

**Priority 1 – Need for Assistance. (a) The costs of fully implementing the magnet schools project as proposed.**

**Introduction.** With this application, **Palmdale School District** (PSD) applies for magnet school funding to develop *five new magnet middle school academies* to reduce, eliminate, or prevent African American minority, English Learner, and low socioeconomic isolation and to improve the academic achievement of all students by *providing real school choice*. **All five proposed magnet school academies are new; Palmdale School District has never received Magnet Schools Assistance Program funding.** PSD is an **elementary district** serving students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grades. PSD is situated in the Antelope Valley in the High Desert of Southern California. Located 60 miles north and east of Los Angeles, Palmdale is rural, and is geographically and economically isolated from services and opportunities that are prevalent in the urban metropolis. The unemployment rate for Palmdale is 9.5% compared to under 5% for the U.S. (<http://www.bestplaces.net/economy/city/california/palmdale>). Many families in Palmdale live at or below the poverty level. Our five proposed magnet academies enroll students who are primarily Hispanic/Latino (72.7%) African American (16.6%), and low income (84.4%). Compared with State achievement scores as measured by California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), Palmdale middle school students score persistently low.

**Our MSAP plan is designed to create and sustain systemic change in educational practices and school cultures based upon research-based practices that have demonstrated effectiveness with populations that are similar to ours.** Each of the proposed new magnet academies will include a science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) focus, with an additional magnet emphasis that links it to the aerospace, business and professional communities of the Antelope Valley (AV). The Antelope Valley has a long history

with space, aeronautics, and aviation. Daily, we see test pilots flying over the valley. Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and Lockheed Martin build rockets, space vehicles, and jet planes for the military, government, and private industry. Our plan will transform four low performing, high minority and high poverty 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade schools into five 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade magnet middle school academies with themes that support college and career preparation:

*Cactus Medical Health and Technology Academy*

*Desert Willow FAST Academy (Fine Arts, Science, and Technology)*

*David G. Millen Law and Government Academy*

*Shadow Hills Academy of Engineering and Design*

*SAGE Academy – Space and Aeronautics Gateway to Exploration – a new magnet middle school academy being built to reduce, eliminate or prevent African American, English Learner and low socioeconomic isolation that will open Fall 2017.*

**Racial and Socioeconomic Integration.** The U.S. Department of Education (2004), National Center for Educational Statistics (2012) and other research has determined that socioeconomic status has become increasingly important in defining student diversity, and “minority” students have become the majority in some states. This is the case in Palmdale. Our population is not only predominantly Hispanic/Latino, but also our populace is becoming more multi-ethnic and multi-racial; increasing numbers of students self-identify as two or more races. Segregation in our schools is based less on racial and ethnic characteristics and more on unequal economic distribution. Therefore, to remedy socioeconomic isolation that includes African American and English Learner populations, our Voluntary Desegregation Plan recognizes and addresses this disparity and will promote integration with higher achieving students from the Palmdale suburbs. This plan will enable PSD to create middle school magnet academies with 21<sup>st</sup> Century themes

that any student in the district can choose to attend. There is *no attendance zone* and *no admission test or requirement* to attend magnet schools in Palmdale School District.

*PSD Background and SES Integration Issues.* The district population by ethnicity is predominantly Hispanic/Latino, at 72.7%; 16.6% are African American; 7.0% white; 1% Filipino; 0.7% Asian and 2% other, including two or more races and declined to state. Our student population is currently distributed fairly evenly with respect to race/ethnicity across our four middle schools that will become magnet academies beginning in 2017-18. However, we have more work to do to reduce, eliminate or prevent low socioeconomic isolation. **PSD has a large percentage of economically disadvantaged students, as measured by those eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM). Palmdale's socioeconomic level is among the lowest in our state, with 84.4% of our students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Meals.**

Looking at a map of our district, which spans 85 square miles of desolate desert, we see that the highest concentration of very low income families is in the center of the City of Palmdale, with middle class housing located on the fringes of Palmdale to the east and west. In Palmdale School District, we have worked tirelessly toward promoting equity in racial and ethnic distribution toward reducing, eliminating or preventing racial isolation of minority groups. Increasing integration, equity and access for our minority and low SES students were motivating factors when we proposed to our School Board that we apply for MSAP funds. As part of our MSAP plan, we also determined we must eliminate school boundaries for our existing and new magnet middle school academies to allow students open access and achieve parental choice. We recommend that the open middle school boundaries policy extend far into the future, as we plan the opening of SAGE Academy, a new middle school that was developed specifically to reduce Minority Group Isolation of African American, English Learner, and very low income students.

In Palmdale, we have planned the opening of this new school with voluntary desegregation in mind. **The new middle school will create a *neighborhood opportunity for minority and low SES students to attend a state-of-the art Space and Aeronautics Academy with a Planetarium on the campus.*** We are committed to creating engaging 21<sup>st</sup> Century opportunities for our students to lift them out of poverty and equip them with knowledge and skills to be college and career ready.

*Need for Significant Increase in Achievement.* **To reduce African American, English Learner, and low income isolation and prepare our students academically and socially for the future, Palmdale School District Superintendent worked with business, city, aerospace, community college, county and other stakeholders over the past three years to position the district to open our five proposed new magnet middle school academies in Fall 2017.** As a district with longstanding challenges related to student achievement, Palmdale School District is committed to making significant and sustained efforts to raise student achievement by implementing evidenced-based practices in the context of new magnet schools. Summary studies have provided mixed results on achievement gains in magnet schools (Betts, Kitmitto, Levin, 2015; Research Services, 2012). For this reason, we developed **this Palmdale PROMISE MSAP plan that will implement evidence-based practices and strategies that have been shown to produce positive results for minority and low income students like ours.** Our evidence-based practices are detailed in the Quality of Project Design narrative. Dynamic magnet themes are being developed as a context in which to accelerate the use of evidence-based practices. Studies summarized in Research Services (2012) indicate that “students enrolled in magnet schools can benefit from their unique course offerings and innovative instructional practices while maintaining or increasing their achievement levels in core areas” (p. 1). Furthermore, magnet



schools are essential to establish in PSD because “Magnet schools tend to enroll larger proportions of Black and Hispanic students than traditional public schools. They have also been found to reduce high concentrations of poverty by attracting a more diverse population of students” (Research Services, 2012, p.1). These are the goals of our **Palmdale PROMISE**.

*Need for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.* Of the 15 Career and Technical Education (CTE) industry sectors, Palmdale provides high-level employment opportunities for five of the sectors, but to take advantage of these good jobs, our students must be highly educated and career ready. The five strongest CTE sectors in Palmdale are: Building and Construction; Energy, Environment, and Utilities; Health Science and Medical Technologies; Manufacturing and Product Development; and Engineering and Architecture. PSD is eager to prepare students to succeed in these industries, or to become part of the “aerospace boom” that is taking place in Palmdale. Our magnet schools will prepare students to achieve in high school and beyond in industries that are relevant to our community.

*Local and Regional Partnerships supporting this MSAP Project.* Given the significant aerospace opportunities in the Antelope Valley (AV), *only 2.2% of residents are employed as engineers in the Antelope Valley.* The 2014 AV Roundtable Report highlighted the “shortfall of engineers and skilled technicians” in our region. Palmdale and the Antelope “Aerospace” Valley today are partners for education and career development to prepare the workforce of the future in the STEM fields. Enormous local support exists for providing workforce stability and education. In 2002, the AV Career Prep Council formed a Math, Science, Engineering, Technology (MSET) Consortium, based upon community needs:

Engineers hired from outside the Palmdale high desert region did not readily adapt to the desert environment and did not stay



Local students that left the area to get an engineering degree seldom returned because they were offered employment in other areas

Local students that did return with an engineering degree provided stability to the workforce

Thus, the “Grow Our Own Engineers” program was born in the Antelope Valley. “Grow Our Own” graduated its first class of local engineers in 2014. Elements of this program include community-wide investments in Project Lead the Way “Gateway to Technology,” Career Academies that emphasize STEM, the Bridge Program to provide a bridge for both students and parents to postsecondary education, and launch of the CA STEM Learning Network (<http://www.bestplaces.net/economy/city/california/palmdale>). PSD formed partnerships with several of these businesses to support our proposed magnet school academies. Partnerships include Federal Aviation Administration, Antelope Valley Air Quality District, YMCA, Antelope Valley College, and Antelope Valley Union High School District. (Please see Letters of Commitment and Support in the Appendix).

*Development of a New Middle School to Reduce Isolation.* Our newest middle school, *SAGE Academy – Space and Aeronautics Gateway to Exploration* is being designed with a space and aeronautic magnet theme. We have located SAGE in the center of the City of Palmdale to offer dynamic, inspiring, 21<sup>st</sup> Century choice to the students who live in the poorest geographic area of our city. ***This is an intentional decision to locate the newest, most technologically sophisticated school in the most needy area of the community. Although SAGE Academy will not have traditional school boundaries, it will be within walking distance for students who currently attend the lowest performing and most economically challenged elementary schools in our district, thereby increasing access to curricula and opportunities that prepare students for***

**college and careers.** Our state and local City Council and Chamber of Commerce have invested in business and education partnerships to improve access to technical careers. Examples of government and private sector aeronautics and aerospace opportunities in our area include:

California Assembly Bill 2600 was introduced by four local Republican lawmakers to create the California Institute for Aerospace located in the Antelope Valley in affiliation with the University of California. Aeronautics and aerospace engineering and technology will provide high-paying jobs in the future if our students are prepared.

Recently, the Air Force awarded an \$80 billion contract for a new long-range stealth bomber to Northrop Grumman Corp. located here in Palmdale.

Lockheed Martin, also in the AV, was awarded a \$20 million NASA contract to design an experimental airplane capable of reducing the effect of the sonic booms created as jets fly beyond the sound barrier. Lockheed is also preparing to produce the LMH-1, a hybrid airship that is part blimp, part airship, and part hovercraft.

➤ Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic commercial spacecraft is being built at his Spaceship Company in Mojave, 35 minutes north of Palmdale. The ship is designed to carry six space-venture tourists and two pilots into space.

Other manufacturing opportunities are growing. Light rail cars are being assembled at Kinkisharyo International's facility in Palmdale under a \$910 million grant from Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Also, Antelope Valley College facilities are expanding to 50,720 square feet from 18,000 to accommodate engineering programs in the AV.

However, amid this aerospace and design opportunity boom, national data and our own local research show there is a critical and growing need for professionals in STEM fields. There is so much promise for technology and engineering futures in the AV, yet present *adult*

*education levels in Palmdale are low, contributing to widespread community economic disadvantage and poverty: 25.3% of adults have no high school diploma, 25.6% are high school graduates, 25.9% have some college but no degree, 7.5% possess an AA degree and 10.9% a BA degree. The majority of Palmdale adults do not work in the advanced technology industries, but rather work in office/administrative support (14%), 11.5% in sales, 7.2% in construction, 6.8% in transportation, 6.7% work as healthcare practitioners or in healthcare support; 5.7% in personal care, and 5.7% in food preparation/service.*

**The Palmdale PROMISE.** Educators, parents, and our community are dedicated to improving the academic attainment and career opportunities for all our students. To meet this challenge and **to attain remarkable results that can be replicated in other school districts**, we engaged with our parents and community stakeholders in a three-year Strategic Planning process. Together we created **The Palmdale PROMISE.** The Palmdale PROMISE/La PROMESA de Palmdale embodies our commitment to: *Pursuing Remarkable Opportunities to Marshall Innovation, Inspiration and Imagination for Success and Engagement – Promoviendo y Realizando Oportunidades Magnificas de Inovación, Inspración e Imaginación para un Sobresaliente Exito.* After examining the data from our **district-wide Needs Assessment**, Palmdale School District is determined to employ every opportunity to improve student academic, social, and career outcomes. Creating magnet school academies is one major endeavor we outlined as a significant component of the Palmdale PROMISE. **We are implementing evidence-based practices in our schools to create a better future for our children and to change the practice of education.** These are not just district goals; these are our community priorities, demonstrated through parent and community focus groups, meetings, and surveys. PSD has made financial, leadership, professional and community commitments to creating and sustaining state-of-the-art



magnet school programs with a STEAM component. MSAP funding is requested for magnet program staff, magnet-themed professional learning, specialized equipment and supplies to implement magnet-themed pathways, for marketing for student recruitment, to bring in specialized consultants, and an external Evaluation Team to guide continuous quality improvement of our efforts.

**To realize the PROMISE, we make to our students, parents and community, to reduce socioeconomic isolation, significantly improve achievement, create state-of-the-art magnet academies at grades 6-8, and to implement dynamic magnet themes over the next five years, Palmdale School District is in need of MSAP funds, which we are requesting in the amount of \$14,989,263,** over five years. MSAP funds are required in addition to State funds to provide extensive staff professional learning (50-80 hours per year) to significantly increase achievement for all student groups, bring Safe and Civil Schools training and coaching to improve school climate and cultures, and significantly reduce disproportionate African American minority suspensions, and raise teacher expectations while we integrate low SES and minority students with higher achieving students. Our needs, goals, objectives, and expected outcomes are driven by our district and school-level Logic Models and are supported in the Budget Narrative.

Local Control Accountability Plan - LCAP. In 2013-14, California Department of Education (CDE) responded to statewide parent and community demand to bring greater local control to education. Under the leadership of our Governor and with the support of voters, California changed the funding structure for public schools and instituted the *Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)*. PSD parents, staff, and community met in schools and throughout the community and responded to surveys during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years to set priorities and develop our required *Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)*. LCAP



requires us to improve access to education for all pupils, ensure teachers are credentialed and qualified in the subject areas they teach, ensures that graduates are college and career ready, that students are English proficient, and that parents, students, and stakeholders are *engaged and active participants in planning, development, implementation, expenditures, and outcomes*. The LCAP eight State Priorities, which are aligned with the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, are: 1) **Student Engagement** (*attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, dropout rates, graduation, etc.*); 2) **School Climate** (*suspension and expulsion rates, student participation*); 3) Basic Necessities (facilities, staffing, etc.); 4) Implementation of Common Core State Standards; 5) **Parental Involvement**; 6) **Student Achievement**; 7) **Access to Courses**; 8) Other student outcomes in subject areas.

As the core of our MSAP plan, Palmdale School District proposes to implement **five magnet middle school academies** by reconfiguring four intermediate (junior high) schools as 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade magnet middle school academies by fall 2017, and opening one new magnet middle school that is being strategically located for access by our lowest-achieving African American, English Learner, and low income students. The costs of implementing the five new magnet schools far exceeds the district’s financial resources. **To fully implement our MSAP program as designed, PSD requests \$14,989,263 in federal MSAP funds allocated over five years.**

***(b) The resources available to carry out the project if MSAP funds were not provided.***

Palmdale School District receives federal and state funds for educational programs. Federal funding includes ESSA Title I, Title II and, Title III to improve student academic achievement and to support English Learners (EL). State funds are distributed via California’s Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). PSD also receives state funding in the form of ADA (Average Daily



Attendance), a per-pupil amount based upon students' daily attendance. PSD allocates these funding resources judiciously to maximize the direct impact to students.

District financial resources are derived from State funds and categorical (federal) funding. **District funds are committed to middle schools to improve teaching practices that increase student learning, and to support district priorities that include Project Lead the Way, Next Generation Science Standards, support for English Learners, technology equipment and training, and support staff:**

Personnel: Director of Curriculum and Instruction – Middle Schools, C&I Administrative Assistant, Technology Coordinator, Data Analyst, district office support, new teachers for math, science, engineering, technology and visual and performing arts, District and middle school Parent-Community Liaisons

Professional Learning: Ongoing teacher professional learning in Mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), English Language Development, Critical Reading process, Technology, Using Chromebooks with students, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), CHAMPS classroom management, Physical Education Standards, Special Education grade-level training in Grade -Level State Standards

Technology equipment: Classroom sets of Chromebooks and Tech Tuesdays training for teachers for 1:1 student-computing

Academic Counselors at each middle school to advise and support students and parents in achieving high academic goals; support students to be career and college ready

In addition to these district commitments to middle schools, and because **creating magnet schools is critical to the Palmdale PROMISE to improve achievement for the most needy students** in Palmdale, the **district initiated and passed a local bond measure to fund**



**construction, facilities, equipment, furniture, and materials for the new magnet school, SAGE Academy.**

Funding for these priorities totals \$4,091,719. This amount is substantial, but is **not sufficient to develop high quality magnet school academies that will reduce minority isolation and significantly increase student achievement.**

**(c) The extent to which the costs of the project exceed the District's resources.**

*Impact of the funding gap on Project Design.* Palmdale School District has already committed substantial financial and human capital to the design and development of this magnet school plan. We are dedicated to creating and implementing five new magnet academies serving grades 6-8. However, we would not be able to purchase the equipment and materials, provide intensive and sustained professional learning, increase parental collaboration, and improve school climate and cultures as required to implement 21<sup>st</sup> century education programs that will move our students out of poverty by preparing them for careers of the future. MSAP funding is necessary for extensive staff professional learning in STEAM and magnet-themed fields, equipment and materials, marketing and recruiting our priority students to implement our Voluntary Desegregation Plan, and to improve parent collaboration and involvement. We also must change the culture of our schools to embrace positive student and staff behaviors, raise standards and expectations, provide supports to enable students to meet them, and to increase parent choice.

*Impact of the funding gap on the proposed program.* The funding gap significantly impacts the magnet and STEAM project at the proposed sites. We are using district LCAP funds to increase students' access to hands-on, rigorous science, technology and engineering experiences through Project Lead the Way (see Quality of Project Design). At this time, however, we do not have the

funding to offer specialized magnet and other STEAM experiences to all the district students in grades 6-8 as elements of the core curriculum, nor to train our teachers to develop expertise in engineering and design, technology, medical/health, law, and space/aeronautics. Our district mission is to ensure access and equity for all our students, with a special focus on African American, English Learner, and students with disabilities. As the aerospace industry grows significantly in the next three years due to the new defense contract at Northrup Grumman and other aerospace industries, we have an opportunity to capitalize on this explosive growth that will create high-paying jobs and the need for local systems, design, civil, electronic, and mechanical engineers among others; design specialists, computer programmers, composite specialists, business managers, accountants, tool and dye makers, drafting specialists, and many more. PSD is in need of MSAP funds to implement the proposed project as designed. Without MSAP funds, critical project elements cannot be implemented to reduce minority group and low SES isolation, increase interaction among diverse students, substantially increase academic achievement in math and English/Language Arts, and to positively impact the social and emotional values and behaviors of our staff and students. **Without MSAP funds, PSD will not be able to fund critical magnet school components required to achieve our goals:**

**Safe and Civil Schools *Foundations* process** for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to increase social integration among diverse students with divergent needs and improve school climate

**READ 180 evidence-based intervention for struggling adolescent readers**

**Magnet Support Teachers** to monitor project implementation, provide continuous quality feedback for improvement, keep the project within budget, and make sure students are enrolled in appropriate classes to **achieve proficiency on rigorous State standards**



- A teacher **coach for English Language Development** and a **math consultant** from Antelope Valley College
- Professional Learning**, including specialized training and experience, to implement the special **magnet themed curricula with fidelity and effectiveness**
- Design, development, and sequencing of specialized curricula and materials required to implement magnet themes**
- Expand Principal and site leadership and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** to support, evaluate, and sustain school improvement reforms
- Purchase engineering, robotics, aerospace, aeronautics, music, fine arts, world languages, and medical technologies materials, curricula and equipment to implement specialized magnet themes**
- Academic tutors** to support students in achieving proficiency in challenging courses
- Marketing and recruitment** to attract and retain high-achieving African American, English Learners, other students to reduce, eliminate or prevent Minority Group Isolation
- Process evaluation and **rigorous evaluation** of the project, including **data analysis and statistical consulting** to document improvement in key outcomes and to measure *impact*
- Parent, staff, student, and key stakeholder **surveys and focus groups** to gather participant feedback, inform implementation, and to make course corrections for continuous quality improvement.

Palmdale School District directs school funding and resources to the personnel and programs that directly affect our students. Since we are a very low income community, **the costs for the proposed MSAP project exceed district resources by \$14,989,263.**



**(d) The difficulty of effectively carrying out the approved plan and project, including how the design of the magnet schools project, type of program proposed, location of the magnet schools impacts the District's ability to successfully carry out the plan.**

*Need for MSAP funds to effectively carry out this proposed PROMISE.* Through data analysis,

community and district meetings, focus groups, surveys, and collaboration with parents and

community leaders during our strategic planning process that spanned the 2014-2017 school

years, PSD **identified five critical needs that propel our request for Magnet School funds.**

**MSAP funds are needed to attain our strategic goals: 1) To reduce, prevent, or eliminate**

**African American (AA) and English Learner (EL) minority groups and low SES student**

**isolation for middle school students by 2021-22;**

**2) Significantly increase percent proficient in English/Language Arts for AA, EL, low SES**

**and students with disabilities in middle schools by 2021-22;**

**3) Significantly increase percent proficient in Mathematics for AA, EL, low SES and**

**students with disabilities in middle schools by 2021-22;**

**4) Create middle school STEAM academies to inspire students, create real school choice,**

**increase parental collaboration, and provide college and career readiness by 2021-22;**

**5) Improve school climate and safety in middle schools by improving positive school-wide**

**relationships and behavior to significantly reduce disproportionate suspensions of African**

**American students.**

Further, MSAP funding will be used for **marketing and promotion to reduce, eliminate**

**or prevent minority and low SES isolation through targeted recapturing and re-enrolling of**

**Palmdale students from middle class families that have left our district to enroll in STEM**

**programs in neighboring districts.** If approved, this MSAP plan will allow PSD to fully realize

and implement the Palmdale PROMISE and achieve our project goals for approximately **6,080 students** in grades 6-8 by 2021-2022. Without MSAP funding, the significant evidence-based programs, practices and strategies detailed in this proposal could not be implemented, and we risk falling short of our PROMISE to our students, families, and community. To access the Palmdale PROMISE, please see:

<http://www.palmdalesd.org/cms/lib/CA01000370/Centricity/Domain/1/exec%20summary.pdf>.

**Priority 2 – *NEW Magnet School Projects and strength of evidence to support proposed projects.***

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) made important amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), including encouraging evidence-based decision making as a practice in public education. U.S. Department of Education (ED) guidelines recognize school improvement as a “continuous, systemic, and cyclical process, and emphasizes the use of evidence in decision making” (Hale, Dunn, Filby, Rice, & Van Houten, 2017, p. 1). **Palmdale School District proposes five NEW middle school magnet academies using evidence-based methods and practices designed to increase academic achievement and reduce isolation of minority and low SES students.** Again, these are NEW magnet school programs. **Palmdale School District has never received magnet school funding; we are a novice applicant.**

Our proposed MSAP project will implement two evidence-based practices and programs that meet WWC Evidence Standards Without Reservations. The first evidence-based practice (Study 1) is *Safe and Civil Schools Foundations - A Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Process* which will help us to improve school climate, reduce isolation, and increase student integration by increasing respectful, accountable interactions



among students of diverse groups. The second evidence-based program (Study 2) is **READ 180**, a powerful intervention that has been shown to significantly increase the reading achievement of middle school students who score two or more years below grade level. We provide a rationale for implementation of each of these evidence-based practices (EBP). We will replicate these processes and programs with fidelity in Palmdale to improve relevant student outcomes in integration, positive behavior, and reading achievement.



**Study 1. Citation.** Ward, B. & Gersten, R. (2013). Research into Practice: A Randomized Evaluation of the Safe and Civil Schools Model for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports at Elementary Schools in a Large Urban School District. *School Psychology Review*, (42) 3, 317-333. ***Meets WWC Evidence Standards Without Reservations.***

**Study Outcomes.** Schools in the study were **randomly assigned** to an intervention or wait-list control group in a **true experimental design**. Like PSD middle schools, study schools had high concentrations of students receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals (study was 90%; PSD is 84.4%), high minority populations (study was 87%; PSD is 93%), and both the study schools and PSD had high numbers of students scoring low on statewide standardized tests. Three sources of data were used as outcome measures: (a) school level data - student discipline records (suspensions) and student achievement scores from state tests, (b) student responses on the *California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)*, and (c) teacher responses to items on the staff School Climate Survey that related to student behaviors. Data were reported following year 2 of implementation. Results demonstrated: (a) A statistically significant reduction in number of

suspensions per 100 students and a reduction in number of days of suspension from pre-intervention to Year 2. Intervention schools also saw reductions in both bullying and other problem behaviors. Importantly, a **statistically significant** 14 percentage point increase was seen in the number of students proficient on state testing in math (Cox Index **0.34**) and a **statistically significant** 9 percentage point increase in English/Language Arts proficiency (Cox Index **0.25**).

(b) Questions from the CHKS student survey suggested reductions in bullying, although reductions were also reported during this period for waitlist control schools. (c) Staff in Cohort 1 intervention schools reported that a schoolwide positive behavior system was in place and described substantial improvements in student behaviors: a 32% decline in the odds that Cohort 1 staff report that bullying is a frequent problem, a 67% decline in the odds that staff report that widespread disorder in the classroom is a frequent problem, and a 21% decline in the odds that staff report that disrespectfulness and defiance are frequent problems (effect size – 0.15). Schools in the waitlist control, in contrast, continued to report high or increasing number of suspensions, with declines in state achievement test scores during the waitlist period.



**Relevance to Proposed Project.** If awarded MSAP funds, **Palmdale will contract with Safe and Civil Schools to replicate and implement the methods described at our five proposed new magnet schools.** *Rationale – why this is important.* The Safe and Civil Schools Foundations process is essential for our district. Substantial research indicates that both school climate and social-emotional learning (SEL) are essential factors for human development and education. School climate refers to the quality and character of individuals and practices in schools and



includes norms, values, interpersonal relations, social interactions, and organized processes and structures (<http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/faq.php>). A positive school climate influences important factors such as teacher retention, decreased incidents of violence, lower dropout rates, and higher achievement. SEL is an integral part of education from preschool through high school ([www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)). Research supporting the importance of SEL as a *foundation* for academic learning (hence the name *Foundations* for this intervention) comes from diverse fields including neuroscience, health, and economics. A Columbia University impact study found that every \$1 invested in SEL programming yields \$11 in long-term benefits (Belfield, Bowden, Klapp, Levin, Shand, Zander, 2015); strong SEL programs have produced 11% gains in student achievement.

The Safe and Civil Schools Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Model cited in the study referenced is *Foundations* (<http://www.safeandcivilschools.com>). *Foundations* is a multicomponent, multi-tiered, comprehensive approach to schoolwide improvement. Integrating applied behavior analysis, research on effective schools, and systems change management theory, the intervention process is a set of procedures designed to improve behavior and student-staff relationships by systematically and consistently applying positive behavioral techniques. The *Foundations* process focuses on guiding members of an entire school staff in developing a schoolwide environment that is safe, civil, and conducive to learning. *Foundations* involves the entire school staff, including custodians, cafeteria workers, office personnel, yard supervisors, bus drivers, instructional assistants, all teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and students working together to establish proactive, positive (non-punitive), and instructional schoolwide discipline policies and practices to create and maintain a positive and productive school climate.

**(C-1) Include ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.**

If awarded MSAP funds, **Palmdale will contract with Safe and Civil Schools to replicate the methods of the Ward and Gersten (2013) study at all five proposed new magnet schools, including the experimental design with random assignment.** Safe and Civil Schools experts will deliver a variety of professional learning services that include staff inservice training, workshops, and on-site implementation using coaching and support. *Foundations* project materials include books, DVDs and CDs from Safe and Civil Schools for all members of the school staff. The training and coaching will begin in January 2018 and will be implemented over a four-year period, with one additional year (five total years) of coaching, data collection and analysis, and expert support to **sustain systems change** that is predicted to occur in all school cultures. Trainers and coaches will guide staff through the process of designing a positive and proactive schoolwide discipline plan affecting all students in all settings on campus (PE gymnasium, cafeteria, yard, hallways, restrooms, library, computer lab, etc.) and include before- and after-school behavior and bus rides. We selected this evidence-based process because Safe and Civil Schools *Foundations* school-wide improvement model has been used successfully to produce positive changes in school climate in over 4,000 schools. ***Foundations has been documented to improve the MSAP outcomes that are specified in our Logic Model:*** increased academic achievement in both math and reading/language arts, improved proactive student behaviors, reduced discipline events, and improved school climate – including reduced suspensions - based upon strong evidence presented in the study cited above.

**(A-2) Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study that meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards Without Reservation**

**Study 2. Citation:** Boulay, B., Goodson, B., Frye, M., Blocklin, M., and Price, C. (2015).

*Summary of Research Generated by Striving Readers on the Effectiveness of Interventions for Struggling Adolescent Readers.* (NCEE 2016-4001). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Available: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20164001/pdf/20164001.pdf>.

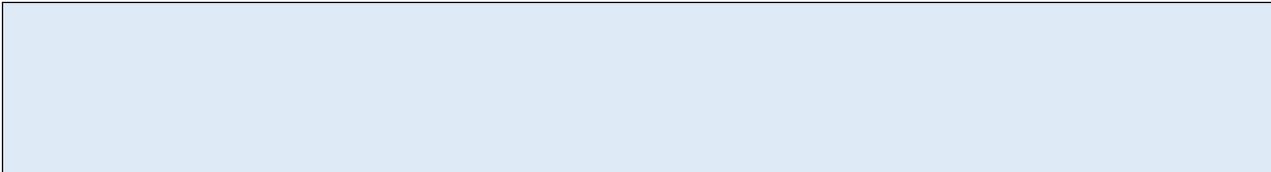
- ***Meets WWC Evidence Standards Without Reservations.***

**Study Outcomes.** READ 180 produced evidence of positive effects. Three studies found statistically significant positive effects on reading achievement; zero studies found no effects.

The Swanlund, et al. (2012) study included in the *Striving Readers* monograph was a **randomized control experimental design** conducted with 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students.

“READ 180 is a reading intervention for students in elementary through high school students (grades 4-12) reading two or more years below grade level that aims to address gaps in students’ skills through the use of literature, direct instruction in reading skills, and a computer component. READ 180 offers differentiated levels of support through small group, teacher-led instruction and customized, technology-based instruction” (Swanlund, et al., p. 3). READ 180 Level B is developed for middle school students. The intervention was designed to be implemented over one year of daily, 90-minute sessions and employs several instructional strategies: “fluency exercises, question stems, use of graphic organizers, activation of prior knowledge, and cooperative group work, among others” (p. 3). There is a recommended sequence in which whole-class instruction is followed by small group instruction (approximately

five students) that focuses upon students’ identified needs. READ 180 software provides instruction in decoding, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and tracks each student’s progress. Individualized instruction is determined by assessment of the student’s word recognition, comprehension, and fluency skills. Findings indicated a **statistically significant positive effect of READ 180 on middle school students’ reading achievement** as measured by Wisconsin’s Measures of Academic Progress Reading Test (ES 0.14) at the end of one year of implementation.



**Relevance to Proposed Project.** The study cited provides **strong evidence** and “substantially increases the amount of credible information available to district administrators trying to decide how to best meet the needs of struggling adolescent readers” (p. 8). **PSD must immediately and effectively improve middle school students’ reading achievement to allow them to access grade level texts, magnet curricula, STEAM instructional components, and give them the skills to “read to learn.”** Our 2015-2016 baseline achievement data indicate that only 50-65% of our 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students “nearly met or met” the State standard in reading comprehension: Cactus 50%; David G Millen 56%; Desert Willow 57%; Shadow Hills 65%. We studied and reviewed several evidence-based programs, and selected READ 180 because of its demonstrated success in *significantly* improving reading, comprehension, and fluency of struggling adolescent readers, and because of its applicability for middle school students.



PSD has Local Progress Monitoring (benchmark) reading and state achievement test data on all students who will be 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students next year. We will select the students at each grade level who score two or more years below grade level in reading comprehension and will provide a Reading/Language Arts Intervention class for one year using READ 180. As the study suggested, we will extend this intervention for an additional semester for those students with the greatest need to make gains toward grade-level reading. The READ 180 intervention is very costly, due to intensive small group instruction and computer technology and the 1:1 teacher coaching required to implement READ180 with fidelity at all five proposed magnet schools. **We made the commitment to our students, our parents, our community, and to ourselves to substantially increase reading achievement for all students; READ 180 will be directed to the students with the most persistent reading challenges.** Results will be measured each year by district benchmark tests and the annual California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). Using Professional Learning Communities, our teachers will review student data and progress every two weeks. Student progress assessments are built into the computer software to allow teachers to regularly measure student skill acquisition and to provide additional instruction and skills practice for students making slow progress. We will implement READ 180 for all students in need over all five project years, and will sustain the intervention beyond the project period for students in need.

**Priority 3 – Selection of Students. The extent to which the District proposes to select students to attend magnet schools by methods such as lottery, rather than through academic examination.**

To ensure full desegregation and promote racial, ethnic and socioeconomic integration of diverse students, we will *eliminate middle school boundaries* beginning with the 2017-18 school year.

Palmdale School District developed a Voluntary Desegregation Plan that applies to all middle schools included in this application. Our PROMISE Goal 1 is: To reduce, prevent, or eliminate African American (AA) and English Learner (EL) minority groups and Low SES student isolation for middle school students by 2021-2022. Our Voluntary Desegregation Plan includes open enrollment for all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to select their magnet school of choice. In Fall 2017, all district 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and new 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to the magnet academy of choice, based upon magnet theme, during the open enrollment period. Applicants will be selected for enrollment in their first-choice school by lottery. To guarantee equity and prevent student isolation, students from the lowest SES schools will be identified in our data system, and will be awarded their first-choice school using a **Weighted Lottery** to ensure they receive priority. Presently, all our schools have the capacity to enroll all district students in grades 6-8. We will open a fifth new magnet school, SAGE Academy, to increase the magnet choices for students and parents. In the future, if any magnet school is at capacity, students in the Weighted Lottery will be given the opportunity to attend their second-choice magnet school or their neighborhood school. The Palmdale PROMISE magnet program and weighted choice lottery will desegregate the city's low income students currently attending the poorest schools. No academic or other examination is required for magnet school entry. We are negotiating with Antelope Valley Transit Authority to create express bus routes to our magnet academies, and hope to negotiate free bus passes for our Weighted Lottery students to travel to their magnet school of choice. In the meantime, we have placed funds in the MSAP budget across all five years to ensure that our priority students will have transportation to their school of choice.

With the opening of SAGE Academy, we will have the capacity to enroll all our middle school students and still have space available. We hope to **reverse declining enrollment that**

**has plagued PSD over the past five years, as our brightest 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade students have left PSD to attend private, charter, and other high-tech schools in the valley.** Over the past three years, we have lost **480** of these students to other districts in the Antelope Valley, and we project we will **lose another 500 students this year.** Our Voluntary Desegregation Plan is designed to improve racial and social integration and entice all our students to remain in the district. If we do not create these magnet school opportunities, PSD will continue to experience declining enrollment of high SES and high achieving students. Minority and low SES student isolation will increase. Further, with declining enrollment at grades 6-8, we will not be able to sustain SAGE Academy and offer our students the gift of Space and Aeronautic technology, a staple in the AV.

Enrollment information and deadlines for submitting magnet school applications will be sent to all parents in English and Spanish. Information will be published in the local newspapers and posted on the District and School websites as well as shared via other appropriate social media. Additionally, each of our magnet school’s personnel will visit priority elementary schools to facilitate parent meetings, magnet school visits, and a “road show” highlighting each academy focus. To reduce, eliminate or prevent minority and low SES student isolation and to promote integration of diverse students by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status within each academy, students may apply to any magnet academy in the district. Race-neutral factors (Weighted Lottery) will be used to enroll a diverse population at each site. Transportation will be facilitated, with the District covering costs by the end of the project. No academic criteria, entrance examination or performance audition will be used to select students for the magnet school. Please see Table 5: Selection of Students.

**Priority 4 – Increasing Racial Integration and Socioeconomic Diversity. Extent to which the District proposes to increase racial integration by taking into account socioeconomic diversity in designing and implementing the magnet school program.**



In its documents for *Creating Successful Magnet School Programs* (2004, 2008), the U.S. Department of Education stated that socioeconomic status had become increasingly important in defining student diversity. Segregation in Palmdale schools and communities is primarily a result of housing patterns influenced more by economic patterns than by race, although these two factors are highly correlated. **Our Voluntary Desegregation Plan and the planned opening of our new middle school, SAGE, were designed to improve access to high quality magnet programs for minority and low SES students.** To address GPRA and PROMISE Goal 1: Reduce, prevent or eliminate African American (AA) and English Learner (EL) Minority Group Isolation and economic segregation in middle schools, we will track and report both SES and race/ethnicity in applications, enrollment, and achievement in our MSAP plan.

Schools are under increasing pressure from parents, industry, and federal and state governments to raise academic achievement and increase access to high quality schools for low SES students. **Research has shown that to raise cognitive and academic skills, it is more important to avoid concentrations of poverty than concentrations of minority students per se** (Kahlenberg, 2014). The Congressionally-authorized Coleman Report (1966) stated that the “beneficial effect of a student body with a high proportion of white students comes not from racial composition per se but from the better educational background and higher educational aspirations that are, on the average, found among whites” (p. 307). More recent research confirms these findings (Kahlenberg, 2014).

**In designing our MSAP plan to achieve SES integration, increase choice, and raise student achievement, each strategy we selected is based upon research that at a minimum satisfies the Department’s definition of Evidence of Promise. To inform our Voluntary**

## **Desegregation Plan and the design and implementation plan of our magnet schools**

**program**, we examined a study by Diem (2012), *The Relationship Between Policy Design, Context, and Implementation in Integration Plans*, published in *Education Policy Analysis Archives*. Using the Department’s definition of evidence of promise, we identified Diem’s analysis to **support the theoretical linkage between at least one critical project component of our plan, student and parent choice, and one relevant project outcome, balance SES across district middle schools by 2021-2022, as defined in our Logic Model.** “Research indicates that SES-based integration plans are becoming increasingly attractive to school districts for several reasons. First, there is a strong overlap between SES and race, which can facilitate racial diversity in schools... without violating court rulings (*Parents Involved, 2007*). Second, **SES-based integration can help school districts raise student achievement by breaking up concentrations of poverty in schools with lower academic achievement by creating schools with more mixed income student populations**” (Diem, 2012, pp. 5).

*How Palmdale defined Socioeconomic Status (SES).* We studied integration plans based on SES that defined SES in various ways: eligibility for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM), parent education, or neighborhood poverty rate. For our purposes, **PSD defines low SES as eligibility for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM).** We have observed that this measure correlates with parental education and with neighborhood income level. To design our magnet schools integration plan, the study by Diem (2012) observed that in this post-*Parents Involved* (2007) era, most **voluntary desegregation plans have two core features: socioeconomic status and voluntary choice.** Race-neutral plans such as Palmdale’s Voluntary Desegregation Plan allow parents to send their children to a school of choice. Choice is a key component of our integration plan, and a **Weighted Lottery will be implemented** to ensure priority access for students from

low SES areas in our community. We will track and report race and ethnicity in magnet school application and enrollment each project year, and we will track and report SES/FRPM for students at each magnet school. Information will be used to inform recruitment strategies.

*Methodology, Research Design, and Study Outcomes that are relevant to our population and the*

*Palmdale MSAP PROMISE.* In one of Diem's case studies, we found similarity to our issues and

plans for Palmdale magnet schools. Omaha Public Schools' (OPS) voluntary SES integration plan is similar to the circumstances in Palmdale in the following ways: 1) Like Palmdale, OPS was a zone-based enrollment plan that transitioned to citywide plan; 2) About 65% of OPS students were eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM); PSD's FRPM is 85.57%; 3) OPS also had a declining white middle-class population; Palmdale's white population declined years ago as aerospace jobs left the area, and due to the number of low-priced single-family homes. Then, many Latino, African American, foster families and group homes moved to Palmdale, increasing racial, social, and economic isolation in low-income areas of Palmdale.

Most middle-class parents in Palmdale live on the East or West side suburbs, and commute an hour or more into the Los Angeles metropolitan area to work. In the center of Palmdale are concentrations of minority and low income families. OPS implemented a zone-controlled inter-district choice policy to integrate schools to reflect the socioeconomic diversity of the district.

Palmdale will implement a School of Choice integration plan based upon the success of OPS.

*Study Outcomes that are relevant for Palmdale School District.* Like Palmdale, OPS needed to modernize its older schools before voluntary desegregation would be feasible. Like Palmdale, OPS passed a School Bond to fund school renovation and expansion. Like Palmdale, OPS used FRPM as the SES indicator. Students and parents selected a school of choice, and students were assigned by lottery. Palmdale will employ a Weighted Lottery to ensure that low SES students

receive their first-choice magnet school. OPS found that “many parents are opting to send their children to magnet schools. Magnet schools are our most successful study” (pp. 14-15). OPS also found, “...families of color and families of poverty are more likely to make choices (to schools outside their neighborhoods) than middle class parents” (p. 15). Palmdale will implement our Voluntary Desegregation Plan, which we are confident will meet our desired goals of integrating students from low and middle income neighborhoods. In addition, the opening of SAGE Academy in Fall 2017 will bring a state-of-the-art magnet school into the Palmdale City center. The creation of SAGE Academy will bring a great magnet school to the neediest students.

*Our MSAP plan is designed to increase socioeconomic integration and increase access to challenging academic courses necessary for college and careers.* Currently, California educates 1 out of every 10 students in the country, and of those students, 3 out of 5 are low-income and the majority are Latino. California has more English learners than any other state in the union (Smith & Smith, for Education Trust-West, 2017). Throughout the district, Hispanic/Latino students are the largest ethnic group. PSD also has a large percentage of economically disadvantaged students, as measured by those eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM). Approximately 26% of district students are English Learners, with 66.7% of EL 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students being defined by our data as **Long-Term English Learners (LTEL)**. These are students who entered school speaking a language other than English, but by fourth or fifth grade did not meet State or District reclassification criteria as **Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)**. Most significantly, however, students of color, especially African American students, are not represented in honors classes at most middle schools. English Learners are also under-represented in these more rigorous academic courses. **This is one of the major goals of our MSAP plan - Palmdale PROMISE Goal 1– to reduce, eliminate, or prevent African**

**American and English Learner isolation by increasing the number and percent of African American and EL students that take and achieve proficiency in academically rigorous courses.** Details of this plan are presented in the Desegregation Narrative.

**(a) Desegregation. (1) The effectiveness of the plan to recruit students from different social, economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds into the magnet schools.**

Palmdale School District consulted legal advisors and reviewed U.S. Department of Education (ED) and Office for Civil Rights (OCR) guidance that outlined key steps for recruiting magnet students and implementing programs to achieve diversity and avoid racial isolation. We identified our *compelling interests* for voluntary desegregation and how they relate to our mission and unique circumstances. We designed an evaluation strategy to inform how we will know when our compelling interests have been achieved.

Palmdale's Compelling Interest and Rationale for Integration. Our Palmdale PROMISE is designed to ensure that our students are provided with **learning opportunities in environments comprised of students of diverse backgrounds and resources.** Our core values include the belief that **participation in stimulating, varied learning environments produces long-term social, intellectual, academic, civic and even economic benefits** to our students. These benefits extend to the school environment and even to the community. Research and OCR guidance have shown that “interacting with students who have different perspectives and experiences can raise the level of academic and social discourse both inside and outside the classroom... by choosing to create this kind of rich academic environment, educational institutions help students sharpen their critical thinking and analytical skills” (*Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity in Postsecondary Education*, n.d., p. 1). We are strongly committed to raising the

achievement and opportunities for all our students, and this mission drives both our Voluntary Desegregation Plan and our MSAP student integration plan. PSD's strategic planning process identified significant district needs that drive our need for MSAP funding for magnet academies. Our Voluntary Desegregation Plan is based upon identified student and community needs.

**DESEGREGATION Need, Gap, or Problem 1:** Economic isolation exists in identified middle schools and neighborhoods, with collateral low achievement. Very low enrollment of African American, English Learner, low SES, female, and students with Specific Learning Disability (SLD) enrolled in challenging academic courses.

**GPRA GOAL 1 – Palmdale PROMISE Goal 1.1:** Reduce, prevent, or eliminate African American (AA), English Learner (EL), and low SES minority group isolation in magnet middle schools by 2021-22.

**PROMISE Goal 1.2.** Increase enrollment of AA, EL, low SES, female, and students with Specific Learning Disability in challenging academic courses by 2021-22.

**PROMISE Goal 1.3.** Sustain magnet school academies and equity practices beyond the end of federal funding.

**Expected Long-Term Outcomes:** **1.1** Reduce, prevent, or eliminate AA, EL, low SES isolation in middle schools through school of choice enrollment; Sustain balanced enrollment beyond project funding. **1.2** Increase enrollment and interaction of AA, EL, low SES, female, and students with SLD in challenging academic courses: Honors, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), Algebra/Geometry, and magnet-themed. **1.3** PSD will institutionalize grant practices and develop sustainable funding to maintain magnet academies.

**Theory of Change to achieve Goal 1:** IF we identify students based on low SES neighborhoods for **priority enrollment in magnet school academies**, and IF we **communicate and recruit effectively** to our target populations, and IF we clarify and support **administrator and teacher leadership** to achieve student integration and interaction, and IF we **implement evidence-based practices** such as *Capturing Kids' Hearts*, *Foundations*, and *WEB*, THEN we will eliminate student isolation based on race, language, and economic factors.

**Our Plan Prioritizes Integration.** **Five values** on which our Palmdale PROMISE was built are:

- **High intellectual performance** that prepares every student to graduate ready for college, career, and the global 21<sup>st</sup> century world
- **Equity** for all our students, reflected in outcomes and opportunities
- Facilitating and supporting every student's achievement by building on their **strengths, cultures, languages and experiences** to create new successes
- **Multilingualism and multiculturalism** as individual, community, national, and global assets in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- **Integrity and community** based on trust and common purpose that empower individuals and communities.

“We know that integrated schools boost individual student achievement, as well as attract and retain stronger teachers. School integration—more than increased funding, leadership changes, and stringent teacher evaluations—is the most effective known educational innovation” (Potter, Quick, & Davies, 2016, p. 23). Our Voluntary Desegregation Plan is designed to: Prevent, reduce, or eliminate social, racial, ethnic or economic isolation; Foster student integration and diversity; Ensure equal educational opportunity and access for all students; Remedy and re-engage our underrepresented students in STEAM and magnet courses that support our

community industries; Provide all students the opportunity to meet challenging State and District content and performance standards; Provide opportunity to design and develop innovative education methods and practices that promote diversity and increase choices in public school programs; Foster greater parental decision-making and involvement in students' academic lives.

**We also have a compelling need in Palmdale to reduce disproportionality in special education and in the number of students suspended, many of whom are African American. Our MSAP integration plan (PROMISE Goal 1) and school climate plan (PROMISE Goal 5) will remedy this disproportionality.**

*District Plan to Recruit Diverse Students.* Palmdale SD will rely on race-neutral approaches for recruitment and integration. We are committed to achieving equity and equal access for student groups that include students in poverty, many of whom are African American or Latino. We also want to address equity for our students with disabilities. We developed **three race-neutral strategies to meet our integration goals:** 1) Open a new magnet academy strategically located in central Palmdale; 2) Neighborhood, in-person recruitment; and 3) a Weighted Lottery.

*Strategy: Strategic School and Program Site Decisions: Birth of SAGE Academy - Space and Aeronautics Gateway to Exploration.* In developing our Voluntary Desegregation Plan, we examined student enrollment patterns and school achievement for both our elementary and middle schools. We noticed that historically PSD had not been purposeful in recruiting and distributing students among our existing middle schools. We also noticed that five of our 21 elementary schools serve students in very high poverty areas of Palmdale, where more than 91% of children qualify for the federal FRPM program. The students are largely African American or Latino. These high-poverty schools lack a diverse student body and are economically isolated.

Palmdale is a high-poverty district compared to others in the state. Of the 19,455 students enrolled in PSD, **84.4%** are enrolled in FRPM. District-wide, our percentage of students qualifying for FRPM ranges from 70.42% to 96.69%. Currently, students in our four middle schools qualify for FRPM within the range of 80.52% to 87.87%. Reducing racial and economic isolation is important because students who are not exposed to diversity miss the benefits of interacting with people of different backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences.

Our enrollment data reveal that 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from the five lowest income elementary schools (highest percent FRPM) are currently bussed to two middle schools **not in their neighborhood**. Through these data, we identified a compelling interest to address the needs of our low SES students, and to create neighborhood alternatives while also **distributing these students** across the district schools to achieve integration. PSD was already committed to creating magnet middle school academies, but by using only our existing sites, our students with the greatest need would still be bussed to schools outside their community. We recognized that this approach did nothing to improve local conditions or create access for these students and their families. Using ED and OCR guidance, we were also mindful of the burden upon students and their families when they must travel to middle schools some distance from home. We determined that PSD has an obligation to our students to provide high-quality magnet middle schools throughout the district.

For this reason, we embraced a remarkable opportunity to locate a new, state-of-the-art magnet middle school with access for the most economically distressed neighborhoods of our community, central Palmdale. In a process that has spanned three years, PSD proposed and passed a local bond measure to fund this new middle school. We strategically located **SAGE Academy – Space and Aeronautics Gateway to Exploration** to provide a viable neighborhood

alternative to our students who have historically not had access to a neighborhood middle school. We believe this new school will help us to raise student achievement and increase parental involvement with a new neighborhood middle school. Our students in the most economically impacted area of the city will have real school choice – they may attend a dynamic program within walking distance of home – SAGE Academy - or they may apply for enrollment in any district magnet schools of choice. Although PSD has worked tirelessly to provide school and teacher resources to the lowest SES schools in our district, student achievement has remained persistently low. We believe that the opening of SAGE Academy will provide a real opportunity for parents and students to be involved in their local magnet as we work to engage students and raise achievement. The Space and Aeronautics – Gateway to Exploration theme will provide a pathway to college and local, high-paying careers for neighborhood students.

*District and School-level Strategy:* **Neighborhood, In-person Marketing and Recruiting.**

Parents care deeply about their children and their achievement, but few parents from central Palmdale are involved in parent leadership in middle schools, in part because of the need to travel outside the neighborhood, but also because they may have had discouraging experiences themselves when they were students. We must address these issues with neighborhood, in-person outreach that reflects and respects families’ values and hopes. Principals, teachers, district magnet staff, school counselors and our bilingual Parent-Community Liaisons will be actively involved in meeting with parents in our priority neighborhoods to explain and present the options for magnet school enrollment. Students will have the choice to attend the magnet academy for their neighborhood zone, or they may apply for open enrollment at any of the district’s five magnet middle academies. **For all incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, we will hold Parent Nights at each high-priority elementary school** (those with the highest percent FRPM) to share our plans

for each magnet academy. Presentations and brochures highlighting each academy and its magnet pathways will be provided in English and Spanish. Principals, Counselors, and Magnet Support Teachers will describe the magnet pathways and the STEAM electives offered at each academy. Parents and students will view student projects, talk with teachers and counselors, and get assistance with completing school of choice enrollment forms. School counselors will meet with parents to explain the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, our social-emotional integration program Where Everybody Belongs (WEB), and tutoring opportunities for students. (Please see Quality of Project Design.) Childcare and snacks will be provided for young children.

**Door-to-door Outreach.** Because we know that some parents are unable to attend evening meetings, our school-based Parent-Community Liaisons and school volunteers will also walk neighborhoods on Saturday mornings in November to meet face-to-face with parents in our priority neighborhoods. We want to make sure all parents have the information they need to make an informed choice for their middle school child. Our recruitment will also extend to the students themselves. We are producing signs and banners for each academy with their magnet theme that we can display when we market to other schools. We are also developing videos written by each magnet academy that highlight their unique program and showcase students involved in robotics, music, art, science, and other activities related to each school's magnet theme. In addition, each school will provide a "traveling road show" using their students in demonstrations of hands-on projects and sharing opportunities for involvement in student government, visual and performing arts, Model UN, math, science, and robotics competition, among others. Some academies are planning to develop an "App" (smart phone application) for students and parents to learn more about magnet opportunities. Each school will update its

website in the fall to expand parent and student access. We also plan to have Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on local Spanish radio and information posted throughout the City of Palmdale. We will use social media as appropriate to “get the word out.”

Strategy: Weighted Lottery. To ensure that the students from our priority neighborhoods are enrolled in their school of choice, we will implement a Weighted Lottery for student enrollment. We identified the five highest percent FRPM elementary schools. Current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in these schools will be prioritized in the Weighted Lottery; the students from the target geographic areas will have priority for their first-choice academy. The Weighted Lottery is based upon geographic and low SES community; all students from the target area are treated the same regardless of race. Upon granting of MSAP funds, we will contract with a company that the School Board has approved to conduct the Weighted Lottery. Following the Open Enrollment for School of Choice period each Fall, students who have completed a school of choice application will be entered into the lottery. Students from our five priority elementary schools, those with the lowest SES, will have priority through the Weighted Lottery to attend their first-choice academy. We will closely examine our applicant and enrollment data each year to make certain that we are achieving our compelling need for school integration. We will make adjustments to our marketing and recruitment strategies each year to ascertain that we are meeting our Voluntary Desegregation goals, and to determine whether the Weighted Lottery is producing intended benefits for our target students. We believe these race-neutral strategies are workable.

Implementing our plan. Palmdale School District Superintendent, School Board, Magnet Schools Advisory Board that will be composed of parents, community and key district members, the Project Director, and our Project Evaluation Team will monitor implementation and results of our Voluntary Desegregation Plan. In our **Marketing and Recruitment Plan** and our Evaluation

Plan, we identified resources, outputs, and short- medium- and long-term outcomes that are anticipated to improve social integration and reduce, prevent, or eliminate minority and low SES isolation. These key documents will guide implementation.

From time to time, we will need to consider factors that the district ordinarily considers in student enrollment and assignment, such as current and projected student enrollment, travel times, and sibling attendance issues. We will examine how well the district's practices are achieving diversity or avoiding isolation, and modify them as needed. Through our **Magnet Schools Advisory Board**, which will exist at the District level with a **Magnet School Advisory Committee** at each middle school, we will provide opportunity for students and parents to raise concerns about school assignments or other school decisions. While the committees and Magnet Advisory Board are open to any parent, we anticipate that we may need to **recruit parents from target neighborhoods** to encourage a representative group and achieve diversity. We will maintain documents that describe our compelling interest, the process we followed to make decisions, the effectiveness of our targeted marketing and recruitment outreach, the data we reviewed, and the results of our Voluntary Desegregation efforts.

**(2) How well it will foster interaction among students of different social, economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds in classroom activities, extracurricular activities, or other activities in the magnet schools.**

Various studies since *Brown* have shown how the social environment of schools affects the attitudes of students from one racial group toward students of other racial groups (Hawley, n.d.). Over the past 15 years, research in developmental psychology documented the social and developmental benefits of intergroup contact that results from school integration. These studies

examined stereotyping, prejudice, and exclusion attitudes in childhood, and concluded that racially integrated schools are necessary to achieve cross-racial understanding, which may lead to a reduction of bias and stereotyping. In a parallel vein, there is also evidence involving “peer effects” which suggests that having middle-class and high-achieving classmates has a positive effect on lower SES student achievement (Kahlenberg, 2014). As we have seen from other successfully integrated MSAP middle schools that we visited, classroom learning strategies that engage students such as Project Based Learning are effective to achieve social and academic integration once desegregation begins. When we made site visits to MSAP magnet middle schools, we saw diverse students actively involved in projects and hands-on learning. One (white) student commented, “I would never have met her (indicating her Latina peer) at my other school. If I hadn’t come here, we wouldn’t be friends.”

Palmdale School District recognizes that fostering interaction among diverse students is not only desirable, but is also a critical and intentional project goal. Objectives 1.2a and 1.2b address school and classroom integration. PSD developed four school-wide strategies to facilitate student interaction and collaboration both in and out of the classroom.

**School-level Strategy: Replicate the middle school study implementing Safe and Civil**

**Schools Foundations process.** *Foundations* School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and our implementation process to replicate the research are described in Priority 2. This strategy is critical to social integration of diverse students. When a school is safe, welcoming, with positive staff-student relationships and positive expectations and supports for appropriate student behavior, discipline events and bullying are significantly reduced. Students from all groups feel safe and connected to school, staff, and peers. *Foundations* is an essential MSAP process that respects diversity.

District Strategy: Strengthen Capturing Kids' Hearts Program at Middle Schools.

PSD has provided significant staff development to implement a district-wide intervention to improve student-teacher and student-to-student relationships. *Capturing Kids' Hearts* (CHK) (<http://flippengroup.com/solutions/capturing-kids-hearts/>) is a research-based process designed to strengthen students' connectedness to school through enhancing protective factors (strong bonds with teachers, clear rules of conduct that are consistently enforced) and targeting modifiable risk factors (inappropriate behavior, poor social coping skills). Results from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health

(<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth/documentation>)

demonstrated that **student connectedness** reduced negative behaviors in four domains of adolescent health: emotional health, violence, substance use, and sexuality. We are implementing *Capturing Kids' Hearts* (CHK) school-wide on all Palmdale campuses.

*Capturing Kids' Hearts* (CKH) is a skill intensive, systemic process designed to develop high-performing school cultures, align organizational and individual behaviors to outcomes, and increase school connectedness. As a result of implementing this integrated approach, 1) **teachers build an intentional culture that emphasizes connectedness with students** and with each other, 2) **negative behaviors are minimized** while learning is maximized, and 3) **students acquire communication and conflict resolution skills** that help them succeed in school and beyond. CKH has been shown to be effective both with minority and non-minority youth. CKH is helping us to improve relationships and behaviors in the classroom. We will continue to employ CKH even as we use MSAP funding to build trainer-of-trainers school climate teams at each middle school to begin the process of schoolwide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports using *Foundations*, described earlier in this Narrative.



Both processes have been shown to be effective for schoolwide integration of students of different racial, ethnic, social and economic backgrounds.

School-level Strategy: Implement WEB – Where Everybody Belongs. One of the markers of student success is involvement in school activities and development of positive relationships with peers. Once our students have selected their magnet school of choice and are enrolled, PSD has established **strategies and actions to achieve integration and positive interaction of diverse students across courses and activities.** With receipt of MSAP funds, we will begin training teams of teachers and support staff at our magnet middle schools to implement **WEB - Where Everybody Belongs.** WEB is a middle school orientation, transition, and **peer-to-peer mentoring program** that is modeled after the successful high school peer mentoring program *Link Crew*. WEB is designed to welcome 6<sup>th</sup> graders and to make them feel comfortable and involved in their first year at middle school. WEB structure and activities are designed to capitalize on the importance of peer relationships for adolescents. Once the staff members have been trained, the adult leaders then train 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students to be leaders and mentors to the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders. **Each 6<sup>th</sup> grade student has a 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade peer mentor.** Cross-age peer mentoring has been shown to produce benefits and growth for both mentors and mentees, resulting in a “double impact” (Garringer & MacRae, 2008). Mentees’ natural tendency to look up to slightly older youth helps them build relationships beyond their normal circle of friends. Students participate in team-building activities, share school culture and expectations, and learn about electives and extra-curricular activities. Both student and adult leaders provide guidance to new students on strategies for academic success in middle school. Sixth grade students are encouraged and supported to join clubs and activities with both grade-level and older peers. WEB is a yearlong transition program with four components: middle school orientation,



academic follow-ups, social follow-ups, and leader-initiated contacts. Cross-age peer mentoring activities such as WEB have been found to **increase connectedness to school and peers, increase feelings of competence and self-efficacy, improve grades and academic achievement, and increase prosocial behaviors and activities. Mentors also gain empathy and moral reasoning, intrapersonal communication and conflict resolution skills, and improve connections and relationships with adults.** WEB has been correlated with increased school achievement. WEB is one of our intentional student integration vehicles. We selected this specific **social influence program** to increase student interaction among diverse ages and groups on campus.

School-level Strategy: **Project Based Learning (PBL).** A fourth strategy to promote active learning and integration among diverse students is Project Based Learning. PBL is a student-driven, teacher facilitated approach to learning that begins with a Driving Question (Bell, 2010). PBL promotes social learning and interaction through the need to solve real-world problems by communicating, negotiating, and collaborating with others. Students must brainstorm ideas, conduct research, and learn to listen to and cooperate with group members. Teamwork is essential. Through group work to reach a mutual goal, students learn to respect others, tolerate ambiguity, and appreciate differences. At the end of the project, students complete a self-evaluation. They evaluate not only their learning, but also the success of their social interactions. They reflect on their communication skills, determine how well they listened to others, and evaluate whether their own ideas and opinions were heard. The skills of communication, cooperation, and collaboration are essential for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century professional world. PBL extends benefits beyond cooperative learning. Principals and Teachers will evaluate the

implementation and outcomes of PBL using instruments developed by Buck Institute of Education (please see Quality of Project Plan).

**(3) How the District will ensure equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who have been traditionally underrepresented in courses or activities offered as part of the magnet school; e.g. women and girls in mathematics, science, or technology courses, and students with disabilities.**

During our three-year strategic planning process, we examined a variety of data that informed our planning and decision making. This MSAP PROMISE Plan was developed to address five compelling district needs. Two of our goals are derived from our need to reduce isolation and improve social and economic integration among district students. One of the identified problems for our community is economic isolation, which exists in certain schools and neighborhoods, and co-exists with low educational attainment and low student achievement.

Data on Economic Isolation. The table below shows the percent of students who receive Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM) for the existing middle schools and the five elementary schools that are the priority schools for our Weighted Lottery for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

School	Enrollment 2016-2017	Percent FRPM 2016-2017
Cactus Middle School	841	87.87%
David G Millen Middle School	1011	82.39%
Deseret Willow Middle School	672	82.14%
Shadow Hills Middle School	806	80.52%
<b>Five Highest FRPM Schools</b>		
Chaparral Elementary	836	91.99%
Manzanita Elementary	756	91.27%
Tamarisk Elementary	907	96.69%
Tumbleweed Elementary	999	94.39%
Yucca Elementary	724	96.55%



These students with the greatest economic needs have traditionally been under-represented in STEAM opportunities, and their potential has been limited by persistently low achievement. We believe that magnet schools will raise expectations and opportunities for all students.

**District Strategy: Student Recruiting from High FRPM Schools; Select Students for Enrollment Using Weighted Lottery.** Right now, PSD middle schools are planning student-led presentations as a “road show” that will be presented to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at our five highest FRPM elementary schools. Our goal is to encourage students from these elementary schools to select a magnet school of choice and talk with their parents to complete the school of choice application. As noted above, the Weighted Lottery process will ensure that students from these five elementary schools will be enrolled in their first-choice magnet academy. We expect that this strategy will help us reduce isolation and achieve social and economic integration at the middle school academies by diversifying enrollment of students from these low income, low-achieving schools. By recruiting a diverse student body, we anticipate the benefits of social interaction among diverse learners and increased academic achievement. “When low performing students are concentrated in the same schools, it is more difficult to raise their achievement than when these children are integrated into the middle-class population” (Rothstein, 2013, p. 17).

Student integration in PSD middle schools is a problem in rigorous academic courses. Our student data reveal that our **middle schools enroll few African American, English Learner, low SES, female, and students with Specific Learning Disability in challenging academic courses.** Students of color, especially African American students, are not represented in honors and challenging classes at our middle schools. English Learners, who make up approximately 26% of district enrollment, are also under-represented in these more rigorous academic courses. This is a major goal of our MSAP plan – to reduce, eliminate, or prevent AA,

low SES, and EL isolation by increasing the number and percent of under-represented students that enroll in and achieve proficiency in academically rigorous courses.

School-level Strategy: **Recruit and Enroll Diverse Students in Challenging Academic Courses; Strengthen the Cultural Competence and Sensitivity of Teachers.** Our course-level enrollment data revealed that African American (AA), English Learner (EL), and female students are under-represented in challenging courses that prepare students for college and careers.

One of the primary goals of the Palmdale PROMISE MSAP project is to **recruit, support, and engage AA, EL and females who are under-represented in STEAM and Honors classes** at middle schools. “Though Black students may gain from other aspects of reduced isolation at the school level, access to higher level courses should be an important part of the benefits acquired...” (Davis, 2014, p. 425). We also will dedicate efforts to reduce AA over-representation in Special Education and increase the number/percent of students with SLD in challenging courses.

Using our School Counselors, we have begun concerted **efforts to recruit AA, EL, and female students to select the STEAM magnet focus that matches their interests.** Each middle school class has the capacity to enroll 29-31 students, and we are prepared to open more Honors classes as the number of students increase. Once the students are in the classroom, we know our teachers must connect with them in a personal and culturally respectful way.

Strategy: **Focus on Low-SES Students to Raise Achievement.** Since many of our AA, EL, and female students come from low-SES families and neighborhoods, we realize we must consider the effects of poverty on learning and development. We will use Eric Jensen’s well-researched and practical books: *Teaching with Poverty in Mind: What Being Poor Does to Kids’ Brains and What Schools Can Do About It* and *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind: Practical*



***Strategies for Raising Achievement*** to improve our instructional practices with a focus on reaching our students in need. Jensen’s work draws from research, experience, and real school success stories. As a cognitive neuroscientist, Jensen examines the human cost of poverty on children, families, and communities. His contributions to education focus on methods of teaching and engagement that can ***actually alter the developing pre-teen/teen brain***. We will purchase the books and use them as in-depth, practical study guides during our bi-weekly teacher

**Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) also publishes a study guide to use with the books. PSD administrators recommend Jensen’s books and strategies for addressing students in poverty, as his **research on student engagement produced increases in cognitive capacity, motivation and effort, attendance, and achievement** in students like ours. Teaching strategies will be discussed in grade level and department (subject matter) PLCs as part of our methodology for improving teacher practices. Principals, Magnet Staff and our Evaluation Team will monitor implementation over five years and periodically review student data related to our stated outcomes. With bi-weekly meetings, we will identify and replicate or amplify “what works” for our students, and will support teachers with fidelity of implementation.

**Strategy: Recruit Females**. In the context of STEAM education, girls and young women, along with minorities, need specific attention. As demonstrated by numerous recent national studies, women are severely underrepresented in the STEM work force. A recent American Association of University Women (AAUW) publication noted that both male and female students from historically disadvantaged groups such as African Americans and Latinos have less access to advanced courses in math and science, which negatively impacts their ability to enroll in and successfully complete STEM majors in college (Corbett & Hill, 2015). Much of the research

suggests that **mentors and early experiences, particularly at the middle school level**, make a difference in inspiring girls with interest in STEM through engaging, personalized experiences. A 2012 study conducted for the Girl Scouts (*Generation STEM: What Girls Say About Science, Technology, Engineering and Math*) found that girls are interested in STEM and aspire to STEM careers, but need further exposure and education about what STEM careers can offer, and how STEM can help girls make a difference in the world. (Modi, et al. 2012).

In the book, *Mindset*, by Carol Dweck (2006), which our middle school staffs will read, Dweck states that a **growth mindset** promotes achievement and persistence in STEM. She also provides recommendations that we will use in our PLCs: 1) Teach children that **intellectual skills can be acquired** (the brain is like a muscle that gets stronger and works better the more it is exercised); 2) **Praise** children for **effort** (praise them for the process they use to arrive at conclusions, and give process feedback to the most able students who have often coasted along, gotten good grades and been praised for their intelligence); and 3) Highlight the struggle (communicate to students that we **value and admire effort, hard work, and learning from mistakes**). An AAUW study recommended: 1) Encourage students to have a more **flexible or growth mindset** about intelligence; 2) **Expose girls to successful female role models** in math and science; and 3) **teach students and teachers about stereotype threat**.

**Using our Magnet Support Teachers and School Counselors, we will seek out and actively recruit under-represented students** and will support them in challenging courses through study skills and tutoring. We want the percent of students enrolled in challenging courses to be equal to their percent enrollment in each middle school academy.

**PSD also has a significant need to address disproportionality.** We address this need in **PROMISE Goal 5** with integration strategies and by creating a **positive school-wide culture and school climate that respects all students.**

**DESEGREGATION Need, Gap, or Problem 5:** Middle school suspensions are high.

African American students are suspended in disproportionate numbers. Percent of students feeling safe at school and feeling connected to school varies by campus.

**PROMISE Project Goal 5:** Improve school climate and safety in middle schools by improving positive school-wide relationships and behavior to significantly reduce suspensions of African American students.

**Expected Long-Term Outcomes:** **5.1** Significantly reduce total number of suspensions at magnet schools. **5.2** Significantly reduce number of suspensions of African American students at magnet schools. **5.3a.** Increase the percent of middle school students that report feeling safe at school. **5.3b.** Increase the percent of students that report feeling connected to school. **5.4** Middle school teachers that report the school climate is positive and the school is safe. **5.5** Middle school parents that report the school climate is positive and the school is safe.

**Theory of Change to achieve Goal 5:** **IF we create safe and orderly schools** and provide ongoing professional learning in culturally effective and responsive practices, and **IF all adults at school model and treat all students with respect,** tolerance, and kindness, and **IF we teach students the social, emotional, and behavioral skills** they need to succeed in school and in society and support them in practicing and using these behaviors, **THEN** students will treat others with respect and our schools will become safer places where diversity and differences are celebrated.

Evidence to Support School Climate Theory of Change. School climate is defined as the quality and character of school life, based upon the patterns of people's experiences. It reflects the norms, values, goals, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organized structures of the school (Cohen, McCabe, Mitchell, & Pickeral, 2009). Primary constructs that underlie school climate are perceptions of relationships with school adults, perceptions of relationships with peers, perceptions of physical and psychological safety, and connectedness. We know from research that students achieve higher and have more positive social, health, and personal outcomes when they are enrolled in schools that are safe, supportive, and have caring and responsive school staffs (WestEd, 2014; Ward & Gersten, 2012). O'Malley and Henson (2013) found a step-wise positive linear relationship between positive school climate and student achievement in California, with a large effect size ( $ES = .70$ ). Our district data tell us that there is much more we can do to improve students' feelings of safety, belonging, participation, and fairness, especially in our middle schools. Our suspension data are especially disturbing. As a percent of district population, African American males and students in special education are suspended in disproportionate numbers. We are compelled to reduce and eliminate this disparity through improved social and emotional conditions, changes in staff behavior, and school climate.

Behavioral psychologist Dr. Randy Sprick, Founder and CEO of Safe and Civil Schools, stated, "Most chronic misbehavior *serves a purpose for the student*. Because there are many reasons why students misbehave, corrections for specific misbehaviors are more effective when they address the underlying cause of the misbehavior. Misbehavior may be due to lack of awareness, lack of ability or skill, attention seeking, or habitual behavior" (Personal communication, 3/2/2017). Through professional development and increased staff self-awareness, we can break the pattern of disproportionate discipline referrals. School and

classroom characteristics that research has shown are statistically correlated with reduced referrals and lower suspension rates include **positive school climate and inclusive teaching practices: positive, caring teacher-student relationships; high academic, social, and behavioral expectations; positive school and classroom structure; preventive and proactive discipline policies; parent engagement; and activities for social-emotional learning** (WestEd, 2014; Oregon Leadership Network, 2013; U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2012). Earlier in this Narrative, we outlined *Foundations*, our school-wide intervention to build positive behavioral supports, improve school climate and safety, and build positive relationships. To add to our Theory of Change, *Foundations* will help PSD: 1) Move from “fixing” students to fixing/improving environments; 2) Move from changing student behavior to changing the behavior of all individuals in the school; 3) Move from using extrinsic punishment and rewards to control student behavior to fostering self-regulation; 4) Move from pushing youth out of schools to providing flexible and nurturing systems that match youth needs.

**(4) The effectiveness of all other desegregation strategies proposed for the elimination, reduction, or prevention of minority group isolation in schools with substantial proportions of minority students.**

Recent data from the Education Trust-West (2015) indicated that African American students in California are: 1) less likely to have access to and be provided a full sequence of college preparatory classes; 2) less likely to graduate high school in four years, and 3) less likely to complete college. Education Trust and other studies show that teachers tend to hold lower expectations for African Americans and students with disabilities, and that these expectations predict and influence students’ outcomes in school. Data reflecting disproportionality are due to



students' lack of access to opportunities and a history of inequitable policy decisions rather than a lack of student ability. We strive for equity and access for all our students.

*District Equity Strategy:* **Ensure equity and access for African American Students, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities.** With Education Trust-West as a partner in our Palmdale PROMISE MSAP Program, we will implement the recommendations that have been shown to make a difference with African American students: 1) Make **high-quality learning opportunities** available; 2) **Engage Families**; 3) **Integrate schools**; 4) **Improve school climate and fix school discipline**; 5) Provide **health, wellness, and social-emotional supports**. (Please see Letters of Support in Appendix.)

As noted in our goals and research cited above, we recognize that SES, race, and parental education level are highly correlated. Data continue to show, however, that SES is a more powerful indicator of student achievement than race (Rothstein, 2013). Through our MSAP desegregation plan, we seek to increase the number and percent of middle class students attending our magnet middle schools by recruiting students and retaining our own middle class students as middle schoolers in PSD. Beyond this, our desegregation goals also include improving equity by **increasing access to challenging STEAM and magnet courses for under-represented students including English Learners (EL)**. We will improve access to college and career education through **increasing reclassification rates of English Learners**. Students who meet academic criteria in English reading, writing and speaking are “reclassified,” that is, they are Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). Our PROMISE Goal 2.2 states PSD will reduce the percent of Long Term English Learners in grades 6-8 at magnet schools each project year. We address this goal with teacher professional learning, content standards, and



evidence-based programs, curricula, strategies, and activities which are specified in the Quality of Project Design narrative for English Learners.

PSD is also committed to **improving academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities**. A recent dissertation explored reasons for the historically poor educational outcomes nationwide for students with disabilities, and discovered several themes over which districts have some control: decision making, inclusion, professional learning, interventions, and student supports (Wolford, 2017). Specifically, we will implement **Co-teaching** to address our students with Specific Learning Disability. Co-teaching is defined as two teachers working collaboratively in one classroom to provide instruction for a group of students. We outline our process for implementing Co-teaching in the Quality of Project Design narrative.

*Evaluating our Student Integration Plan: How we will Know when our Compelling Interest has been Achieved.* We created a **District Logic Model** to address each of our five significant needs that drive this Palmdale PROMISE MSAP plan. Our Logic Model addresses the resources, strategies, activities, and evaluation plan to reduce, prevent, and eliminate disproportionality. **We will meet monthly as district and school-level teams to monitor implementation and short-term outputs so that we can take timely corrective action as needed. We will review our plan annually to verify that we are meeting our strategic goals.** We will maintain documents that describe the district's compelling interest, and the process we followed in implementing our decisions, including alternatives considered and rejected, and the ways in which the chosen approach helps to achieve diversity or avoid racial isolation.

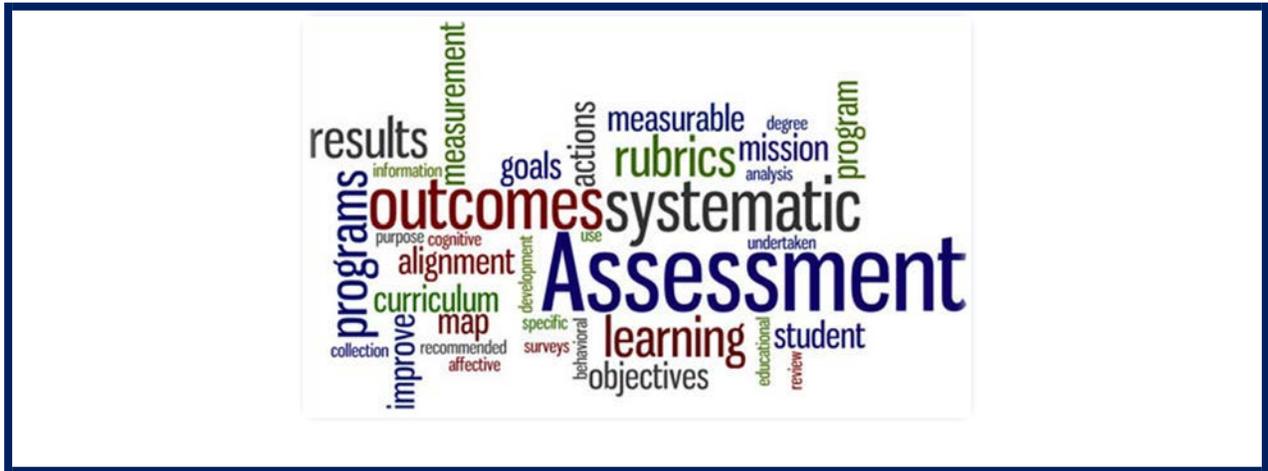
**(b) Quality of Project Design. (1) The manner and extent to which the magnet school program will improve student academic achievement for all students attending the magnet school programs, including the manner and extent to which each magnet school program will increase student achievement in the instructional area or areas offered by the school, including any evidence, or if such evidence is not available, a rationale based on current research findings, to support such description.**

**This PROMISE Plan is Grounded in Research with Evidence of Effectiveness for Our**

**Populations:** Through our research and strategic planning process, PSD developed an understanding of and **commitment to implementing evidence-based decision making and practices**, including how needs, context, implementation strategies, curriculum and instruction, desired outcomes, and sustainability inform our choices regarding evidence-based interventions. We base this MSAP plan on a **two-year community Needs Assessment process** from which we generated hypotheses about the possible causes and contributing factors for our observed Needs, Gaps, and Problem Statements. Then we researched and considered various evidence-based interventions, and determined those that we believe are relevant and appropriate to our population. **We intend to beat the odds. Our 5-year data will show positive effects of our magnet school program.** To accomplish this, we focus our **action plan** on practices, interventions, and process that **meet ESSA definition of “Strong Evidence:”** those strategies, activities, programs, curricula, and processes that demonstrate a significant effect on improving student outcomes. We read, evaluated, and discussed strategies, practices, curricula and programs reviewed by What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) and other published research, and selected those that meet WWC standards With or Without Reservations. We selected strategies, programs and interventions that worked for other districts with needs and students like ours. Our research was focused on **what works, “for whom” and “under what circumstances.”**

Strategies, activities, and curricula were identified that will enable us to meet our **Palmdale PROMISE Project goals for student achievement:**

**PROMISE Project Goal 2/GPRA 2: Significantly increase achievement in reading, English/Language Arts for AA, EL, low SES, and students with Specific Learning Disability (SLD) in magnet schools by 2021-22.**



**Theory of Change To achieve Goal 2:** IF teachers receive **50-80 hours each year of high quality professional learning** focused on reading strategies, writing, critical thinking, development of magnet themes, curricula, Project Based Learning (PBL), and cultural competence for effectively addressing the learning needs of diverse students including minorities, children of poverty, English Learners and students with disabilities, and IF we **implement evidence-based practices with fidelity**, and IF we regularly **measure student achievement with authentic and rigorous assessment methods**, THEN teachers will understand, develop, and faithfully implement effective teaching strategies that improve student achievement and that will be sustained over time.

**The Palmdale PROMISE plan to improve achievement in reading and English language.**

“Good schools don’t leave anything about teaching and learning to chance” (Hancock, 2016).



PSD used research to carefully craft our MSAP interventions to raise achievement. Our Palmdale PROMISE Goal 2 matches the MSAP GPRA goal for increasing reading achievement for all students. Our **outcome achievement measure is the new (2014-15) California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CASPP)**. CAASPP is based upon the Smarter Balanced assessments which reflect California State Standards (CSS). PSD has developed district-level assessments and **Local Progress Monitoring (LPM)** for each student group in reading, language arts, and math that are aligned to the new and very rigorous State Standards.

### **District Plan to Increase Achievement in reading and English/Language Arts.**

Too many of PSD 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students read below grade level. The percent of 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting State Standards in Reading ranges from 50-65% (2015-16 CAASPP). Even fewer students meet State standards in English/Language Arts (writing), 24-36%.

The U.S. Department of Education's report *Closing the Achievement Gap: Lessons from Successful Schools* (2005) reported the following successful school practices:

- A school culture that supports success. "A high performing school needs highly dedicated and motivated teachers who are *perpetually hopeful about student performance*" (p.10) (CKH, *Foundations*)
- A school culture that includes high expectations for African American and Latino student Achievement and that includes offering more demanding courses such as Honors, and encouraging minority students to enroll in demanding classes through targeted outreach (Dweck book study)
- Learning supports to help students reach high expectations that include tutoring, study

skills, and other supports (AVID, Intervention classes, tutoring)

- Teachers receiving professional development and support on effective strategies for teaching reading and math; “teachers who are committed, who continue to grow professionally and adapt” (p.11) (PL and PLCs)
- Emphasis on assessment and accountability, with teachers regularly analyzing student data from State and District assessments, as well as using classroom assessment data to see which strategies are working to improve the learning of struggling students. “*The data drives all your decisions*” (p. 13); (PLCs, LPM)
- Teaching State and District content standards and aligning curriculum with standards (integration of Magnet Themes into all content areas)
- Positive and optimistic outlook of teachers and students, involving working collaboratively with other teachers, students and parents, and a belief that if they work together, they can accomplish their goals (PLCs, Dweck book study, CKH)
- Changes in the class schedule to allow more time for instruction and in-depth learning through Project Based Learning (PBL, Academy electives)
- Engaging teaching that provides more hands-on experiences, use of technology, and learning that is relevant to the students (PBL, PLTW, Academy electives)
- Shared leadership and responsibility; change is sometimes led by the teachers and sometimes by administration, but change always involved a core group of people at the school (Innovate Ed, PLCs,)
- Engage in “leadership for change” (p. 18) (Innovate Ed, PLCs)

These principles underlie our plan to significantly raise student achievement. We need to increase academic expectations, improve teacher practices, create innovative learning



opportunities, and create magnet schools that address the *whole child*, creating a participatory school climate and introducing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of our school culture. Rothstein (2013) wrote, "... holding educators accountable for test scores in schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged children creates incentives to narrow curricula by directing time, effort, and resources away from non-tested curricular areas and toward more test preparation and drill in math and reading. This strategy ignores that literacy depends not only on decoding print but also on informed curiosity about history, literature, science, and the arts. Mathematics proficiency also relies upon children having quantitative problems they are motivated to solve" (p. 17). School-related factors that contribute to increased achievement include school integration, quality early childhood education, class size, and teacher quality.

*How PSD selected our Growth Targets.* Palmdale PROMISE goals and objectives in reading and language arts are based upon analysis of student needs. We developed goals and objectives through an extensive process: 1) We met over two years with parents, staff, and community to discuss student achievement, student needs, and to set goals and priorities for action. 2) We committed to SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Agreed upon, Relevant/Results oriented, and Time bound. 3) Although our growth targets may seem small to some, we believe they are defensible for this reason: we read numerous research studies and examined best practices of various education systems before our workgroups defined these objectives. Our growth targets mirror the *actual gains* of real students in well-designed outcome studies. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Long Term Trend (LTT) data provided a compelling example for us. For African American students, NAEP Scale Score gains for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, math and reading combined were small: gains from 1973 to 1980 were 0.6%; from 1980-2000 were 0.3%; from 2000-2003 were 0.9%; and from 2003-2012 were 0.4% (Rothstein,

2013). PSD has a data base with longitudinal student data that shows small academic growth over time. We must increase growth. Our Palmdale PROMISE MSAP and LCAP plans are completely aligned, which will allow us to dedicate both district and grant resources toward improved academic achievement. We believe we can meet or exceed our growth targets by implementing evidence-based practices with fidelity. *Please note: Year 1 (2017-18) will focus on hiring project personnel, including intervention and Magnet Support Teachers, training teachers in our evidence-based interventions, developing curriculum and magnet themes, and implementing our Weighted Lottery to enroll students. Year 2 (2018-19) will be the first full year of project implementation* with all resources and personnel in place. Our achievement goals are built upon student growth. The first year, we will need to train teachers and develop curriculum, and so MSAP interventions will not yet be in place. Students may experience incremental growth in Year 1. But by Year 2, when programs and services are in place, we expect growth in achievement as compared with baseline. In Year 3, we “move the goalposts” and measure achievement from Year 1 scores – we are no longer comparing growth to the baseline. In this way, we are working each year toward larger growth gains. We expect greater growth the longer we implement our project strategies and actions. Change takes time. Our LCAP and MSAP student achievement goals and objectives aligned to standards in reading/English language are:

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS Needs and Gaps in Student Achievement:** 2.1 Persistently low reading and English/Language Arts (E/LA) achievement despite district interventions; 2.2 Significant numbers of Long-Term English Learners (LTEL) at middle schools.

**GPRA Goal 2/PROMISE Goal 2.1: Significantly increase percent proficient in reading, English/Language Arts for AA, EL, low SES, and students with Specific Learning Disability (SLD) in magnet schools by 2021-22.**

**Project Goal 2.2: Reduce the number of Long Term English Learners (LTEL) in grades 6-8 by 2021-22.**

**Expected Long Term Outcomes: 2.1** Magnet Academy students in all subgroups significantly increase achievement in reading, E/LA on CAASPP by 2021-22. **2.2** Decrease the percent of LTEL students in grades 6-8 at magnet schools each project year.

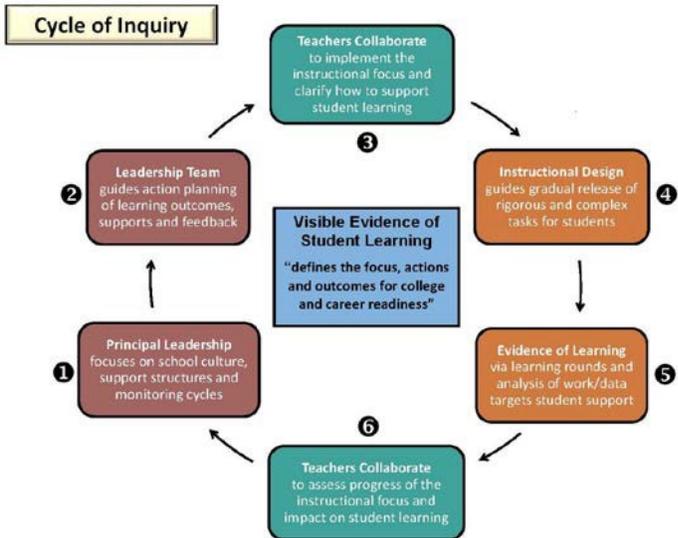
Strategy: **Build Principal and Teacher Leadership Capacity.** Principals must not only be expert teachers, they must also have personal skills to support teacher professional learning and they must know federal, state, and district policies and laws to be able to apply them in the setting. Principals are instructional leaders who deserve specific professional development.

Evidence: The U.S. Department of Education report, *Closing the Achievement Gap* (2005), documented “leadership for change” was a team effort initiated by the principal and coordinated through department faculty (p. 42). **Stable, consistent leadership at the school and district level** was a critical component in schools’ success in narrowing the achievement gap. Through consistent effort and ongoing evaluation to maintain progress, schools used the same strategies PSD is using in this PROMISE plan: strengthen faculty teams, conduct ongoing evaluation of student performance data, enhance professional development, and expand supplemental support services. **These activities led to significant progress in raising academic achievement and extracurricular participation of minority students.**

Actions: Principals will attend professional learning with the teachers to gain expertise in the curricula and methods described in this plan. In addition, PSD will provide administrator training and coaching related to their instructional leader role. Our PROMISE leadership consultants include author/educational consultant Michael Fullan, Jay Westover, Chief Learning Officer of



Innovate Ed, and Marianna Vinson, former Deputy Director for U.S. Department of Education. Ryan Smith of Education Trust-West will also serve as a mentor to Principals. (Please see Letters of Support in Appendix.) These consultants’ expertise will ensure we develop the capacity of our district, our magnet schools, and our teacher teams to close the gaps of college and career readiness and raise achievement. Our strategic focus around Fullan’s **Four Disciplines of Systems Leadership - Coherence, Clarity, Commitment, and Collaborative Inquiry** will help us develop a shared accountability for continuous improvement. These consultants will work with PSD to: 1) Analyze – create a strategic focus on student learning, clarify root causes of student inequity and underperformance, and define gaps in student academic skills and behavior; 2) Design – create systems of support for leadership, teaching, and student learning through cultivating a collaborative culture focused on visible evidence of student learning; creating instructional supports to promote learning progressions that gradually enable students to complete more rigorous and complex tasks; 3) Implement – engage students in learning cycles with personalized instruction for mastery of skills and concepts; provide time, resources and supports aimed at developing school-wide instructional capacity; and develop expertise of principals and teachers through job-embedded professional learning; and 4) Refine – monitor



evidence of student learning to improve capacity of teacher teams to collaboratively plan instruction. Our administrators and teacher leaders are involved in this process. Education Trust-West is especially



interested in helping PSD meet the needs of our African American students, and will assist us by advising our leadership team around family and community engagement. Innovate Ed will consult quarterly with the middle school Principal cohort and their leadership teams to improve PLCs. This will create coherence, clarity, commitment, and collaborative inquiry with a shared vision, build capacity to engage in cycles of inquiry, and sustain improvement through a culture of shared accountability. Innovate Ed will also teach PLCs how to go deeper into analysis of student data. We will build sustainability for this MSAP project through supporting a “pipeline” of instructional leaders: Magnet Support Teachers will develop leadership skills and become Assistant Principals, Principals, and then District leaders to carry on the PROMISE mission.

Measurement. PSD will use DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many’s (2010) *Professional Learning Continuum*, a rubric designed to assess progress on developing effective Leadership Teams and PLCs. This developmental process measure allows PLCs to observe, reflect, and evaluate their learning relative to the growth principles and effective practices of the rubric.

Strategy: **Magnet Support Teachers to increase teacher support.** MSAP grant funds will allow us to hire a Magnet Support Teacher (MST) for each academy and also an English Language Development coach for English Learners.

Evidence: In a report published by Education Week, Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers, and Swanson (2011) documented that supports of quality teaching methods produced positive gains in student learning. Consistent investment in teacher supports was key.

Actions: Our motto for teaching is “Palmdale LEADS: Listens, Encourages, Appreciates, Dialogues, Supports” our teachers. We accomplish this by creating deep leadership among Principals and instructional personnel, as described above. With grant funds, we will hire



**Magnet Support Teachers** (Teacher on Special Assignment - TOSA) who are Master Teachers in specific subject matter such as reading, English, writing, technology, mathematics, art, science, or engineering (see TOSA/Magnet Support Teacher job description in Appendix). We will hire subject Specialist Coaches such as the English Language Development Coach and a Math Consultant to provide on-site coaching, strengthen our New Teacher Academy and Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program, and empower all teachers with effective classroom management through professional learning and coaching with *Foundations* and the companion classroom version, *CHAMPS*.

*Measurement:* To examine the effectiveness of teacher supports, we will use DuFour, et al.'s (2010) Professional Learning Continuum observation/self-assessment tool for PLCs and the Essential Project Design Elements Checklist and Project Based Teaching Rubric by BIE to quantify PBL improvement.

*Strategy:* **Provide each teacher with 50-80 hours per year of quality professional learning (PL) related to the goals and objectives of this plan.** High quality professional development that is characterized by “coherence, active learning, sufficient duration, collective participation, a focus on content knowledge, and a reform rather than traditional approach” which is typically a one-day workshop, can make a significant difference in student learning and achievement (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shipley, 2007, p. 1).

*Evidence:* The IES National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (Yoon, et al., 2007) report, which employed rigorous evidence standards, found that teachers who receive substantial professional development – an average of 49 hours – were able to **boost their students’ achievement by 21 percentile points.**

Actions: PSD has taken this research to heart. Our plan does not allow for “conference budgets” or one-day teacher workshops on myriad topics. Instead, District leaders designed our Professional Learning calendar (see Palmdale PROMISE Professional Learning Plan (PLP) and Work Plan in Appendix) around our needs to build strong magnet programs and improve student learning in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. PSD worked closely with teachers and negotiated two Professional Learning (PL) days embedded into the work year. This allows for two, 6-hour learning days in addition to the 6-hour day prior to the start of school, for a total of 18 hours. Both school-wide (e.g. *Foundations*, WICOR, AVID, technology) and subject-specific (math, reading, EL, engineering, Project Lead the Way, etc.) professional learning will take place over five years. In addition to “dose,” Aligned Supports and Follow-up/Accountability are the critical variables in effective PL.

Our PL Plan begins Year 1 with a focus on creating safe, civil, positive, and participatory school and classroom environments. Readings, discussions and sharing in PLCs will strengthen our shared values around establishing a welcoming, respectful, supportive, engaging classroom environment. Training and implementation of *Foundations* Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports will focus our commitment. In Year 2, PL addresses effective instruction. Year 3 will encompass differentiation of the curriculum to support diverse learners. Years 4-5 hone and sustain best practices.

Measurement: Accountability will be measured by student academic growth using CAASPP E/LA, District Local Progress Monitoring (LPM), and District STAR Assessments.

Strategy: **Implement weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for teachers.**

Teachers will participate in grade-level or subject matter PLCs each week for 25 hours per year.

Evidence: “Rather than searching for quick fixes, [schools] create communities of collective inquiry that deeply examine instructional practices and student impact. Some focus on getting the foundational pieces such as literacy in place while others tackle the deeper learning agenda accelerated by the digital world” (Fullan and Quinn, 2016, p. 33).

Actions: Through union negotiations, one additional hour was added each week to the staff meeting/professional learning time for a total of two hours per week/8 hours per month. This time (90 hours over the course of one year) is available for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the writing of themed curricula for each magnet school. During this time, teachers and support staff will review student achievement data, discuss readings, plan interventions, develop cross-curricular projects, write and develop curricula, and share successful practices. These activities are derived from Fullan and Quinn (2016) and Pinchot and Weber (2016).

Measurement: Because the PLC time is part of the employee contract, teachers will participate in PLCs for two hours each week. Process evaluation by Principals, Project Director, Magnet Support Teachers and the Evaluation team will document evidence of improved teacher practices over the course of the grant project. DuFour, et al. (2010) *Professional Learning Continuum* observation/self-assessment tool for PLCs will be used to standardize and quantify improvement.

Strategy: **Implement READ 180 for all English-proficient students reading two or more years below grade level.** PSD is committed to hiring and training **one Reading Specialist for each magnet middle school** to implement READ 180. Funds will be used for teacher training, instructional materials, and student assessment. Each magnet school will offer six periods of READ 180 daily, which will reach 120 students per year at each magnet school (20 per class).

Evidence: WWC found the evidence for READ 180 on the achievement of adolescent readers to be medium to large for three outcomes: comprehension, general literacy, and reading fluency.



Actions: READ 180 will begin in the second semester of Year 1 (January 2018) after Reading Specialists have been trained, materials purchased, and the computer program for student intervention installed and validated. READ 180 will continue across all five project years, with the potential to significantly improve the reading achievement of 600 students at each site, or 3,000 students project-wide.

Measurement: READ 180 has built-in assessments of specific reading skills throughout the program. Students who pass the criterion move on to the next skill; those who need more remedial assistance with specific skills are flagged by the assessment system for additional direct instruction. All students will continue to participate in District Local Progress Monitoring (LPM) and will take the state achievement test, CAASPP each year. The outcome measure is the increase in the percent of students who meet the State grade-level standard in E/LA.

Strategy: Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). For the past 35 years, AVID has provided teachers nation-wide with a means for increasing rigor and creating engaging learning environments to accelerate learning of underperforming students. AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing minority and low SES students for college readiness and success in a global society ([www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org)). AVID targets students who are underrepresented in higher education and prepares them to be the first in their family to attend college. AVID enrolls students in the academic middle (grades of B, C, and even D) who express the desire to go to college and a willingness to work hard.

AVID trains educators to use proven practices to prepare middle school students for high school, college, and careers. PSD supports AVID training for teachers in all middle schools and use of AVID strategies in all core academic courses. AVID teachers must be certified, and schools are also certified annually. AVID core principles include: *academic reading* and *critical*



*thinking; writing to learn* and to communicate; *inquiry-based teaching* – developing wonder through asking questions and seeking knowledge and understanding; *collaborative teaching and learning*; teaching *organization* skills – time management, organizing materials, managing resources, short- and long-term planning and goal setting; *Cornell Note-taking* – recording not only information, but reflection and questioning as a learning and retrieval process; and the *Socratic Seminar* – a rigorous, structured activity in which students pose and respond to questions regarding text or artifact involving complex issues. In PSD middle schools, AVID is an elective class.

Evidence: A 2013 study (Huerta, Watt, & Butcher) reported that students who began AVID program during middle school were more prepared for high school and college rigor than students who participated only in AVID in high school. Another study (Bernhardt, 2013) found that AVID facilitated both intellectual and affective growth in students. “AVID’s structure and philosophical orientation encourage and support the development of meaningful relationships among teachers, school staff, and program participants and their families” (p. 203).

Actions: AVID teachers are currently certified, but must maintain annual certification. A total of 8 hours of site-based AVID teacher training will be provided by local AVID and LA County Office of Education each quarter. AVID teachers will also receive 8 hours of direct instruction each year and 20 hours per year (5 hours per quarter) of on-site coaching and observations across all five years. (Please see Letters of Support in Appendix.)

Measurement: AVID requires annual certification of both teachers and school-level programs to ensure quality and fidelity to the AVID strategies. Annual certification includes adoption of a philosophy aligned with the AVID Mission and use AVID methods in daily instruction: 1) Instruction using WICOR strategies (described below); 2) Incorporation of a culture of rigorous,

relevant, differentiated opportunities in an environment that promotes college readiness; 3) Site and district leaders support, guide, and facilitate AVID principles; and 4) Systems are aligned to ensure fidelity of implementation across the grades. AVID representatives make annual site visits to each school. PSD will work toward having each magnet school go beyond certification and achieve AVID Demonstration Status, a measure of very high quality, by 2022.

Students in the AVID course will demonstrate personal goal setting, evidence of effective time management, and use of Cornell Note Taking as demonstrated by their Digital Portfolio and teacher evaluation. AVID students will improve or maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout their years at the magnet school.

Strategy: **WICOR** is a set of AVID strategies and principles of learning: *Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading to learn*. WICOR is a proven learning support structure for middle and high school students. AVID/WICOR scaffolds social and academic structures to “build critical reading and thinking skills for rigorous fields of study, using writing as a powerful thinking and communication tool, and fostering collaboration among students, teachers, and other professionals... and the ‘real’ world of working and living” (Johnson, Nickel, Popp, Marcus, 2012, p. 73). Writing strategies such as Cornell Notes, Two and Three Column Notes and Responsive Writing challenge students to organize their thoughts, ideas and write summaries of what they have learned. The strategy of Inquiry is best illustrated through the use of a Socratic Seminar. Students are given a common text to read. The teacher poses questions requiring students to evaluate options and make decisions. Students must actively engage in making evidence-based explanations to support their theory. An example of Collaboration is the use of Philosophical Chairs. In this strategy, students listen to a statement and then decide if they agree or disagree, then defend their opinion using evidence and logic. Organization requires that

students in the middle grades keep a 3-ring binder neat and organized with dividers, pencil pouch and specific folders where classwork and homework are kept. Students are also taught to use a planner to record assignments and personal events. Organizational skills are essential to success in academic and social situations. Reading is that critical skill that all students must have to be successful in high school, college and beyond. According to Gottschalk & Hjortshoj, (2004) students often do not complete assigned readings nor know how to effectively read assigned material. AVID's approach and use of critical reading provides teachers and students with research based strategies designed to help students read more effectively. Through scaffolding, students are taught to connect reading material to prior knowledge, understand the author's purpose and identify the structure of the text to improve comprehension ([www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org)).

Evidence: Teachers in schools that made significant progress in closing the achievement gap “underscored the importance of writing across the curriculum” (U.S. Department of Education, 2005, p. 41). When educators and parents hold high expectations for students and instruction emphasizes depth of understanding, the English Language Arts curriculum “is characterized by a focus on literacy, writing, critical thinking, and analytical skills” to close the achievement gap (ibid, p. 41). Collaboration, according to AVID, is *engagement*. Collaboration is strongly supported by learning theory as well as two decades of research focusing on educational reform.

Actions: Part of this MSAP budget will fund local AVID and LACOE consultants to provide 4 days per site of professional learning and coaching every year for 5 years to non-AVID teachers who are implementing WICOR strategies across the curriculum. Teachers will be trained to use WICOR strategies in their specific content area. This develops a culture of college readiness for all students. Students will use WICOR to collaborate, question, write to learn, and engage in purposeful collaboration and inquiry with peers.

Measurement: All students will use Cornell Notetaking as measured by periodic notebook checks in class. Teachers will use the Socratic Circle and the inquiry method to develop higher levels of student reasoning. All teachers – not just language arts – will teach and evaluate the writing process, evidenced by collaborative planning and scoring of student writing using district rubrics. Student critical reading and writing scores on LPM will be evaluated against district growth targets.

Strategy: **Project Based Learning.** The Buck Institute defines Project Based Learning (PBL) as a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time on an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge ([https://www.bie.org/about/what\\_pbl](https://www.bie.org/about/what_pbl)). Essential project design elements include: key knowledge, a challenging problem or question, sustained inquiry, authenticity, student voice and choice, reflection, critique and revision, and the public product. PBL is especially popular for education in medicine, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. PBL enhances student collaboration, a key principle in engaged learning. Depth of learning and intrinsic motivation are key benefits of PBL, along with student-centered inquiry (Holm, 2011). PBL involves student-centered instruction over an extended period of time; students plan, investigate, and produce a product, presentation, or performance. Public presentation of the product is an additional benefit for student growth.

Evidence: PBL has been touted as being superior to traditional teaching methods in improving problem solving and thinking skills, and engaging students in learning (Holm, 2011). Holm conducted a meta-analysis of peer-reviewed research on PBL. Her analysis documented positive outcomes for PBL in content learning, higher levels of engagement, and more positive perceptions of the subject. PBL was particularly effective for diverse learners who typically did

not participate in traditional instructional settings. The real-world aspect of PBL allowed diverse learners to share their knowledge about subjects that were familiar and accessible. Several studies documented beneficial academic effects of PBL for middle- to low-achieving students, including increased language skills. Teachers reported reduced disciplinary actions during PBL activities.

In a fascinating study that examined the effect of student collaboration, Treisman (1992) investigated the reasons for poor performance of African American students in calculus at the University of California, Berkeley. His hypothesis was rooted in common stereotypes: that the poor performance of AA students was caused by a variety of factors – low income, low motivation, poor academic preparation, and lack of family support. Results did not support his hypothesis. The Chinese students, a comparison group who performed well in calculus, studied collaboratively, while African American students worked alone, without peer support. When AA students were trained and supported in studying collaboratively, group differences between their calculus performance and that of Chinese students disappeared.

*Actions:* PSD will contract with a consultant from Buck Institute for Education (BIE) to provide training and coaching in PBL. Training for teachers will include the three-day PBL-101 workshop, one-day Visioning Day workshop, 2-day Implementation Planning Lab and 1-day Leadership Development. Teachers who complete all days of training then participate in the Coaching Academy. Six days of on-site coaching will be provided, with two additional days in Year 2 to sustain PBL practices with fidelity. This is followed by 8 days in Years 3-5 with a Systemic Partnership Coach. BIE is committed to effective and sustained PBL using evidence-based practices with coaching and self-evaluation.

*Measurement:* Evidence that PBL is implemented with fidelity will be evaluated by BIE Coaches, MSTs and Principals at each site. Coaches and Principals will use the Essential Project Design Elements Checklist and Project Based Teaching Rubric, both designed by BIE to support teachers in attaining “Gold Standard PBL.” Each department will plan and implement at least one project that meets BIE standards each year. Authentic assessment of student learning will include work archived in the Student Portfolio stored on GoogleDocs. Students will archive projects, papers, performances, and participation in competitions. Students will also archive their 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project – described below under *Developing Strong Magnet Themes*.

*Special population: English Learners.* Our English/Language Arts (E/LA) **Objectives 2.2 a-d** address a special population in Palmdale: Long-Term English Learners (LTEL). California Department of Education (CDE) defines **Long-Term English Learner (LTEL)** as an English learner (EL) student to which all of the following apply: (1) is enrolled on Census Day (the first Wednesday in October) in grades 6 to 12, inclusive; and (2) has been enrolled in a U.S. school for six or more years; and (3) has remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive prior years, or has regressed to a lower English language proficiency level, as determined by the newly developed English Language Proficiency of California (ELPAC); and (4) for students in grades 6 to 9, inclusive, has scored at the “Standard Not Met” level on the prior year administration of the CAASPP E/LA.

Out of 915 English Learners in grades 6-8 in PSD, 831 have been English Learners for 6 or more years (90.8%). Of the 831 students who have been designated EL for 6 or more years, 523 (62.9%) meet the State definition of Long Term English Learner (LTEL). While LTEL students possess a high degree of basic interpersonal communication skills (social language) in

English, they lack cognitive academic language proficiency. This lack of academic language proficiency is what has causes students to fail to meet the criteria to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, and it is also a barrier to academic success in other content areas. There is an urgent need for an intensive focus on developing students' academic language, the language proficiency necessary for success in school.

Strategy: **Provide evidence-based curriculum and instruction to reduce the number of LTEL.** PSD reviewed and adopted a State-approved, research based program for accelerating the academic English proficiency of Long Term English Learners, *English 3D*.

Evidence: *English 3D* was developed by English Language Development expert Kate Kinsella. Research on *English 3D* in Moreno Valley School District in California at grades 6-7 found that the curriculum and instructional methods, which were implemented with fidelity, resulted in 85% of the LTEL students making gains in one or more domains on the previous State test, California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Moreno Valley is a fringe urban district like Palmdale with a predominantly Latino population and 83% of students qualifying for FRPM. A second study in Downey School District in California, with similar demographics, reported 53% of *English 3D* students met their expected growth, with the percentage of students proficient in reading doubling from winter to spring assessment.

Actions: EL students in grades 6-8 will participate in one period of Designated English Language Development instruction each day. Teachers of *English 3D* will receive professional development on implementation as well as ongoing coaching both from our **MSAP-funded middle school EL instructional coach** and from an expert consultant in *English 3D*. Changes in the English Language Development Standards and the new English Language Proficiency Assessment of California – ELPAC - necessitate a shift in pedagogy for all our English

Learners. The EL coach at our magnet schools will provide teacher professional learning to help ensure that our teachers have the capacity to implement the instructional shifts required to support the language development and academic needs of our EL students. The EL coach will also provide support to our teachers in the implementation of *English 3D*.

*Measurement:* *English 3D* includes formative and summative assessments that produce immediate and actionable information. California has piloted a new English proficiency test for EL students, the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California – ELPAC. Students will take the ELPAC for the first time in Spring 2018. This assessment will determine the classification of English Learners, and will define the standard for English Proficiency. EL students will continue to take District LPM tests in reading and writing, and will also take the CAASPP annually. EL results will be disaggregated for reporting of project outcomes.

*Special population: Students with Specific Learning Disability (SLD).* Addressing the over-representation of minority students in Special Education, and the poor outcomes for students in special education programs who fail to meet State academic standards, is a mandate for all California school districts through the required Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Disproportionality in Special Education is also an equity issue identified by Office for Civil Rights. Special Education Law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act – IDEIA, 2004) requires that students be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment and have access to the core curriculum received by non-disabled peers. In examining our student data, we noted that African American students in PSD are significantly over-represented in Special Education, with the percent in Special Education being more than double their percent of district enrollment. PSD is committed to reducing disproportionality and improving outcomes for this

population. While this is a district-wide issue, we will begin by addressing over-representation in middle schools.

Strategy. **Co-teaching** is defined as two or more teachers delivering instruction at the same time in the same physical space to a heterogeneous group of students. PSD will use the model of Co-teaching that pairs a special education teacher with a subject matter teacher for multiple periods each day. We hope that by the end of MSAP funding, PSD will have co-teaching in place in English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, and magnet-themed courses.

Evidence. Murawski and Swanson (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of Co-teaching. The analysis indicated that co-teaching can be very effective for students with special needs, especially those with milder disabilities such as learning disabilities. When implemented correctly, co-teaching can be a successful way to teach all students in a classroom setting (<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/03/25/the-benefits-of-co-teaching-for-students-with-special-needs/>). Benefits of Co-teaching include: 1) Students with disabilities are provided access to the general education curriculum and general education setting; 2) Students with disabilities still receive specialized instruction; 3) All students receive greater instructional intensity and differentiated instruction; 4) Teachers learn from each other's expertise and expand the scope of their teaching capacity; 5) Reduces negative stigma associated with pull-out programs; 6) Students with disabilities are integrated may feel more connected with their peer group.

Actions. To be effective, a general education teacher must be willing to partner with a special education teacher. Principals and Magnet Support Teachers will search out appropriate pairs of teachers, and will help them identify shared beliefs, cultivate relationships, identify classroom management techniques, embrace each teacher's expertise, and clarify roles. Participating teacher pairs will receive training and coaching in Year 1 through Los Angeles County Office of

Education (LACOE). Co-teaching will be implemented as a pilot program in one or more magnet schools in Year 2. Teams will use PLC time for planning, and will have a common prep period. Building upon successful practices and lessons learned, PSD will extend the best practices for co-teaching to two additional schools in Year 3 and to the final magnet school(s) in Year 4.

Measurement. Principals, MSTs, LACOE, and our Evaluation team will make process observations of co-teaching in classrooms. Each trimester, participating teachers will document collaboration, strengths of the process, and areas of concern through interviews and shared observations. Data from students with SLD will be compared with that of non-disabled students in PLCs to analyze student progress, and help determine whether co-teaching had an effect on student learning. This information will allow us to make regular adjustments to improve collaboration and student outcomes.

**District Plan to Increase Achievement in Mathematics.**

Too many 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students achieve below grade level in mathematics. The percent of students meeting or exceeding the State Standards in Mathematics in grades 6-8 ranges from 11-26 percent in PSD middle schools.

**MATHEMATICS Needs – Student Achievement:** Students experience persistently low math achievement despite district interventions. Algebra 1 and Geometry are not offered in middle schools.

**GPRA Goal 3/PROMISE Goal 3: Significantly increase percent proficient in math for AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD in middle schools by 2021-2022.**



**Expected Long-Term Outcomes:** **3.1** Magnet Academy students in all subgroups significantly increase achievement in Math on CAASPP by 2021-22. **3.2** Increase number of students taking and successfully completing Algebra and Geometry at each magnet school each project year.

**Theory of Change To achieve Goal 3:** IF we provide **expert consultation and professional development for our math teachers** to enable them to **engage students in mathematical thinking and discourse**, and IF we provide students with **supports for using mathematics to solve real-world problems**, not worksheets, and IF we **create higher level math classes for students to aspire to**, THEN our teachers will prepare students to reason logically and use mathematics in science, economics, engineering, technology, and other fields, which will raise math achievement.

Few teachers receive intensive, sustained, and content-focused professional learning in mathematics; only 10% of secondary math teachers spend more than 24 hours in PL for math in a given year (Birman, 2007, cited in Yoon, 2007). We have observed that most elementary teachers do not have strong mathematics knowledge, and so they teach arithmetic computation. Our students come to middle school without mathematical reasoning abilities and with skill gaps that limit their achievement and use of math to solve real-world problems. Because of this, PSD does not currently offer Algebra 1 in 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grades and Geometry in 8<sup>th</sup> grade for advanced students. We know that successful completion of Algebra 1 by 8<sup>th</sup> grade is a gateway to college.

**Strategy: Antelope Valley College Math Consultant/ Math Intervention Program.** With our partner, Antelope Valley College (AVC), we will design and implement a math intervention program that addresses achievement and skills gaps of two years or more.

Evidence: The effects of tutoring include short-term skills acquisition, but the more important impact is on motivation, overall higher grade point average, and willingness to continue on to higher education. The longer the student received tutoring (up to two years), the greater the cumulative effects (Reinheimer & McKenzie, 2011).

Actions: PSD identified a mathematics professor at Antelope Valley College who will work with PSD 20% of her AVC-contracted time. Her collaboration and work with PSD will be three-fold: 1) She will work exclusively with magnet school math teachers to provide professional learning on identifying and referring the students who have specific gaps in their learning to our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). 2) She will select, train, observe, and evaluate 20 AVC students to work as math tutors. 3) She will train our project Math Intervention teachers on the process to move students in and out of intervention, on methods to support student learning, and how to fill in the academic gaps. She will also train the math intervention teachers on the use of tutors, how to design an enriched mathematics environment for at-risk students, and how to review student data for both long-term and short-term intervention. The intervention teacher will be stationed in the Math Lab and will have approximately 20 students assigned to the class each period. The Math Tutors will work in the Math Lab providing 1:1 tutoring and support.

During the planning year, the AVC Math Consultant and PSD Educational Services Department will design the intervention course, plan the training and professional learning, and develop the key indicators of success using short, medium and long term outcomes.

Current 5th grade students that need math intervention will be identified in the Spring prior to their transition to middle school. These are students who have earned a "D" or "F" grade, or who have performed poorly on the CAASPP Mathematics assessment and have been identified as having a two-year gap. At-risk students will be identified through a careful review

of their first and second trimester grades and teacher recommendation prior to the start of each semester. Students in need will receive a Math Intervention class and individual tutoring. The lowest 120 identified students at each middle school (20 per class with 6 classes per day) will receive the math intervention as an “elective;” students will still have a grade-level math class. PSD recently negotiated one additional period each day at middle school so that students who need intervention will still get an elective. Students will be motivated to complete the intervention program in order to have two electives.

Additionally, a second layer of intervention will be available for "just in time" learning. Students who encounter difficulty with a particular math concept or application (e.g. dividing fractions) in their assigned math class can be sent to the Math Lab for a quick one-on-one lesson with an AVC Mathematics Intervention teacher or tutor.

**Measurement:** To measure the success of the AVC Math Intervention, AVC’s Research Analyst and Consultant will compare pre- and post-intervention data for students who receive tutoring and intervention and will analyze and report the percent of students mastering math concepts measured on the CAASPP. In addition, AVC Mathematics and Engineering Department will conduct a **study of PSD Math Intervention Class to provide evidence as a promising practice**. The team will use a Quasi-Experimental Design described in the Project Evaluation Plan to measure the impact of the intervention on student math achievement.

**Strategy:** **Provide Professional Learning in Mathematics and Math Instruction.** PSD will provide intensive teacher training in math using MSAP funds for middle school math teachers.

**Evidence:** Research has shown that one of the predictors of student achievement is the extent to which teachers know the subject matter (Northern, 2016). This is especially true for mathematics. Teachers who received summer training in math followed by additional training

during the school year (up to 80 hours), and who had time to analyze student learning and achievement data, were able to raise student math achievement by 21 points.

Actions: Through the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, all teachers receive 12 hours of professional development in the newly adopted State Mathematics Curriculum and teaching strategies. Recognizing that we must raise the bar for both the teaching of mathematics and the number of students who improve their understanding and application of mathematical concepts, our **magnet math teachers will be funded to attend four days of specialized training at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics summer institutes**. Also, beginning in Year 1, PSD will offer at least one class of Algebra 1 at the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade level for students who are prepared. We will add Geometry for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Year 2 for those students who took Algebra 1 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We will add more Algebra classes as additional numbers of students are prepared for more rigorous mathematics instruction.

Measurement: We will use process observations of teaching and student outputs, which are the number of students taking and passing advance mathematics classes with a grade of C or better each year. Our project outcome measure is student growth, disaggregated by subgroup, on the CAASPP Mathematics Assessment.



**Developing Strong Magnet Themes and Increasing Parent Involvement**

**Need, Gap or Problem:** PSD has a significant percent of very low income families/students. Many PSD parents lack a college degree and work in low-wage jobs. Community aerospace, aeronautics and manufacturing opportunities require an educated, technically proficient workforce – students are not prepared for technical and managerial careers due to lack of opportunity and pre-requisite skills.

**PROMISE Project Goal 4: Create middle school STEAM magnet academies to inspire students, increase career and college readiness, create real school choice, and increase parent involvement.**

**Expected Long Term Outcomes:** **4.1** Magnet schools prepare students for science, engineering, design, medical/health, technology and fine arts college and career opportunities by 2021-22 and beyond. **4.2** 8<sup>th</sup> grade students complete a Digital Portfolio and Culminating Project integrating learning across curriculum and magnet themes. **4.3** Minority and low SES parents increase and sustain meaningful involvement and leadership in magnet schools and their child’s education.

**Theory of Change to achieve Goal 4: IF we develop dynamic and relevant magnet themes with hands-on learning projects that involve students actively in learning and solving real-world problems, and IF we engage local leaders in effective and significant community partnerships to develop and support our magnet themes, and IF we provide teachers with the resources to become experts in STEAM and magnet-themed fields, and IF we welcome and involve parents as true partners in their child’s school and education, THEN our magnet schools**



will attract a diverse population of students who will learn to interact and cooperate, and who will be prepared for college or careers of today and tomorrow.

**Strategy: Implement magnet STEAM programs and evidence-based courses** of instruction that substantially strengthen students' knowledge of academic subjects especially in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, technology, and the arts to improve their attainment of tangible and marketable vocational and professional skills.

**Evidence:** Engaging magnet themed programs, challenging career-focused curriculum and enhanced facilities promote parent and student choice and enrollment (Davis, 2012). Well-designed and faithfully implemented magnet school programs can produce gains in academic achievement and to achieve integration goals. Parents who are welcomed and supported increase engagement in leadership roles at the school and district level.

**Actions:** PSD will engage in detailed planning in Year 1 to develop all our middle schools into magnet academies around their identified themes. We want to ensure that all our students have opportunities to participate in a rigorous themed program that will develop college and career readiness, including non-college careers that are available in the aerospace and design facilities in the Antelope Valley. All our magnet academies will have a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) focus, AND each will have one or more unique magnet emphases. To support our magnet academies in meeting State standards for STEAM, we will take advantage of the California STEM Service-Learning Initiative (<http://www.calstem.org>) and STEM Learning Network (<http://www.cslnet.org>). These state resources create regional networks to *increase the number of women and minorities becoming engineers, scientists and technologists of tomorrow*. There are resources for teacher training and assistance in implementing STEM-based service-learning projects. Utilizing these state and regional resources



will help us identify additional partners for collaboration and resources in implementing PBL, and help us develop a cadre of STEM trainers that can support teachers. Teachers will have 20 hours of release time (with substitutes paid by grant funds) in Year 1 for planning/writing magnet-themed curricula, 15 hours in Year 2, and 10 hours in Year 3. Teachers will have 5 hours of planning/writing in Years 4-5, with costs paid by PSD for sustainability.

Counselors and Magnet Support Teachers (MST) will identify and support students in need of reading and/or math intervention. They will review students' LPM progress every 6 weeks and make sure they receive intervention or tutoring if needed.

PSD has partnered with a Director of Antelope Valley High School District to help establish our community, district, and school level **MSAP advisory groups**. Our magnet programs will feed into the high school career education programs. The high school has committed to consult with PSD on curriculum development and units of study so that the two district programs align.

Measurement: Our primary measure of the success of our magnet-themed curricula is the **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project**. Working with teachers, MSTs, and community partners, students will explore and develop a culminating project over their three years in middle school. During the planning year, teacher teams will develop a project scoring rubric to determine: Project Exceeds the Standard, Meets the Standard, or Approaches the Standard. The project may be a written paper, project, or performance. Students will present their project to a Community/Parent panel that will score the project using the Rubric. Students will receive feedback on their project, and will also complete a self-reflection on the process of completing the project that includes how it supports their college and career goals.



Strategy: **Project Lead the Way.** We selected the evidence-based Project Lead the Way (PLTW) as our primary **STEM curriculum.** PLTW is a rigorous, research-based curriculum that provides transformative learning experiences for all students, where engaging, hands-on classroom environments are created that empower students to develop the skills they need to thrive. PLTW teachers receive training, resources, and support to engage students in real-world learning. The middle school Gateway curriculum invites students to discover what they are passionate about through exploratory learning units. Each unit engages students in activities that build knowledge and skills in areas including computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. In Design and Modeling units, students discover the design process and develop an understanding of the influence of creativity and innovation and apply these concepts to their own life. Automation and Robotics students learn about the history and impact of automation and robotics as they explore mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Flight and Space brings the exciting world of aerospace alive where students explore the science behind aeronautics and use their knowledge to design, build, and test an airfoil. Medical Detective students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they analyze genetic testing results to diagnose disease and study DNA evidence found at a “crime scene.” Students solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, investigate how to measure and interpret vital signs, and learn how the systems of the human body work together to maintain health.

Evidence: PLTW is the nation's leading science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curriculum used in over 8,000 schools across the U.S. Among other significant findings, independent research studies reveal that PLTW students outperform their peers in school, are better prepared for post-secondary studies, and are more likely to consider careers as scientists,

technology experts, engineers, mathematicians, healthcare providers, and researchers compared to their non-PLTW peers. PLTW fosters career-technical education (CTE) through integration of STEM concepts and courses, providing “transformative learning experiences for K-12 students and teachers across the U.S. Through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science, students learn problem-solving strategies, critical and creative thinking, and how to communicate and collaborate.” (<https://www.pltw.org/about-pltw>). PLTW works to shape the innovators, creators, and designers of today and tomorrow. A researcher from the University of Virginia, Dr. Robert Tai (2012), and his team collected and analyzed over 30 research studies and reports on PLTW, finding: PLTW contributes to a strong, positive impact on mathematics and science achievement; PLTW has a positive influence on students’ career interest and likelihood to continue their education; PLTW offers a pathway to prepare and motivate students to enter careers in science and engineering. Another strength of PLTW is intensive teacher professional development. PLTW includes STEM-focused teacher professional development designed to prepare middle and high school students for the global economy. This year, PSD purchased most elements of the PLTW integrated curriculum and provided professional development for teachers and administrators.

*Actions:* We will engage in active recruiting and marketing to get diverse students into PLTW. Schools offer different PLTW classes depending on magnet focus. During the planning year, math and science teachers will work closely with PLTW teachers to integrate learning into the experiential projects.

*Measurement:* Students will complete PLTW units throughout the year. Students complete a self-evaluation and reflection on each project. Those who are interested may form competitive

teams to compete in Science Olympiad, Cyberquest, or Robotics competitions at the local and state level.

Strategy: **Support students' social emotional learning.** CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning) defines social emotional learning (SEL) as “a process for helping children develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness” (<http://casel.org>). These skills include recognizing and managing emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically. To teach and support SEL, we identified strategies which were detailed earlier in this Narrative: *Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH)*, *Foundations*, and *WEB*.

Evidence. Outcomes of SEL programs include improved academic performance – an average of 11 points for students who received SEL training vs those that did not; improved attitudes and behaviors; deeper commitment to school and increased time devoted to schoolwork; reductions in disruptive behaviors, noncompliance and aggression; and reduced emotional distress, with fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress and social withdrawal (CASEL, 2015).

Actions. In addition to implementing our three positive SEL program strategies, PSD is developing a “SEAL Team,” which is our process to support individual students' Social Emotional and Academic Learning. Each school has a SEAL team, a group of staff that meet once a month under the leadership of the Principal and School Counselor. The SEAL team provides individualized assistance to students in need through receiving referrals from staff or parents, gathering data, communicating with parents, and then developing a plan to support the student, including making referrals to community agencies for health and mental health services as needed. The School Counselor follows up with the student, staff and parents and manages implementation. The SEAL team checks on each student's progress each trimester.

Measurement. Outcomes for CKH and *Foundations* will be improvements in school climate as measured annually by the student California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) administered online to all 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and the Staff and Parent School Climate Survey. Our key indicators are student connectedness to school, positive student-staff relationships, and students feeling safe at school.

**District Plan to Increase Parent Engagement.**

*I want to have too many parents **demanding excellence** in their schools. I want all parents to be **real partners in education** with their children’s teachers, from cradle to career. In this partnership, students and parents should feel connected – and teachers should feel supported. When parents demand change and better options for their children, they become the **real accountability backstop for the educational system** (Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, May 3, 2010).*

In addition to increasing meaningful student integration, PSD recognizes that we need to increase real parental involvement in our middle schools. We know that social and economic integration in schools – parents as well as students - is important. “Family engagement is rapidly shifting from a low-priority recommendation to an integral part of educational reform efforts” (SEDL, 2013, p. 5). Parent involvement is one of California’s eight educational priority areas. Parents must be involved in determining how Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) dollars are spent. We can increase parent engagement by honoring families’ knowledge, connecting parents to their student’s learning, and creating welcoming, inviting school and district cultures, in addition to increasing opportunities for leadership at the school and district level.

Strategy: **Create a welcoming culture and opportunities for parents to be decision makers, collaborators, and advocates.** The U.S. Department of Education document, *Partners in*



*education: A dual-capacity framework for family-school partnerships* (SEDL, 2013) indicated schools need to create *opportunities* for parent engagement that are linked to learning, and that are relational, collaborative, and interactive. Practices must be systemic – across all organization structures, integrated into all programs, and sustained with resources and infrastructure.

Authentic parent-school partnerships support student achievement *and* school improvement.

Evidence: A Principal in one *Partners in Education* case study stated, “The work of family engagement is particularly important to me, my staff, and our community because experience has taught us that the adults in a school building alone cannot drive dramatic change by themselves” (2013, p. 16). A Harvard Family Research Project meta-analysis documented parental involvement is associated with higher student achievement outcomes on grades, standardized tests, teacher ratings, and other achievement measures (Jeynes, 2005).

Actions: PSD parents currently participate in school and district governance through School Site Council, PTA, the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), and African American Advisory Board, and as volunteers. Parents also support their child at Open House, Back-to-School Night, Family Math and Reading nights, and awards assemblies. Yet, we know that there are families we have not yet reached. “Parents – particularly low income and limited-English proficient parents – face multiple barriers to engagement” (SEDL, 2013, p. 6). Parent involvement is not only a Palmdale PROMISE GOAL, but an LCAP goal as well. We are working to increase diversity and representation and the school and district level. We developed **Objective 4.3.** to recruit parents from under-represented groups to become members on district and school leadership committees: DELAC/ELAC, AAAC, Magnet Schools Advisory, PTA, and School Site Council.” In Year 1, we will create the **Magnet Schools Advisory Board** for district magnet governance, and a

**Magnet School Advisory Committee** at each magnet school. These opportunities will actively involve parents in decision-making for magnet schools. We will also involve Magnet School Advisory parents in our process evaluation. PSD plans two annual bus tours of the magnet academies for Advisory Board members to facilitate opportunities to review project implementation and to make recommendations for academies and the MSAP program.

Measurement: Output measures of parent engagement will be the number of parents by race/ethnicity on district and site level Magnet Advisory and other committees. Process measures include members' participation in annual focus groups and parent surveys that will be developed by the District in collaboration with the Evaluation Team.

Strategy: **Parent-Community Liaisons and Parent/Family Resource Centers.** PSD has hired bilingual Parent-Community Liaisons to support parents at every middle school and to connect them to school, district, and community resources. Each middle school is developing a **Parent/Family Resource Center.** Information will include material on each of our magnet academies, school of choice applications, and transportation. Parent-Community Liaisons will assist parents in completing the school of choice application, as needed. At the district level, we are converting a closed school into a district MSAP Family Resource Center that will open in Fall 2017. PSD implements **research-based parent education** offered during the school year. **Parent Academy**, a series of classes to help parents support their child's learning, is offered each year. Modules include Understanding Your Child's School, Curriculum and Instruction, California Standards, Support for All Learners, Special Education Basics, English Learner Programs, Understanding State and District Testing Programs, Student Discipline, Technology Services, Volunteering, Job Opportunities, Child Nutrition, and Transportation.

Evidence: The U.S. Department of Education developed *A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* with three case studies of successful efforts in building family-school engagement. Strategies that made a difference for parents included home visits, which built trust and communication between parents and teachers. As a result of building these relationships and clarifying both parent and school expectations, parents welcomed ways they could support their child. Math scores increased by 18% and reading scores increased by 9%.

Actions: We know that relationships matter. Too many minority parents may have had negative school experiences when they were students, and expect that little has changed. Understanding this, we are opening conversations with minority families in home and community locations where they are on equal footing. It will take time to gain their trust. The conversation starts with listening. We need to hear their perspective, and respect their point of view. All district personnel, but MSAP staff in particular, will be ambassadors to outreach to parents.

Our Latino parents are very motivated to be involved in helping their child succeed in school. We need to provide more flexible opportunities for parent involvement, including home visits, and evening access to resources such as technology, for parents who work strict or fluctuating schedules. Parent/Family Resource Centers that are open to families in the evening and staffed by Parent-Community Liaisons are one way to increase Latino family engagement.

With regard to engaging African American families, Epstein and colleagues (2009) described the creation of “family-like” schools that place the student at the center of communication and interaction, and that include and welcome all families, even those that are “hard to reach.” Research shows that parent-school partnerships tend to decline across the grades, unless schools work to develop and implement inclusive partnerships that give parents real choice and voice. Parent involvement in their student’s schooling looks different at each

school, depending upon the community of families that attend. Epstein suggests that there are elements of successful parent-school-community partnerships, and that these elements should be present in all schools. **The Six Types of Involvement for Comprehensive Programs of Partnership** and Sample Practices were validated by research using Epstein’s (2009) model: 1) Establishing parent supports for achievement in the home, including **home visits** and **neighborhood meetings** to meet families in familiar settings and help schools understand families better; 2) Effective home-school communication, which includes diverse modalities and social media; 3) Recruit/organize parent support by calling underrepresented parents to assist with a class activity; 4) Support learning at home through parent-student curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning such as family math or science night; 5) Include parents in school decisions by making school meetings less formal, with parents planning a dinner and school providing childcare; and 6) Integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

*Measurement:* One output measure will be an unduplicated count of the number of parent contacts annually by each Parent-Community Liaison. The Liaison will also invite parents to participate in focus groups and our annual parent survey to assess the quality of services provided to parents, and to obtain their recommendations for how services and outreach can be improved.

**School Level Magnet Plans.**

In Year 1, all five magnet school academies will engage in planning, collaborate on curriculum development around magnet themes, create interdisciplinary projects integrating real-world, hands-on activities (PBL), integrate technology into teaching and learning, and will develop process and rubrics for evaluating student projects, portfolios and performances. All magnet



schools will implement State Standards and the district’s designated curricula, which include Project Lead the Way and AVID at all middle schools. All middle schools offer a fine arts curriculum that meets State standards and includes beginning and advanced band. All offer student leadership in the form of Associated Student Body (ASB) activities, intramural sports, and campus clubs. All students will create a digital portfolio that houses their best work across the curriculum. Work can be shared with other students and parents. The Portfolio will be highlighted in their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year with a Culminating Project that showcases their learning over three years, and is presented to a community panel.

If MSAP funds are awarded, **each middle school academy will offer three learning pathways. Two pathways are district priorities: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) using selected modules from PLTW Gateway to Learning, and Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA). Each middle school has also developed a third campus-specific magnet program that will be developed through detailed planning in Year 1.** Each magnet pathway will require teachers to teach and use “backward planning,” working with the students to design a culminating project, and then determine the planning, information, materials, information, and timeline to execute the project. By Year 3, all magnet academies will have magnet themes integrated across a multidisciplinary curriculum. For example, History and Language Arts students will explore the development and growth of STEM industries of the magnet theme, and explore current events and the effect on the advancement and expansion of magnet technologies. Students will discuss, debate, and write expository pieces to deepen their learning. VAPA students will discover how the media and developing technologies impact the arts. They will also work alongside engineering and design students to design and build theater



sets and lighting schemes for school drama performances. Magnet academies will integrate Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Technologies through development of interdisciplinary PBL.

### **Shadow Hills Academy of Engineering and Design**

*Program Overview.* Shadow Hills Academy of Engineering and Design will transform the conventional middle school STEAM curriculum into a magnet school where Science, Technology, Engineering, and Design are taught through inquiry, PBL, and hands-on exploration. The Academy of Engineering and Design will offer a dynamic learning environment rich in science and technology, with a rigorous curriculum that provides students with engaging coursework to cultivate curiosity and motivate learning. Shadow Hills has existing spaces dedicated to the STEAM curriculum: robotics lab, computer lab, graphic design lab, and music room.

*Magnet Program Curriculum and Opportunities.* With MSAP funds, Shadow Hills Academy of Engineering and Design will include options to study multiple aspects of engineering and design with real-world application.

**Engineering Pathway.** The Engineering Pathway courses will include PLTW modules, Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced LEGO Robotics, Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced VEX Robotics, and we will develop a Paxton Patterson STEM Action Lab. The study of robotics and coding will be integrated at all grade levels. The **Paxton Patterson STEM Action Lab** will empower students to discover their interests and aptitudes and focus on the many careers that come from the different STEM areas such as electronics, energy and power, laser technology, and structural engineering. Students will use the engineering design cycle to help them research,

plan, create, improve, and reflect on projects, as well as find creative solutions to real-world challenges.

**Design Pathway.** The Design Pathway courses include Computer Programming and Game Design, Advanced Game Design, Geometric Design, Graphic Design - Multimedia I, Multimedia II, 3-D and Web Design, Business Computers, and Business Marketing. In the **Computer Programming and Game Design** classes, students learn about computer hardware and the major components inside a computer, while dis-assembling and re-assembling computers. Digital citizenship – proper behavior and smart decision making on the internet – is taught utilizing the website *www.commonsemmedia.org* where students occupy the life of a virtual character making decisions, both good and bad, for the character to see possible consequences. Students also advance through a course on coding using *www.code.org*, a website that incorporates games that teach students how to communicate with a computer and how to follow the logical steps that a computer utilizes. Student will learn 3D Modeling and Design using *www.tinkercad.com* where they complete design challenges to show their proficiency with the program, create a playground that incorporates the skills they have learned, and finally design and print an item they have created in 3-D. Students in advanced classes work with *www.scratch.mit.edu*, where they learn computer programming, and create a variety of video games that they can play and share.

**Geometric Design** is the starting point for design and engineering. This class takes students from the basics of drawing shapes, following directions and solving math problems to the complexities of creating structures that hold many purposes. Students begin with learning the basics of straight lines and how those are used in the formation of shapes, and then integrated to make curved lines. Students explore tools used in drafting, scale and perspective. The

intermediate class takes students to the next level of structure and design. In Advanced Geometric Design students engage in the study of bridges, gaining understanding of tension and compression stresses.

**Graphic Design** – Graphic Design includes Multimedia I and II, 3-D and Web Design, and Video Production. Students in the beginning Multimedia class identify, analyze, and create various forms of graphic art. Students are introduced to the latest versions of graphic design software used in the professional industry, including Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. Students will be able to print their 3-D designs on a MakerBot 3-D Printer. The intermediate Multimedia class introduces students to Web Design and Digital Animation. Adobe Animate will enable students to design interactive animations with cutting-edge drawing tools and publish them to multiple platforms, including Flash/Adobe AIR, HTML5 Canvas, WebGL, or even custom platforms.

In the **Business and Careers Class** students work on developing proper keyboarding technique along with learning the basic skills of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to complete projects using each platform. In the Business Marketing class, students learn about the stock market and how to invest in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.

**Visual and Performing Arts Pathway.** The Visual and Performing Arts Pathway includes Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Band, Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Orchestra, Mariachi, Digital Recording and Songwriting, Art, Photography, and Spanish.

**Band and Orchestra.** The music program consists of an instrumental concert band, and instrumental orchestral strings. Students in the concert band class use “Sound Innovations” books I and II for instruction and utilize the following instruments: flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, French horn, baritone horn, trombone, tuba, oboe,



bassoon and percussion instruments (snare drum, bass drum, tympani, and bells). Students in orchestral strings use “All for Strings” books I and II for instruction, and utilize the following instruments: violin, viola, cello and bass. Advanced programs include a jazz band, and a mariachi band, where guitars, bass guitars, mariachi guitars, and bass are used. At every level, students engage in music concerts in the winter, spring, and at the end of the school year, and have the opportunity to march and play in local parades.

The **Digital Recording and Songwriting** class begins with students initially focusing on songwriting basics – creative writing, poetry and lyrics. Students then progress to writing and performing original songs. In the advanced class, students work in the recording studio where they produce a final project.

Using the Betty Edward's "Learning to Draw" model in the **Art Program**, students at beginning and intermediate levels learn how to draw from the right side of the brain. They progress to gesture and contour drawings, where perspective is taught as the students learn to draw 2-3 vanishing points. The cultural component of art is also introduced, with a cross curricular Social Studies focus that explores stained-glass windows and illuminated manuscripts. In the advanced ceramics class, the focus is on techniques necessary to create pottery, including wheel throwing, slab building, extrusion, and press mold.

Students in the **Photography** elective gain experience photographing people, events, nature, landscapes, architecture, and animals, in natural lighting situations. The course covers the fundamentals of digital photography, including the history of photography, photographic composition, camera operation, techniques, professional applications, printing, and digital editing and manipulation using Adobe Photoshop and similar programs. Students advance to Photojournalism where they develop an electronic portfolio of color and black and white



photographs. They build on their knowledge of artistic composition and learn to apply design fundamentals to photography.

### **Cactus Medical Health and Technology Academy**

Program Overview. Cactus will be a Medical Health and Technology magnet where students will choose from a wide range of electives that will prepare them for entrance into similar pathways offered by the local high schools. Cactus students will receive certification at graduation for completing requisite coursework in one of two areas: Medical and Health or the Technology Pathway.

Magnet Program Curriculum and Opportunities. **Medical Health Pathway.** Cactus faculty is excited to offer the district's only Medical Health Pathway that will be developed in collaboration with the Health Careers Academy at Palmdale High School. Classes in the Medical Health Pathway are as follows: Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Medical Detectives, Community Emergency Response Training (CERT), Junior Upcoming Medical Professionals (JUMP), Health and Fitness (Soccer and Dance), Focused Fitness, History of Medicine and Technology, Anatomy, and Sports Medicine. Through Community Emergency Response Training (CERT), students will receive knowledge on how to become a "first responder" in the event of an emergency as well as Red Cross/CPR basic First Aid training and certification. Students will use their First Aid, CPR and CERT training to participate in community events and will complete 20 hours of community service learning each year. Cactus will also offer the middle school version of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) as an elective called Junior Upcoming Medical Professionals (JUMP). JUMP is designed to prepare students for a future in medical fields and incorporates guest speakers, field trips to medical facilities, and community service projects to promote compassionate, quality health care and leadership in medical/health fields.

Cactus will offer a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum that focuses on pre-medical and preventive health concepts that will prepare students for a wide range of careers in the health care field. Cactus students will work closely with teachers and community partners including Los Angeles County Office of Education Health Programs, Palmdale High School Health Careers Academy, Palmdale Regional Medical Center and local first responders to create an environment supportive of independent academic exploration and hands-on learning with real-world relevance.

Cactus is prepared to begin the Medical Health Academy in Project Year 1. Cactus has consulted the National Consortium for Health Science Education (<http://www.healthscienceconsortium.org>), which will provide teacher professional learning. In Year 1, Health, Science, and PE teachers will complete Red Cross First Aid/CPR Trainer-of-Trainers course, Next Generation Science Standards, and PLTW Medical Detectives training. In Year 2, these teachers will develop PBL units and will complete the Health Sciences Curriculum and State Framework training. Years 3-5 will focus on developing in-depth magnet specific expertise as well as planning interdisciplinary PBL.

**Technology Pathway.** The Technology Pathway is founded on the coursework of PLTW. The philosophy is, “Middle school is the perfect time for students to explore and learn that there is more than one way to reach a solution” ([www.pltw.org/our-programs/pltw-gateway](http://www.pltw.org/our-programs/pltw-gateway)). Students receive rigorous and relevant experiences through activities and project-based learning. Through 9-week units, students explore technology and engineering in robotics, computer science, biomedical, environmental and other STEM-related topics. Students will also compete in local and state Robotics, Cyberquest, Science Olympiad and Mathletes competitions to motivate and engage them. Examples of classes in the Technology Pathway are: PLTW Automation and Robotics, PLTW Design and Modeling, PLTW Magic of Electrons, PLTW Science and

Technology, History of Medicine and Technology, and Game Design, Robotics, and Competitive and Applied STEM. The Technology Pathway will directly address the technology standards for STEM and California State Standards, including Language Arts standards (Depth of Knowledge), International Standards for Technology Education (ISTE), National Educational Technology Standards (NETS), and Bloom's Taxonomy with emphasis on computational/critical thinking. These standards are addressed through the following curricula:

- Tynker Visual Programming: real world applications include video gaming, web applications, and educational software development
- LEGO Mindstorms EV3 Robotics: real world applications include autonomous crop spraying, military and police bomb disposal, disaster management (entering situations not fit for humans), automated vehicle assembly, and medical extremity replacement (intelligent prosthetics)
- Tynker Drone Programming: real world applications include real time support and response to disasters (earthquakes, structural and wild fires, floods, tornados, and hurricanes)

Technology-Engineering EV3 coursework for grade 6 includes three units: Robotics Introduction; Circuits and Computers; and Hardware, Software and Firmware. Grade 7 EV3 has four units: Get Moving (How Far? How Fast?); Taking Turns (Turning, Test and Graphics, Flowcharts, Engineering Challenge); Touch-See-Repeat (Digital Information, Movement, Loops, Group Challenge); and Decisions-Decisions (Switches, Switch Loops, Line Follower, Multitasking, Engineering Challenge). Grade 8 EV3 has three units: 1) Wired for Data (Data Wires, Logic, Engineering Challenge); 2) Advanced Programming Techniques (Blocks with Parameters, Moving Blocks, Turning Blocks, Parallel Beams, Synchronization, Engineering Challenge); and 3) Advanced Computer Robotics Techniques (Debugging, Reliability, Squaring

on a Line, Stall Detection, Menu Systems).

For students who do not wish to take advantage of the two pathways, a third *humanities* option is available: Classes in the humanities will be offered for students who wish to pursue a variety of electives that are more holistic versus technical in nature. These classes will seek to broaden the students' understanding of their world as well as attain skills that will be developed from the following classes: Rhetoric and Debate, Theater, Art, Foreign Languages, Journalism, Home Economics, AVID, ASB, Health and Fitness (Dance), Band, Guitar, and String Orchestra.

### **Desert Willow FAST Academy – Fine Arts, Science, and Technology**

*Program Overview.* Desert Willow FAST Academy is a unique middle school magnet program that will give students three magnet options: Fine Arts, Science, or Technology.

*Magnet Program Curriculum and Opportunities.* The Fine Arts pathway will provide introductory to advanced learning and performance opportunities for students in vast array of visual arts, performing arts, and other advanced elective offerings. All courses are designed for students wishing to pursue fine arts in high school and college. All courses will increase students' creativity and critical thinking. The **Visual Arts Pathway** is an innovative and rigorous program in which students hone their skills in studio areas such as drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, graphic design, photography, and digital video. Students will also learn the art critique process, investigate art careers, and study art history and aesthetics. **Performing Arts** is a rigorous and exciting program for students who are interested in pursuing vocal music, instrumental music, theatre, or dance in high school and college or for students who wish to increase their creative and critical thinking skills. Students will develop their performance ability through Chorus, Band, Dance, Keyboarding and Musical Theatre. **Beginning Band** will provide

students opportunities to learn the basics of every instrument, then they choose their “Top 3.” With the band director’s help, students will choose the best instrument for each student. Students will also learn to read music and learn the fundamentals of music performance on their chosen instrument. **Concert Band** is open to students with one year of experience on an instrument. Students will build upon the fundamentals of performance that they learned in Beginning Band and will perform intermediate band literature. **Wind Ensemble** is the premier performing ensemble at Desert Willow FAST Academy. This course is open to students with at least one year of experience on an instrument. Students are placed into this group based on audition and skill. Students will learn advanced instrumental and ensemble techniques to perform more advanced band compositions. **Jazz Band** is available to students with at least one year of experience playing trumpet, trombone, alto/tenor/baritone saxophone, drums, piano, bass guitar, or electric guitar (other instruments are possible to add). Students will learn the fundamentals of Jazz performance including swing style and improvisation.

**Beginning String Orchestra** is open to students who have never played a stringed instrument before. Students may choose to play violin, viola, cello or bass. They will learn the fundamentals of string playing, reading music, rhythm, and musicianship. **Intermediate String Orchestra** is open to students with least one year of group instruction. Students will continue in their development of technique, musicianship and music theory. **Advanced String Orchestra** is open to students with at least one year of group instruction. Students will audition for the Advanced String Orchestra. **Keyboarding** is open to students who wish to learn to play the keyboard. No experience is necessary. Students will learn basic keyboard, how to read music, and the fundamentals of group performance. **Digital Music Theory/Composition** is an innovative course that utilizes our iMac Lab, midi keyboards, music notation software, and

GarageBand to teach students about music theory, piano skills, and composition. Students will compose original music in various styles and forms while in this year-long class

**Beginning Chorus** will be open to all students. Anyone can learn to sing! Students will learn basic, healthy vocal technique, and they will also explore a wide range of music genres. For students with previous choral experience, **Choir** will be the premier vocal ensemble at Desert Willow FAST Academy. In Choir, students will sing a wide range of music, including pop, jazz, world music, classical, and folk. **Dance (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced)** will provide students opportunities to develop fundamental knowledge and skills in two or more dance styles, recognize choreographic processes, enhance aesthetic awareness, and make connections between dance and other subject areas. **Drama and Musical Theatre** will enable students to participate in varied aspects of acting and musical theater, with special attention to the fundamentals of voice production, stage movement, acting, characterization, dance, and technical aspects of a plays and musicals. Students will use interactive media to create and store sounds, music, images, and special effects on an iMac. All students enrolled in performance-based music classes will perform a minimum of three concerts each year.

**Visual Arts Pathway.** A strategic plan will be developed through collaboration with Los Angeles County Arts for All to develop the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Program at Desert Willow Academy. VAPA teachers will implement the Visual and Performing Arts Standards for California. In collaboration with core teachers, VAPA teachers will provide guidance for integration of visual and performing arts within the core curriculum.

**Beginning Art** is an introductory course where students will create art in various 2-D and 3-D media including drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and digital art. Students will also learn about art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art careers. Students enrolled in **Digital**

**Videography** will create a portfolio of videos - Instructional Video, Book Trailer, Drama, Comedy, and Public Service Announcement - in an iMac computer lab that uses iMovie, iPhoto, GarageBand, and Final Cut Studio. Students will use technology to produce music, video, and theatrical productions. We hope to inspire our students to write and produce original music, video and film. In Year 2 or 3, we plan to bring the *John Lennon Educational Tour Bus* to our school with MSAP funds. The John Lennon Bus is a mobile state-of-the art multimedia audio/music and HD video recording studio that teaches and engages students in writing, performing and producing original songs, music videos and documentary productions – all in one day [www.lennonbus.org](http://www.lennonbus.org).

**Graphic Arts provides students with skills in Digital Photograph and Graphic Design.** Students will learn to use a digital camera to explore photography as an art form. This will include digital manipulation and layering. This class will meet in an iMac computer lab with iPhoto, Aperture, GIMP, and Photoshop Elements. Cameras and drawing tablets are provided for use during class time. The year-long project will be **Yearbook**. There are numerous opportunities to integrate technology and the arts. Desert Willow will create a lab for integrating technology, journalism, photography, digital art, graphic design and performing arts. **Advanced 2-D Art** students will develop advanced skills in drawing, painting, printmaking. Students will develop an art portfolio, participate in art competitions, and learn to exhibit artwork. Students will continue to develop art skills and techniques in **Advanced 3-D Media** including ceramics, sculpture, and fiber arts. Students will develop an art portfolio, participate in art competitions, and learn to exhibit artwork in the Museum of Art and History events in Lancaster. Students may also be selected to join the Pasadena Arts Society.

**Environmental Science Pathway** provides integration between Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics. Our Environmental Science Pathway focuses on developing a deep understanding of NGSS and includes modules from PLTW. Students will receive a rigorous, academically challenging curriculum with intense science and math instruction. Students will participate in early engineering experiences with technology integrated across the curriculum. Teachers will use PBL and an innovative, hands-on curriculum to involve students in asking questions, understanding the interactions between ecosystems, analyzing and interpreting data, finding answers to real world issues and designing solutions to environmental problems. Students will engage in field and outdoor learning while working with experts at the **Aquatic Laboratory and Hydroponic Lab**. Students will discover how matter and energy are transferred between producers, consumers and decomposers as the three groups interact within the ecosystem. Students in the Hydroponic Design Lab will utilize the existing water feature in the Mezzanine level of Desert Willow to design and create a hydroponic lab.

Desert Willow hopes to implement an **Interactive Virtual Science Lab** in Year 2, providing students with opportunities to conduct ongoing investigations on molecules and organisms. The Virtual Lab helps students learn basic laboratory techniques and practice methods used by lab technicians and researchers in a variety of careers. Students will use and develop models to describe the functions of an organisms utilizing technology, keeping safety standards at high levels and minimizing waste in a typical lab. Virtual labs will enable students to develop skills in identifying empirical evidence and using scientific reasoning. Virtual lab experiences will help students explain organic structures as well as understand the impact of human activity on natural resources.



Desert Willow has existing areas already terraced and equipped to house a **Learning Garden** located on the south side of the campus. Its prime location and natural shelter will provide students with the prime conditions for the Learning Garden to be designed and built by the **Green Architecture class**. Students will not only know the plant in its importance within the earth's ecology, but also within the context of the environment. **Sustainable Resourcing** students will discover that human activities are major factors in environmental change that have both short and long term consequences, and are positive and negative for the health of people and the natural environment. Community partnership with **Waste Management of the Antelope Valley** will provide students with an understanding of the end-product for processing waste materials. Students will participate in a field trip to Waste Management to understand the process required for materials to be recycled and repurposed. Students will engage in a recycling effort and create a system for separating biodegradable waste, recyclable waste and non-recyclable waste. Students in this class will establish and maintain systems and protocols to increase amount of recycled materials and decrease the non-recyclable materials in schools. Students will also research, design and implement their own campaign for an environmental issue of their choice. Students will contact major agencies and influential people to interview by phone or internet about their efforts to save our planet, animals or humans.

The AV Air Quality Management District will help with development of curriculum, provide classroom speakers, help identify other environmental resources, facilitate field trips in the AV, and provide mentoring for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project. AVAQMD will provide one grant each year for a teacher to attend the Keystone Science School. This institute provides educators with the process, skills, and confidence to investigate current

environmental and STEM issues with their students. Teachers learn how to combine classroom lessons with real-world experiences ([www.keystonescienceschool.org](http://www.keystonescienceschool.org)).

**Digital Communication Pathway** will provide students with opportunities for communicating effectively and working interdependently with multidisciplinary careers. Students will develop digital knowledge, values, and a range of critical thinking, communication and information management skills for the digital age. Digital Literacy will move students from the basic level of access to use to understanding and eventually the creation of websites, blogs, vlogs, computer applications and programs. **Digital Humanities** provides students skills to develop into responsible and engaged digital citizens. Developing a **Media Studies** elective will provide the connection between the narrative and visual interpretation of media. Students can participate in Journalism, Social Justice Studies as well as Toastmasters. Students in the Communication Pathway can produce a documentary film or may incorporate speech/debate on a historical topic integrating the perspective of the Arts. The Communication Pathway can include learning a second or third language in our language lab. The use of Duolingo will provide students with the program required to explore multiple languages.

Desert Willow staff recognizes that middle school students may not be ready to choose and invest in a single pathway. Students may enter VAPA, Science or Technology, or Communication pathways in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade, and may continue their chosen pathway for one, two, or three years. The interdisciplinary approach will provide students with opportunities to move within different pathways. Students may choose to explore all three pathways over the three middle school years.

## **David G. Millen Law and Government Academy**

*Program Overview.* In addition to full implementation of the district's STEAM and VAPA initiatives, David G. Millen (DGM) Law and Government Academy will specialize in two additional areas, Humanities, which includes Law and Government, and VAPA.

*Magnet Program Curriculum and Opportunities.* The **Law and Government Academy (LGA)** will examine skills and careers associated with professions in community, state, national and international law and government such as attorneys, government careers, politicians, and first responders through a school-wide interdisciplinary approach. Students will have the opportunity to take LGA-focused classes as either core classes or electives, as well as participate in after school clubs/teams. Additionally, DGM Academy will host many of the Law and Government-themed programs for Palmdale School District, such as the Inter-School Communication Council and the Model United Nations Program. The program will also field a Mock Trial team in conjunction with the program currently offered by our partners at Highland High School.

**LGA Specialized curriculum:** Our **Law and Government Pathway** 6<sup>th</sup> grade interdisciplinary curriculum offers an examination of laws and society with an emphasis on social contracts. For 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students explore History and Systems of Government as an extension of laws and societies. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students expand on knowledge gained from 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades and delve into Civilizations focusing on Civics; 8th grade includes a case study of US Government: how governments are formed and sustained. Teachers completed training to develop and enhance student leadership skills. We are planning to add a **foreign language lab** that can teach multiple languages, with software that will do both instruction and grading. We will upgrade the Spanish I classes to Honors.

Throughout the LGA academy, students will have the opportunity to meet local attorneys and government officials. In preparation for the Mock Trial, students will visit a courtroom and observe proceedings of a trial. In Mock Trial, student compete with more than 2,000 students in LA County. Students participate as lawyers, witnesses, court clerks, or bailiff, where they develop their analytical, logical reasoning, and communication skills.

The core of the LGA relies upon the six proven practices highlighted in the document *Revitalizing K-12 Civil Learning in CA: A Blueprint for Action*, LGA will include the six proven practices of civil learning. 1) Provide instruction in government, history, law democracy; 2) Incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events in the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important in their lives; 3) Design and implement programs with opportunities to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction; 4) Offer extra-curricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools and communities; 5) Encourage student participation in school governance; 6) Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures (Guilfoile & Delander, 2014). Practices will be integrated into social studies and English classes in grades 6-8, as well as LGA-specific courses.

**Civics and the Constitution.** 8th grade students will study the formation of the Union and history and process of writing the U.S. Constitution. Students will know the purpose and activities of the three branches of government and become familiar with the elements of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Amendments. Students taking the **Speech and Debate** courses will develop public speaking skills, including extemporaneous speaking, declamation, and storytelling. They will learn to research, develop an argument, question, and learn rebuttal

skills. Teachers will develop school-level debate competitions around topical issues. This course will be a prerequisite for participation in Model UN. Students will be encouraged to explore Youth Toastmasters, and will be encouraged to start a Teen Toastmasters club. **Legal Careers** offers a foundation in legal analysis and reasoning where students learn civil procedure and criminal law, with a focus on career planning, professionalism and ethics.

**Mock Trial** is an academic competition in which students participate as attorneys, witnesses, court clerks and bailiffs as they acquire a working knowledge of the judicial system. As team members, they study a hypothetical legal case, research legal documents, and receive guidance from volunteer attorneys on courtroom procedures and trial preparation. Students gain self-confidence in their deduction and reasoning capabilities and learn the power of exceptional communication and debate skills. **Model UN** will be a course to prepare students to participate in Model United Nations simulations. California YMCA Youth & Government have provided the Model UN (MUN) program to middle school students throughout California since 2001. PSD middle school students, as delegates, will participate in the program will peers from other schools. Students discuss international issues, discover other cultures, develop life-enhancing skills, and make new friends. Model UN for middle school and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students will be hosted and facilitated by DGM teachers and students. The four-month program culminates when delegates from around the state meet at the YMCA's annual Model UN Delegate Assembly. The Model UN class will focus on contemporary international issues and world geography. The course prepares students to be better global citizens who civilly engage with others in the world for peaceful conflict resolution and sustainable human development. Students focus on diplomacy, negotiation, and decision making in an international context. Students write a position paper on a country that is assigned to them. They learn to make oral arguments, make

motions, and learn the rules of procedures, and making motions. All this work culminates in a Model UN simulation where students represent the country assigned to their group.

**Environmental Law.** This is an interdisciplinary area of study that involves science and the law. DGM has a partner who currently is a Fuels Expert for the U.S. Department of Defense, working in Navy and Marine branches in the U.S. and Japan. (See Letter of Support in Appendix). The Fuels Expert communicate via Skype with students to discuss environmental issues as they relate to development of environmental regulations and enforcement, As a woman, and environmental scientist who began her career at Edwards Air Force Base here in the AV, the consultant is a role model who will encourage young women to consider a career in environmental science or law. She is married to an attorney who is also a Marine.

Our **Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)** program, while having traditional arts, will focus on “new media” and design skills. Students will use the technology of “new media” such as digital photography and design, video editing, and blog design to create the type of media that they have become accustomed to. They will also use these 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to develop brand identities and learn how to market themselves. This will be coupled with traditional aspects of VAPA such as music, art, theater, and our after-school drama and dance programs.

**Art and Government** interacts with the arts as from the perspective of regulator and patron. Like other forms of expression, art can inform, inspire or offend. Students will study arts as an expression of personal and social ideals reflecting personal and moral senses. Students will study regulation of artistic expression, copyright and plagiarism, learn how government funds the arts, and asking key questions such as “How is freedom of expression through art protected by the First Amendment?”

DGM plans to develop a **Journalism** program that will examine freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to obtain information or opinions without fear of government censorship or punishment. Students will explore various print and audio media, and analyze argument and persuasion. **Forensic Study.** Students will complete the PLTW module Medical Detectives from a medical-legal perspective. Students learn about the history of forensics, what are the safeguards to ensure forensic science is done properly – fingerprinting, capturing and preserving DNA evidence, how to collect evidence to build a legal case, etc. **Competitive Academics** will be a course in which students enhance their academic knowledge and practice problem solving in preparation for local and regional competitions. In arts and sciences, students compete in the annual Cyberquest, Mathletes, Lego Robotics, Science Olympiad, Dance Force competition, and music competitions. We will expand these events in the following years by providing school wide events for parents to attend such art shows (photography, film, fashion, etc.), Robotics, Mathletes, and other competitions.

DGM Academy Partnerships. Our Mock Trial team partners with Highland High School to practice for the Constitutional Rights Foundation Mock Trial Competition. We are working with AVUHSD to create a local middle school division for annual Mock Trial Competition. We partner with the YMCA to compete as a Model United Nations Team with other schools from across the district, and DGM will host the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Model UN. We coordinate with Worldstrides International Discovery to send students to Washington D.C. as well as a science discovery trip.

Student Recruitment. DGM will invite 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to attend a Crime Scene Investigation Day. Students will move from the investigation stage to the trial stage. They will end the day as the jury deciding if the defendant is innocent or guilty. We will visit feeder elementary schools and offer orientation days near the end of the school year.

## **Space and Aeronautics Gateway to Exploration - SAGE Academy**

Program Overview. SAGE Academy will open August 2017 as our Magnet School for Space and Aeronautics. This is a new magnet school located in the center of the City of Palmdale, serving students grades 6-8. Antelope Valley is a national leader in aerospace and aviation, so our theme, Space and Aeronautics, closely aligns with our aerospace and aviation industry both in Palmdale and the greater Antelope Valley. Unique to SAGE Academy is a fully functional Planetarium staffed by a director who will engage students in exploring space through the planetarium. He is a member of the Antelope Valley Astronomy Club. During an eclipse, the entire club gathers at the Planetarium with their telescopes to view the eclipse. SAGE Academy students will be involved in these experiences.

Magnet Program Curriculum and Opportunities. SAGE Academy will offer three pathways: **Space and Aeronautics Pathway**, PLTW and VAPA. The Space and Aeronautics Pathway will include two options: **Civil Air Patrol (CAP)** program and **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** development and training. Civil Air Patrol students will be introduced to the principals of flight, model rocketry, and other aerospace curricula while engaging in leadership training, a transfer skill for high school, college and career readiness. Courses of study in CAP include: rocketry, spacecraft, hot air balloons, space stations, astronauts, planets and moons, stars, the Hubble Telescope, gliders, drones and other radio-controlled aircraft. The Aerospace dimensions has six modules: 1) Aerospace Dimensions, 2) Introduction to flight, 3) Aircraft systems and environment, 4) Rockets, 5) Space environments and 6) Spacecraft.

**Model Rocketry.** CAP students will build and launch model rockets. If students complete the program as outlined in the handbook, they can qualify for the model rocketry badge. **Introduction to Cybersecurity.** This course is an introduction to current cyber threats

and provides activities for improving collective awareness and defense. **International Space Station** is built on thematic learning, which includes exploring careers in space, and introduces the concepts of microgravity and learning to grow crystals. Other thematic units include biographical study of flight pioneers Charles Lindberg, the Wright Brothers, and Amelia Earhart. SAGE Academy will have a Paxton Patterson Action Lab. This form of PBL includes automation and robotics. The newly named principal of SAGE Academy is building relationships with key personnel at Edwards Air Force Base and has been named an Honorary Commander for the Base.

Our industry partnership with The **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** has resulted in the development of a series of classes that will introduce the students to aviation, weather, air transportation, aviation regulations, navigation, and aircraft engines. The FAA modules include a **Flight Simulator Laboratory**. Students will engage in hands-on learning including time on two air flight simulators that mimic the air traffic controllers' environment. Students will learn the five essential skills for success not only for employment with the FAA, but for any career: communication, concentration, decision making, problem solving, and multi-tasking. The FAA is committed to our success as this program will provide a pipeline into their industry. Our partnership with the FAA includes hiring a consultant who has over 25 years of experience. She will help manage the implementation of our program including tours of airports (Burbank, Mojave, Fox Airfield, etc.), writing curricula, teacher training, access and volunteer opportunities at the Los Angeles County Air Show and Flight Simulator Lab.

As curriculum is developed in the core subject areas to support space and aeronautics themes, these two programs will become more robust. Students will leave middle school with leadership and academic skills applicable to high school, the aeronautics industry, and beyond.

**(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g. teachers' unions); critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.**

*Commitment and Capacity: Resources dedicated to achieving MSAP goals.* PSD receives federal funding under Title I, III, and VI that is dedicated to improving student achievement. In addition, we have state LCAP funding, 100% of which goes to academic improvement. As is evident from the extent of research and planning, the district is committed to student integration and to significantly increasing student achievement. We spent the past 25 months critically examining our achievement data, our practices, and our facilities. Millions in federal, state and local bond funding have been spent on planning, facilities, professional learning, and equipment/materials acquisition. We have created and are transitioning now to 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade middle schools that will become magnet academies in Fall 2017. There is unanimous support for magnet academies at all levels from the Board of Trustees and community to district, schools, parents, and students. (Please see Letters of Support in Appendix). We have the support of our teachers' union and classified employees for this proposed project. We are using school bond monies for facilities modernization to provide flexible space for student projects and to improve technology. We made significant commitments over the past two years to technology, with the purchase of classroom sets of Chromebooks for each student, and teacher training in using personal computers for problem solving, beyond internet research and PowerPoints. We have almost enough Chromebooks for 1:1 computing (each student has his/her own Chromebook). We are upgrading our technology infrastructure so that every student will have a school Gmail account and access to GoogleDocs to create and share work. Our Superintendent is working with the City

of Palmdale and the providers of broadband Internet services to install additional towers on school property to bring wireless access to families in their homes throughout Palmdale. This is a significant step that assures equal access to this powerful tool.

District support for MSAP. As detailed throughout this narrative, PSD has committed district funding to curriculum, professional learning, and facilities. In Year 1, we will create a **Magnet Schools Advisory Board that will serve as our Committee on Sustaining Magnet Schools.**

The MSA Board will be representative of our parent population, will include community and industry members, school and district leaders, and will also include student representation. We plan to have one to two students from each magnet school participate on the MSA Board in rotation. This **Board will meet quarterly.** There will also be a **Magnet School Advisory Committee at each magnet school, and this group will meet monthly.** To facilitate and sustain magnet schools, PSD created the position of Director of Curriculum and Instruction – Middle Schools who will serve as the Project Director for this MSAP grant and provide central office supervision of the magnet program. We selected Principals for the five magnet schools who are strong instructional leaders, who have a creative vision for the magnet school academies, and who are driven to implement this project with enthusiasm and fidelity.

Partnerships and Community Support. As detailed earlier in the Narrative, we have the strong support of the City of Palmdale, Los Angeles County Office of Education, California STEM network, our elected State and Congressional Representatives, and significant support from business and industry, including the aerospace industry. This support will help us make STEM and magnet education a reality for students in Palmdale, and will connect them with the community and the world. We will seek guidance and funding from our partners over the next several years to write themed curricula, develop local mentorships for students, and improve and



sustain our magnet schools. We have partnered with Innovate Ed to help us recruit and operationalize the Magnet Schools Advisory Board for effectiveness in planning, evaluation, and sustainability. (Please see Letters of Support and Commitment in the Appendix).

Marketing and Recruitment Plan. Marketing, outreach and recruitment of students matching key demographics will be critical to actualizing our voluntary desegregation plan and meeting our student integration goals. In addition to student and staff presentations and demonstration of student learning and projects to parents, elementary schools, and community, we realized we needed a marketing plan. Our plan has several elements:

PROMISE Magnet schools brochure. This brochure, translated into Spanish and other languages spoken by our community as practicable, will provide a detailed description of each of the magnet schools, the application process for enrolling students in their school of choice, the Magnet Support Teacher contact information at each site, and the Recruitment Center/Family Resource Center office hours for additional information.

PROMISE Magnet Schools Posters: Posters, translated into Spanish and other languages spoken by our community as practicable, will be developed and distributed to our city library, county offices, post office, DMV, local churches and businesses, and all schools in the district.

PROMISE Magnet Schools Print Advertisement: Print advertisements will be used in our local newspapers, *The Antelope Valley Press* and *Aerotech News and Review*. Additionally, three times a year PSD releases an insert magazine in the Antelope Valley Press known as *The Launch Pad*. Every edition of *The Launch Pad* will include updates on our magnet schools, information on how to enroll in our schools, and highlight upcoming events related to the magnet schools.

PROMISE Magnet School Tours: Three pre-scheduled tours at each site, every year, will welcome elementary school students, community members, and parents. These tours will highlight our magnet-themed programs.

PROMISE Magnet Schools Project Fair: Each January/February, prior to the open enrollment deadline, all magnet schools will participate in a PROMISE Magnet Fair at the Antelope Valley Mall. Each magnet academy will provide a visual display of their magnet themes that includes information on course offerings, academic and social clubs, athletics and open enrollment. Live demonstrations, including robotics, performing arts, and aeronautics projects will be scheduled throughout the day. District, school staff and students will be available to answer questions.

Magnet Recruitment Training: We will provide training that will enable all staff (secretarial, administrative, custodial, Parent Community Liaisons, etc.) to describe the magnet programs in a clear, concise, compelling and consistent way to all stakeholders including parents, students, and community members. A detailed PowerPoint presentation, brochures, posters and other recruitment material will be made available to all District staff.

**Multi-Year Sustainability Plan.** Beginning in Year 2, PSD will use the **MSAP Center Sustainability Planning** resources and **Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool** to begin our actionable and realistic sustainability plan. We will assess both internal and external resources and gaps, review and revise our Theory of Action, refine/revise strategies and actions, as well as develop new indicators based upon data. Through the MSA Board, we will continue engaging strong leadership, furthering each magnet academies' mission/vision/goals, continue to articulate magnet goals to parents and community after funding ends, extend and deepen our involvement with community and industry partners, as well as documenting and communicating magnet success. District funds will be used to upgrade or replace equipment and supplies. By the end of

Year 3, PSD will have a detailed sustainability plan based upon: 1) History, Progress, and Future Plans; 2) Strategic Considerations; 3) Magnet Academy Financing Plan; 4) an Action Plan and Timetable; and 5) Supporting Documents. During Years 4-5, each magnet academy will use the Sustainability Planning resources to make school-level assessments and modifications needed to sustain their academy focus. Increasing community partnerships for human, materials, and financial resources will be an essential school sustainability goal. Our current Sustainability Plan includes:

- Desegregation and Student Integration: Continue open enrollment, weighted lottery, and district-funded transportation to magnet academies; Increase community support for parent and student choice that supports desegregation
- Magnet Themes: Expand and diversify community partnerships with arts, music, and theater groups, artist in residence, aerospace and aeronautics industry, materials and design
- PLC: Professional Learning Communities are established at each school; Staff works collaboratively to support students; Teachers imbedded in magnet-themed courses and STEAM will support new teachers, using a Trainer of Trainers model
- PBL: Magnet and STEAM curricula and established practices continue to support PBL and PLTW as critical for teaching and learning; Follow-up training using LCAP funds
- Community Partnerships: A growing need for aerospace engineers, managers, and technical design and manufacturing will fuel district-industry partnerships that may include shared and new funding
- School Climate: As student behavior improves through consistent, respectful teaching and recognition of positive behavior, suspensions and expulsions are reduced. Staff improves in positive classroom management, thus increasing academically engaged time. Magnet teachers



support training and implementation of *Foundations* in district elementary schools.

➤ Continuous Evaluation: Schools use authentic and timely assessment processes to provide corrective feedback to students. Grade-level and cross-discipline data teams continue to meet. Principals and teacher leaders share, graph, and post student data and work products. A continuous cycle of improvement results from true professional learning communities

PSD is committed to creating viable local career options for our students. To this end, we are determined to sustain the initiatives of this MSAP investment. PSD will leverage state and federal funds to continue the activities undertaken through this grant project. We are committed to student integration and eliminating isolation for AA, EL, and low SES students. Our School Board will dedicate district funds to continue the magnet academies, including funding themes, professional learning, and revising curricula to stay current with developing trends and technologies. Our MSAP PROMISE community partners assured us they are with us beyond the grant period, as they, too, are invested in community development through educating our youth. We will expand parent partnerships.

California Department of Education funding structure includes a baseline grant to schools and “supplemental concentration” funding to address the needs of priority groups that include English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and Foster Youth. PSD receives supplementary funding for these students. Under the LCAP requirement, PSD must improve academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for these groups. Through our Sustainability Plan, PSD will ensure that the systems and practices that we put in place with MSAP funding will become institutionalized. We developed a 34-page detailed Work Plan to guide our MSAP project implementation. (Please see Quality of Management Plan).

**(3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

As evidence of our **commitment and capacity** to ongoing, as opposed to “one time” teacher, administrator and staff professional learning, we developed a comprehensive Professional Learning Plan, articulated below.

Research indicates, “Professional development is the strategy schools and school districts use to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their practice throughout their career” (Mizell, 2010, p. 1). Research has shown that **teaching quality and school leadership are the most important factors in raising student achievement** (Mizell, 2010). Furthermore, “For business and community leaders, the quality of a community’s education system relates directly to the economic success of the community” (Mizell, 2010, p. 1).

Numerous studies have documented the value of professional learning (PL) when it is **systemic, planned, thoughtfully designed, and of sufficient quantity and intensity – “dose” – to make a difference in teacher practice. PL must also be followed by implementation, coaching, reflection, and evaluation of its effectiveness.** We designed our MSAP PROMISE PL plan after analyzing student and community needs and data. Our plan addresses student and teacher needs and **directs resources to training, coaching, consultation and collaboration** that has been shown to be effective for the problems we want to address. PL is most useful within the context of the teacher’s daily work. For this reason, our plan brings experts, coaches, and consultants *to Palmdale* to work with our staff on site as much as possible. This is also cost effective; rather than send teams to conferences, on-site training allows us to involve all our teachers in PL and to support interactive learning.

Professional development, according to the literature, includes not only workshops and seminars, but also collaborative learning among colleagues, independent reading and research, observations of a colleagues' work, and other forms of peer consultation. PSD Professional Learning Plan (PLP) incorporates all these strategies. **To personalize learning, each teacher will develop an annual Personalized Learning Plan** that incorporates MSAP training but may also include personal goals. A visual representation of this Theory of Change is:

**Personal Goals + MSAP-Aligned Training/Support + Follow-up and Accountability =  
Teacher Growth**

As important as personalized learning and high quality training and support are, these are not enough to ensure effective practice. Principals, District administrators, and the Project Evaluation team must also develop accountability measures – outputs, indicators, and outcomes – to assess teacher effectiveness.

**Just like with students, we know we need to pace teacher professional learning.** We must focus our efforts on one to two areas at a time and continue the work until we have achieved our stated goal(s). If we try to do too much at once, our teachers will be overwhelmed and we will not achieve our objectives. Expectations for professional growth are distributed over the 5-year funding period. We developed a **detailed 5-Year PL Plan** (PLP). (Please see Professional Learning Plan in Appendix). The first page of our district-level PLP is presented below.



**Palmdale PROMISE  
Professional Learning Plan  
Year 1 2017-2018**



Participant	Professional Learning	Completion Date	Total Hours
Certificated and Classified Staff	Safe & Civil Schools – 4 full days of Foundations	June 30, 2018	24
Teachers and TOSAs	STEAM Curriculum Integration and Development Writing, Revising, and Implementing	June 30, 2018	10
Teachers and Administrators	Project Based Learning or Universal Design for Learning *Not all teachers will complete training in the same year	Varied	
Teachers and TOSAs	Specialized Learning (e.g. Read 180, Co-Teaching, Conferences and Outside Trainings)	June 30, 2018	5
Teachers, TOSAs, and Administrators	Book Study Mindset by Carol Dweck	June 30, 2018	5
Teachers, TOSAs, and Administrators	AVID WICOR Training – Quarterly training, 2 hours each for a total of 8 hours	June 30, 2018	8
Teachers and TOSAs	Weekly PLCs – Answering the 4 PLC Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum &amp; Lesson Design</li> <li>- CFA/Rubric</li> <li>- Review Student Data</li> <li>- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)</li> <li>- Answering the 4 PLC Questions:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is it that we want our students to know and be able to do?</li> <li>2. How will we know when they have learned it?</li> <li>3. How will we respond when students don't learn it?</li> <li>4. What will we do when they already know it?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	On-going (25 hours per year, embedded weekly)	25
Every teacher will develop a Personalized 5-year Professional Learning Plan			<b>77 Total Hours</b>

**(4) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory.**

*Evidence of strong theory* means “a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a **logic model**” (Education Department General Administrative Regulations, Title 34, CFR, Part 77). PSD developed a **detailed Palmdale PROMISE District Logic Model** and a **School-level Logic Model for each magnet academy**. The complete Logic Model and school-level models are provided in the Appendix. A one-page District Logic Model is presented below:





Palmdale PROMISE District Logic Model (One Page)



Project Resources →	Project Activities →	Project Outputs →	Short-Term Outcomes →	Medium-Term Outcomes →	Long-Term Outcomes
District support for Project Director, District Leadership	<b>Project Management</b> Principal leadership development	Management of project budget, Project work plan, Equipment and materials	Magnet support staff hired, PL training, Develop magnet-themed curricula	Implementation with fidelity of district and magnet activities; Increased student engagement	Systemic reforms in teaching practices are institutionalized
District Leadership Voluntary Desegregation Plan MSAP Funds Weighted Lottery, Marketing Plan	<b>Desegregation:</b> Student recruitment, School of Choice Applications; Weighted Lottery	<b>District:</b> Logos, recruiting brochures, PSAs, Number of School Choice applications <b>School Level:</b> Recruiting visits to elementary schools. Number of Road Shows, Parent/student tours of magnet schools	<b>District:</b> Students apply and enroll in magnet schools of choice through Weighted Lottery. <b>School Level:</b> Peer-to-peer mentors through WEB	<b>District:</b> Increasing numbers of students, parents exercise school choice. <b>School Level:</b> AA, EL, female, students with SLD enroll in magnet and honors courses to increase integration.	Reduce/prevent/ eliminate minority group and low SES isolation in middle schools. Increase enrollment and interaction of diverse students in challenging academic courses. Sustain project reforms over time
District financial commitment to professional learning, evidence-based interventions, technology for teaching and learning, use of student data  MSAP funds for magnet-specific training and interventions	<b>Academic Growth:</b> District focus: reading, math, science, technology, PLTW, AVID MSAP Professional Learning, Magnet curricula, PBL, PLCs <b>Academic Interventions:</b> Math, Reading, English Learners	<b>District:</b> Number of hours of PL in reading, math, NGSS, PLTW, technology, AVID <b>Project:</b> Number of hours PL: magnet curricula, PBL, PLCs, READ 180, EL intervention, WICOR, math intervention, Number of students receiving targeted intervention	Teachers engage in PL, PLCs to develop magnet instruction, PBL and increase student integration and learning. Students improve in reading, math through evidence-based intervention classes. Students increase STEM and VAPA skills	<b>District:</b> Teachers implement project strategies across the curriculum. Students improve reading, writing, math, English development skills. <b>School:</b> Magnet themes boost student learning through PBL. Students compete locally and at the state level in academic and STEM.	Students are proficient on State standards in reading, language arts, math. Significant reduction in number of LTEL at middle schools. 50 or more students at each magnet school take and master Algebra I or Geometry annually.
District commitment to facilities, equipment, Parent-Community Liaisons, Parent-Family Resource Centers Community and Industry Partnerships	<b>Magnet Themes and Parent Engagement:</b> Community partnerships Magnet School Advisory Board and Committees Parent Academy for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	<b>District:</b> Parent/Community Liaison engages parents in neighborhoods, schools, community <b>School Level:</b> Number of neighborhood and school meetings to engage "hard to reach" parents	<b>District:</b> Magnet School Advisory Board; school visits <b>Schools:</b> Magnet School Advisory Committees; school visits	<b>Schools:</b> Students complete 3 or more magnet-themed courses; complete Digital Portfolio; Complete 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project	Students gain knowledge and skills in STEM, VAPA and magnet-specific themes and are prepared for high school and college. Parents of all racial groups are engaged in educational decisions.
MSAP funds for Foundations, WEB District commitment to CKH	<b>Equity and School Climate:</b> RCT and implementation of Foundations, WEB, CKH, Unconscious Bias training	Number of teachers completing Equity and School Climate trainings; Number of students participating in WEB	Schools implement positive expectations and schoolwide PBIS; Reduction in office discipline referrals; Students receive counseling services	Total number of suspensions and suspensions of AA students decrease; Schools are safe and orderly	Improved school climate & student-staff relationships; Eliminate disproportionate suspensions; Students are safe and connected to school; Staff and parents report schools are safe and orderly

**(c) Quality of Management Plan. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

The Project Director, working with the Deputy Superintendent, the Director of Budget and Finance, and other district administrators, is responsible for development, scheduling, implementation and oversight/management of all aspects of this proposed plan. Principals will take responsibility for directing activities at their schools, working in collaboration with the Project Director, supervise and evaluate site personnel. PSD has won and successfully completed



many federal grant projects. We have the management capacity and accountability to implement this MSAP project on time, on budget, and with fidelity.

*District-Level Management.* The Project Director, working closely with the Deputy Superintendent, are assigned primary responsibility for management and implementation of this MSAP plan.

**Palmdale PROMISE Work Plan.**

PSD administrative leaders developed a detailed, 34-page Work Plan for the execution of project



**Palmdale PROMISE Work Plan**



Month	Key Actions	Data Source / Evaluation Methodology	Person / Area Responsible
<b>2017-2018</b>			
<b>September 2017</b>	<b>MSAP District Team</b> Team reviews Work Plan	Assignments given to key personnel with expected timelines and deadlines. Questions and concerns addressed.	Deputy Supt. Project Director
	District Cabinet Members	Cabinet is informed of key actions and their role for successful implementation of MSAP grant. <b>The Desegregation Plan</b> is reviewed.	Deputy Supt.
	Meet with the District Chief Business Officer	MSAP Budget timelines and deadlines are reviewed. Processes and procedures are agreed upon. Business office very clear on their role.	Deputy Supt. Project Director
	Magnet School Principals	The Desegregation Plan and Work Plan is reviewed, questions answered. Begin meeting with teachers to review and monitor Personalized Learning Plans.	Project Director Project Coordinator
	Project Evaluation	Finalize contract with grant evaluator and place on Board of Trustees Agenda.	Deputy Supt. Project Director
	FAA Consultant	Finalize contract with FAA Consultant. Place on Board of Trustees Agenda.	Deputy Supt. Project Director
	InnovateEd	Finalize contract with InnovateEd to secure building of coherence and ensuring sustainability.	Deputy Supt. Project Director
	<b>Marketing &amp; Targeted Recruitment</b> Marketing Consultant	Hire a marketing consultant.	Project Director
	Implement Marketing Plan	Scheduling of elementary site visits for recruiting is completed by November. Principals design their marketing material and complete by October.	Project Director Principals
	District Recruitment/Resource Center	District Recruitment/Resource Center is complete by October.	Project Director
	Contract w/ Smart Choice Technologies	Secure contract with Smart Choice for weighted lottery system. Clarify weighted lottery priorities.	Project Director Asst. Supt. of Student Service
	Parent Night at Parent Centers	Student led parent nights sharing learning and activities. Inventory marketing materials and replace as needed and revise videos.	MSTs
	<b>Professional Development</b> AVID Contract	Finalize contract for AVID On-site Training. Place on Board of Trustees in October.	Project Director

strategies and activities, a timeline, and responsibilities of district personnel. The complete Work Plan is presented in the Appendix to this Narrative. We include the first page of the Work Plan here as evidence of that the detail and timeline of this plan is sufficient to execute the project activities on time and within budget.



**(2) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives is brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**

*Diversity of Perspectives.* PSD developed four strategies for seeking diverse perspectives from parents, community, and project participants: **1) Magnet Schools Advisory Boards (MSA), 2) Web-based Communication, 3) Teacher, Student, Parent, and Partner Focus Groups and Surveys, 4) Community Presentations/Outreach, and 5) Student Ambassador Program** that includes student representatives on the Board of Trustees and will add representatives to the Magnet Schools Advisory Board and school-level committees.

*Strategy: MSA Boards.* As outlined above, one vehicle for gathering parent and community input to the magnet schools plan and sharing information on progress is through the school level Magnet Advisory Committees and district Magnet School Advisory Board. The school-level advisory committees will meet monthly at each magnet school. The District Magnet School Advisory Board will meet quarterly. The school-level boards will include parents, a teacher from each grade level, and magnet community partners, and two students. At the district level, the board will be composed of major community partners, a representative from each magnet school, two students, diverse magnet parents representing student race/ethnicity and SES, one Principal, and the Project Director. In addition, major community partners will be members of the district Magnet Advisory Board. At each meeting, the school committees and district advisory board will receive an update from staff on the **project implementation**, successes, and next steps. The **budget** will be reviewed to ensure project funds are being spent for the equipment, materials, processes and activities as described in the grant narrative. These advisory board meetings will

be open, public meetings, with opportunities for parents and members of the business community to attend. Non-members may address the board, using the procedure for public speaking adopted by the District Board of Trustees. Minutes of the meeting will be taken, and a report of the meeting generated. The meeting calendar, agendas, minutes and reports will be placed on the district website. From time to time, students will present evidence of learning, achievement or projects completed. As with all district meetings, translation services are available and provided.

**Strategy: Web-Based Communication.** To make sure that the public has access to information about implementation of the MSAP project, the Project Director and technical staff will create a Magnet Schools website at the school and district level. Highlights of school and student activities will be featured, with each school updating its information periodically. The website will also advertise the application and enrollment process, dates and forms, and scheduled dates for magnet school tours. The magnet website will be updated as needed, at least quarterly. In addition, each magnet school will update its site website to include a description of the magnet program, magnet-themed activities, important meetings, enrollment process and information, and contact information for key project personnel.

**Strategy: Teacher, Student, Parent, Partner Focus Groups and Surveys.** Each Spring, the Project Director, Magnet Support Teachers, and Evaluation Team will hold teacher/staff, student and parent Focus Groups at each magnet academy. Key questions will be developed. Focus Group responses will be recorded and shared with the Magnet Advisory Board and Committees, and will become part of the annual Evaluation Report. Each Spring, magnet academy staffs will complete the online School Climate Survey (WestEd); parents will complete the online School Climate Survey for Parents. Students will complete the online California Healthy Kids Survey.



District and school-level results are compiled by WestEd and provided to the district. This information will also be part of the annual Evaluation Report.

**Strategy: Community Presentations/Outreach. Magnet academy tours** for parents, students, and community will be scheduled at each magnet school during October and November each year. PSD also plans to showcase student projects and productions in the community throughout the year. These include music and drama performances at the Palmdale Playhouse, hosting the Model UN competition, showcasing robotics and engineering projects at the Antelope Valley Mall, and other opportunities to share student projects and performances.

**(d) Quality of Personnel. (1) The qualifications of project personnel.**

**The Project Director is highly qualified to manage the project.** The **Director of Curriculum and Instruction – Middle Schools** was selected by the Superintendent to serve in the *district-funded* capacity of Project Director. PSD wishes to fund the Project Director position with district funds to ensure accountability and sustainability of this PROMISE plan across years. The Project Director is responsible for providing leadership in the ongoing development and improvement of curriculum and instruction in the magnet schools. She assists in the planning, organization, support and evaluation of the curricular and assessment programs of this MSAP plan and directs all staff professional learning. She works collaboratively with District personnel to advocate for high quality educational programs for all middle school students. As Project Director, she supports student achievement by ensuring the successful implementation of the District's MSAP and PROMISE educational goals. The Director will conduct the planning, professional development and implementation of the magnet middle school academies, as specified by this project proposal. The designated Project Director has served as an elementary

and middle school Principal, Assistant Principal, Professional Development Coordinator, curriculum specialist, and a teacher at the intermediate school level (grades 7-8). She holds California certification in *Cross-cultural, Linguistic and Academic Development*. She has extensive experience as a teacher and director of AVID programs, and was certified through Harvard School of Education in conducting Instructional Rounds in middle schools. She also serves on the Board of Antelope Valley College.

**Other key personnel are qualified to manage the project.** (See Appendix, Resumes of Key Project Personnel).

***District-funded personnel:*** Superintendent. PSD Superintendent inspires the vision of the Palmdale PROMISE and supports all staff in being accountable for the Palmdale Mission. He oversees all aspects of the District's functioning, including top-level management of federal grants. *As a bilingual and bicultural role model for our students, families, and community*, he personally promotes Palmdale School District with parents, community, regional and state opportunities. He serves on numerous community, state, and professional boards. He is equity driven, student focused, and data centered.

Deputy Superintendent. The Deputy Superintendent is responsible for working with the Superintendent to provide leadership and in directing and supervising the development, maintenance, and improvement of the district's educational programs. She holds a Doctorate of Education in Organizational Leadership, and has served as Chief Leadership Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Director of Student Services, Highland High School Principal, Assistant Principal, high school Counselor, and teacher. She has supervised International Baccalaureate school programs, special education programs including the high school district's Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Emotionally Disturbed, and Autism programs, and

several high school academies including Law and Government Careers and Arts and Multimedia. She is the line supervisor for the Project Director.

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services. Our Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services provides leadership in establishing system-wide goals, assists in the development of a comprehensive program plan, and oversees areas aligned to academic outcomes, including instructional improvement, Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, Academically Gifted Services, Fine Arts, ELD/World Languages, Exceptional Children, Federal Programs/Title I, Migrant Education and Pre-K- 8 Instruction. As the District lead for Research and Accountability, she directs investigation, analysis and method formulation for handling special projects, evaluates final results, reviews reports, directs special projects, and implements technical assistance for schools with low student achievement. She has expertise in continuous improvement cycles for schools with average to high achievement. She is bilingual/bicultural.

Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services. This individual provides leadership and oversight of the Special Education, Student Services and Health Services. He provides direction and vision for Special Education programs, Alternative Education programs including Community Day School and Independent Study, Welfare and Attendance initiatives, Welcome and Enrollment Center, and School Nurses/Immunization Clinic.

Director, Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Our LCAP Director will work with the Project Director to ensure we meet our achievement goals. She is responsible for the leadership, direction, assessment, support, monitoring and supervision of the LCAP and its alignment with the District's Strategic Plan and this Palmdale PROMISE; identifying and implementing a process for reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the LCAP at the District and site levels, serves as a resource and maintains a high level of knowledge about LCAP, LCFF, CCSS,

SBAC, and current best practices and planning resources. She conducts outreach and builds strong relationships and partnerships with school personnel, facilitates parent/community/stakeholder meetings for the District around LCAP, and supervises, coordinates, and monitors contract procedures. She will assist in the collection and reporting of MSAP project student data.

Director of Academic Achievement – Target Populations. The Director of Academic Achievement—Target Populations leads the District in implementing programs and services to improve outcomes for English Learners including increased academic achievement, higher reclassification rates and a reduction in the number and percentage of Long Term EL.

Principals. Each of our five middle school principals has experience with diverse and economically disadvantaged students. They themselves are ethnically diverse, and mirror the Palmdale community. All have experience with curriculum development, team building, professional learning, data analysis, closing the achievement gap, and AVID.

Coordinator of Educational Technology. The Technology Coordinator holds credentials in both teaching and administration. She has more than 13 years' experience writing and designing technology plans and has served as a developer for the California Technology Use Plan.

District Coordinator of Testing and Assessment. Our Coordinator of Testing and Assessment assists in monitoring student data including Local Progress Monitoring, CAASPP, enrollment and attendance, and suspensions and expulsions. She provides reports for schools, the district, and special projects. She has served as an Assistant Principal at Shadow Hills Middle School, and worked as Special Projects, AVID, and GATE Coordinator.

Administrative Assistant to the Project Manager. A skilled, technologically proficient classified Administrative Assistant will assist the Project Director at the district level. The Assistant will assist with development of letters and forms, magnet school reports, data management, magnet

applications and enrollment, ordering and tracking supplies, and will assist with publicizing and marketing the magnet school programs.

School Counselors. Each middle school employs a School Counselor. Under this Palmdale PROMISE MSAP plan, Counselors will continue to assist students with academic and social development at each magnet academy. Our Counselors will also assist the Principal and Magnet Support Teachers (MST) to achieve student recruitment, transition, and student support.

Counselors will engage in targeted recruitment of girls, African American, English Learner and students with SLD to attend and succeed in challenging academic courses in the magnet schools.

Counselors will recruit target students through small group sessions with identified 5<sup>th</sup> graders and will provide explicit information on enrollment, transition and magnet pathways using Carol

Dweck's "growth mindset" ideals. Counselors will also spend additional time recruiting at elementary schools that have the lowest socioeconomic status (SES). These schools will receive intense recruitment efforts including parent nights around the choices of magnet schools and magnet pathways. Counselors will also attend other recruitment activities as appropriate.

Counselors will be responsible for facilitating the transitions between elementary school and middle school as well as the transition into high school. Counselors will continue to provide academic, social/emotional, and college/career support to all magnet students with a concentration on our focus groups (girls, African American students, low SES, English Learners, and students with SLD). Small group sessions for the focus groups will be scheduled around grades, transitions, course and pathway selection, growth mindset, and social/emotional support.

College/Career Fairs will host guest speakers that represent the focus students (female astronauts, female/African American neurosurgeons, etc.) and if available small group meetings with these guests will be scheduled. Counselors will prepare a three-year plan of activities

(lessons that support the California Standards and College and Career Readiness) and will present this information to 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents. Counselors and MSTs will support students in completing the digital portfolio, which will be housed in GoogleDocs, and will be updated each trimester.

**(2) The qualifications of personnel, including experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project, including the key personnel’s knowledge and experience in curriculum development and desegregation strategies.**

***MSAP Funded Personnel. Magnet Support Teacher - Teacher on Special Assignment***

***(TOSA).*** Five teachers, one for each magnet academy, who are highly qualified in magnet themes or STEAM curricular areas will be hired to coordinate the magnet school program at each academy. Magnet Support Teachers (MST) will assist the Project Director and Principals with project-related duties at each academy. MSTs will have a strong technology and science background or visual/performing arts experience and will work with site administrators and the Project Director to implement the magnet school themes, ensure application with fidelity, assist with professional learning and coaching, and will collect school-level data for MSAP reports. MSTs will assist the Project Director with marketing efforts. MSTs will have primary responsibility for recruitment and enrollment efforts to our target communities, will schedule and supervise student presentations and “road shows,” and will schedule and present the parent nights around the choices of magnet schools and STEAM courses. MSTs will provide teacher support, concentrating on our focus groups - females, African American, low SES, English Learners, and students with SLD. (See Job Description – Teacher on Special Assignment).

**District MSAP Project Coordinator** monitor and facilitate implementation. Assist principals and MSTs with the logistics of implementing and maintaining common practices and site-themes



specific goals of the grant / Provides support with planning of PL for the project. Provides support in gathering and analyzing data across project schools. Monitor parent involvement activities. Facilitate collaboration meetings with the district. Organize district level meetings and staff with MSTs. Schedule and support the activities of the MSA Board.

Consultants. Palmdale School District will hire a math consultant who is a Professor at Antelope Valley College. Her duties and support for our MSAP PROMISE plan were described above in Quality of Project Plan.

External Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team will be directed by an independent consultant with experience in school desegregation and formal training and experience evaluating federally funded grants and education programs. The Team will have expertise in designing multiyear evaluations, developing programs for diverse learners, guiding staff in data review processes, analyzing and reporting trends, completing statistical analyses, and generating annual and final performance reports. The Evaluation Team will lead a collaborative evaluation effort, implement the evaluation design, assist with data collection procedures, provide monthly process observations, analyze data and report progress semi-annually to stakeholders. The Team will work with the Project Director and District administration to monitor fidelity of project implementation, make data-driven improvement suggestions, identify areas of project strength for replication and dissemination, and develop grant performance reports.

**Magnet-Themed Teachers. Teachers who will provide instruction in magnet schools are qualified to implement the special curriculum of the magnet schools.** We have teachers on staff that have advanced training in PLTW, Vex, and Lego Robotics and our music teachers are highly qualified as well, winning several state competitions with our Advanced and Honor Bands

Our middle school teachers have experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project, including knowledge of and experience in curriculum development, lesson design, and differentiated instruction to address the needs of diverse learners. Several are bilingual and/or bicultural, and hold the California Bilingual Authorization of the Cross-Cultural Language Academic Development (B-CLAD) Credential. All have the Cross-Cultural Language Academic Development (CLAD) Certification. Most hold Secondary Subject-matter Credentials. Through our Professional Learning Plan, teacher knowledge and abilities will be strengthened in key areas of this magnet school plan including diversity, cultural competence, and magnet-themed expertise. (Please see the Resumes of Key Project Personnel in the Appendix.)

STEAM and Magnet-Specific Teachers. One challenge to implementing an effective and authentic STEAM and aerospace-themed magnet program is acquiring and retaining middle school teachers with deep subject matter knowledge, particularly in our magnet themes of engineering and design, medical health, robotics, computer programming, aeronautics and space, advanced mathematics, visual and performing arts, and law and government. Our current teaching staff is highly qualified in the sciences and mathematics. We anticipate a need to hire up to two new teachers at each middle school for core magnet-themed subjects. Our teachers need deep subject matter knowledge of biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, civil engineering, and visual and performing arts in addition to documented success in closing the achievement gap for diverse learners. PSD will require that each new teacher have a college major closely related to his/her subject in addition to a secondary teaching credential. PSD will rely on our local aerospace, FAA, civil engineering and design consulting partners to work with us in developing and writing the curriculum scope and sequence for our specialized magnet themes. They will also provide job-specific visits and teacher training. Our Professional Learning Plan supports our

teachers to increase their knowledge in engineering, robotics, biology, and technology through attending summer institutes to develop or advance subject-matter expertise. To strengthen our visual and performing arts programs, we are seeking two additional art and theater arts teachers with these college majors and credentials.

*As part of nondiscriminatory employment practices, PSD will ensure that all personnel are selected for employment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.* In addition to federal and state laws requiring nondiscriminatory hiring practices, PSD Board Policy complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and specifies fair and nondiscriminatory practices. PSD is an equal opportunity employer. Our Board Policy states that the District will develop a plan and make any reasonable accommodations to the work environment for an individual with a disability both in the job application process and in performing the essential functions of the position for which s/he is hired. We are proud that members of the Board of Trustees, our administrators, teachers, and classified employees reflect the broad diversity of the Palmdale community.

**(e) Quality of Project Evaluation. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence of promise.**

**Evaluation Studies will be completed to produce Evidence of Promise.** Evidence of promise is defined as “**empirical evidence** to support the theoretical linkage(s) between at least one **critical component** and at least one **relevant outcome** presented in the Logic Model for the proposed process, product, strategy or practice” (Title 34 of Code of Federal Regulations, Part 77). Empirical evidence is satisfied by a correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias, a quasi-experimental design (QED), or a randomized control trial (RCT). **PSD will conduct**



**three studies to produce evidence of promise: 1) A RCT replicating the Ward and Gersten (2013) study of *Foundations*; 2) A QED to measure the effect of the Math Intervention class on students' math gains; and 3) A QED to measure the effect of READ 180 on middle school students' reading comprehension achievement gains.** Results of the studies will be summarized with statistical analyses in the Final Project Report and will be presented to staff, parents, and community.

**RCT. Method.** Two project schools will be randomly selected to receive *Foundations* training and coaching in Year 1. Training and coaching will extend into Year 2 to ensure fidelity of implementation. Safe and Civil Schools trainers and the Evaluation Team will monitor both schools for fidelity of implementation using the Safe and Civil Schools' Benchmarks of Quality tool. The remaining three project schools will serve as wait-list controls. Outcome measures are total number of suspensions and number suspensions of AA students following one full year of implementation of the *Foundations* process. Randomization helps ensure internal validity – that the change is due to the treatment, and promotes external validity, allowing generalization to other schools using *Foundations*. **Critical Components.** The critical components for this study are 1) the number of staff completing all days of *Foundations* training, and 2) School-wide implementation with fidelity by 90% or more staff members of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports processes as defined by the *Foundations* manual and measured by the Safe and Civil Schools' Benchmarks of Quality tool. **Relevant Outcomes** are: 1) the total number of suspensions at the end of Year 2 as compared with 2015-16 baseline; and 2) the number of suspensions of AA students at the end of Year 2 compared with baseline. Other relevant outcomes include the percent of teachers who report the school is safe and orderly on the Staff School Climate Survey, and the percent of students who report they feel safe at their school on

the California Healthy Kids Survey following Year 2 of implementation. Data Analysis will be completed as in the Ward and Gersten (2013) study using a differences-in-differences analysis comparing Cohort 1 (implementation) schools vs. Cohort 2 (wait-list control). This analysis estimates the effect of the *Foundations* training and implementation on the relevant outcome variables.

**QED for READ 180 and Math Intervention.** The effects on academic achievement for READ 180 and the Math Intervention class will be evaluated over time via repeated assessments.

Method. District Local Progress Measures (LPM) will be made on students the trimester before (Time 1) and just prior to receiving the READ 180 or math intervention (Time 2). Students will receive the reading or math intervention for one academic year, and LPM will be taken at two points during the intervention trial and two points after the students complete the intervention. In this way, PSD will be able to document, with some certainty, that the intervention had an effect on reading or math achievement, and that the intervention was sufficient to enable the student to continue to make academic progress after the intervention ends. For the Math Intervention study, the Critical Component is the number of hours of training and coaching received by the math intervention teachers. The Relevant Outcome is student achievement on District LPM and the State CAASPP in math. For READ 180, the Critical Components are the number of teachers completing the required READ 180 training, and implementation of the components of the READ 180 program with fidelity. The Relevant Outcome is student achievement on District LPM and the State CAASPP in reading.

**Using the Logic Models for program evaluation.** Results of the QED studies depends on both Process and Outcome Evaluation. PSD built this PROMISE plan on strong program theory through development of a **District Logic Model and a Logic Model for each magnet**

**academy.** (Please see Logic Models in the Appendix). Evaluation is conducted to provide information that participants and stakeholders need to make decisions about program resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Program evaluation is a process that drives continuous quality improvement and provides information about the use of resources and the impact they had on intended recipients. *Evaluation will determine how successful our project is in meeting its intended outcomes, including our goals for desegregation and increasing student achievement.*

Process Evaluation. The most critical feature of program evaluation is **process evaluation.**

Process observations begin early in the implementation timeline. “Using data and evidence keeps the improvement process guided toward the desired outcomes” (Hale, et al., 2017, p. 7).

**Implementation of the project components with fidelity is the most important aspect of evaluation during the first two years.** Our Evaluation Team will make monthly site visits to each project school to assess implementation of project components; the team will observe Professional Learning days, PLCs, Magnet School Advisory Board and Committees, and will meet twice each month with the Project Director and District administration. Student work products will be collected and archived as appropriate. LPM, District STAR, and CAASPP data will be used to measure achievement gains.

Our continuous improvement process began with five problem statements for which we developed goals and expected outcomes. We will evaluate our identified strategies and activities by tracking outputs and desired short-, mid- and long-term outcomes via measurable goals. Our evaluation process is iterative – data are collected, analyzed, and discussed frequently – at least monthly - so that adjustments can be made to the activities, interventions or programs. Then, the activity or intervention can be refined for subsequent implementation, data are collected, analyzed, and results are evaluated again relative to our objectives and desired outcomes. Our

evaluation plan ensures that a problem-solving orientation contributes to continuous improvement. Our Process Evaluation plan is based upon WestEd’s model for evidence-based improvement: Inform (analyze needs) – Select (examine and identify effective programs/practices)– Plan (develop implementation strategies and actions) – Implement (check for fidelity)– Analyze (conduct summative assessment; monitor data and progress; evaluate desired outcomes)– then Plan again (Hale, et al., 2017, p. 8).

Evaluation Questions from the Logic Model. In the Logic Models, we developed a set of questions to guide the project evaluation process:

Resources. To what degree were the project resources/capacity sufficient to implement the project effectively? Were resources used effectively to produce desired change?

Activities. To what degree were the project strategies and activities conducted as intended? How did the district and schools identify students to serve? How effective was the Voluntary Desegregation Plan? The plan to integrate students? What was the effect of Marketing and Recruitment on student enrollment in the magnet academies? How effective were the magnet themes in attracting and retaining students? To what degree was the dose of professional learning sufficient for teachers to attain mastery of the process, curriculum, or program? To what degree did students receive sufficient instruction and practice of the concept, skill, process or curriculum to demonstrate understanding and mastery of the knowledge or skill and to appropriately apply the knowledge/skills to real-life problems?

Outputs. What were the levels of student enrollment in magnet schools? What was the increase in AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD in challenging courses? How many teachers participated in PL and PLCs? How many parents increased participation in school and district



leadership activities? How did parent diversity in leadership compare with community demographics?

Outcomes and Impacts. To what degree did the program achieve its short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes? What was the impact of the Voluntary Desegregation Plan? What was the impact of the strategies and activities on reading and English/Language Arts achievement? On math achievement? On school climate and safety? On disproportionality in suspensions? What was the involvement and impact of business/community partnerships on the implementation of magnet themes? What is the evidence that students benefitted from the magnet-themed curricula and activities?

Additional Questions. What were the barriers to implementation? What are the “lessons learned?” What would participants do differently? What are the parents’ perceptions of the magnet school programs?

To answer these questions, both Process and Summative evaluation methods will be used. Project staff, parents, community partners and students will participate annually in focus groups and Key Informant interviews.

**(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.**

*Data Collection.* Program evaluation is data driven. Both quantitative and qualitative data sources will be used to determine project effectiveness and report project outcomes.

**Outcome (Summative) Evaluation.** The purpose of summative evaluation is to quantify student progress and program improvement toward identified goals and performance measures. The



Evaluation Team will work with the Project Director and district staff to collect GPRA data and to analyze data on desegregation and student achievement, as well as project-level performance measures. The methodology proposed for the outcome evaluation is quantitative data analysis that will be summarized using descriptive statistics and objective reporting of changes in student achievement. Multiple quantitative data sources will be used to determine magnet school program effectiveness and to report data for the GPRA measures. Qualitative observations and data will be used to understand and interpret quantitative results.

**Methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.** The Evaluation Team, working in collaboration with the Project Director, will collect quantitative information to report on GPRA and project goals:

**GPRA GOAL 1 – Palmdale PROMISE Goal 1: Reduce, prevent, or eliminate African American (AA), English Learner (EL), and low SES minority group isolation in magnet middle schools by 2021-22.**

**Objective Performance Measures:**

**1.1a.** By October 1, 2019, AA, EL and low SES students will be distributed across magnet schools in proportion to their representation in district enrollment +/- 6% to reduce or prevent isolation, as measured by district enrollment data using California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS).

**1.1b.** By October 1, 2022, AA, EL and low SES students will be distributed across magnet schools in proportion to their representation in district enrollment +/- 3% to reduce or prevent isolation, as measured by district enrollment data using CBEDS.



**1.2a.** By October 1, 2019, AA, EL, low SES, female, and students with SLD will enroll in Honors, PLTW, Algebra/Geometry, and magnet-themed courses in proportion to their enrollment in the magnet academy +/-6% to increase social, economic, and academic integration as measured by school and classroom enrollment data.

**1.2b.** By October 1, 2022, AA, EL, low SES, female, and students with SLD will enroll in Honors, PLTW, Algebra/Geometry, and magnet-themed courses in proportion to their enrollment in the magnet academy +/-3% to increase social, economic, and academic integration as measured by school and classroom enrollment data.

**1.3a.** By October 1, 2019, PSD will fully implement MSAP strategies, activities, programs and practices, and will write a sustainability plan to maintain magnet academies beyond funding.

**1.3b.** By October 1, 2022, PSD will institutionalize MSAP strategies, activities, programs and practices, and will fully implement our sustainability plan to maintain magnet academies as measured by Final Project Report.

**Expected Long-Term Outcomes for Desegregation:** 1.1 Reduce, prevent, or eliminate AA, EL, low SES isolation in middle schools through school of choice enrollment; Sustain balanced enrollment beyond project funding; 1.2 Increase enrollment and interaction of AA, EL, low SES, female, and students with SLD in challenging academic courses: Honors, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), Algebra/Geometry, and magnet-themed; 1.3 Sustain magnet school academies and equity practices beyond the end of federal funding.

**GPRA Goal 2/PROMISE Goal 2.1: Significantly increase percent proficient in reading, English/Language Arts for AA, EL, low SES, and students with Specific Learning**



**Disability (SLD) in magnet schools by 2021-22. 2.2. Reduce number/percent of LTEL in grades 6-8 at each magnet school each project year.**

**Objective Performance Measures: 2.1a** By October 1, 2019, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase E/LA scores on CAASPP by +2 points over 2015-16 baseline. The data source is CA Dataquest.

**2.1b** By October 1, 2020, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase E/LA scores on CAASPP by +3 points over Year 1 (2017-18) scores *for a total growth of 5 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**2.1c** By October 1, 2021, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase E/LA scores on CAASPP by +4 points over Year 2 (2018-19) scores *for a total growth of 9 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**2.1d** By October 1, 2022, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase E/LA scores on CAASPP by +5 points over Year 3 (2019-20) *for a total growth of 14 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**2.2a.** By October 1, 2019, achieve 2% decrease in the percentage of LTEL students in grades 6-8 over the 2015-16 baseline as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California – ELPAC.

**2.2b.** By October 1, 2020, achieve 3% decrease in the percentage of LTEL students in grades 6-8 over Year 1 (2017-18) *for a total decrease of 5% below the baseline* as measured by ELPAC.

**2.2c.** By October 1, 2021, achieve 4% decrease in the percentage of LTEL students in grades 6-8 over Year 2 (2018-19) *for a total decrease of 9% below the baseline* as measured by ELPAC.



**2.2d.** By October 1, 2022, achieve 6% decrease in the percentage of LTEL students in grades 6-8 over Year 3 (2019-20) *for a total decrease of 15% below the baseline* as measured by ELPAC.

**Expected Long Term Outcomes for Reading, Language Arts: 2.1** Magnet Academy students in all subgroups significantly increase achievement in reading, E/LA on CAASPP by 2021-22.

**2.2** Decrease the percent of LTEL students in grades 6-8 at each magnet school each project year.

**GPRA Goal 3/PROMISE Goal 3.1: Significantly increase percent proficient in math for**

**AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD in middle schools by 2021-2022. 3.2** Increase number of students taking and successfully completing Algebra and Geometry at each magnet school each project year.

**Objective Performance Measures: 3.1a** By October 1, 2019, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase Math scores on CAASPP by +2 points over 2015-16 baseline; data source is CA Dataquest.

**3.1b** By October 1, 2020, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase Math scores on CAASPP by +3 points over Year 1 (2017-18) scores *for a total growth of 5 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**3.1c** By October 1, 2021, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase Math scores on CAASPP by +4 points over Year 2 (2018-19) scores *for a total growth of 9 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**3.1d** By October 1, 2022, AA, EL, low SES, and students with SLD increase Math scores on CAASPP by +5 points over Year 3 (2019-20) *for a total growth of 14 points over baseline*; source: CA Dataquest.

**3.2.** By June 1, 2022, 50 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at each magnet school will pass Algebra 1 or Geometry with a grade of C or better as measured by enrollment and student GPA.

**Expected Long Term Outcomes for Mathematics:** **3.1** Magnet Academy students in all subgroups significantly increase achievement in Math on CAASPP by 2021-22. **3.2** Increase number of students taking and successfully completing Algebra and Geometry at each magnet school each project year.

**PROMISE Project Goal 4: Create middle school STEAM magnet academies to inspire students, increase career and college readiness, create real school choice, and increase parent involvement.**

**Objective Performance Measures:**

**4.1** By October 1, 2018, all 5 magnet middle schools enroll AA, EL, and low SES students *in each magnet pathway* through school of choice applications as measured by disaggregated school enrollment data, from CBEDS.

**4.2** By June 1, 2022, 70% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at each magnet school complete the Digital Portfolio and Culminating Project as measured by magnet teacher records and student product or performance, as measured by teacher records and project archives.

**4.3.** By October 1, 2021, at least 2 AA, EL, and low SES parents are members on each district and school leadership committee: DELAC/ELAC, AAAC, Magnet Schools Advisory, PTO/PTA, School Site Council as measured by Evaluator Observation.

**Expected Long Term Outcomes for Magnet Themes and Parent Engagement:** **4.1** Magnet schools prepare students for science, engineering, design, medical/health, technology and fine arts college and career opportunities by 2021-22 and beyond. **4.2** 8<sup>th</sup> grade students complete

Digital Portfolio and Culminating Project integrating learning across curriculum and magnet theme. **4.3** Minority and low SES parents increase and sustain meaningful involvement and leadership in magnet schools and their child's education.

**PROMISE Project Goal 5: Improve school climate and safety in middle schools by improving positive school-wide relationships and behavior to significantly reduce suspensions of African American students.**

**Objective Performance Measures:**

**5.1.** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, the total number of suspensions at each magnet school that received *Foundations* training and coaching will be reduced by 5% from 2015-16 baseline as measured by school suspension data – resulting in a 25% reduction over 5 years for schools receiving Year 1 implementation. Data source is Online Assessment Reporting System (OARS).

**5.2.** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, the number of suspensions of AA students at each magnet school that received *Foundations* training and coaching will be reduced by 7% from 2015-16 baseline as measured by school suspension data – resulting in a 35% reduction over 5 years for schools receiving Year 1 implementation, using OARS data.

**5.3a.** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, the percent of students reporting positive school connectedness will increase by +2% per year from 2016-17 baseline as measured by the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) for each magnet school that received *Foundations* training and coaching.



**5.3b.** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, percent of students reporting they feel safe at school will increase by +2% per year from 2016-17 baseline as measured by the CHKS for each magnet school that received *Foundations* training.

**5.4** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, the percent of school staff reporting the school is safe will increase by +2% per year from 2016-17 baseline as measured by the Staff School Climate Survey for each school that received *Foundations* training.

**5.5** By June 2019 and for each subsequent project year, the percent of parents reporting the school is safe will increase by +2% per year from 2016-17 baseline as measured by the Parent School Climate Survey for each school that received *Foundations* training.

**Expected Long-Term Outcomes for School Climate and Safety and Equity Practices:**

**5.1.** Significantly reduce total number of suspensions at magnet schools. **5.2.** Significantly reduce African American student suspensions at magnet schools. **5.3a.** Students report increased feelings of safety at school. **5.3b.** Students report increased feelings of school connectedness. **5.4.** Staff report schools are safe. **5.4** Parents report schools are safe.

Quantitative Data Sources: Our Evaluation Team will collect student achievement data annually from the California Assessment of Student Progress and Proficiency (CAASPP) disaggregated by significant subgroups; English Language Proficiency Assessment of California – ELPAC; the California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS); Local Progress Monitoring (LPM) and the district’s Online Assessment Reporting System (OARS). Data on school climate, student safety, and school connectedness will be gathered each Spring from students, staff and parents via the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), Staff School Climate Survey, and Parent School Climate Survey.



Qualitative Data Sources will include: *Event Observations* - collaboration, PLCs, professional learning, student integration on campus, students engaged in PBL, projects, and performances, etc.; Process meetings with Project Director, Principals, teachers, administrators, Magnet Support Teachers; Portfolio analysis of student work, authentic assessment of student work products and performances including the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project; Classroom observations of teachers and students engaged in magnet-themed PBL; Focus groups with parents, staff, and students; and Key Informant interviews.

Deliverables: Products and Reports. **Methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

*Continuous quality improvement - participants.* As noted above, a significant portion of this Evaluation plan involves process evaluation – ongoing observations, dialogue, and feedback to the program participants as the project is implemented from start through the end of funding. Using continuous quality improvement, the Evaluation Team documents observations of key actions, artifacts, and processes throughout the project period and will share this feedback with the project participants each month during school and district site visits. Participants will share their observations and experiences with the evaluator during feedback sessions. Key questions that guide the sessions are: What has been implemented? What is working? What barriers or problems are occurring? How might these be solved/overcome? Are the resources sufficient? What happens next?

*Continuous quality improvement – Stakeholders.* As part of the evaluation plan, stakeholders at the District level will receive a presentation with written updates on project implementation, successes and challenges, and budget expenditures annually. Key stakeholders include parents, School Board Members, Superintendent and Cabinet, Magnet School Advisory Board, magnet



Palmdale PROMISE District Logic Model (One Page)



Project Resources →	Project Activities →	Project Outputs →	Short-Term Outcomes →	Medium-Term Outcomes →	Long-Term Outcomes
District support for Project Director, District Leadership	<b>Project Management</b> Principal leadership development	Management of project budget; Project work plan; Equipment and materials	Magnet support staff hired; PL training; Develop magnet-themed curricula	Implementation with fidelity of district and magnet activities; Increased student engagement	Systemic reforms in teaching practices are institutionalized
District Leadership Voluntary Desegregation Plan MSAP Funds Weighted Lottery, Marketing Plan	<b>Desegregation</b> Student recruitment; School of Choice Applications; Weighted Lottery	<u>District:</u> Logos, recruiting brochures, PSAs, Number of School Choice applications <u>School Level:</u> Recruiting visits to elementary schools. Number of Road Shows, Parent/student tours of magnet schools	<u>District:</u> Students apply and enroll in magnet schools of choice through Weighted Lottery. <u>School Level:</u> Peer-to-peer mentors through WEB	<u>District:</u> Increasing numbers of students, parents exercise school choice. <u>School Level:</u> AA, EL, female, students with SLD enroll in magnet and honors courses to increase integration.	Reduce/prevent/ eliminate minority group and low SES isolation in middle schools. Increase enrollment and interaction of diverse students in challenging academic courses. Sustain project reforms over time
District financial commitment to professional learning, evidence-based interventions, technology for teaching and learning, use of student data  MSAP funds for magnet-specific training and interventions	<b>Academic Growth:</b> District focus: reading, math, science, technology, PLTW, AVID MSAP Professional Learning, Magnet curricula, PBL, PLCs Academic Interventions: Math, Reading, English Learners	<u>District:</u> Number of hours of PL in reading, math, NGSS, PLTW, technology, AVID <u>Project:</u> Number of hours PL: magnet curricula, PBL, PLCs, READ 180, EL intervention, WICOR, math intervention; Number of students receiving targeted intervention	Teachers engage in PL, PLCs to develop magnet instruction, PBL and increase student integration and learning. Students improve in reading, math through evidence-based intervention classes. Students increase STEM and VAPA skills	<u>District:</u> Teachers implement project strategies across the curriculum. Students improve reading, writing, math, English development skills. <u>School:</u> Magnet themes boost student learning through PBL. Students compete locally and at the state level in academic and STEM.	Students are proficient on State standards in reading, language arts, math. Significant reduction in number of LTEL at middle schools. 50 or more students at each magnet school take and master Algebra I or Geometry annually.
District commitment to facilities, equipment, Parent-Community Liaisons, Parent-Family Resource Centers Community and Industry Partnerships	<b>Magnet Themes and Parent Engagement:</b> Community partnerships Magnet School Advisory Board and Committees Parent Academy for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	<u>District:</u> Parent/Community Liaison engages parents in neighborhoods, schools, community <u>School Level:</u> Number of neighborhood and school meetings to engage "hard to reach" parents	<u>District:</u> Magnet School Advisory Board; school visits <u>Schools:</u> Magnet School Advisory Committees; school visits	<u>Schools:</u> Students complete 3 or more magnet-themed courses; complete Digital Portfolio; Complete 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Culminating Project	Students gain knowledge and skills in STEM, VAPA and magnet-specific themes and are prepared for high school and college. Parents of all racial groups are engaged in educational decisions.
MSAP funds for Foundations, WEB District commitment to CKH	<b>Equity and School Climate:</b> RCT and implementation of Foundations, WEB, CKH, Unconscious Bias training	Number of teachers completing Equity and School Climate trainings; Number of students participating in WEB	Schools implement positive expectations and schoolwide PBIS; Reduction in office discipline referrals; Students receive counseling services	Total number of suspensions and suspensions of AA students decrease; Schools are safe and orderly	Improved school climate & student-staff relationships, Eliminate disproportionate suspensions; Students are safe and connected to school; Staff and parents report schools are safe and orderly

school committees, and major community partners. The Palmdale PROMISE District Evaluation Logic Model in the Appendix specifies the projects goal and objective performance measures, and the method of evaluation. The Evaluation Team Work Plan specifies the activities, deliverables, and timeline for evaluation activities.

**(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**



Palmdale School District asserts that the costs of this MSAP project are reasonable in relation to our five critical needs identified in our Logic Model: 1) To reduce, eliminate or prevent African American, English Learner, and low-SES isolation in middle schools; 2) To significantly increase achievement in reading and English/Language Arts for AA, EL, low-SES, and students with disabilities; 3) To significantly increase achievement in mathematics for AA, EL, low-SES, and students with disabilities; 4) To create and sustain magnet middle school academies to increase students' career and college readiness and to increase parent engagement; and 5) To improve school climate and safety in middle schools and to significantly reduce disproportionate suspensions of African American students.

*The project as designed is feasible, realistic, and likely to be implemented with fidelity.* This plan is based on our student and community Needs Assessment process that spanned two years of data collection, analysis, discussions, and planning. *We have teacher, staff, administration, parent and community buy-in.* PSD has worked with parents, community, teachers, and classified staff for more than two years to address the compelling need to raise student achievement, reduce disproportionality, increase parent choice and voice, and reduce isolation. Our entire community is committed to the Palmdale PROMISE. Our Congressman, the FAA and Civil Air Patrol are counting on our magnet schools to produce the technical and skilled workforce of the future.

*Our strategies and activities are evidence-based.* We cannot waste time and resources on programs or ideas that have not been documented to work with populations like ours. Each of our strategies detailed in this plan is a proven or promising practice that has produced positive results for students like ours. *Our outputs and indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound* as indicated by the Project Work Plan, Professional Learning Plan, and Evaluation Work Plan. *Our evaluation process is data-driven and will lead to continuous quality*

*improvement. Evaluation will produce evidence of promise.* In addition, our Project Work Plan includes development of a realistic Sustainability Plan, which will enable us to *leverage district and State resources.*

As we noted in Competitive Preference Priority 1 (b) and (c), we cannot implement critical aspects of this Palmdale PROMISE without MSAP funding. We must improve practices and raise achievement to ensure the future for our students. They are the inventors, scientists, engineers, artists, leaders, explorers, leaders, and parents of tomorrow. We hold their future in our hands. We must deliver on this Palmdale PROMISE.



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