



# TAKING ACTION

Recommendations to Ensure Future Success

Palmdale School District  
Raúl Maldonado, Superintendent

It's a school day, and all over Palmdale, kids, parents, and staff are headed to places where they will be welcomed, nurtured, and challenged: Palmdale schools. As they arrive, they greet each other warmly, in English and Spanish, and a host of other languages. Their schools are clean, beautiful, and inviting, mirroring the value in which Palmdale holds its children and youth, and those who serve them. Students enter their school community with a purpose: some will head for the multipurpose room; others will make their way to the library and multimedia center; yet others will hurry to the playground where staff have organized physical activities that engage students' minds and bodies.

This is the Palmdale PROMISE --- alive and in action!



# TAKING ACTION FOR SUCCESS

Dramatically Improved Student Achievement & Engagement

21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environments of High Intellectual Performance

Providing Direction to Sites & Staff

Safe & Affirming School Environments

Family & Community Engagement

## Dramatically Improving Student Engagement & Achievement

In order for Palmdale to achieve its vision for student success, we propose to dramatically improve student engagement and achievement through access to powerful learning opportunities. To this end, the following are recommended:

### 1. FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

*Extend full-day kindergarten to all elementary sites.*

Currently kindergarten is offered using three different models, two of which are half day. In order to support equitable access and to higher levels of achievement, every elementary site should be supported in offering a full-day kindergarten. Using a phase-in process, full day kindergartens should offer a language model so that every child begins early language learning, which is proven to increase cognitive flexibility, creativity, and academic performance. The models selected should be ones shown to lead to high levels of multilingual competency.

### 2. VAPA CURRICULUM

*Develop VAPA as a systemic reform effort for all schools and all grades.*

Create an innovative Visual and Performing Arts curriculum based on a powerful pedagogy and a quality teacher preparation program to teach the arts as required by California Ed Code. This reform effort should augment the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) program by adding the "A" in STEAM training and instruction. As part of the VAPA curriculum, an El Sistema-like music program should be implemented districtwide, and an arts exploratory wheel should be phased-in to provide standards-based comprehensive arts learning opportunities for all elementary students. (The "wheel" allows students to rotate through music, visual arts, theatre, dance, and digital media courses throughout the year.)

### 3. CAREER/LINKED LEARNING<sup>1</sup> AND MULTILINGUAL LEARNING PATHWAYS

*Implement integrated career/linked learning and multilingual learning pathways at all schools.*

Create a set of integrated career/linked learning and language learning programs/pathways to provide multiple options for all students. Define the staffing and timeline parameters for each pathway. Address access to specialized services such as GATE and Special Education within a supportive integrated career/linked learning and language learning context. Students who have early access to excellent curriculum have academic, and ultimately economic, advantages compared to their peers. Additionally, a rich and challenging curriculum engages students and results in greater academic achievement. Through engagement in linked learning, STEAM, and multilingual learning, students are able to advance and enrich their learning. Therefore, we should identify desired outcomes in these areas, then design and phase-in programs and pathways PreK-8 that will yield high levels of preparation and successful transition to such

---

<sup>1</sup> Linked Learning is usually implemented as a high school approach. However, the intent here is to adopt the aspects of linked learning that are applicable to the elementary and middle school grades.

programs/pathways at the high school level and beyond. Determine how these program/pathway options will be implemented and where they will be placed so every student has equitable access. Ultimately, every student should be expected to participate and succeed in these programs/pathways. (See Appendix 1 for a table of possible multilingual learning options to consider and Appendix 2 for a sample career pathways model.)

#### 4. TECHNOLOGY

*Expand student active engagement by increasing the quantity and quality of daily technology use by students, teachers, and parents.*

Through regular quality use of technology, students can connect with people from around the world, identifying and solving real world problems. They can create content rather than simply consuming content, and at the same time, acquire real 21st Century skills. Strategic use of technology in school and in the home/community can support students in performing in depth learning and improving critical/creative thinking skills. Implement educational technology that promotes the four C's – communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity - and that provides equitable access for English Learners and students of color to core curriculum and academic language in the classroom, school, and community. Establish a base level of technology available to every student, a set of articulated expectations about how/when technology should be used in the classroom by teachers and students, and a base level of technology support provided to classrooms and schools. Train students and parents at every school as technology mentors to assist teachers and work with the Technology Support staff in integrating technology routinely into classroom teaching/learning. Develop innovative technology uses that support integration (of concepts/curricular areas), interaction (across time and space), intelligence, imagination, and innovation. Explore options for take-home technology to support students/parents.

#### 5. EXTRACURRICULAR OFFERINGS

*Expand no-cost extracurricular offerings so that every student has access to engaging activities beyond the school day.*

Currently, not all students have access to extracurricular activities, such as music, academic clubs, and sports. These activities offer opportunities for students to learn the values of teamwork, individual and group responsibility, physical strength and endurance, competition, diversity, and a sense of culture and community. Extracurricular activities provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom, offering students the opportunity to apply academic skills in a real-world context, and are thus considered part of a well-rounded education. By providing a rich array of no-cost extracurricular offerings, ensuring student voice and choice in the design and selection of those offerings, and arranging for viable transportation options so access is assured for all students, we can improve both student engagement and achievement.

#### 6. STAFF RECRUITMENT

*Make particular efforts to recruit diverse bilingual/multilingual educators.*

The District's Human Resources Department will utilize strategies to identify and attract diverse bilingual/multilingual educators, including librarians/library staff, technology staff, and instructional resource/support staff. These strategies will change and adapt to changing circumstances, and include:

- Strengthening relationships with local institutions of higher education.
- Operating a Para-To-Teacher program ("PTTP"), to draw on community resources and grow our own teachers in shortage areas.
- Operating a program to identify community members who were educators in their countries of origin and supporting these educators in attaining California certification.
- Recruiting at events targeting multilingual educators, such as California Association of Bilingual Education Statewide Conference.
- Considering establishing a teaching career pathway for students.

#### 7. LONGER SCHOOL DAY

*Explore the feasibility of extending the school day by at least one hour.*

Conduct a feasibility study to determine how the school day can be extended by an hour or more so that students are able to experience a richer and more varied curriculum and those who need additional assistance and support are able to receive it without sacrificing access to the full curriculum. Engage the employee bargaining units in this exploratory process.

## Creating Globally-Competitive Learning Environments of High Intellectual Performance

In order for Palmdale to achieve its vision for student success, we propose to create and sustain globally-competitive learning environments of high intellectual performance across the curriculum and in all areas needed for 21st century success for students, including the opportunity for development of high levels of multilingual and STEAM competencies. To this end, the following are recommended:

### 1. ESSENTIAL PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

*At each school and districtwide, monitor implementation of essential pedagogical practices supporting high intellectual performance for every group of students.*

Adopt districtwide the essential pedagogical practices (see Appendix x). Train teachers, principals, students, parents and others on these practices. Engage teachers in collaboration through PLC to develop specific interactive classroom strategies to operationalize these essential pedagogical practices. Ensure the four District strategies for development of critical thinking are integrated. Establish vehicles for teacher demonstrations and sharing of the interactive classroom strategies. Guide principals in observation and feedback practices that support improved implementation of the practices and corresponding strategies. Develop video clips of these practices/strategies in action in Palmdale classrooms.

### 2. HIGH LEVERAGE PRACTICES/PROGRAMS

*Implement innovative and high leverage strategies, approaches, and programs that are proven to dramatically improve school results for English Learners, foster youth, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and African American students.*

Identify research-informed high leverage practices, programs, models, and approaches that are aligned with our values and that have some evidence/promise (theoretical or empirical or both) for significantly improving the engagement, achievement, and/or 21st century success of our students, in particular, our English Learners and students of color. Determine which of these would be best adopted districtwide and which should be locally selected and implemented. Make these known to schools for them to incorporate into their Single Plans for Student Achievement. Provide the necessary training and support for successful implementation. Monitor progress.

### 3. PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

*Design and implement a performance-based assessment system focused on having students develop and demonstrate mastery of identified key standards and skills.*

Create a catalogue of common project-based tasks for students at every grade level that require students to integrate their learning across the curriculum and that require the use of technology and a second language. These can be used to "assess" student mastery of key concepts/standards. Teachers develop these projects and students can select from the catalogue what they want to do to show their mastery. The projects are presented publicly (including the community/business in assessing) success in completing the

projects. Work with teachers to identify and publicly display quarterly common projects. Engage teachers and others in identifying project strengths and shortcomings. Teachers will collaborate and mentor each other to improve shortcomings to strength areas. Incorporate an eighth grade culminating project (similar to high school senior projects) with a career/college component.

#### 4. CAREER/COLLEGE GOING CULTURE

*Develop a prek-8 career and college going culture.*

At the elementary level, establish college/career-focused introductory activities, projects, exploratory wheels, and other similar mechanisms for engaging students and developing a career and college going culture. Move students into career pathways in middle school. Integrate technology and language study into each career pathway. Ensure that all career pathways also assist students in preparing for college preparatory coursework. Provide similar opportunities for parents and families to support career and college going efforts. Engage community partners in this effort as well, including possibly creating an Employer Advisory Board.

#### 5. AVID/AVID STRATEGIES

*Implement avid and avid strategies districtwide. Increase the enrollment of English Learners and students of color in elementary and middle school AVID.*

There are currently AVID programs in all elementary schools and AVID elective courses in all intermediate schools. In order to ensure that AVID thrives where the most underserved students are concentrated, assign an AVID coordinator to schools that have not met API targets. Ensure all teachers PreK-8 use AVID strategies. Monitor access and results for English Learners and students of color.

#### 6. LIBRARIES

*Expand the digital and traditional library holdings at each site and in each classroom to reflect sufficient target/primary language print and digital materials in line with the recommendations of the International Reading Association, and provide professional development to the library staff.*

There is a direct correlation between high quality school library programs and student achievement. More access to books results in more and better reading. Yet, language learners often have little access to books and other reading material in the target/primary language. The International Reading Association recommends that both school and classroom libraries be expanded so that every child is able to select a new book every day. The District will support the expanded acquisition of reading materials for school and classroom libraries, including guiding school sites in allocating funds to purchase materials in support of this effort. The District will also provide regular professional development to certificated and classified library staff.



## Providing Strategic Direction for Sites & Staff

In order for Palmdale to achieve its vision for student success, we propose to *provide strategic direction and support for district administrators, principals, teachers, and sites focused on improving the quality of classroom instruction and interaction in every classroom in every school*. To this end, the following are recommended:

### 1. HIGH-LEVEL FACILITATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Train all district and site leaders in high-level facilitation.*

In order to support promising Palmdale leaders in providing the necessary leadership in adaptive times, conduct high-level facilitation training focused on enhancing our internal capacity for leading and sustaining the types of positive transformation that our schools require and our students deserve. Utilize a comprehensive program to develop the skills and knowledge professionals need so that they can design, implement, and sustain strategic initiatives in schools in order to dramatically improve achievement for all students, and to close the achievement and access gaps that currently exist between groups of students.

Focus on three interconnected areas of study - Leadership, Systems, and Facilitation Process Skills. Ensure each program is uniquely designed to embed such skill development into the actual strategic work of our district and schools.

Invite sites to bring leadership teams to the training. Schedule two cohorts/year until all are trained. Identify potential facilitators in each cohort and engage them in a trainer of trainers module.

### 2. SHARED VISION, INSTRUCTIONAL PRIORITIES, & EXPECTATIONS

*Engage sites in developing deep understanding of and enacting the district vision, instructional priorities, and expectations for 21<sup>st</sup> century success and high intellectual performance.*

Engage the district office departments, principals, and sites in professional conversations about the district vision for creating and sustaining globally-competitive learning environments of high intellectual performance across the curriculum and in all areas needed for 21<sup>st</sup> century success for students, including promoting high levels of multilingual competency, and what all of these mean for teaching and learning. Design activities to build shared understanding and commitment. Ensure that administrators and staff are able to translate the instructional priorities and expectations for 21<sup>st</sup> century student success into instructional and supervisory practices at the school and district levels.

### 3. SUPPORTING/MONITORING TEACHER PRACTICE

*Support principals with systems to support and monitor teacher practice and reflection on student engagement, achievement, and 21<sup>st</sup> century success.*

Develop systems for onsite support, mentoring, and monitoring of teacher practice that leads to improving the quality of classroom instruction and interaction. Facilitate ongoing professional learning communities to identify, design, and rehearse strategies and approaches for improved student engagement and high

intellectual performance. Incorporate cultural and linguistic responsiveness/equity training in this. Support intra- and inter-school professional learning focused on improving the quality of classroom instruction and interaction.

#### 4. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

*Conduct an assessment of current programs to determine their alignment to the new district essentials and their potential for achieving the vision of student success for all groups of students we serve.*

Identify the major district/site sponsored programs and develop an assessment protocol to determine their research base, their alignment to the new district essentials, their potential for helping us achieve the vision of student success for each group of students we serve, their current implementation status, and their current results profile. Using the results of this assessment, make a recommendation about whether to continue to support these programs as is, to modify their use to increase alignment and effectiveness, or to phase out their use.

#### 5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

*Implement a coherent professional development program for teachers, support staff, and administrators designed to improve the district's capacity to implement the strategic plan recommendations.*

Provide professional development to administrators, teachers, and other staff regarding our vision, instructional priorities, essential pedagogical practices, deep learning, culturally and linguistically responsive practices, and other topics supportive of student success, such as Common Core Plus and district initiatives/programs. Structure and provide teachers, administrators, and other staff with a safe, trusting, and nurturing arena for implementing and addressing the Initiative and expanding their knowledge and repertoire of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. Build teacher/staff leadership capacity through targeted professional development that incorporates research-supported practices that yield high levels of student engagement, achievement, and 21st century success. Develop resource materials (i.e., videos) that show what effective teaching/learning looks like. Provide ongoing support and coaching for principals to expand their knowledge of and access to resources aligned to the 21st century success and high intellectual performance. Prioritize student engagement and achievement in PLCs and PD, and organize districtwide PLCs so that teachers in similar grades/subject areas are able to align and calibrate across sites. Provide on going coaching for teachers in targeted instructional practices. Enhance the current New Teacher Bootcamp. Develop and implement complementary parent leadership and engagement programs that help parents understand and support our vision for student success.

#### 6. GRADING

*Continue to develop and monitor consistent grading protocols and processes across the district.*

Continue the current work and direction on establishing consistent and equitable grading protocols and processes across the district in order to support improved learning and instruction. Grading is important because it defines the relationship and behavior between teacher and student, student and student, teacher and parent. Within the parameters of the district's adopted model, consider ensuring that report

card grades are heavily informed by the (a) quality of REVISED student work (that is, work is submitted, feedback on how to improve the work is provided, and work is revised and resubmitted. Work is based on highest priority standards of the school or district.) and teacher COLLABORATIVELY GRADED work. Support the development and consistent use of rubrics as appropriate. Engage students in the design and use of these rubrics. Complete the grading manual.

7. DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS/NETWORKS

*Identify demonstration schools, and establish professional learning school networks.*

Identify demonstration schools that are examples of quality implementation of the various academic pathways. These schools will provide other sites with opportunities to visit and observe. School networks will be established that include both demonstration schools and high need/underperforming schools so that learning about successful implementation of powerful program pathways can extend across the District.

8. COMMUNITY LANGUAGE RESOURCES

*Identify community language resources, and make those accessible to staff and students.*

Create a directory or other compendium of community language resources and make this available to staff, students, and parents as a way of expanding access to language learning. Collaborate with foreign government consulates, tribal leaders, universities and colleges, and business and community partners in the identification process. Utilize these community language resources as a vehicle for strengthening school/community interaction and partnership.

9. RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION & CLINIC<sup>2</sup>

*Align Response to Intervention and Clinic expectations, standards, and protocols with the District vision for student success and implement districtwide with fidelity.*

Ensure that all teachers, staff, administrators, and parents understand the processes and procedures for RtI and engage fully in that process to quickly and effectively identify student academic, emotional, and social needs and then provide the appropriate intervention. Make explicit the Clinic expectations and nonnegotiables for each grade and course level are explicit. Write SMART goals for those nonnegotiables and direct resources at students who need support to attain proficiency. Ensure that administrators know by course/grade level those students who are not reaching proficiency and engage in frequent conversations around support for the students, monitor student progress, and relentlessly ensure all students reach the goal.

---

<sup>2</sup> "Clinic" is the name given to PSD's Intervention model.

## Providing Safe & Affirming School Environments

In order for Palmdale to achieve its vision for student success, we propose to create and support safe, affirming, equitable, and enriched globally-competitive school environments for participatory, restorative, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive learning and interaction for students. To this end, the following are recommended:

### 1. STUDENT VOICE & LEADERSHIP

*Establish opportunities for students PreK-8 to develop their voice and leadership in ways that respect and affirm their multiple identities and to participate in decision-making around issues where they are key stakeholders.*

Conduct an analysis at each school to identify the influencers/leaders (traditional and nontraditional). Ensure the identified leaders represent the diversity of the school. Engage them in leadership activities that develop their adaptive leadership and facilitation skills and that embed them in advisory and decision-making bodies in the district. Convene these leaders to identify school, district, and community level leadership opportunities for other students. Explore the possibility of establishing school faculty-student senates (see Lexington HS in Lexington, MA). Provide training to student leaders to serve as peer counselors, mediators, and advisors.

### 2. RESTORATIVE PRACTICES<sup>3</sup>

*Design and implement a Restorative Practices system that promotes and strengthens positive school culture, enhances pro-social relationships within the school community, and reduces suspensions K-8 for students of color.*

Currently, students of color are disciplined disproportionately<sup>4</sup> (more often and more severely) than their White peers. Review the disproportionality data and have an open discussion about the causes and solutions. Assist each school in convening frank conversations about discipline at the school, including the number of times students are sent out of classrooms, and the reasons for dismissal from those classes. Provide training for staff, including the discussion of how/why various groups (racial, religious, ethnic,

---

<sup>3</sup> Restorative Practices is a social science that integrates developments from a variety of disciplines and fields – including education, psychology, social work, criminology, sociology, organizational development and leadership – in order to build healthy communities, increase [social capital](#), decrease crime and antisocial behavior, repair harm and restore relationships. More information can be found at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative\\_practices](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_practices).

<sup>4</sup> Research shows that students of color face a disproportionate number of disciplinary actions in U.S. public schools. According to a 2014 report by the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Office, widespread racial disparities exist in terms of how schoolchildren are punished. The longitudinal study looked at data from the past 15 years and found that minority students face a disproportional number of disciplinary actions in schools across the country, from those in affluent suburban neighborhoods to those in the poorest urban areas: <http://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/students-of-color-disproportionately-disciplined-in-schools>. For data specific to Palmdale SD, contact Dr. John Porter, Assistant Superintendent/Special Education & Student Services, at [jcporter@palmdalesd.org](mailto:jcporter@palmdalesd.org).

linguistic, sexual identity/orientation) are at risk for exclusion or inequitable/unfair actions from staff, students, or parents. Establish a path back to redemption for students who have been disciplined.

### 3. TRANSITION

*Improve the success of transition between key grade spans: PreK/K to 1<sup>st</sup>; 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.*

Transitions between key grade spans represent opportunities for students to falter. Transition programs address the academic, social and procedural elements and develop a sense of belongingness and connectedness to the future school. Review the current transition processes and evaluate the results. Strengthen the protocols, processes, and procedures to improve student academic success, connectedness, and belonging. Consult with students and parents to gather information about what's working and what's not, and what would help. Incorporate these data into decisions about changes in current practice. Establish a system for 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to collaborate frequently with intermediate school teachers around NGSS and math (both are 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> aligned).

### 4. CUSTOMER SERVICE

*Fully implement and monitor our customer service policy.*

Investigate quality service approaches such as those used by the Ritz-Carlton<sup>5</sup>, which has won numerous Baldrige<sup>6</sup> Quality Management Awards. Engage staff, parents, and students in designing a quality customer service approach for the District that reflects the District values. As part of this program, provide training for front office staff and others who interact regularly with the parents and the public. Monitor success in becoming a quality service district.

### 5. CLEAN, BEAUTIFUL, AND SAFE FACILITIES

*Enforce the district standards for facility maintenance and safety, and launch a school beautification project in collaboration with the city and community.*

Currently, some campuses are not as well maintained or as safe as others. While the District does have standards for the upkeep of schools and for school safety, they are not equitably enforced. Students, staff and parents take pride in well-maintained school campuses. Enforce the standards for maintenance equitably at all schools. Brief all maintenance, custodial, and school staff on those standards. Seek input from staff, students, and community regarding the physical state of the sites. Ensure district and site safety plans are updated and aligned with the Palmdale PROMISE. Additionally, ensure the current Bully Free curriculum is implemented with fidelity. Create a school beautification project in collaboration with the city and community. Include parents and students. This project should address school pride, school cleanliness,

---

<sup>5</sup> The Ritz Carlton Hotel Company has been repeatedly recognized for its gold standard customer service, These standards encompass the values and philosophy by which the Ritz Carlton operates across the world. More information on the Ritz Carlton's values and philosophy, go to: <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Corporate/GoldStandards/Default.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> The Baldrige Framework has endured for decades and served as a model for other national and international excellence award frameworks. For more specifics, go to: <http://www.baldrige21.com/Baldrige%20Model.html>

recycling, gardening projects, the use of school facilities for community events, and other similar approaches.

6. ENGAGED SCHOOLS

*Establish a base level of expected participation in school-associated events, such as field trips and special projects.*

Currently, schools have varying levels of participation in popular school events, field trips, and activities. This makes some schools more desirable than others. Identify those activities or events that all schools are expected to support and ensure that schools have the necessary support and funding for this. Collaborate with the city to offer more opportunities and support for school events. Establish partnerships between schools with fewer resources and community businesses/foundations/groups to support their participation in events and projects.

7. SCHOOL CLIMATE & RELATIONSHIPS

*Support the establishment of safe, affirming, and respectful climates and relationships at every site.*

Currently, there are issues concerning respect for others among staff, students, and parents. Bullying is dealt with well in some instances and not so well in others. Given this, the District policies and programs regarding bullying, and the district anti-bullying program, should be revisited to strengthen them and to ensure they reflect the latest professional knowledge about effective practices and policies. Ensure that all staff, students and parents have a clear understanding of the District policies concerning behavior and bullying, and provide staff, students, and parents with resources, tools, and training to effectively address instances or patterns of bullying and disrespect. Engage students in creating a districtwide campaign of positive, respectful behavior. Provide resources for cross-cultural understanding, including contracting with cultural diversity experts.

8. STUDENT SAFETY

*Revisit the traffic safety plans for district schools and revise as necessary to ensure practices include safe drop-off and pick-up processes.*

Currently, there are processes and procedures in the drop-off and pick-up of students to and from school that need review and revision. Develop traffic pattern plans for all schools in collaboration with the Sheriff's Department, then enforce these plans. Inform parents of students of the traffic pattern and policies around drop-off and pick-up zones.

9. ACADEMIC REPUTATION

*Strengthen the academic robustness and options available at every site so that all Palmdale schools are seen as academically desirable.*

Currently, there is a perception that the some schools are better academically and aesthetically than other schools. Ensure that all schools are physically attractive. Engage school communities in making their

expectations and standards visible and known and ensuring that these are aligned with comparable practices. Provide assets-based support and enrichment for academically struggling students. Ensure that all students have access to rigorous courses, including advanced learning, arts, multilingual learning, and physical education.

#### 10. PARTNERSHIP WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

*Consolidate a proactive partnership with law enforcement agencies, programs, and personnel that builds positive relationships among schools, students, parents, community, and law enforcement.*

Recent national events have highlighted the divide that often exists between communities of color and law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Yet, in Palmdale the law enforcement institutions have been deeply involved in the design of the Palmdale PROMISE and have voiced sincere commitment to the design of a more equitable system. This creates the opportunity to strengthen positive relationships that support our students' achievement of their maximum potential. This partnership should include structures for addressing inequities, strengthening mentorships, building goodwill, and implementing restorative practices that include paths to redemption for students. Persistent issues (i.e., drug use in the middle grades) can be addressed systemically in ways that build trust and alternatives for success.

## Engaging Families & Community

In order for Palmdale to achieve its vision for student success, we propose to engage diverse families and communities in powerful learning and collaboration. To this end, the following are recommended:

### 1. KNOWLEDGEABLE PARENTS

*Inform parents of program/pathway options and long-term impact on student success and college readiness.*

Develop an informational brochure (available in written, audio, and electronic formats in multiple languages) that clearly describes the various district program/pathway options, the research/data behind each, and the long-term impact of each option on students' likelihood of achieving academic success, college readiness, and global competitiveness. This information will be designed to provide parents and other stakeholders annually with easy to understand information critical to them making an informed choice about which instructional option to select. Staff will be trained on this information and the most effective ways of communicating the information to parents and others.

### 2. KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF

*Provide training to front office and counseling staff, Parent Liaisons, and other personnel responsible for communicating with parents to enable them to better counsel parents on program models/pathways and options.*

Staff will receive annual training in understanding the differing goals of the various academic program models/pathways/options offered by the District, the program structures, and the implications for appropriate student placement. Staff will use this information to counsel parents regarding the various program choices. Staff will also receive training regarding the availability of translators and interpreters to assist in the information/counseling process, where necessary.

### 3. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

*Create effective school/community partnerships to support/enhance the success of students, parents, and the community.*

Launch the PROMISE Partnership program to establish community partnership meetings with the agencies that serve our families in order to create programs that benefit the students, parents and the community as whole. Connect the culminating/capstone projects to this work.

### 4. FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP

*Ensure that district and school family/community engagement programs build leadership capacity and value/draw on community funds of knowledge, with specific attention to families of English Learners, foster youth, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.*

Powerful family and community engagement programs should build leadership capacity and value and draw upon community funds of knowledge to inform, support, and enhance teaching and learning for language learners. This means putting in place specific practices to help the parents:

- Get oriented to the school system.



- Acquire strategies for supporting their student's success.
- Establish a college-going culture in their homes and communities.
- Share family and community resources.
- Become part of the school decision-making process.
- Develop as strong leaders and advocates on behalf of their own and other children.

5. PARENT RESOURCE CENTERS

*Establish Parent Resource Centers that serve every school.*

Establish parent resource centers that serve every school, staffed by the Parent Liaisons assigned to the schools. Where facilities limitations cannot accommodate a separate Center at every school, partner schools to share a resource center. Where parent centers already exist, expand these to ensure they can support parent education and leadership for all parents, including African Americans, English Language Learners, Special Education and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged families. At the district level, continue to support effective parent leadership programs such as Parenting Partners and Project 2 INSPIRE. Support the Centers in partnering with the Neighborhood Houses.

6. PARENT ADVISORY/COMMUNITY COMMITTEES

*Provide academic program information to SSC/ELAC/DELAC, AAPAC, DAC/PAC and other parent/community advisory groups.*

The District will work with SSCs, DELAC, ELACs, AAPAC, DAC/PAC, and other parent/community advisory groups to make sure that parents receive adequate information the available program models/pathways/options – their goals, structure and duration. An annual topic for SSC/ELAC/DELAC/AAPAC/DAC/PAC meetings will include the benefits of multilingualism and the impact of school practices and community/home practices on the development of English and multilingualism.

7. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS AND TOOLS

*Create better means of communication with our families and community through the use of parental portal, social media, and local news agencies and businesses.*

Establish internal and external communication protocols and processes to ensure families, community members, and partner organizations have timely and user-friendly access to the information they need to effectively support our vision for student success. Share programs, information, and resources between the District and the high school district. Publicize parent meetings and training, open houses, college nights, and other such events. Share information about adult workshops and programs that benefit and educate our parents, so they can be better equipped to help their children academically.

# APPENDICES

- 1 – Potential Multilingual Learning Program/Pathway Options
- 2 – Sample Career Academy Model
- 3 - Globally-Competitive Learning Environments of High Intellectual Performance

## APPENDIX 1

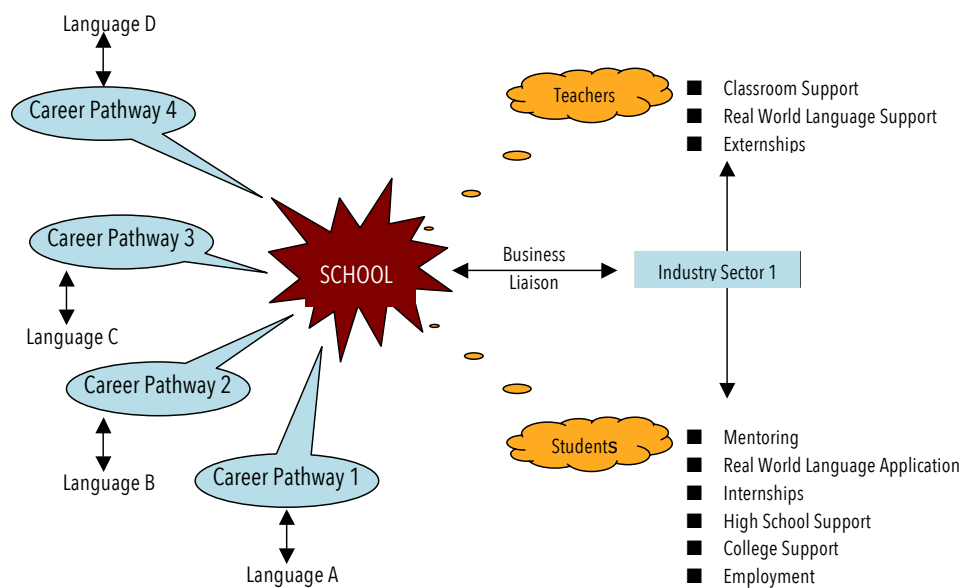
### Potential Multilingual Learning Program/Pathways Options

These pathways are designed to lead to the Seal of Biliteracy.

Possible Pathways	Grades	Target Students
<b>Dual Language Immersion</b> Develop proficiency and academic competency in English and the target language.	PreK-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Learners</li> <li>Heritage Language Speakers</li> <li>Native English Speakers</li> </ul>
<b>Biliteracy</b> Develop English language proficiency/literacy, and academic competency and literacy in their home language.	PreK-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Learners</li> </ul>
<b>World Languages Immersion</b> Help Native English Speakers to develop competency in a World Language as well as in English.	PreK-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native English Speakers</li> </ul>
<b>World Languages Experience</b> Help students develop beginning to intermediate skills in a World Language.	PreK-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Students</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary World Languages</b> Help Native English Speakers develop competency in a World Language through a yearly sequence of progressive courses, from Year 1 World Languages to AP World Languages.	7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native English Speakers</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary Heritage Languages</b> Help Heritage Language Speakers develop competency in their heritage language through a series of progressive courses.	7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Language Speakers</li> </ul>
<b>Accelerated Learner</b> Designed for students who are three or more years below grade level and have little or no primary language literacy or English proficiency.	5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older Immigrant English Learners with Interrupted Schooling</li> </ul>
<b>Long Term English Learner</b> Designed for LTELs with a curriculum tailored to students who are orally fluent in English, making minimal progress (or losing ground) in English proficiency, and struggling academically.	5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Learners</li> </ul>
<b>Multilingual</b> Adds a third language to Dual Language Immersion and Biliteracy Pathways.	PreK-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students in Dual Language or Biliteracy Programs</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 2

### Sample Career Academy Model



## APPENDIX 3

### Globally-Competitive Learning Environments of High Intellectual Performance

#### *Learning Environment*

The term learning environments refers to culturally and linguistically responsive learning spaces in our classrooms, our schools, and our community where every student is considered high status and that positively develop and affirm each student's cultural/linguistic identity and self-esteem, self-motivation and learner autonomy, and social skills and competency. In these spaces, educators and staff intentionally plan and structure instruction and interactions to develop a sense of community, self-determination, trust, and democracy. In these learning environments, educators and staff establish strong relationships with students by being personable, caring, trustworthy, and having an interest and understanding of the lives of our students. Educators and staff show respect for students' experiences, languages, and cultures by honoring their voice and creating environments where student voice permeates the classroom instruction, and decisions for instruction are based on student needs. Educators and staff communicate responsibility by creating physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe learning environments, modeling high expectations for learning, connecting instruction with students' learning needs and making a link with their prior knowledge, providing multiple ways in which students can learn and demonstrate knowledge, and clearly articulating the curriculum's "usefulness" for today and the future. Educators and staff use students' lives outside the classroom as a means of engaging them more deeply in learning that has strong relevance for them. In particular, we find ways to help our students see future possibilities for people who look and sound like them, who come from similar backgrounds and experiences.

#### *Globally-Competitive/21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning*

Globally-competitive 21st century learning refers to a set of specific skills, capacities, and dispositions that prepare students to thrive in and out of school. These skills, capacities, and dispositions include:

a) Academic Preparation

21st century academic preparation differs from the traditional academics. Instead, it focuses on a full and rich curriculum, including multilingual learning, which includes all the different disciplines, including the arts, technology, and physical education. Students need opportunities to show what they've learned through advanced-level applications of their knowledge in the various languages they are learning. Most importantly, they need to learn HOW to learn because most of the actual content they get in school will be obsolete by the time they finish college.

b) College and Career Readiness

Being college and career ready means that students have real choices and options – to go to university or not, to pursue this career or that, not because of their zip code or the language they speak but because we prepared them. Whether they enter the university or the workforce when they graduate, they will have the linguistic, social/cultural, cognitive, and metacognitive tools to think critically and creatively in a global environment and to keep on learning throughout their lives.

- c) **Mastery of Advanced Literacies and 3M Skills (Multimedia, Multilingual, and Multicultural)**  
In today's world, being bilingually proficient at near native-speaker like levels is the barest minimum. Across the globe, young people are routinely prepared as high-level multilinguals --- all of whom can speak English at professional and technical levels --, and when the whole world knows English, knowing ONLY English is no longer a competitive advantage. Our students will be required to interact positively with people from all cultures and walks of life. They'll need to be multiculturally competent. And they'll need to be able to learn, create, and use multiple media, technologies, and literacies at high levels of competency across multiple languages.
- d) **Innovation, Creativity, and Solution Seeking Competencies**  
Our students' success will depend in significant part on having the discipline, skill, and daring to be innovators and creators and to seek and find solutions to problems that haven't even been invented yet, often in multilingual and multicultural work and social environments. How do we provide the space for students to acquire these skills, capacities, and dispositions in a coherent, comprehensive, and disciplined way when many students, especially English Learners, have been precluded from participating in instruction that builds these skills?
- e) **Social, Civic, and Environmental Responsibility**  
Students also need to be prepared to apply their classroom learning to real world social, civic, and environmental issues which are extremely complex and challenging. They will be the ones making the decisions that determine our quality of life, and in a global world, decisions made in one part of the world will have impact throughout the world. How do we help them develop and apply their diverse linguistic and cultural knowledge in socially, civically and environmentally responsible ways?
- f) **Technological Fluency**  
Technological fluency is often what comes to mind when we talk about 21st century preparedness. But this area isn't just about using tools --- it's about a new way of conceptualizing communication, collaboration and interaction, integration, intelligence, and creativity (imagination and innovation) across languages and cultures.
- g) **Critical Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration Skills**  
Our students need to be able to use their linguistic and cultural skills to reason effectively, use systems thinking, make judgments and decisions, communicate clearly, and collaborate with others in order to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global business, social, and personal environments.
- h) **Strength of Body, Mind, and Character**

Living in a global village requires that every member develop the strength of body, mind, and character to contribute in positive ways to a healthy and diverse community. We know from an emerging body of research the impact of healthy bodies on powerful minds. We recognize that the development of personal, social, and business ethics is a key need for a responsive global community.

### *High Intellectual Performance*

High Intellectual Performance is an overarching concept that encompasses seven essential pedagogical practices. We support high intellectual performance when we deploy these pedagogical practices, which we intend to support as core PSD practices that should be in evidence in every one of our classrooms:

- 1) Identify and build on student strengths.  
Identifying and building on student strengths means acknowledging that students don't come to us as blank slates or as an accumulation of deficiencies. They know things, they've had experiences, they have cultures and languages --- all of these are powerful assets that we should build on. We need to acknowledge these assets and show students that we believe in them and in their linguistic, cultural, intellectual, and academic capacity. This also means that teachers and other school personnel need training, coaching, and experience to identify such assets in order to use them and build on them to support optimal language learning.
- 2) Establish powerful relationships that nurture success.  
Establishing powerful relationships that nurture success requires that teachers know their students and their communities and that students see teachers and staff as their advocates and supporters. Students will look for teacher behaviors that they see as evidence that the teacher respects them and their cultures, languages, and communities. We know that relationships are everything. Many students will refuse to learn from teachers who they don't believe care about them, respect them, or have their best interests at heart.
- 3) Elicit high intellectual performance.  
Teachers can elicit high intellectual performances by making sure the curriculum is multilingual, multicultural, well-articulated, relevant, and rich. They intentionally invite students into cognitively complex work and inquiries in ways that allow students' curiosities to be engaged and for students to experience a series of connected successes. They take advantage of what we know about how the brain works best to structure brain-compatible experiences for their students. Most importantly, they carefully plan activities that prime or prepare students for cognitively demanding work, they use processes that allow students to engage in meaningful ways with the content, and they organize activities designed to help students retain and retrieve what they learn – all in linguistically and culturally responsive contexts.

4) Engage students actively in the learning.

We can engage students actively in the learning process by focusing their attention on challenging thinking and requiring that they use oral and written language in English and the target language(s) to communicate and concretize their thinking. We can connect the learning to students' real lives and engage them in creating authentic products that add value to the students, their families, their schools, and their communities.

5) Create environments of enrichment not remediation.

The research is clear on the power of creating language learning environments of enrichment rather than remediation, which teachers can do by treating students as gifted and organizing language learning experiences that allow them to behave and produce as gifted students.

6) Situate learning in the lives of students.

Critical to high intellectual performance is situating learning in the lives of students by using culturally and linguistically responsive strategies that validate students as knowers and that use their lives, languages, cultures, experiences, and current knowledge as the starting point for learning. When teachers do this, they communicate to students that their experiences count and that who they are counts.

7) Address the prerequisites for learning.

Finally, we need to address the prerequisites for learning by making sure that students have what they need to be successful learners and students. This includes the resources we provide to students, as well as explicitly teaching to bridge gaps in students' academic and linguistic preparation. It means working with families in ways that expand their capacity to contribute to their children's school success, not just inviting them to serve as passive listeners to our own ideas and plans.



# NOTES

# NOTES

# NOTES



# TAKING ACTION FOR SUCCESS

PALMDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PALMDALE, CALIFORNIA