



**Serving Educationally Disadvantaged Students:  
Expanding and Replicating the Scholarship Prep Model**

U.S Department of Education Charter Schools Program

Grants to Charter Management Organizations for the Replication and  
Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools

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## ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

### Absolute Priority 2 – Low-Income Demographic

Scholarship Prep (“SPCS”) is applying for this grant opportunity under Absolute Priority 2 – Low-Income Demographic. Below is information to show the number and percentage of students across SPCS’s current schools that come from low-income families. All SPCS schools participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). To determine eligibility for low-income designation, SPCS used qualification for Free and Reduced Price School Meals, using the current Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) from the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs. This information is also found in *Appendix E*.

School Name	School Location	Low-Income Students (#)	Total Students (#)	Low-Income Students (%)
SPCS Santa Ana	Santa Ana, CA	374	434	86%
SPCS Oceanside	Oceanside, CA	177	319	55%
Overall		551	753	73%

## COMPETITIVE PRIORITIES

### Competitive Preference Priority 1 – Promoting Diversity

SPCS was purposefully founded to meet the unique needs of educationally disadvantaged and historically underserved students. Of California’s six million TK-12<sup>th</sup> grade students, these are predominantly students from low-income families, English Learners (ELs), and Students with Disabilities (SWD). SPCS currently serves 753 students across two schools and is proud of its commitment to serving those students most in need, as illustrated below.

	Low-Income Students	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
SPCS Santa Ana	86%	52%	10%
SPCS Oceanside	55%	20%	13%

While SPCS is committed to serving educationally disadvantaged students, it also understands the importance of recruiting and maintaining a diverse student body of “Scholars”. As noted in the table above, there is a nearly 50/50 breakdown of low-income vs. non low-income students at SPCS Oceanside. SPCS is an open-enrollment charter management organization, giving no enrollment preference to any particular race or economic profile and has purposefully located its schools in high-needs communities with educationally underserved students who are primarily low-income Hispanic/Latino and African-American students. It was, therefore, through an explicit recruitment effort, targeting multiple neighborhoods and community centers in conjunction with various community leaders that the diversity of the SPCS Oceanside campus was achieved and has been maintained. Furthermore, the racial breakdown of SPCS Oceanside and the average for the local district schools within 3 miles of the new SPCS Lomita-Harbor City campus (opening for the 2019-20 school year) are noted below.

School Name	African-American	Latino/Hispanic	White	Other
SPCS Oceanside	4%	59%	32%	5%
SPCS Lomita-Harbor City Comparison Schools	10%	75%	8%	7%

SPCS anticipates that the Lomita-Harbor City campus will mirror the demographics of the surrounding schools and attract a racial and socioeconomically diverse student body. SPCS will also continue to review and refine its recruiting practices and personnel to ensure that each SPCS campus maintains or increases its diverse profile.

The recruiting practices of SPCS start with extensive community outreach prior to the opening of each school to ensure that families across all economic backgrounds understand the value of enrolling their children in an innovative, project-based learning

school with rigorous academic standards and a strong offering of arts and athletics “electives” to begin to position their children on a college pathway. SPCS believes that diverse schools provide a greater opportunity for students to learn from each other and can invigorate and strengthen the urban neighborhoods in which SPCS chooses to site its schools. To further this goal, SPCS seeks out neighborhoods where it is possible to create mixed income and racially integrated school communities. Enrollments have increased at both SPCS campuses since their openings, and diversity of the families choosing to attend further reinforces the mission and vision of SPCS. SPCS provides strong support to maintain its targeted diversity by also participating in the federal School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program, which offer free or reduced price meals to all students who meet eligibility requirements. SPCS will continue to identify communities in which racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies can be drawn.

Two large components of ensuring that the racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies feel welcome and valued are the SPCS staff members and the curricular choices SPCS makes. SPCS leadership is deliberate in recruiting, hiring, and training staff that is reflective of the communities it serves. Hence, SPCS makes affirmative recruiting efforts to employ a diverse, multilinguistic staff in order to hire staff, and once hired, continuously engages in ongoing professional development in order to effectively accelerate the closure of academic achievement gaps disproportionately affecting students on the basis of race. Across the two SPCS schools in operation, approximately 55% of all staff members identify as Hispanic/Latino, African-American, or Asian. It is vital that students and families are able to identify and share similar experiences with the school staff. These same staff members also play key roles in the selection of culturally relevant

texts and learning experiences for the students. SPCS makes a pointed effort to include reading material, profiles, and success stories of people, places, and events that are relevant to students through racial background, community ties, nation of origin, and other self-affirming qualities. Additionally, SPCS staff seek family and student input on school wide events to showcase students' heritage and talents, including international food festivals and dance performances.

*Competitive Preference Priority 3 – High School Students*

(i) SPCS plans to replicate its educational model to serve high school students, including those educationally disadvantaged. Two areas have already been identified as target locations for the high school, allowing for existing SPCS students to continue their SPCS educational careers through 12th grade. Each location was chosen based on its proximity to pre-existing SPCS TK-8 schools and will therefore also serve a large percentage of educationally disadvantaged students.

(ii) SPCS is committed to hiring and developing the best staff members possible for its high school campuses. The organization has a head start as it already employs an Executive Team member with high school teaching and administration experience as well as a credentialed School Counselor who served as a high school academic counselor after working in the admissions and financial aid departments of a local university. Both team members served as founding staff members of a charter high school, lending valuable experience to the efforts that SPCS undertakes. This Counselor, working in a school serving over 90% low-income students, ensured a 100% application rate to 2 and 4-year colleges, 100% ACT or SAT completion rate, and a 99% graduation rate for the first graduating class.

SPCS will create student schedules that allow for all students to have access to Advanced Placement courses beginning as early as 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Each SPCS high school will employ at least one (1) full-time Counselor who will:

- Provide college counseling, admissions requirements and financial aid;
- Provide career counseling and employment protocols;
- Create and monitor intervention plans for off-track students, including credit recovery, adult schools, and online blended models;
- Partner with established companies to provide SAT and ACT prep courses;
- Coordinate and provide access to local, state, and national scholarship opportunities;
- Establish linkages with postsecondary schools; and
- Assist students in completion of the Common Application, Cal State University and University of California applications.

(iii) SPCS is committed to seeing students not just *to* college, but *through* college as well.

The SPCS Counseling team will:

- Visit graduated SPCS Scholars at college campuses to provide support with financial aid, work-study, and academic advising;
- Hold workshops on SPCS high school campuses for graduated SPCS Scholars and their families to continue understanding the financial aid process, including scholarship applications, FAFSA, and loan agreements;
- Maintain a database of graduated students and their postsecondary institutions to establish peer support systems; and

- Collaborate with partner charter management organizations to offer a more robust support system at specific postsecondary education institutions.

(iv) SPCS is committed to the following performance measures to provide valid and reliable information on its progress in preparing students for enrollment and success in postsecondary education institutions:

- 100% SAT/ACT completion by end of junior year
- AP course enrollment
- 100% Mock job interview completion rate by end of junior year
- 100% Mock college admissions interview completion rate by winter senior year
- 100% Scholarship application completion rate by winter senior year
- At least 2 college visits by end of junior year
- 100% Meet A-G requirements

*Competitive Preference Priority 5 – Novice Applicant*

SPCS is a Novice Applicant in terms of receipt for this grant, as it has never received a Replication and Expansion Grant, has never been a member of a group application that received such a grant, and has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal Government in the five years before the deadline. This said, while a Novice Applicant, SPCS and its leadership team has the experience and expertise necessary to successfully implement a project of this scale during the grant period and ensure its sustainability after the grant period is complete. For details on the management plan, experience and expertise of team members, please see Appendix B.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Section A. Scholarship Prep Charter Schools - A High Quality CSP Applicant**

#### **A1. Increasing Achievement for All Students**

Scholarship Prep Charter Schools (“SPCS”) is a dynamic, growing Charter Management Organization (CMO) committed to serving educationally underserved students in Southern California. In California, 62% of students are from low-income families, 54% are Latino, 43% speak a language other than English in their homes, and of this last group, 82% speak Spanish. SPCS is specifically designed for these students—meeting their educational needs via a rigorous Project-Based Learning program that positions them on a highly innovative collegiate pathway through a differentiated academics approach, and in combination with a unique arts and athletics electives program for all students. SPCS currently operates two TK-8 charter schools, and was recently authorized by the Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD”) to open a new TK-8th grade school in Lomita-Harbor City in the South Bay region of Los Angeles.

SPCS’s flagship school in Santa Ana was authorized by the Orange County Department of Education (“OCDE”) as a countywide benefit charter in 2015, opening in 2016. The Santa Ana campus received this countywide status as the result of being the only TK-8 school in the entire county to place an admissions preference for, and a priority to serve, educationally disadvantaged, underserved students including foster youth. SPCS’s Oceanside campus was authorized by the San Diego County Department of Education (“SDCOE”), in 2016, opening in 2017. Acting with a sense of urgency in the need to close academic achievement gaps for educationally underserved students, the Executive team of SPCS launched a bold, assertive “no excuses” leadership philosophy and rigorous curriculum to accelerate achievement gap closures

witnessed in incoming new students, and to accelerate growth. *SPCS' bold educational model has succeeded. In less than two full years, SPCS has defied the odds and shattered all expectations at both campuses as evidenced by statewide performance data.* SPCS has delivered on that for which they stood: creating college scholarship pathways for all students, particularly those most educationally disadvantaged and underserved.

From Day One, and starting in Transitional Kindergarten (TK), SPCS utilizes a university-themed, college scholarship-inspired concept, so that Scholars understand that by achieving academic, arts, and/or athletics excellence, a broader array of options exist for future endeavors in higher education. This university-themed environment was created to not only motivate students to attend school (as noted in SPCS's high attendance rates in A.1.c), but, also, to rapidly close stark achievement gaps and academically excel. One step onto an SPCS campus captures this commitment to their college-bound culture: instead of using alphanumeric designations to identify classrooms, SPCS identifies classrooms by prolific universities throughout the United States, such as UCLA, Harvard, Stanford, etc. Each university is carefully selected based on the Academic Progress Rate ("APR") and/or Graduation Success Rate ("GSR"), which is based on collegiate student-athletes' graduation rate. This was particularly important to SPCS which recognizes that access to college may be attained via an athletics scholarship.

SPCS holds weekly Pep Rallies with the entire student body to promote camaraderie, competition, and school pride. At Pep Rallies, SPCS Scholars can be seen chanting their university's alma mater/team fight song or learning about the character trait of the month. Rather than utilizing school bells to mark the beginning or end of periods, university fight songs are used. College flags adorn the campus starting curbside. SPCS adheres to a pride-boosting dress

code, including university t-shirts, and participates in a thoughtful Character Education curriculum in order to bring out each Scholar's "Personal Best". Parents in high-poverty communities in which SPCS seeks to locate often muse that this is what a college must look and feel like. SPCS is intent in developing a scholarship pathway for historically educationally disadvantaged students so that one day they will KNOW what college looks and feels like.

**a. SPCS's Three-pronged Scholarship Pathway Approach (3PA) – Academics, Arts, & Athletics**

SPCS is committed to developing pathways for its Scholars to be best positioned to obtain scholarships to attend college. Historically, there are three (3) recognized pathways for a student to obtain a university scholarship: academics, arts, and athletics. The link between student achievement (*academics*) and the *arts* and *athletics* has been well documented. SPCS's *Program Imperatives* provide a unique approach to identifying the strengths and interests in all their students through athletics and arts electives beginning in TK.

All SPCS students are launched on a scholarship pathway through this unique "electives" program incorporating arts and athletics options into the school day schedule. Students are, thus, able to take ownership of their own learning and scholarship pathways, and from year to year, can elect to try something new or to continue to refine their skills in the arts or athletics elective course to best position themselves for multiple collegiate scholarship pathways. Once students enter high school grades at SPCS, their course offerings will be aligned to their TK-8 opportunities to close the loop on TK-12 preparation for college readiness. By establishing a strong foundation of education in the communities SPCS serves, a sustainable model is able to flourish, greatly benefiting economically disadvantaged, and predominantly Latino and African-American communities.

Ultimately, it is the goal of SPCS that all students will be effectively positioned to receive a college scholarship, earn a degree, and eventually give back to their community.

### **b. Closing the Achievement Gap and Exceeding State Averages**

The mission and vision of this network is one of closing the Achievement Gap for all students. Under their “no excuses” leadership philosophy, SPCS Santa Ana soared to become the #1 ranked public school in California on student academic growth in Mathematics as measured by 2018 results of the California Assessment of Student Performance & Progress (CAASPP), *outpacing all 10,634 California K-12 public schools in the Golden State* (to see the rankings go to [caaspp.edsource.org](http://caaspp.edsource.org)). Additionally, SPCS Santa Ana ranked in the top 1% of performers in student academic growth in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA)--ranking #45 out of the 10,634 schools monitored. What is particularly noteworthy is that SPCS Santa Ana accomplished this remarkable achievement in *only* its second year of operation!

SPCS Santa Ana posted double-digit academic growth across ALL major student demographic subgroups with an impressive measurable 19% improvement in English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy and an astounding 36% improvement in Mathematics. Likewise, SPCS Oceanside—in only its first year of operation—outpaced the local school district in both ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. Expectations are high for stellar performance of their recently authorized Lomita-Harbor City campus in Los Angeles.

Student Academic Success/Growth					
Subgroups	Students Meeting/Exceeding Standards (%): Multi-Year View - SPCS Santa Ana				
	Test Years	SPCS Santa Ana	Santa Ana USD	Orange County	State of CA
All Students ELA/Literacy	2016-17	31	28	57	49
	2017-18	50	30	58	50
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>19</b>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
All Students Math	2016-17	21	22	48	38
	2017-18	57	24	49	39
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>36</b>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
English Learners ELA/Literacy	2016-17	18	2	15	12
	2017-18	28	4	16	13
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>10</b>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
English Learners Math	2016-17	18	5	16	12
	2017-18	46	6	17	13
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>28</b>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
SED* ELA/Literacy	2016-17	28	27	39	36
	2017-18	47	28	42	38
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>19</b>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
SED* Math	2016-17	19	21	29	25
	2017-18	56	22	32	26
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>37</b>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>
Students w/ Disabilities ELA/Literacy	2016-17	7	6	19	14
	2017-18	29	8	21	5
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>22</b>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-9</i>
Math Students w/ Disabilities	2016-17	25	7	17	11
	2017-18	41	8	18	12
	<i>Growth</i>	<b>16</b>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>

\*Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

 Largest growth in category

**SPCS Santa Ana students' academic performance saw significant gains on statewide assessments in just two years in the program.** As shown in the chart above, SPCS Santa Ana students demonstrated outstanding growth in both ELA/Literacy and Mathematics on the 2018 statewide assessment (CAASPP) administration as compared to district, county, and statewide

counterparts. The specific breakdown by subgroup, including how "all students" compare, is explained further in the paragraphs below.

*SPCS Santa Ana Academic Performance Growth — All Students:* SPCS Santa Ana demonstrated the most growth in the percent of students meeting or exceeding Common Core State Standards amongst all public schools in their county (Orange) in both ELA/Literacy (19%) and Mathematics (36%) on the 2018 statewide assessment (CAASPP) administration. Astoundingly, the school's math growth was also best amongst ALL California public schools. SPCS Santa Ana outperformed their local district by 20%, and grew 18% more than their state counterparts, matching overall percentages of students meeting or exceeding statewide standards (50%).

*SPCS Santa Ana Academic Performance Growth — English Learners (ELs):* SPCS Santa Ana EL students excelled in their statewide academic achievement growth in ELA/Literacy by growing by double digits—10% in one year, significantly outperforming EL students of the local district by 24%, the county by 12%, and all EL students in California by 15%.

This statewide performance growth trend continued even stronger in Mathematics for the SPCS Santa Ana EL students, improving 28% in one year, significantly outperforming EL students of the local district by 40%, county EL students by 29%, and all EL students in California by 33%. With fidelity in implementation of the academically rigorous Eureka Math curriculum, coupled with intensive professional development of teaching staff and student academic support systems, SPCS Santa Ana demonstrated astounding growth contrasted with all

other EL students—locally, countywide, and statewide—who only grew 1% in the same time period.

*SPCS - Santa Ana Academic Performance Growth — Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (“SED”)*: SPCS Santa Ana SED students excelled in their statewide academic achievement growth in ELA/Literacy by growing by double digits—19% in one year, significantly outperforming comparable SED students of the local district by 19%, the county by 5%, and all SED students in California by 9%. Similar to the previously reported EL data, comparable SED students only grew by single digits in the local district (1%), the county (3%), and the entire state of California (2%). SPCS growth can be attributed to, in part, an academically rigorous ELA/Literacy curriculum, Wit & Wisdom, intensive professional development of teaching staff, and comprehensive student academic support systems.

This statewide performance growth trend continued even stronger in Mathematics for the SPCS Santa Ana SED students, *growing a whopping 37% in one year*, significantly outperforming SED students of the local district by 34%, county SED students by 24%, and all SED students in California by 30%. Once again, with fidelity in implementation of both the academically rigorous Eureka Math, coupled with intensive professional development of teaching staff and student academic support systems, SPCS Santa Ana demonstrated astounding growth with these historically educationally disadvantaged students, contrasted with all other SED students—locally, countywide, and statewide—only grew 1% (district level), 3% (County level) and 1% (State level) in the same time period.

*SPCS Santa Ana Academic Performance Growth— Students with Disabilities (SWDs):*

SPCS Santa Ana SWDs excelled in their statewide academic achievement growth in ELA/Literacy by growing by double digits, 22%, in one year, significantly outperforming comparable SWDs of the local district by 21%, the county by 8%, and all SWDs in California by 24%. Whereas SPCS SWDs demonstrated great growth in just one year, comparable SWDs only grew by single digits in the local district (2%), the county (2%), and even *declined* for comparable SWDs in California (-9%)!

This closure of the achievement gap trend for SPCS students also continued in Mathematics for SPCS Santa Ana SWDs, improving 16% in one year, significantly outperforming SWDs of the local district by 33%, county SPED students by 23%, and all SWDs in California by 29%. SPCS Santa Ana demonstrated solid growth for its SWDs in contrast with all other SWDs—locally, countywide, and statewide—who only grew 1% across all district, County, and State levels in the same time period.

These data points are *compelling in demonstrating the commitment and success* SPCS has in meeting the needs of historically educationally disadvantaged SWDs.

**SPCS Oceanside students' academic performance outpaced local district counterparts on statewide assessments in their first year of operation.** SPCS Oceanside, in just its *first* year of operation, outpaced their local district counterparts on the 2018 statewide assessment (CAASPP). SPCS Oceanside saw 49% of its students meet or exceed standards in ELA/Literacy compared to 44% at the local school district, Oceanside Unified. In Mathematics, 38% of SPCS students met or exceeded standards compared to 35% at the local district. The SPCS CMO has used similar academic program improvement and enhancement strategies to that

of their Santa Ana campus in the second year of operation for the Oceanside campus. The intended result is to secure similar Year Two growth results in both ELA/Literacy and Mathematics to that of SPCS Santa Ana in their second year of operation.

### **c. Strong Student Attendance, High Student Retention, and Low Expulsion Rates**

SPCS Scholars *want* to be at Scholarship Prep! In its first year of operation SPCS Santa Ana had a low chronic absenteeism rate of just 5.8% for school year 2016-2017, compared with Santa Ana Unified at 6.2%, Orange County at 7.7%, and the State of California at 10.8%. Students are determined to be chronically absent if they are absent for 10% or more of the enrolled instructional days. In its second year of operation, the SPCS absenteeism rate dropped to 3.8% for school year 2017-2018, compared with Santa Ana Unified at 7.1%, Orange County at 8.3%, and the State of California at 11.1%. S

In its first year of operation, SPCS Oceanside had a low chronic absenteeism rate of 6.0%, compared with Oceanside Unified at 12.4%, San Diego County at 11.0%, and the State of California at 11.1%. SPCS Oceanside is confident that this rate will further decrease in its second year of operation as it did at the Santa Ana campus.

Undoubtedly, SPCS has lived up to its mission and vision of serving historically educationally disadvantaged students across all identifiable significant subgroups of students: ELs, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged youth, and SWDs.

## **A2. SPCS Has Never Had a School Closed**

SPCS is a strong operator and manager of schools with no financial, operational, safety, or compliance management issues. All schools opened by SPCS continue to be in operation, with no closures or revocations. SPCS has had no significant issues in the area of financial or operational management. The CMO has received clean annual audits with no findings since opening, maintains a healthy and robust balanced budget with positive cash flow, has developed strong reserves at its flagship school to mitigate times of uncertainty, and maintains a strong Average Daily Attendance rate (96% or higher in each school year).

## **A3. SPCS Has Had No Financial, Operational, Statutory, Regulatory, Or Safety Issues**

SPCS has experienced no significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school charters. SPCS has had no significant issues in the area of financial or operational management. The CMO has received clean annual audits with no adverse or negative findings since opening, maintains a healthy and robust balanced budget with positive cash flow, has developed strong reserves at its flagship school to mitigate times of uncertainty, and maintains a strong Average Daily Attendance rate (96% or higher in each school year). It maintains a strong relationship with its authorizers, OCDE, SDCOE and LAUSD. Executive level staff and the Board of Directors receive annual training in the Brown Act, California Corporations Code, business/non-profit ethics, and sexual harassment prevention. Additionally, Executive Staff have received intensive leadership development training from the Charter School Development Center, the California Charter Schools Association, and ongoing trainings with their own SPCS legal counsel.

## **Section B. Serving Educationally Disadvantaged Students, Families and Communities**

### **B1. Current Service to the Educationally Disadvantaged**

As the SPCS mission and vision proclaim, SPCS is committed to serving historically underserved high poverty, minority and foster youth by creating a positive, supportive, yet rigorous collegiate-bound culture. SPCS has purposefully established its existing campuses in traditionally educationally underserved areas and will continue to expand and replicate to serve educationally disadvantaged students. As documented from data supplied in Section A of this narrative, SPCS's ability to move the needle on academic outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students should be replicated.

The addresses of Schools Operated by the Applicant (Appendix F) verifies that SPCS campuses are located in and serve economically and educationally disadvantaged communities. Thus, SPCS welcomes students from all racial and economic backgrounds in alignment with its open-enrollment policy and future site selection plans as described in Section B2.

#### **a. Student Population**

*SPCS Santa Ana has almost triple the percentage of English Learners compared to the State of California and 17% more than the surrounding district.* The percentage of SPCS Santa Ana high poverty students (Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, or SED) is higher than the surrounding district and State averages, while the percentage of SWDs is comparable. The SPCS Oceanside student body has comparable percentages of ELs, SED students, and SWDs as the surrounding district and State averages. Additionally, due to targeted recruitment efforts, the percentage of students qualifying for each category *increased* from Year One to Year Two of

operation. SPCS has made it a priority to identify and recruit educationally disadvantaged students and will continue to do so.

### **b. Tailored Education Model for Disadvantaged Learners**

SPCS's mission is to provide all students with equal educational opportunities and seeks to fulfill its mission through assisting educationally disadvantaged students, including low-income students, educationally underserved racial and ethnic subgroups, SWDs and ELs, to: (1) close stark differences in educational attainment between the educationally disadvantaged students and their non-educationally disadvantaged peers, known as the achievement gap; (2) accelerate the pace of this gap closure; and (3) meet or exceed academic standards that lead to college and career readiness. SPCS's commitment to serving educationally disadvantaged students features the following core elements:

Unwavering focus on student achievement: SPCS teachers and leaders are focused on completely closing the achievement gap, and student academic growth is a primary factor in professional evaluations and compensation packages for teachers, staff and CMO administrators. SPCS starts with the belief that "every student can". As part of the SPCS core philosophy to encourage students to excel, a school-wide recognition system based on their mission and vision is incorporated throughout the year. A variety of events are held to honor student achievement and academic success, such as the unique Collegiate Awards given to students who demonstrated significant growth and/or exceeded standards in one or more areas on the CAASPP assessment. These students, along with their families are invited to a "Hollywood red carpet" affair and presented with a gold, silver, or bronze engraved medal identifying their academic accomplishment. This particular award is unique in that all students who take the statewide

assessment have the opportunity to receive a medal through not only excellence, but also through growth--closures of the achievement gaps. This award has lent significantly to SPCS's statewide assessment outcomes noted in section C of this narrative.

Talent development: SPCS firmly believes that the most important determinant of student achievement is teacher quality, and invests heavily in the recruitment, development, recognition and retention of talented teachers. All continuing and new SPCS teachers participate in two weeks of professional development specifically tailored to meeting the instructional needs of educationally disadvantaged students prior to the start of each school year. Professional development occurs on a weekly basis centered on student outcome and assessment data. All SPCS teachers have a coach who observes him or her in action on a rotational basis, reviews lesson plans, and provides individual coaching and support. The SPCS Executive Team coordinates with site administration and teacher leaders to identify yearly and multi-year priorities. Professional development, both internally and externally, is geared to increasing competency in these areas. It is essential to SPCS that they identify high-leverage, efficacious priorities, such as creating Essential Questions for all units, utilizing SMART (specific, measurable, aligned, realistic, and time-specific) content objectives, monitoring rigorous academic discourse from students, and implementing restorative justice practices. To achieve desired outcomes for each priority, SPCS's professional development is led by seasoned educational leaders, from teachers to the Executive Team. To supplement these efforts, SPCS has partnered with organizations to receive intensive training on many fronts, including Project Based Learning (The Buck Institute), Restorative Justice practices (International Institute for Restorative Practices), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (California Department of Education), and English Learner best practices (Ensemble Learning).

More time spent learning for Educationally Disadvantaged students: The SPCS school day schedule provides for instructional minutes at every grade level that far exceed the California state minimum requirements - in some grade levels by over 20,000 minutes per school year. SPCS also provides students with the unique opportunity to simultaneously pursue excellence outside of traditional academics and offers students multiple enrichment opportunities through a structured athletics and arts electives program during the school day in a commitment to expanding potential scholarship pathways.

A rigorous Common-Core aligned curriculum: SPCS outlines the ambitious academic standards that all students are expected to master at each grade level, so that success in one grade can be seamlessly built upon in the next. SPCS standards are aligned to the nationally benchmarked Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and are designed to ensure college and career readiness. The English Language Arts/Literacy (Wit & Wisdom) and Mathematics (Eureka Math) curricula used by SPCS are top ranked by *Ed Reports* and were specially selected based on their alignment to the rigor of the CCSS.

Strategic use of data for Educationally Disadvantaged students: Prior to the first day of school, all teachers begin to intensively dive into data of incoming students in order to ascertain individual student and school wide achievement gaps and plan strategies for instructional intervention and long range planning. Each teacher assembles “Rainbow Rosters” of their classes, identifying through cumulative file review and discussions with previous teachers key information about each student and their class as a whole to best plan differentiated instructional strategies according to the unique needs of their students. Teachers use different colored

highlighters on their roster to identify educationally disadvantaged students, including ELs, SWD, students previously retained, and students who have needed extra support to meet grade level standards in prior years. SPCS teachers give interim assessments (IAs) that measure student mastery of what has been taught. Before each administration, students set goals on specific standards and overall proficiency and growth in consultation with their teachers. After each IA, teachers and school leaders intensively analyze the data and create data-driven instructional plans that target whole class, small group and one-on-one instruction to address gaps in student learning. Students are also key in the data review process, identifying areas in which they can improve and creating action plans to increase performance for the next administration.

Targeted academic interventions aimed at improving performance outcomes for Educationally Disadvantaged students: SPCS created a unique academic intervention program called FILMS (Focusing on Individual Learning to Master Standards) to address the needs of students in grades 1-8 who are struggling to meet grade level standards expectations in ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics. Students are selected for FILMS based on multiple data points, including formative assessment data, parent request, statewide assessment scores, NWEA MAP scores, and student work samples. FILMS sessions are held before and/or after school for definitive time periods (4-10 weeks) at least once a year. Teachers providing this intervention design targeted instruction geared toward helping students improve their academic knowledge in the core instructional areas listed above, and do this in an instructional setting designed to accommodate a more individualized approach. Student progress is monitored, and as students attain grade level proficiency, they are promoted out of this intervention.

Communication with parents regarding their child's academic progress: SPCS uses SCORE (Student Contract of Outcomes to Reach Excellence) Sheets to identify a student's academic and/or social-emotional needs, determine appropriate interventions to facilitate growth, and communicate this plan to parents throughout the year. The SCORE Sheet is used with all identified at-risk students to allow teachers to collaborate on the best strategies and utilize past successful interventions that may be helpful to ensure academic growth. The SCORE Sheet includes targeted objectives and goals focusing on the student meeting grade level standards. The SCORE Sheet is updated to identify if interventions have been successful, or if additional intervention is necessary. If a student is deemed as making "adequate progress," the student continues to be monitored to ensure academic success. If by the end of the school year the student is not making adequate progress, further and/or more intensive remediation/intervention is considered.

Strong, supportive, safe school culture for Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Immediately upon entering an SPCS school, one can feel a sense of urgency, rigor, focus and joy. Key elements of SPCS's school culture include: a commitment to character education; an unwavering college focus; teachers who know and care about the challenges students and their families face; parents are viewed as partners; high expectations for all; and special recognitions and celebrations for academic and character achievement. SPCS students, staff and families also exhibit firm commitments to stewarding their children in pursuit of education as the key to the American Dream, as witnessed by their active participation in parent-led "Pep Squads" (SPCS's Parent Teacher Associations) and site-based governance and advisory councils.

Parent and Community Outreach towards Families of Disadvantaged Learners: SPCS understands that serving educationally disadvantaged students also means addressing the needs

of their families. Hence, SPCS is proud to have partnered with community groups in launching Parent Training academies, including the very successful “Coffee With the Founders” conversations in which SPCS Co-founders regularly meet with parents on important education topics. SPCS Santa Ana is setting the standard across the network dedicated to empowering parents as true partners in student achievement. For example, SPCS Santa Ana developed a partnership with a local State Farm Insurance Agency in order to facilitate greater parenting skills, and to empower them with resources to truly become the most important teacher in their child’s life. This program entailed a 13-week intensive "Highly Capable Kids" seminar emphasizing forty research-based qualities that influence children's development and resiliency. Their "Make it Possible" Program focuses on financial literacy and savings for college. Their Reading Development program teaches parents the importance of reading and proficiency with English as a second language using strategies and resources to improve literacy for all. Collectively, these community partnerships developed and launched at SPCS for its parent community are consistent with its mission and vision of serving underserved and educationally disadvantaged communities, and to mobilize them in strategies supportive of the college scholarship pathways it is creating.

## **B2. Expanding Service to the Educationally Disadvantaged**

### **a. Expanding Enrollment**

While recruitment during the first year of an SPCS school is essential, it remains a priority to maintain the targeted student enrollment throughout the life of the school. Under the proposed expansion/replication plan, SPCS school staff and administrative team will be encouraged to continuously seek educationally disadvantaged students, particularly SWDs, SED

students, and ELs, who are of the age in which they can enter SPCS and start on the path to college. SPCS's commitment to ensuring successful replication and expansion, and serving educationally disadvantaged students, propelled them to create a specific Student/Family Outreach Coordinator at each school who regularly participates in community meetings to directly work with parents.

SPCS is committed to ensuring that all students and families with whom they interact during the recruitment and outreach process are made to feel welcome and respected. SPCS's outreach plan will include collaboration with community leaders and organizations. This outreach will take the form of information meetings with community members and potential families regarding the SPCS instructional and support programs. SPCS will use a multitude of free and volunteer strategies to communicate with local families, organizations, and community leaders. Some of these include:

School Information Meetings and School Tours – SPCS will hold information meetings to provide families with information about the school, its programs, mission, vision, and student support systems as well as conduct tours of the proposed school sites. These meetings will include English/Spanish language translation and question and answer sessions. SPCS leadership has conducted multiple school tours before submission of all charter petitions and will continue to hold information meetings and tours up to and through the opening of the school. At these information meetings, the SPCS Executive Team has made it a priority to personally meet parents and lead these presentations so that parents understand from the start that the SPCS Executive Team will be actively invested in the education of their child. Throughout the year, the SPCS Co-founders hold numerous meetings with parents to update them on the school program

and events, such as “Coffee with the Founders” meetings, “Pep Talks”, PEP Squad meetings, and ELAC meetings for parents of English Learners.

Fliers/brochures/postcards – SPCS will create fliers and brochures in English and Spanish outlining its vision and mission statements for the school and the community for the purpose of student recruitment. Fliers will be distributed as a primary means to recruit students each year before and during the Open Enrollment period. Each year, SPCS plans to disseminate informational fliers/brochures to the surrounding community and agencies with ties to underserved populations. The SPCS recruitment team will be active in the community, including attending events at recreation centers, preschool and day care centers, and after school programs. SPCS will also mail fliers and/or postcards directly to homes in the surrounding areas to ensure the broadest and most equitable recruitment outreach. The SPCS team specifically targets mailings to communities with high concentrations of socioeconomically disadvantaged families.

Multiple Media Outlets – SPCS will work with multicultural, multi-linguistic local radio, television, and print media outlets to send news releases and place advertisements about student recruitment, the school opening, and parent information events about SPCS instructional practices and programming. SPCS has utilized a website and social media feeds to communicate information about the school’s mission and vision, instructional practices, student registration, upcoming events, Board of Directors member information, agendas and meetings, and contact information for parents. SPCS will continue this communication access.

Door-to-door - SPCS has and will continue to utilize a grassroots effort to ensure the broadest reach for student recruitment, particularly those students most educationally underserved. Thus, a “door-to-door” recruitment campaign will be implemented to directly

connect to the local community, provide a “face-to-face” opportunity for interested families to learn more about the school’s offerings, and specifically target those families living closest to the school to support those students who need to walk to campus.

This comprehensive recruitment plan will ensure that SPCS continues to recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students by ensuring that its efforts encompass the entirety of the surrounding communities. The SPCS recruitment team’s proactivity and frequency of efforts will engage the widest audience possible, including traditionally hard-to-reach areas and families. Once the Open Enrollment window closes, if any grade levels have more applicants than available spaces, a public lottery will take place for that grade level. The date, time, and location will be provided to all interested families, as well as publicized on the school’s social media and website. Names of students will be randomly chosen during a public lottery process, and all interested members of the public are invited to attend. As names are drawn, they are either placed in their designated grade level or placed on a waiting list in the order drawn.

#### **b. Identifying New Markets**

When implementing its replication and expansion plans, SPCS intends to concentrate its growth by opening, four regional “hubs” in Southern California over the next five years, consisting of six (6) TK-8 schools, feeding two (2) replicated high schools. These “hubs” include high populations of educationally disadvantaged students that SPCS commits to serving in order to address the pressing concern of closing the achievement gap based on its mission to establish successful college-bound education pipelines in communities where these have been absent or dysfunctional.

SPCS seeks to become an enduring institution in the civic life of these communities and establish partnerships with them in transforming family expectations and ultimately, community-wide results. SPCS's educational program is specifically designed to support educationally disadvantaged students in meeting or exceeding state academic content and achievement standards through a focus on differentiated instruction, educational interventions, and social-emotional supports. The primary activity of all SPCS schools is to close—and *rapidly*--the achievement gap for all scholars, and accelerate their growth in order to provide them a competitive college-bound pathway.

### **c. Focused Recruitment & Strategies to Ensure Success**

Serving English Learners: To support the environment needed for ELs, SPCS will recruit teachers who have a secondary credential as well as bilingual or ESL endorsements (state authorization to teach ELs such as BCLAD, CLAD, SB1969), and who not only have training in second language pedagogy but also have experience teaching second language learners and sheltered English classes. All teachers will be trained in appropriate methods for teaching ELs at various levels of proficiency. These methods include preview and review strategies and after school tutoring programs that are coordinated with the regular curriculum and designed for ELs.

Following SPCS's intensive focus on literacy and academic rigor, students will move toward mastery of the English Language at a rapid pace. Based on the English Language Development ("ELD") Framework, SPCS believes that the best approach is through an inclusive structured Integrated ELD Program along with protected Designated ELD time. In this format, EL students are not segregated from their English-speaking peers. The program provides the

extra support students need, while immersing them in the English language. All teachers with EL students will use the California (CA) ELD Standards in addition to their focal CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards to support their ELs' linguistic and academic progress.

Instruction will be made comprehensible to all EL students by the use of Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) instructional methods and strategies, including visuals, graphic organizers, technology-based language development, and interactive communication. This support will enable them to develop the grammatical framework and vocabulary needed to become proficient readers and writers. Staff will support EL parents by providing translation for newsletters and other forms of communication.

During Designated ELD, teachers with ELs will use the CA ELD Standards as the focal standards in tandem with the content standards to build in and on instruction from core content areas. Students' proficiency with academic English and literacy in the content areas will be the main focus of Designated ELD instruction. Teachers will support their students to develop the academic vocabulary and listening and speaking skills to successfully participate in academic tasks across all content areas. During Designated ELD, teachers will ensure that students have meaningful interactions with complex, relevant texts and with their peers. Students may discuss text structure, learn word meanings, complete close reading protocols to examine the language in a text they have already read, or engage in debates using language they have learned.

Recognizing that ELs are often at risk for reading problems, the strongest programs respond quickly to the results of formative assessments by offering small group reading

intervention for struggling readers that augments the core-reading program. A key element to SPCS's educational program is regular small-group tutoring, FILMS, for students who are struggling. ELs will be supported during FILMS through pre-teaching of vocabulary, use of graphic organizers, extended time on writing and reading assignments, explicit grammar instruction, and small group work as no more than 10-12 students will attend any FILMS session.

Serving Educationally Disadvantaged Students: In addition to the highly effective structures offered at SPCS to support and challenge students, additional strategies will target students who may have additional needs—students performing far below or above grade level, students with low socioeconomic status, ELs, foster youth, and Special Education students. On a frequent basis, faculty will review assessment data (including interim assessments, common assessments, teacher-created and publisher-issued quizzes and tests, writing assignments, etc.) in detail to plan and evaluate differentiated instructional techniques and identify students in need of interventions and additional supports, including potential referral for evaluation of a suspected disability. Modifications such as differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and alternative assignments will be used to address the needs of individual students.

At SPCS, all students at risk of low achievement, including SWDs, educationally disadvantaged students, and English Learners, will receive focused attention to their needs and strengths as teachers implement individualized instruction based on data-driven assessments. Teachers will meet regularly to compare their student data, discuss student performance and concerns, and discuss instructional strategies, interventions, and enrichment. Targeted intervention will be provided to our students free of charge either before and/or after school in

grades one eight until they demonstrate on an interim or local assessment that they are successfully mastering the class material.

Serving Students with Disabilities (“SWD”): The core elements of SPCS’s education program – moderate class sizes, “hands-on” project based learning methods promoting critical thinking, intensive reading focus, data-based instructional decisions, and a “Response To Intervention” approach – incorporate many best practices of strong special education programs. SPCS expects SWD to achieve at comparable levels to their general education peers. Therefore, SPCS uses an inclusion model within the context of a structured school day. Inclusion means that students with special needs are integrated with their general education peers, which SPCS believes, in accordance with law, is the most appropriate, least restrictive environment. SPCS has proven to be successful in recruiting SWDs. SPCS Santa Ana has increased its SWD population from 5% in just two years. SPCS Oceanside has maintained 13% of its total student population as SWD, surpassing the local school district’s total percentage.

In addition to fitting with SPCS’s mission-driven approach and education program, SPCS does not discriminate admission based on disability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or intellectual disability. SPCS requires each state educational agency (SEA) and its local education agency (LEA) to educate SWD in accordance with the law’s requirements; each LEA must ensure that SWD are located, identified, evaluated, and if found eligible, provided free and appropriate public education. SPCS is in compliance with all such state and federal non-discrimination laws and provides all special education students and English Language Learners with a free and appropriate education. A non-discrimination statement is prominently placed on

SPCS's enrollment lottery application to ensure that all parents/guardians applying to a SPCS school are aware of the policies.

#### **d. Admissions, Lottery, and Enrollment**

Scholarship Prep will be an open enrollment, tuition-free public school with no specific requirements for admission (e.g., minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.) as outlined in Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(A). Scholarship Prep will enroll all pupils who wish to attend to the extent that space allows and will adhere to all state and federal laws regarding the minimum age of students. Admission eligibility will not be determined by the place of residence of a pupil, except as otherwise required by law.

Scholarship Prep will establish a period of open enrollment each year. The first day of the open enrollment period, the deadline for submitting enrollment forms, and the date, location, and procedures for the random public drawing/lottery will be advertised via the school website and the school's main office. During the Open Enrollment period student enrollment forms will be accepted. After the open enrollment period closes, should Scholarship Prep receive a number of enrollment forms from potential students that exceeds the number of spaces available at each grade level within the school, the school will conduct a random public drawing/lottery as set forth below, with the exception of existing students who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year. Scholarship Prep will use the following methods of communication to inform interested parties of the timelines, rules, and procedures to be followed during the open enrollment and lottery processes: The school website; Social media; Phone calls; Emails; and Postcards/Flyers.

If Scholarship Prep has spaces available after the open enrollment period, enrollment forms will continue to be accepted. Following our public random drawing/lottery, students not able to attend Scholarship Prep due to space limitations will be placed on a waiting list in the order the registration is received, and then will be contacted when a vacancy occurs. The students and their families will be informed of their place on the waiting list.

### **Section C. The SPCS Evaluation Plan & Logic Model for Project Success**

#### **C1. Evaluating Success**

SPCS's five-year plan to expand and replicate high quality charter schools is aligned with its mission of serving educationally disadvantaged students by providing an academically rigorous public education in order to close achievement gaps, accelerate growth, and position students towards a collegiate pathway.

SPCS intends to use CSP funding to expand and improve its high quality charter school model across its Southern California network of schools within these five categories: Growth, Achievement, College Pathways, Culture, and Management Capacity. SPCS has set various project goals within each category. The objectives identified are attainable, specific, measurable and illustrative of SPCS's commitment to serving historically educationally underserved youth with a firm belief that every student can succeed! Additionally, the project objectives provide annual benchmarks that will enable SPCS to hold itself accountable in compliance with the grant and monitor progress toward the final objectives throughout the course of the grant period.

## Category #1: Growth

Project Objective				
SPCS will expand and replicate to provide access to greater numbers of educationally disadvantaged students.				
Performance Measure		Baseline Data	Achievability Factors	Data Collection
Growth				
1.a	Increase student Enrollment to 3,550 students by Year 5	Current Enrollment: 753 Scholars	Moderate growth plans to grow attendance by 200 9-12 SPCS scholars	Annual State Report
1.b	Expand grade levels served to TK-12th	N/A	Moderate growth plans to grow attendance by 200 9-12 SPCS scholars	Annual State Report

1.a SPCS will increase student enrollment in order to serve greater numbers of educationally disadvantaged students in newly replicated/expanded schools. Over the course of the grant period, SPCS will grow its enrollment from a current baseline of 753 students to 3,550 total students by the 2023- 2024 school year, which is further discussed in the budget narrative. This will be verified by annual state reports. SPCS will grow its education footprint by expanding to two additional counties in Southern California (Los Angeles, Riverside) in addition to the two counties in which it currently operates schools (Orange, San Diego). With this growth, SPCS will begin development of geographic hubs capable of serving greater numbers of educationally disadvantaged students.

1.b SPCS will grow its enrollment in order to serve 9-12th grade students in two expanded high schools serving 750 students by the 2023-24 school year. This will be verified by annual state reports.

## Category #2: Achievement

Project Objective				
SPCS will increase student academic achievement, especially for educationally disadvantaged subgroups.				
	Performance Measure	Baseline Data	Achievability Factors	Data Collection
Achievement				
2.a	Closure of Achievement Gap for all Subgroups of Students in Mathematics & English Language Arts (ELA) on the CAASPP by 5% each year	Baseline: 2.1: All SPCS Subgroup students growing by 5%	In line with current organizational practice	State Assessment (CAASPP)
2.b	Increase reclassification rates for EL Students by 5% each year	SPCS EL Reclassification Rate is 36%	In line with current organizational practice	Annual English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPAC)

2.a Closure of the Achievement Gap - all Subgroups of SPCS Students (Free/Reduced Lunch, ELs, Special Education) in Mathematics and English Language Arts by 5% annually. Currently, SPCS is closing gaps for all subgroups of students by at least 5% and will maintain this pace across the term of the grant. This will be measured by annual state testing data. Internal assessments given to students twice annually prior to testing will enable SPCS to be on track for meeting the objective. This achievability of this objective is in line with current practice and will be measured via CAASPP performance reports/data.

2.b Increase reclassification rates for SPCS EL Students by 5% annually. Currently, SPCS is closing gaps for EL students by ensuring they become proficient in English language usage at a rate of 36% annually. The achievability of this objective is in line with current organizational practice and tis success will be measured by annual ELPAC testing and annual statewide reports.

### Category #3: Pathways to College

Project Objective				
SPCS will prepare students for college and career success.				
	Performance Measure	Baseline Data	Achievability Factors	Data Collection
Pathways to College				
3.a	100% of HS students take SAT or ACT	N/A	SPCS will hold SAT and ACT workshops	SAT and ACT Reports to SPCS
3.b	100% of HS students will be college ready, according to the University of California's A-G requirements	N/A	SPCS Counselors will monitor course scheduling and complete credit reviews	SPCS Recordkeeping
3.c	100% of HS students will apply for scholarships	N/A	SPCS will hold ongoing college fairs/scholarship workshops	SPCS Recordkeeping and Navient System

3.a 100% of eligible High School Students will take the SAT or ACT to become college ready. Currently, SPCS baseline data is valued at zero, since it does not have any baseline data with regard to operating a high school. CSP grant funding is a critical element towards SPCS replicating its high quality charter school model to serve 9-12 grades. This will be measured by SAT and ACT Reports to SPCS.

3.b 100% of SPCS will be college ready, according to the University of California's A-G requirements. Baseline info is currently zero. SPCS counselors monitor scheduling and complete credit reviews. SPCS Recordkeeping will measure data collection for this objective.

3.c 100% of SPCS High School students will apply for scholarships during their junior or senior year. SPCS does not have baseline data since they do not operate a high school. SPCS will hold ongoing college fairs and scholarship workshops. Performance measures & data collection will be measured by SPCS Recordkeeping and Navient System.

## Objective #4: Culture

Project Objective				
SPCS will maintain a positive, safe school climate to ensure high levels of student engagement.				
	Performance Measure	Baseline Data	Achievability Factors	Data Collection
<b>Culture</b>				
4.a	Average Daily Attendance (ADA) attendance rate is 96% or higher	SPCS ADA is 96%	In line with current organizational performance	State Department of Education reports
4.b	Annual Student Retention rate of 90% or higher	SPCS Retention rate is 80%	In line with current organizational performance	State Department of Education reports
4.c	Annual suspension/expulsion rate will not exceed 4%	SPCS annual suspension/expulsion rate is 4%	In line with current organizational performance	State Department of Education reports

4.a Average Daily Student attendance rate is 96% or higher. SPCS currently has an Average Daily Student attendance rate of 96%. SPCS is proud of this number, and knows that it will have to work harder to keep the bar high. This will be measured by state Department of Education student attendance data.

4.b Annual Student Retention rate of 90% or higher. SPCS is in its third year of operation and on an ambitious growth plan. SPCS currently has an annual student retention rate of approximately 80% school wide across its campuses. SPCS will collect data annually and will be measured by State Department of Education data.

4.c Suspension/expulsion rate will not exceed 4% annually. As discussed in the budget narrative, SPCS will hire one school counselor onsite at every school it plans to expand or replicate. This counselor will identify high-risk students and work with them to ensure their needs are met and to get them back on track towards a successful collegiate bound pathway. SPCS is confident that with CSP funding, it can ensure that its suspension/expulsion rate will not

exceed 4% annually. This will be tracked annually and will be measured by state Department of Education data.

**Category #5: Management Capacity**

Project Objective				
SPCS will maintain fiscal solvency and operate using CMO best practices.				
Performance Measure		Baseline Data	Achievability Factors	Data Collection
Management Capacity				
5.a	SPCS will maintain a 8-10% budgetary reserve each year	SPCS current rate is 20%	In line with current organizational performance	Annual Audit Reports
5.b	Annual audits, conducted by State approved auditing firm, will not produce any issues	All SPCS audits have found no issues	In line with current organizational performance	Annual Audit Reports

5.a SPCS will maintain an 8-10% budgetary reserve each year. As per most California Charter School authorizer requirements, Charter schools must have a minimum of 3-5% in budgetary reserves annually. SPCS currently maintains a budgetary reserve of 20% across its two operational sites, yet it intends to replicate and expand a total of eight (8) new schools in a five (5) year period. In the budget narrative, SPCS intends to fund a \$750,000 Working Capital Line of Credit, using CSP funding, to significantly strengthen its financial position, with regard to expanding and replicating high quality charter schools. Although its growth plans are ambitious, SPCS will never drop below a 10% budgetary reserve annually. This will be verified by annual financial reports, and its annual report to the State of California.

5.b SPCS will receive clean Annual audits. As a young and growing CMO, SPCS has received clean annual audits, but it understands that with growth, comes complications. As indicated in the management plan narrative on in Section D, SPCS intends to use CSP funding to

hire a Director of Finance and Compliance to ensure ongoing success. SPCS understands that an investment into its operational branch is necessary to ensure that annual audits will not produce any issues. This will be documented and verified annually through financial reports, and within its annual reports to local county authorizers and the State of California.

## **Section D. SPCS Management Plan and Personnel**

### **D1. Network Structure and Internal Capacity**

In the fall of 2014, Gloria Romero, the former Majority Leader and Education Committee Chair of the California State Senate who had led California's 2010 Race to the Top Education Reforms and Founder of the California Center for Parent Empowerment, began the search to start a charter school dedicated to serving high poverty youth trapped in chronically underperforming schools. Senator Romero was introduced by mutual charter school advocates to Jason Watts, the then CEO of Charter Boost, with over 12 years experience of operational management of both traditional district and charter schools. They quickly saw eye to eye on how to transform schools serving educationally disadvantaged students from diverse communities and the dearth of high quality charter schools in California, especially within low-income communities facing disproportionate barriers to socio-economic advancement. Shortly thereafter they decided they had to work together to create a high quality charter school management organization in order to address this challenge.

Since their first conversation in the Fall of 2014 through today, SPCS founders have envisioned and developed an organizational management system, coupled with a strategic management plan to become the highest-rated charter management organization in California

and beyond. In 2015, the SPCS founders officially formed Scholarship Prep as a California 501c3 nonprofit, and wrote their first charter petition to enable them to operate as a countywide benefit charter in Orange County. Not long after receiving unanimous approval from the Orange County Board of Education, they opened their flagship school doors in Santa Ana in August of 2016. The *Wall Street Journal*, intrigued with the idea of a former California Senator now operating a charter school, chose to cover the school on its very first day of operation (Appendix I: Additional Information).

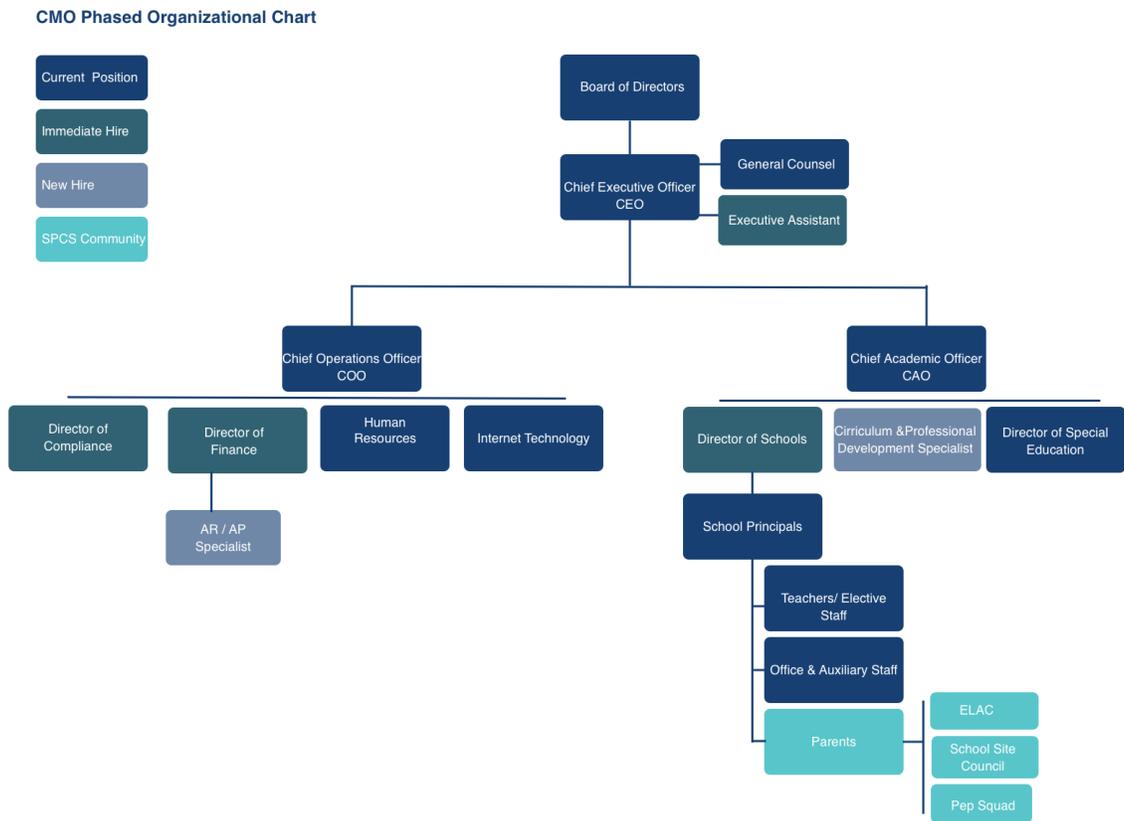
Knowing they had to do more to close the stark Achievement gaps they witnessed in incoming historically educationally disadvantaged and underserved students to their Santa Ana campus in year one of the CMO, they recruited Andrew Crowe to become their Chief Academic Officer (CAO). Mr. Crowe had a demonstrated track record of success in both traditional public and charter schools across the entire K-12 continuum.

The leadership and quality of the administrative personnel of SPCS is designed to ensure that schools meet their mission of providing a university-inspired pathway of success while closing the achievement gap for all students, including those underserved. The SPCS Board of Directors, internal organizational structure, plans to involve parents, and use of expert service providers reflects its intention to ground the school in the best practices of Charter School management and oversight.

For SPCS, visualizing and planning for an effective charter management plan and strategy has always been at the forefront of their activity. As of the date of this grant submission, both SPCS schools have exceeded expectations and outpaced their local districts in their

nascency. Additionally, SPCS was authorized in 2018 by to LAUSD to replicate their highly successful charter school model in California’s largest school district.

As indicated on the CMO Phased Organizational Chart below, the leadership and staffing structure of SPCS is designed to ensure not only a high quality school on an individual basis, but also an infrastructure set in place to easily replicate and expand its CMO activities. The CMO chart is broken down by current positions, immediate new hires within 6 months of receiving an award, and additional new hires within 12 months of receiving an award. These roles are strategically built into the CSP 5 Year grant period (further discussed in the Budget Narrative), to ensure the ability of SPCS to sustain the operation of the replicated charter schools, both during the grant’s reporting and compliance timeline, and after it has ended.



There are three branches of management leadership within the SPCS CMO: Executive, Operations and Academics. The Executive branch is the highest-ranking branch in the SPCS CMO, and their primary responsibilities include making major corporate decisions, managing the overall operations and resources of a company, business development, budget creation and oversight, legal compliance and SPCS replication and expansion (i.e., growth). The SPCS Chief Operating Executive (“CEO”) works closely with the Board of Directors to ensure that board members fully support SPCS’ mission, culture, and goals. The CEO acts as the main point of communication between the board of directors, general counsel, and corporate operations. Each member of the Board was carefully chosen for his or her dedication to education, area of professional expertise, service to the community, and ability to support the vision and mission of Scholarship Prep. The CEO is also responsible for community outreach, media relations, fundraising, and strategic planning. As discussed further in the budget narrative, an immediate hire using grant allocations will be an Executive Assistant to report directly to the CEO to further the work of the Executive branch and assist with executive level communications and organization.

The Operations branch is charged with ensuring effective and long-term execution of all of SPCS’ strategic functions, managing the company’s day-to-day operations, monitoring the company’s metrics, overseeing the budget and expenditures, and setting goals for the company. In collaboration with the CEO, the COO implements Board policies, administers and supervises the school and its employees, leads development of educational program implementation, controls the processes and functions of all accounts payable and receivable, fosters a culture of positive, engaged learners, and serves as a strong advocate for the school’s philosophy and

parental involvement. Both the Human Resources and Internet Technology departments report directly to the COO. As further discussed on the budget narrative, the Operations branch will look to make two immediate hires using grant allocations to bring on a Director of Finance and Director of Compliance, who will report directly to the COO.

The Academics branch is responsible for the implementation of the instructional program, teacher development and training, organizational student academic performance assessments (local and statewide), and training of site administration as needed. The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) is lead officer of this branch, whose main focus is to act as an intermediary between the overall academic goals and policies of the SPCS CMO and also between local SPCS schools.

Although governed by one Board of Directors, SPCS local schools maintain their own autonomous community advisory boards and self-governance when it comes to the matter of overseeing the implementation of the curriculum, staff professional development and instruction, school culture, academic assessments, community outreach initiatives, and student enrollment and development goals. For example, local school Principals are responsible for the implementation and execution of the day to-day program, including fiscal solvency of the site. As discussed further in the budget narrative, given the fact that SPCS intends to open a third school in Lomita this fall, a Director of Schools is considered an immediate hire. In the current SPCS CMO model, all Principals directly report to the CAO. The ability to use grant dollars for this specific hire will, undoubtedly, achieve economies of scale to allow the CAO to focus on furthering the overall goals of the academic branch, while also creating a new role that is specific to guiding and furthering the efforts of all local principals, and thus the local schools. Further, a

second tier hire of a Curriculum & Professional Development Specialist will be created to also further these efforts.

## D2. SPCS Management Plan to Ensure Project Success

As noted in the expansion and replication development timeline below, SPCS has developed a detailed business model for expanding enrollment, identifying new markets, and ultimately green-lighting replication and the opening of its new schools in educationally underserved communities. This strategic business plan will ensure that SPCS does not just open new schools, but rather will open them in communities of documented need with a shortage of quality, school choice neighborhood options and significant parent demand.

### Expansion & Replication Development Timeline



During Phase 1 of its expansion plan, and in alignment with its mission statement, SPCS works diligently to identify new markets based on a comprehensive community needs and demand assessment, in order to serve educationally disadvantaged communities facing a market failure in public education, whereby access to high quality, free public schools is not an option. This initial phase of SPCS’s Expansion/Replication model is based on a comprehensive community needs and demand assessment in combination with federal, state and local education

performance outcomes based on statewide testing outcomes, school attendance rates, and graduation statistics. Using the broad, perfect-competition definition, market failures are corrected by allowing competing entrepreneurs and consumers to push the market further toward equilibrium over time. As discussed previously in Section B2, SPCS intends to locate its schools in areas of high poverty to ensure it continues to serve educationally disadvantaged, predominantly Latino and African-American, students.

During Phase 2, a select team of SPCS officers will begin their process of location scouting and getting full grasp of a community and the challenges it faces. SPCS will engage in preliminary meetings with potential district and/or county charter authorizers, elected officials, community leaders, and members of their Board of Directors who are longstanding representatives of the low-income communities that SPCS seeks to serve. SPCS has entered into a strategic partnership with Matthew Mallers, the National Co-lead of CBRE Group's Education Practice Group. Mr. Mallers has significant experience with commercial real estate transactions within the niche market of education facilities. Mr. Mallers was instrumental in identifying, negotiating, and executing the terms of the lease for the SPCS Lomita-Harbor City Campus and its potential San Diego campus. He understands the expansion goals of SPCS and is actively looking for potential facilities that meet the criteria identified in Phase 1. For SPCS, finding the right facility that meets the various specifications of zoning and local code enforcement has been a steep challenge. Since engaging Mr. Mallers in early 2018, they have worked together to identify four qualifying educational facilities that meet their criteria, of which two are under serious project consideration, moving into Phase 3.

Phase 3 is considered the tipping point of a project, whereby SPCS will formally engage the SPCS Board of Directors for replication/expansion approval, lease the facility using a contingency escape clause (as per the guidance of Mr. Mallers and SPCS legal counsel), and launch a formal student enrollment campaign. In the past, enrollment campaigns have included hosting community events and workshops at the facility site, neighborhood canvassing door to door to meet parents, and partnering with local community organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs and faith-based organizations/churches, in order to not only announce their location, but to solicit valuable insight regarding the communities in which they serve to enhance student outreach and recruitment strategies.

During Phase 4, SPCS will submit its official charter petition to the local authorizing entity, while at the same time seeking Public Charter School Grant Program Funding (“PCSGP”) and arrange for securing bridge loan funding to jumpstart the facility leasing. Without receiving a bridge loan financing commitment in Phase 2, this current phase would become economically less feasible due to the persistent and clear pattern of siting and funding facilities for charter schools, an ongoing issue that is exacerbated in competitive rental markets such as southern California. Restricted access to funding, coupled with increased costs for charter schools in these tight leasing markets, represent a chasm between traditional district and charter schools. As described in further detail in the budget narrative, SPCS intends to allocate a portion of its award to fund a working capital line of credit, that will be used as a PCSGP bridge loan alternative, saving SPCS tens of thousands in financing fees and effectively streamlining its development project phases and overall capacity.

Finally, in Phase 5 SPCS will hire site specific key staff (e.g., Principal, Office Manager), launch the Open Enrollment drive, and open its doors. SPCS, typically, seeks to open the school facility by late spring so that parent meetings, family education events, and school staff-parents meet and greet events can be launched throughout the summer prior to the official August school start date. The number of dates within each timeline can differ based on various factors, but Phases 1 - 4 can take anywhere from 20 - 40 days each, with Phase 5 taking the longest, between 60 - 90 days.

### **D3. Qualifications of Key Project Personnel**

**Andrew Crowe**, SPCS's **Chief Academic Officer** (see resumes in Appendix B), will serve as the **Project Director** of this grant. With support from SPCS staff, Mr. Crowe currently oversees and manages current CSP grants and the drafting and writing of all new SPCS Charter authorization petitions. As a Teach For America corps member at West Philadelphia High School, Mr. Crowe taught every math course offered and in just two years, his students increased their proficiency on the state assessment by 37%. His peers and administrators also selected him as the School Based Teacher Leader, serving as liaison to the School District and providing professional development based on system-wide initiatives.

Mr. Crowe has extensive experience in working with educationally disadvantaged students. After working in Hawai'i as an instructional coach, Mr. Crowe was a founding teacher at a charter high school in a high poverty community of south Los Angeles. In the school's first two years of operation, Mr. Crowe increased the number of students showing proficiency on the state assessment by 15% and 18%. His assessment scores as a classroom teacher placed him in

the highest tier of achievement according to the Los Angeles Unified School District measuring system. As Assistant Principal, he oversaw student growth that placed multiple subjects in the two highest tiers of achievement (Algebra 1, Life Science, Geometry, and Chemistry). Additionally, the school's reclassification rate for English Learners was nearly double that of the school district.

As Principal of the top performing K-8 public school and charter school in San Bernardino County, CA, student proficiency on the ELA and Math state assessments grew by 6% and 14% in just his first year in the role. Additionally, the school was ranked #1 for all significant subgroups amongst District comparison schools in both ELA and Math (Hispanic or Latino, White, Black or African-American, SWDs, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, and ELs). The school received the maximum score of 10/10 Statewide and Similar Student Rankings from the California Charter Schools Association's 2016 Accountability Framework and ranked in the 96 percentile of all California public schools.

The following key staff members at SPCS will support the Project Director. Their resumes can be found in Appendix B)

**Gloria Romero - SPCS Co-Founder and CEO.** Former California State Senator Gloria Romero earned her PhD at the University of California and chose teaching as her career, serving as a Professor of Psychology at California State University, Los Angeles. Recognized for her commitment to education, she was subsequently elected to the California State Assembly and the California State Senate. During her service, she was recognized as a leader by her peers, becoming the first California woman to ever be elected to serve as the Senate Majority Leader.

While in the Legislature, she served on education and budget committees during her 12 years, making her one of the strongest voices on education reform. While there, she wrote notable education reform laws pertaining to teacher evaluation and compensation, charter school expansion, and wrote the nation's first ever "Parent Empowerment Act" which enabled parents to transform chronically underperforming schools by "triggering" change and expanding Open Enrollment opportunities for parents locked in underperforming, inner city schools. Following her legislative service she headed community-based education reform drives in California. Senator Romero has been a frequent opinion contributor to the Orange County Register on matters of education policy and reforms. She was named Professor Emeritus of the California State University system and occasionally teaches college courses.

**Jason Watts - SPCS Co-Founder and COO.** Mr. Watts began his career as an elementary school teacher, working with students in grades kindergarten through eighth. After more than 10 years in the classroom, he eventually became a site administrator of the top performing district school in San Bernardino County, the largest land mass district in the United States. In 2009, he became co-founder and Director of Educational Services of a charter school organization, which opened as the largest first year charter school in California history at the time, with over 1100 students. In that school's first year of operation, they became the highest performing public school in San Bernardino County. Mr. Watts helped oversee the opening of two additional charter schools with the same organization, another of which was the highest performing first year charter in California history at the time, with a 993/1000 Academic Performance Index score.

**Dr. Eric Beam - Special Education Director,** leads SPCS legal compliance and student support for its special education students and oversees a team of three3 special education

specialists, four instructional assistants, and numerous contract specialists. Dr. Beam earned his Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from UCLA and has served as a Principal and school psychologist for both district and charter schools since 2005. Amongst his value added assets to SPCS are both district and charter school experience as a Director of Special Education. Thus, his contributions to the CMO, in particular students and their families, are integral to the successes Scholarship Prep has seen thus far throughout the organization.

**Karl Yoder - Business operations and CFO of Delta Managed Solutions (DMS)** with over 20 years of experience in business, personnel operations and budget projections and oversight. SPCS retains their services for budget formation and management, payroll, and human resources support, and have succeeded in helping SPCS maintain fiscally conservative operations, ensuring healthy reserves well beyond the charter authorizer required minimums. Additionally, through the work of DMS, SPCS has received clean annual audits since its inception.

**Greta Proctor - Lead General Counsel, Partner at Procopio Law Firm**, one of the most prestigious law firms advising charter schools in California. Working closely with Ms. Proctor, the school has developed mandated policies and “Best Practices” which guide the CMO. Procopio annually conducts ethics and governance trainings for all CMO leadership staff.

**Matthew Maller - Contracted from CBRE**, a leading real estate company in California, who has several years of experience in leading the search and successful navigation of the educational facilities leasing and acquisition processes for charter schools.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

SPCS has met each of the Application Requirements, within this project narrative and the Appendices.

- (a) (i) Please see Sections A1; B1-B2; C and D2
  - (ii) Please see Budget Narrative
- (b) (i) Please see Section A; *Appendix G*
  - (ii) Please see Section A
  - (iii) Please see Sections A2; A3
- (c) (i) Please see Section A; Section B; Section C
  - (ii) Please see Section A and Budget Narrative
  - (iii) Please see Section A, B, and Budget Narrative
- (d) (i) Please see *Appendix F*
  - (ii) Please see Section A; B; and budget Narrative
- (e) (i) - (iii) Please see Sections A2; A3
- (f) Please see Section 3
- (g) Not applicable.
- (h) Please see Section A; Section B; Section D
- (i) Please see Section A; B; and D
- (j) Please see Section B; and Budget Narrative
- (k) Please see Section A; Section B; Section D
- (l) Please see Section A; Section B; Budget Narrative
- (m) Please see Section C; Budget narrative.
- (n) Please see *Appendix H*

(o) Please See Section A; Section B

(p) (i) - (ii) N/A. SPCS requires no waivers of Federal statutory or regulatory requirements to operate its replicated or expanded charter schools.