

Sol Aureus College Preparatory School

Amendment Petition to Add Grades K-4



Prepare for college. Prepare for life.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this charter amendment for Sol Aureus College Preparatory School (S.A.C. Prep) is to seek approval for adding Kindergarten through fourth grades. Since its inception eight years ago, S.A.C. Prep has made significant gains in closing the achievement gap and sending students on to top public and private high schools (see Appendices A and B). Despite challenges with facilities and enrollment, the school has maintained a loyal following of families, high teacher retention, and fiscal stability. However, to maintain its success a revision to the current model is necessary if S.A.C. Prep is to remain viable and effective in the coming years. It is imperative that the model be amended and that Kindergarten through 4th grades be added.

The success of the current model is dependent on recruiting, enrolling, and maintaining 5th grade students for four years in order to prepare them to be able to compete and succeed in college. Because S.A.C. Prep recruits and serves students from historically underserved and socio-economically challenged communities, extra time is needed to help them catch up academically and social-emotionally. Every year, the test scores demonstrate increased academic achievement for students. The data – CST Test scores, grades, and daily conduct and performance – points out that students have a hard time adapting to the high expectations and academic rigor in the 7th and 8th grades. Entering S.A.C. Prep with a variety of the social and academic challenges, they are less competitive than the students who enter in the 5th grade and 6th grade. The model has not proven to be as successful when enrolling students in 7th and 8th grades. Yet, this is when parents begin to look for alternative middle school options, wanting to avoid the bigger comprehensive middle schools at an age when they feel their children are most vulnerable socially, emotionally, and academically. These parents are drawn to the small school setting of S.A.C. Prep.

The inherent challenge in starting in the 5th grade is that it is not the grade level, historically, that parents look to transition their children to another school. It also raises issues for parents who are not comfortable leaving younger siblings (K-4) “alone” at a school without their older sibling to help look out for them. In Houston, the founders had the permission and support of the Superintendent (who would later go to become the U.S. Secretary of Education) to go into the homes of students in Houston public schools to recruit and make their pitch directly to families. So, even without a feeder school, they had access to students. This level of access has varied amongst the various other schools and communities.

There is precedent for altering the model as S.A.C. Prep’s original benefactor and school model – the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) – is changing its model to include grades 9-12 and more importantly K-4. For the KIPP model’s founders, Michael Feinberg and David Levin, starting a school at the 5th grade made sense at the time. They were successful 5th grade teachers losing students they taught in middle school to gangs, family upheaval, and boredom. They were given an approval to continue to work with their students if they could get enough families to voluntarily enroll in their rigorous program of longer school days, Saturday School, and classes in the summer. Feinberg’s and Levin’s initial program became a national model as they replicated these tenets throughout the country. They built the model on their expertise, not necessarily as a nod to any pedagogical or well-researched set of ideas.

In replicating this model nationally, KIPP has run into different challenges in various communities. The schools, while successful overall, have been effective or not so effective for the following reasons: 1) receptiveness and support of the model by the local school district and key stakeholders in the community, 2) ability to raise in excess of \$200,000 per year to supplement core elements of the program such as the longer school day, longer school year, a signature extracurricular program (such as a music orchestra) and field lessons; 3) being in an area with a high-density population of economically challenged residents to target for enrollment or the ability to provide transportation to a disparate group of potential students in more rural areas; and 4) ability to recruit, enroll and maintain a high number of students in the 5th and sometimes 6th grades. Historically, KIPP schools lose between 30-50% of their initial cohort by the time that cohort reaches the 8th grade.

KIPP's goal from the start has been to close the achievement gap and demonstrate the kind of academic achievement students in traditionally low performing public schools are capable of. S.A.C. Prep is doing this (see Appendix C). The model has generated proof points that all students can learn at high levels, despite race or socio-economic background. Furthermore, even with these successes, high performing charter schools, such as KIPP Schools, Aspire Schools, and the charter school in the Harlem Children Zone, have discovered that starting earlier has eliminated some of the challenges they encounter in addressing the needs of the same demographic of students in the upper grades (5th-8th).

Research has shown that the achievement gap actually begins between birth and Kindergarten. For example, through those first 5-6 years of a child's life, a child from an economically challenged family or uneducated family may have heard 10,000 words and know 5,000 words. For families of middle class and more educated families, a child may have heard 25,000 words and be able to use 15,000 words. One can imagine how much easier learning will be for students who know 15,000 words as opposed to 5,000. From the time these two groups start school, the gap already exists and either stays the same or gets wider. To this end, any school model serving undeserved communities whose populations are at the low ends of the achievement gap would like to start as early as possible to begin that process of remediation and learning.

Based on research, the change in direction of charter middle school models like KIPP is inevitable as we begin to see more evidence for the benefits of starting the process of remediation and intervention earlier. To this end, it is critical that S.A.C. Prep expand to include grades K-4. This expansion enables S.A.C. Prep to start the intervention and learning process earlier, build a stronger foundation for its most challenging students, and better supports the faculty, working with students longer to get them ready for college prep high schools, college, and other post-secondary training and educational options.

Locally, the success of Capitol Heights Academy and PS7 can be traced to the strong foundation that is laid in the primary grades in preparing students to handle the rigor of the CA State Standards – soon to be replaced by the similarly rigorous Common Core Standards. In a K-8 model, where students are inducted in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, the individual learning challenges of students are more quickly identified so that students can be supported and brought up to speed quicker. Despite being hampered by a model where students are inducted "late in the game" (by comparison, other high performing charter schools in the area have a 5-7 year head start), S.A.C. Prep has proven very effective in closing the achievement gap with some of its historically most challenging students. With the addition of K-4, S.A.C. Prep will be even more successful.

Before college and other post-secondary training and education programs, S.A.C. Prep students must prepare to enter competitive, college prep high school programs. In surveying the landscape of high school options in Sacramento, there are many quality public and private options for S.A.C. Prep students. The majority of S.A.C. Prep students feed many of the small, thematic charter high schools in Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD), such as Health Professions H.S., New Technology H.S., and the School of Engineering and Science. S.A.C. Prep graduates also attend West Campus H.S. While some graduates do go on to attend Sacramento H.S. and area SCUSD and Elk Grove schools such as Kennedy H.S., Luther Burbank, Laguna Creek, and Consumnes Oaks, most opt for smaller high school settings after attending S.A.C. Prep. A select few have gained admission to and attend private schools such as Christian Brothers, Cristo Rey, and Sacramento Country Day School.

In its eight-year history, S.A.C. Prep has been challenged to establish its identity to people outside of its school community. There has been confusion about what a charter school is. There have been questions about whether or not S.A.C. Prep is a continuation school. Over time, these challenges have made it harder to state clearly what the identity of the school is to outside constituents. The families, students, and alumni of S.A.C. Prep understand the identity of the school, but it still has faced or faces the following identity challenges:

1) *"Is S.A.C. Prep a Kevin Johnson school?"* KIPP and St. HOPE were early partners here in Sacramento, which led to an initial partnership between the two schools where S.A.C. Prep and PS7 were co-located on the same campus at the John Muir Annex campus – **Year 1**.

2) *"Is S.A.C. Prep a church school?"* It was located in facilities owned by New Hope Baptist Church and Genesis Baptist Church – **Years 2-6**.

3) Is S.A.C. Prep an afterschool program? Being co-located on the Freeport Elementary School campus, it is sometimes mistaken for a program as opposed to a school – **Years 7-8**.

S.A.C. Prep has faced and overcome challenges with regard to enrollment, student achievement, and facilities. While overcoming and addressing these challenges, the Board, administration, and staff have maintained an unwavering focus on student achievement. The results speak for themselves. The expansion is a natural evolution of the school from its roots as a KIPP intervention model to being a full fledged school. The addition of K-4 allows us to do the following five things:

- 1) **Close the Gap Sooner.** In order to effectively and comprehensively close the achievement gap, students need to be supported *sooner* in developing and acquiring strong academic and foundational skills such as reading, writing, and number sense.
- 2) **Intervene Sooner.** Identify students entering the primary grades with gaps in their knowledge and skills as well as students with learning differences in order to begin the intervention, remediation, and differentiation process sooner.
- 3) **Develop Enrollment Pipeline Sooner.** By beginning the enrollment process in the Primary Grades, S.A.C. Prep begins to establish its own pipeline of students sooner – including siblings and relatives and friends of existing enrolled students.
- 4) **Transition to More Permanent Identity Sooner.** The move to K-8 allows the school to transition from its beginnings as an “intervention program” to a full service *school* that offers all students from variety of communities, particularly historically underserved communities, and the opportunity to prepare for college, careers, and life.
- 5) **Stabilize Enrollment & Financial Viability.** As enrollment is at the core of public school revenue in the current funding model, it is imperative as a stand-alone school that S.A.C. Prep have more control over its destiny through its ability to be able to recruit students sooner. As this happens, S.A.C. Prep is better poised to remain financially viable over time – with the intent to remain a small school serving students who need the extra help and/or are aligned with the mission/vision of the school.

In order for S.A.C. Prep to continue to be successful and be best positioned to successfully renew its charter before the end of its term in June 2014, it will need to not only be academically successful but also economically viable and sustainable. The K-4 expansion allows S.A.C. Prep to be the master of its own fate moving forward while continuing to provide a high quality and proven public school choice to some of our most needy students and desperate families.

Key Information/Assumptions

Start Date

The plan is to begin the 2011-12 school year with Kindergarten through 8th grades – expanding all at once. While in the past the school added one grade per year, in this instance the plan would be to grow all at once since the culture of the upper grades is already established.

Facilities

Facilities will be a significant factor on the school's ability to expand to the full K-8 model. Currently the school has a Proposition 39 agreement to reside at its current location at Freeport Elementary for 2011-12. However, upon the District approving the amendment allowing S.A.C. Prep to add Kindergarten through 4th grades, the school would want to enter into discussions of S.A.C. Prep operating at another available, unused SCUSD facility such as Bear Flag. If accommodations cannot be made, the school will add grades to fill the capacity at its current location at Freeport and work with District to re-locate to another site for the 2012-13 school year. Facilities notwithstanding, the lower grades (K-4) will have some physical separation from the upper grades (5-8) in terms of layout and classroom locations on the site.

Class Size

The plan calls for 20 students per class in grades Kindergarten through 4th grades and up to 25 students in grades 5-8.

- Four years out (2014-15), the plan calls to have two classes of Kindergartners (20 in each class).
- The projected total for 2011-12, if at full capacity, would be between 170-190 students (K-8).
- Five years out, the total number of students would be between 201 to 223 students (K-8).

The idea behind the enrollment projections are to keep the number of students to less than 25 per class while also limiting the number of new students added in the middle of the year in graded 6-8. Depending on the enrollment in the fall, the school will be prepared to do multi-grade classrooms for the first year or two under the K-8 model. Please see the 5-Year Budget and enrollment projections appendices for more detail.

District Services

S.A.C. Prep will continue to plan utilize SCUSD services including the following:

- Nutrition Services
- Special Education Services (SELPA)
- Proposition 39 – Facilities and Utilities
- ASES Program Fiscal Oversight and Management
- Potential Future Services: Technology Services

ELEMENT A: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Sol Aureus College Preparatory (S.A.C. Prep) is a tuition-free, college preparatory middle school currently serving grades five through eight. S.A.C. Prep is in its eighth year of operation and in year three of its current charter (expires in June 2013). S.A.C. has already graduated over 100 students and will graduate its fifth class in June 2011. The first cohort of 5th graders (the Class of 2011, the year they enter college) are now high school seniors. This fall, the first class of S.A.C. Prep graduates will enter college!

S.A.C. Prep began with one 5th grade class in August of 2003 and added one grade per year for its first four years. The student body of Sol Aureus reflects much of the diversity in Meadowview, its current home (Appendix D). S.A.C. Prep graduates attend the college preparatory small high schools and magnet schools within SCUSD as well as a few select and competitive high schools (Appendix E). Each year, all students have had the opportunity to visit colleges – from Sac State to UC Santa Cruz.

The initial charter for Sol Aureus College Preparatory was approved in March 2003 for the 5 year term of August 2003 to June 2008. Sol Aureus began as a KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) school. In 2005, the Sol Aureus Board of Directors and School Leader along with representatives of KIPP California (the entity that held the charter of Sol Aureus) jointly requested a name change and transfer of governance to the locally formed Board of Directors for Sol Aureus. The proposal was approved in 2005 with no substantive changes beyond the name change and governance structure. All of the key components of KIPP's philosophy (Five Pillars) have been maintained. They include having high expectations for all students and providing more time (longer school day, longer school year) to help students prepare for college and for life. In July 2004, Sol Aureus was forced to move from its initial home in Oak Park in a co-location agreement with St. HOPE/PS 7 due to facility space constraints as Sol Aureus grew. S.A.C. Prep then successfully relocated to Meadowview, briefly housed in New Hope Church then Genesis Church for the next five years, and finally moving to its current home at Freeport Elementary in August of 2009 through Proposition 39.

In Year Four of the operation of the school (2006-07), students were added in not only the lower grades (5th-6th) but in the 7th-8th grades as well. As a result, the size of the school nearly doubled. While initially helping the school in terms of revenue and enrollment, it went against the design plan of the school and had a significant negative impact on the school's culture and academic achievement scores. The classroom climate changed – which led to a less than optimal classroom environment that undermined the carefully developed and hard fought efforts to develop a positive culture of achievement and student accountability. The school's API dropped to its lowest to date that school year – 614. Getting away from the initial plan of growing students from the “bottom up” beginning in 5th and 6th grade and adding only a minimal number of students to the upper grades added more students to the school's enrollment in the short term but had more lasting negative effects in the longer term, including lower academic performance and undermining the culture. Many of the newly added 7th and 8th graders left before the end of the school year.

Parents who sought the school in Years 3 and 4 (2005-06 & 2006-07) seemed desperate to not lose their children to negative peer pressure and low expectations they felt their children experienced in their neighborhood public schools. In an effort to provide the opportunity to as many students as possible from the community the decision was made to open up enrollment to more students and try to help as many of them get into good high schools in preparation for college as possible.

Parents were initially grateful for giving their children a chance to attend a school that would prepare them for college – despite their children’s sometimes poor academic record history of documented discipline issues. In retrospect, S.A.C. Prep was beginning to be seen, as a “last chance” school for troubled, low performing, or hard to reach students. While some segment of S.A.C. Prep’s student population has always been this group of students, adding them in 7th and 8th grades often proved to be ineffective. Near the end of the 2006-07 school year, the Principal, staff, and Board of Directors assessed the impact to the quality of the program and the following decisions were made:

- 1) Limit the number of students added to the upper grade
- 2) Focus on teacher retention;
- 3) Develop and implement a more thorough, new-student induction process
 - a. having a home visit by an administrator or faculty member;
 - b. having prospective students do “shadow days” at S.A.C. Prep, spending a half or whole day attending S.A.C. Prep classes, and attending a new student orientation; and
 - c. Adopting a school wide formative assessment system (Interim Assessments).

As a result, the school has made significant gains since the charter was renewed. In the fall of 2008, the CST results demonstrated that SCUSD’s decision to renew the charter was a good one. See below for the API gains made each year since the new strategies were implemented (See Appendix B).

S.A.C. Prep has also achieved other goals of the plan including limiting the number of new students taken off of the wait list in grades 7 and 8 to no more than 10 overall for the past three years. Two of our longest tenured teachers are in their 6th year. The student induction process has meant that more students are retained for the entire school year. And finally, the formative assessment program adopted by the school has empowered the faculty and students to show continued improvement and mastery of the state standards and curriculum. The controlled growth in enrollment for the upper grades has led to a more positive learning environment but an overall decline in enrollment over the last three years as S.A.C. Prep has gone from having two classes of 8th graders to just one class for the past three years.

MISSION AND VISION

The **mission** of Sol Aureus College Preparatory (S.A.C. Prep) is to develop in its students the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to compete and succeed in college and in life. Increasingly, S.A.C. Prep has seen the need for career exploration and preparation. In other words, exposing students to the variety of career opportunities out there to help students better align career goals with their educational path. In essence, S.A.C. Prep staff is much more deliberate about making the pathway to college and careers more explicit.

Sol Aureus achieves its mission by focusing on classroom instruction, school culture, and enrichment activities that are aligned to the goals of college and career preparation. The school culture is defined by the school values of **Preparation, Respect, Responsibility, Community, and Excellence**. Sol Aureus creates a positive and supportive learning environment of high expectations for **all** of its students. The commitment to classroom instruction is seen through a commitment to identifying, recruiting and selecting reflective and resilient teachers and supporting their continued growth as professionals through ongoing, site-based professional development.

The **vision** of Sol Aureus College Preparatory has four major components:

- (1) To develop in its students the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to succeed in college preparatory high schools, four year colleges and the competitive world beyond;
- (2) To help students begin the process of aligning their passion and goals with educational and career options and experiences.
- (3) To develop a professional environment of teaching and learning that utilizes data and the latest tools and technology to not only drive instruction but to create innovative approaches to instruction.
- (4) To be an anchor for community development in a community or that serves a community of need.

Students use the knowledge and tools they develop at Sol Aureus to create and realize individual goals of achievement for academics and for life. Indicators for student success are: high school admissions, achievement in high school college preparatory courses and Advanced Placement courses, high school graduation rates, as well as college acceptance, entrance, and graduation data for all of its students. Sol Aureus focuses on results – student performance, quality instruction, and life skills.

MEANS TO ACHIEVE MISSION AND VISION

Sol Aureus College Preparatory achieves its mission and vision by continuing to implement the original principles of its initial charter based on KIPP's (Knowledge Is Power Program) Five Pillars:

1. **High Expectations.** Sol Aureus College Preparatory has explicit criteria for observable high expectations through academic achievement and conduct measures that make no excuses based on the background of students. Students, parents, teachers, and staff create and reinforce a culture of achievement and support through a range of formal and informal rewards and consequences for academic performance and behavior.
2. **Choice & Commitment.** Students, their parents, and the faculty of Sol Aureus College Preparatory are part of the school by choice. No one is assigned or forced to attend the school. Everyone makes and upholds a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.
3. **More Time.** Sol Aureus College Preparatory knows that *there are no shortcuts* when it comes to helping educationally underserved students succeed academically. A longer school day, a longer school year, and summer school mean more time for students at Sol Aureus College Preparatory to acquire the academic knowledge, skills, and habits, as well as broad extracurricular experiences that prepare them for college and life.
4. **Power to Lead.** The School Leader of Sol Aureus College Preparatory is an effective academic and organizational leader who understands that there are no great schools without great school leaders. The School Leader has control over the school budget and personnel, allowing him/her to swiftly move dollars or make staffing changes in order to be more effective in helping students learn.
5. **Focus on Results.** Sol Aureus College Preparatory focuses unrelentingly on results. Student achievement on tests and other objective measures will be analyzed to drive instruction. The school does not make excuses based on demographics and expects its students to compete at our city and nation's best high schools and colleges.

The key components of the school's program are summed up in KIPP's motto, "**THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS**" – words that apply to administration, faculty, students, and parents alike. Sol Aureus uses both internal and external accountability measures and indicators to constantly ask if it is, indeed, doing all it can to serve students and families and is achieving the goals spelled out explicitly in the mission.

Partnerships

Through the first eight years, S.A.C. Prep has continued to build a coalition of community organizations, schools, and individuals who support the work of the school:

KIPP Foundation – Provided initial support, training, model, and start-up funding for Alton Nelson, the founder, and the school. The KIPP Foundation is a national, non-profit organization whose mission, like that of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, is to provide educationally underserved students with the knowledge, skills, and character needed to succeed in top quality high schools, colleges, and the competitive world beyond.

SCUSD – The District has provided support and guidance by way of approval and renewal of the charter, Special Education Services, and Nutrition Services. Through three superintendents and numerous changes on the Board, SCUSD has continued to champion the school and its successes. The current Superintendent, Board Members, and SCUSD staff have visited the school and attended special events such as the Open House celebrating the co-location with Freeport Elementary. Diana Rodriguez, the Board representative for the Meadowview community has been a consistent advocate for the school. SCUSD staff have also helped out with grants, CELDT testing and other topics as they have come up. Most recently, SCUSD and S.A.C. Prep are partnering with a community organization in Meadowview, New Hope Community Development Corp., on an ASES grant that allows S.A.C. Prep students to get additional tutoring and enrichment after school a vital service to S.A.C. Prep students and parents.

Councilmember, Bonnie Pannell – Councilmember Pannell has been a consistent champion for the school – attending school events, writing letters of support for grant request, and convening key players and advocating on our behalf for facility space in Meadowview.

Sacramento State University – Through a program called the Health Professions Pipeline Project, Sac State faculty and staff have linked S.A.C. Prep to an SCUSD high school – Health Professions High School and the college itself in an effort to support and illicit interest in health professions and health profession education subject matter such as science and math. S.A.C. Prep students visit Health Professions High School and the college getting tours of both. S.A.C. State students tutor S.A.C. Prep students, answer questions about college in a panel discussion, and lead them in lab experiments at Sac State and S.A.C. Prep such as dissecting cow intestines.

New Hope Community Development Corporation – New Hope was an early supporter of S.A.C. Prep, allowing the school to be temporarily housed at their site in Meadowview while tenant improvements were taking place at Genesis church. They helped recruit students and currently provide tutors and mentors through their afterschool program, Jumpstart.

Christian Brothers, Jesuit, and Cristo Rey High Schools – These three private high schools have been extraordinarily generous to our students and families – everything from granting admission and financial aid support to doing school visits and providing scholarships for their summer programs and fee waivers for application fees.

Girl Scouts of the Heart of Central California – The Girls Scouts have provided a positive outlet for our girls through their lunchtime program. It is very popular.

The Pannell Center – The staff makes rooms available upon request and alerts us of student issues that come to their attention during their afterschool program or events.

STUDENTS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory operates under the belief that all students should have access to rigorous instruction in their communities as well as knowledge of and exposure to college and career pathways. To that end, S.A.C. Prep's high expectations, rigor, and extended time model provides an opportunity for historically underserved children to utilize public education as a means to personal achievement. Historically, over 95% of students from Sol Aureus come from minority groups and 80% qualify for the federal National School Lunch Program.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory has served in two of the District's most educationally underperforming neighborhoods – Oak Park and Meadowview. For the past eight years, Sol Aureus College Preparatory has served students in grades five through eight. In this amendment proposal, Sol Aureus puts forth the plan to extend grades served to include Kindergarten through fourth grade.

BECOMING A 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

The educational program of Sol Aureus enables students to become self-motivated, competent lifelong learners. Students and families that collectively adhere to the founding Five Pillars and Commitment to Excellence Form ("the contract"), achieve academic and personal success. At Sol Aureus College Preparatory, becoming a 21st Century learner has meant:

- I. Students possess a strong foundation of basic academic skills and a broad knowledge base in the core disciplines of language arts, math, science, and history.
- II. Students gain exposure to and begin preliminary preparation for careers and additional post-secondary educational options.
- III. Students develop basic computer literacy.
- IV. Students develop a combination of habits of intellect and character to guide them in making decisions and using good judgment in future endeavors.
- V. A love for reading for pleasure and knowledge are encouraged and supported.
- VI. Students give their time and support to help others in the greater community.
- VII. Students develop fundamental financial skills such as basic accounting, financial budgeting, and financial investing.

Sol Aureus also links regular classroom instruction and extended hours by housing its program in one location, providing instruction by a dedicated faculty and by implementing a unified curriculum interwoven throughout the day from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Fridays, one Saturday of the month, and through part of the summer.

HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory aligns its curriculum objectives to the California Content Standards adopted by the California State Board of Education. The school's focus is not to change what the state feels are appropriate academic outcomes, but rather to ensure that all students master all areas of the California Content Standards. Teachers work with the School Leader to determine the curricula that will best match student needs. Incoming student needs and performance levels determine the weight that teachers place on different elements of the curriculum. The school's expectation is to ensure that mastery of the state standards is achieved. Mastery is necessary to prepare students for the rigorous and challenging curriculum they will encounter in high school Honors and Advanced Placement programs. This is accomplished by having a longer school day, week, and year.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory combines the California Content Standards with "best practice" pedagogical methodologies that have proven successful in established public schools from around the country. The state standards are supplemented in the following ways: character education, extra-curricular activities, technology, and community service. Clear and specific academic objectives are identified and tracked for each student.

The content of the Sol Aureus curriculum focuses on the necessary remediation of basic skills, when applicable coupled with an emphasis on higher order thinking processes in all content areas. In accordance with state regulations, Sol Aureus provides standard, age-appropriate curriculum for Mathematics, Science, English-Language Arts, History-Social Science, and Visual-Performing Arts at each grade level. These courses are supplemented by a California Standards and based web-based program that allows students to work at their own pace, classes that provide extra time for critical thinking skills and advanced curriculum, and includes eighth-grade Algebra in preparation for entering the Honors/AP track at college preparatory high school programs.

A Typical Day in the Life of a S.A.C. Prep Student

6:30-7:00 AM

Administrators and teachers begin arriving at the school. A handful of students begin to arrive shortly after 6:45 AM and head to the office as their parents drop them off on their way to work. As students enter the building in the front office they check to see if they following the guidelines for the way their uniforms should be worn – uniform shirt tucked in, shoes tied, and belts on.

7:00-7:30 AM

Students who arrive before 7:30 will go to the office or cafeteria (depending on the facility) to wait for breakfast. Students then have a choice of reading a book they checked out from their classroom library, picking out a book on the bookshelves, studying flash cards for upcoming quizzes or tests, or sitting down to work on one of 3-4 laptops accessible by students to check their grades on the school's web portal page or complete assignments on Study Island – a web-based, standards aligned tutorial program. Students earn Blue Ribbons for demonstrating mastery in a specific subgroup of a content standard area – typically a 70% or more correct answer average. Students use their own user identification and passwords to access their own data and accounts.

7:30-7:50 AM

Breakfast is served. All students arriving before 7:45 are in the cafeteria whether they are eating breakfast or not.

7:50-8:15 AM

Students line up to go to their homeroom classes. Students give the principal, assistant principal, dean of students, or parent a 3G greeting and handshake (Grip, Grin Greet) as they file past them on their way to class. In their homeroom classes students eat their breakfast, read quietly or begin to get themselves organized for the day. Students take out their homework folder in preparation for homework collection. Students continue to read and have access to netbooks and laptops in their classrooms to check their grades or answer questions on Study Island.

8:15 AM

CPR begins (Circle of Power and Respect) in all classes. CPR is a social-emotional “morning meeting” set of protocols designed to provide space for students to talk about a variety of topics while developing positive social skills, team building, goal setting, and communication skills. The curriculum can be adjusted for all grade levels – K-8. A student is chosen to read of the “morning news”, all students engage in the activity, and then all students do a choral re-reading of the morning news.

8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Instruction begins. With the exception of Kindergarten, the class periods for 1st through 8th grades are broken into a 2.5 hour block of time – with English and math instruction receiving 1.5 hours and science and Social Studies one hour. Each grade level is identified by the year their class will start college (e.g. the 6th grade class for 2011-12 is known as the Class of 2018). The class is also named after a college with a connection to an alumnus of the school that will support some of their activities while they are attending S.A.C. Prep. The aforementioned Class of 2018 is also known as “Chico State.” A S.A.C. Prep Board Member is an alumnus of Chico State and is their leading benefactor. The benefactor for the Class of 2015, University of Oregon arranged to have her alma mater support a trip to visit the University of Oregon this in August 2011. There they will get a tour of the facilities and meet with other students to ask questions and hear about college life. During the 1st period teachers take attendance both online and send their paper record of attendance to the office.

Classes start with a Do Now or Board Language/Board Math to preview and review elements of the state standard groups. The teacher may review the homework briefly going over a few problems that students had difficulty getting on their own. Then a brief review of the previous day’s lesson takes place to reinforce the most recent learning. New material is introduced. The expectation for standard delivery of instruction is broken into three parts:

- **“I do”** – the teacher teaches/models.
- **“We do”** – the teacher models and does guided practice with the students.
- **“You do”** – students perform independent practice while in class under the close supervision of the teacher.

In math class for example, the teacher then takes them through sample problems and guided practice by allowing students to complete the problems on the board. This gives the teacher data on where students might still be having problems before moving on to independent practice. By working the problems in front of the board and looking at

different ways their peers approached the problems, students begin to learn metacognition as they begin to learn how they learn.

Teachers also integrate technology into their classrooms in the following ways:

- **Audio/Visual Projectors** – to show lyrics of popular songs to practice reading comprehension and context clue analysis as well as access websites such as Discovery Education to show informative film clips related to the lesson.
- **Elmo Projectors** – to project student and teacher notes and work onto the white board that can then also be printed out and copied.
- **Netbooks/Laptops** – to integrate technology into the classroom for student use across the curriculum for access to Study Island assignments and practice as well as writing assignments. Study Island not only engages students in a medium they like to work in, it also keeps individualized data on each student. This data is invaluable in determining proficient mastery of the standards as well as providing clues as to how to differentiate instruction to more specifically meet the needs of students. Working in “stations” on some days during the week, the teacher can work with students in small groups while continuing to keep the rest of the students in class engaged

11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Different grade levels of students take bathroom breaks, have recess, PE, DEAR time (Drop Everything And Read) and lunch during this time. Students from the Sacramento State University Health Professions Pipeline Project come in to do in-class tutoring as well as pull-out intervention.

1:00-3:30 PM

Students have afternoon classes in a similar way as they did during the morning block between 8:30 to 11:00 AM.

3:30-6:00 PM

The ASES program, Jumpstart takes over the campus overseeing afterschool programming including:

- Snack time
- Study Hall – Homework help and intervention
- Enrichment

After 3:30 PM, students have access to their teachers for extra help during “office hours.” Teacher office hours are offered by all teachers between 3:30 and 4:00 PM on the days the teacher schedules for them to occur. For most teachers it is at least two days a week. The other days the teacher may work with specific students one-on-one or in small groups or meeting with other teachers to discuss curriculum, teaching strategies, or student management strategies.

Class Schedule Features

“Late Start” – Research has shown that the dynamic adolescent brain is undergoing a myriad of physiological and emotional changes during the middle school years. A later start time allows their brains to “wake up” and be more receptive to learning. The start time will benefit all students – K-8.

“Block Schedule” Format – The class schedule is a hybrid “block schedule” where the order of the classes alternate and allow for weekly All-School Assemblies. For example, Algebra is the first class of the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the 8th graders. It increases the chances that a teacher will have some time each week to work with students at time when they are most alert – whether that is in the afternoon or morning). Although, S.A.C. Prep teachers still review discipline data (see times of the day and days of the week when issues come up in class) and make adjustments to their lesson plans accordingly. The lower grades schedule (K-6) will be less dynamic.

90 Minute Classes – Two of the core classes, English and Math, are 90 minutes each everyday. This allows for the pacing to be manageable and not as rushed. It also allows students more time for independent practice under the supervision of the teacher. The extended class also allows every teacher the opportunity to plan more differentiated instruction, computer lab activities and small group assignments and projects.

Transitions Between Classes – When students transition between classes, students must also shake the hands of their teacher and greet them as they enter the room to practice interacting with adults in appropriate and positive ways. It also gives the teacher useful information about the students before the class begins.

All School Meeting – Held once a week on Fridays, all school meetings help reinforce school spirit and values and celebrate student achievement and attained goals.

Typical Class Examples

In English, for example, the student may start off the class with Board Language or be given a paragraph to edit on their own before they are asked individually to come up to the Board and correct it. The class then moves to a close reading of Othello. The class may begin by reviewing the main characters, plot, and conflict at the point in the play they are reading. Students take turns reading the passages aloud. The teacher mentions that students will be able to volunteer to read for parts in the play when they act it out later in the week. The teacher makes reference to a presentation he did on the history of the Moors in North Africa and the Mediterranean Sea making the connection to history. Students end this activity by being given the homework for the night with questions about today’s reading. The closing activity is a writing assignment on a the theme discussed during the class o Othello that uses an open ended question with embedded Higher Order Thinking skills. The teacher uses an overhead to show examples to the class and performs guided practice before allowing the students to work on the assignment independently.

In Algebra I, students are given the Quadratic formula to memorize and told they will be quizzed on it at the end of the week. The teacher collects the homework and goes over problems in class that students may not have understood. The teacher then uses the projector connected to his laptop to show a quick demonstration of the uses of the quadratic formula using a short video clip on a website he found that stores exemplar lessons on math and rated by math teachers. The teacher then asks students to come to the overhead projector to solve the problems as part of the guided practice portion of the lesson. Students are then given an opportunity to put themselves in groups to do some of the problems together as part of their independent practice. Some students are working in groups while a small group are using four laptops in the room to complete assignments posted by the math teacher on Study Island (web-based and CA content standards-based, tutorial program).

College Prep Features

Each class is named after a college. The current roster of colleges represented are:

- Chico State (5th Grade, Class of 2018)
- Northwestern University (6th Grade, Class of 2017)
- University of San Francisco (7th Grade, Class of 2016)
- University of Oregon (8th Grade, Class of 2015)

Field Lessons – Annual field trips to colleges are arranged. The current class of 8th graders will take a trip to Eugene Oregon to visit the University of Oregon in early August. The trip was arranged by a S.A.C. Prep Board of Directors member who is an Oregon alumnus. Another Board Member has adopted Chico State and arranged to have his alma mater adopt this class. Students in each class have made up their own chants and songs to show their pride for use in All-School Meetings. The goal is to expose students to as many things “college” as possible.

College Friday – Students are encouraged to wear “college gear” on Fridays such as college t-shirts and sweatshirts instead of their uniform tops and sweatshirts. Students can purchase and earn college gear by collecting Sol Stamps. Stamps can be redeemed at the Student Store (once every 6-8 weeks).

Promotional Standards

Proficiency of the objectives at each grade level is the basis for promotion. Students must have a “C” average or better to be promoted, have passing grades in all classes in the last Trimester. 8th grade students not passing their classes after the 1st and 2nd Trimester must choose one of three options to demonstrate the minimum level of mastery of the content in order to be eligible to participate in the promotion ceremony for 8th grade. Teachers assess a student’s progress on a quarterly basis in order to gauge whether the student is meeting the objectives throughout the year. Parents and students also have access to the school’s web portal page that includes the teachers’ grade books where students and parents have access to student grades in all of their classes anytime of day (where there is access to the Internet). A conference with a parent to hear their concerns is also another way promotion is addressed at Sol Aureus.

The program design of Sol Aureus is to ensure that all children succeed. The extended day provides teachers with the time needed to do remediation work when necessary. Students who are in jeopardy of retention are individually counseled and given extra help in their specific areas of concern. Students who continue to struggle are provided with a specific plan with their teachers where there is a concern, along with a checklist parents can use to help support their children at home. The finals in each subject are aligned to California Standards.

In addition to progress reports, in-class tests and teacher observations, students’ CAT-6 and California Standards Test scores, and where applicable, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) test scores are also taken into account for promotional purposes.

Schedule and Academic Calendar

More time on task is central to the success of Sol Aureus students. Students will attend school Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – and until 6:00 pm for Jumpstart. Nine hours each weekday, three and one half hours one Saturday a the month, and two extra weeks in August at the beginning of the school year enables Sol Aureus College Preparatory students to achieve remarkable academic and social progress. The majority of students stay until at least 5:00 pm everyday to meet with their teachers and get help with their homework.

6:30 a.m. (Doors Open)

School doors open with some students arriving to help out in classrooms or work on assessment and remedial programs on laptops.

7:30 a.m. (Breakfast)

Breakfast is served. Students work on morning work as well.

7:50 – 8:15 a.m. (Homeroom)

Sol Aureus College Preparatory students have time to get their materials, read, work on Study Island and get prepared for the day if they arrive early.

8:15 – 8:30 a.m. (CPR) – Students participate in CPR (see earlier description) to start the day and build social-emotional capacity in the students.

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Core Academic Subjects and Reading)

For the majority of the day, students are engaged in the standard curriculum areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, foreign languages, and thinking skills.

3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (Jumpstart: Snack, Study Hall & Enrichment)

1st-8th grade students begin Jumpstart Study Hall and an Enrichment Period in which they receive a daily snack and have the option of working on homework; receiving individualized tutoring from teachers, or participating in group projects. Students who are not performing up to academic expectations forego the enrichment period. Instead, these students receive remedial instruction and study hall during this period. Students in the primary grades take part in a variety of fun and engaging enrichment activities – from art projects to learning games on computers. Fifth through 8th grade students who are in good academic and behavioral standing engage in a variety of extracurricular activities such as basketball, guitar, chess, Spanish and art, dance, and service projects.

Annual School Calendar

Sol Aureus surpasses the Sacramento City Unified School District's calendar of minimal days and adds 7-9 Saturday School days as well as a summer start date – beginning in August, two weeks before Labor Day. The school does not hold Saturday school during summer or holiday weekends. The summer component commences prior to the beginning of the school year (typically August – see Appendix F) for a sample annual school calendar and schedule. Saturday School dates are not counted as “core academic hours” even though the first hour is spend on remediation in math or English.

Saturday Enrichment Classes

Sol Aureus College Preparatory 1st -8th Grade students attend Saturday classes from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. During this time, students participate in activities that contribute to their becoming well-rounded individuals, including the following: martial arts, dance, art, step, soccer, basketball, golf, Spanish, chess, and guitar. Students who need remedial work in core subject areas use a portion of the Saturday classes for intervention and one-on-one tutoring.

In addition, Sol Aureus College Preparatory offers parents a parent class and parent support group led by a trained and experienced counselor. In the future, Sol Aureus may provide help or assistance to parents during Saturday school hours, such as financial planning and ESL classes.

Early Start

All students at Sol Aureus College Preparatory begin the school year before Labor Day. Starting earlier provides Sol Aureus students, parents, and teachers with a head start in preparing for the upcoming academic year. The program is not designed as summer school for those students who failed to perform adequately during the regular school year, but rather as an introduction to the upcoming school year and an orientation for incoming students.

Work in the summer is divided into two components. The first segment contains a two-week long staff development program that provides Sol Aureus teachers with an opportunity to design their goals, objectives, and curriculum for the upcoming school year. Home visits are also scheduled beginning in the spring of the previous year, commencing again in August and going through the fall.

The second component of the summer work is the early start students get in terms of becoming acquainted with the procedures and expectations demanded throughout the year. After assessing each student's individual strengths and weaknesses, teachers emphasize the basics of English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and History-Social Science.

Students are introduced to the concepts, challenges, strengths, and rewards of working as a team and family. Above all, students are welcomed into the culture, and learn what it means to be a Sol Aureus student through introductions to songs, chants, and projects emphasizing hard work, teamwork, and a culture of high expectations. On the first day of school, all children learn what year they will enter college, and will begin the process of learning how to focus on their short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals to be successful at Sol Aureus College Preparatory and at the best high-schools and colleges in the country.

Special Education Students

The Special Education population in its first eight years has not exceeded 10% of the total student population of Sol Aureus College Preparatory. Students have generally come in with an IEP or 504 plan/designation. Sol Aureus teachers are made aware of student IEP plans as well as receiving ongoing training to make sure that instruction and assessments are aligned with identified learning differences spelled out in a student's IEP's. Sol Aureus staff make sure to adhere to the annual reviews of students with IEP's to make sure that their files are current and learning goals updated. Sol Aureus administration and staff meet all guidelines set out in the IEP that are appropriate.

Because there are not enough students to warrant it, Sol Aureus is not assigned a full-time teacher by the SELPA (SCUSD in this case). Historically, students with IEP's have received services in the following manner: Sol Aureus teachers making accommodations in a Least Restrictive Environment (or regular "mainstream" classroom setting) with limited "pull out" time to receive additional services by a trained and certificated teacher. In years 1-4, Sol Aureus received the benefit of an itinerant teacher who spent 2-4 days a week meeting individually with students addressing the learning goals laid out in the student's IEP. This teacher would also consult with the administration and faculty about additional strategies and updates regarding student performance and making progress towards attaining IEP goals.

Sol Aureus has an established referral and assessment process that brings together the parent/guardian, student, and school personnel to address any problems that interfere with a student's success at the school. This process entails written parental request and/or consent, search and serve, a Student Study Team, referral, assessment and IEP review. Currently, there are no students who have received this designation after the review process has been started.

Search and Serve

All Sol Aureus students are tested as a preliminary measure to determine if a referral for assessment is needed. Additionally, as part of the enrollment process, all parents are asked to provide information indicating whether or not they have a current IEP or suspect their child has an unidentified learning difference. Sol Aureus will respond to all parent requests for evaluation by developing an assessment plan. The Principal and staff will also identify any students in need of a pre-referral intervention plan, and work with the School Leader and faculty to establish a Student Study Team for that student.

A Student Success Team composed of the student requiring special education services, that student's parent or guardian, and the School Leader are responsible for identifying the student's needs and developing a plan to enable that student to be successful, including the appropriate individual tutoring schedule and classroom modifications, strategies, and techniques to enhance that student's ability to be successful. If the Student Success Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they recommend that Sol Aureus refer that student for a formal special education assessment. Written parental consent is required to move forward with the process of requesting an assessment to determine if a 504 Plan or Special Education services are warranted. Generally, the Student Study Team meets and makes adjustments at least one other time before referring a student to an IEP Team (which includes District Special Education staff, a parent, and the School Leader) for assessment. Sol Aureus may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate. Upon assessment from the trained staff at SCUSD, students either qualify or do not qualify for services.

Referral for Assessment

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having disabilities and show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Referrals for assessment include examining student screening information and making a decision about whether or not to conduct a formal educational assessment. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for special education services may also make a referral for an evaluation. Any such referrals are responded to in writing by the Principal or Special Education Manager within 15 days. Parents will be informed via the Principal or Special Education Manager that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

If Sol Aureus concludes that an assessment is appropriate, the parent receives an Assessment Plan. Assessments are done only upon receipt of written parent permission. Parents or guardians may also have requested that Sol Aureus assess their child. In this case, Sol Aureus follows the steps for Search and Serve where a Student Study Team is formed to design a plan for the student making accommodations and specific strategy recommendations to assess whether or not an assessment for special services are needed.

Assessment

The Principal follows the aforementioned procedures, and if it is determined that assessment is warranted, the student is referred to SCUSD Special Education staff who then schedule all of the necessary assessments to take place. The types of assessments that have been used for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services include:

- Individual testing;
- Observations;
- Interviews;
- Review of school records, reports, and work samples; and
- Parent input.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory follows the following assessment guidelines:

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the school to administer the assessment;
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability;
- Multiple assessments are delivered by a qualified professional to measure the student's strengths and needs;
- Assessments are delivered without cultural, racial or gender bias;
- Assessments are delivered in the student's primary language, unless a qualified interpreter is provided;
- Assessments are adapted as necessary for students with impaired sensory, physical or speaking skills; and
- A multidisciplinary team is assembled to assess the student, including a teacher knowledgeable in the disability.

The SCUSD Special Education staff works with the Sol Aureus staff to schedule coordinate and facilitate the IEP meeting. Educators qualified to interpret test results present the assessment data at the IEP meeting.

Development and Implementation of IEP

If it is determined by the IEP Team that that the student is eligible for special education services under IDEA, they are given an IEP. If the student is eligible for services, Sol Aureus and the SCUSD Special Education staff (the SELPA for Sol Aureus) provides those services as much as is appropriate according to the student's IEP, which will specify the instruction and services the student shall receive. Students at Sol Aureus who have IEP's are served in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Sol Aureus staff are also trained in following the guidelines of observance, implementation, and compliance with IDEA and other school/SCUSD guidelines and procedures applicable to Special Education or determination of a student warranting Special Education services.

Each student who has an IEP has an IEP team that oversees the implementation and progress of the IEP. The IEP team at Sol Aureus usually consists of the following individuals:

- The parent or guardian of the student for whom the IEP was developed;
- The Principal;
- The student's teachers who are familiar with the curriculum appropriate to that student;
- Special education professionals qualified to interpret assessment results; and
- An SCUSD Special Education staff representative,.

Others familiar with the student are invited as needed. For example, if a student or family is receiving additional counseling and support services from an outside agency, with the parent's request and consent, this agency can send a representative to the meeting Sol Aureus views the parent as a key stakeholder in these meetings and will make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules and needs so that they will be able to participate effectively on the IEP team. The school provides an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents and/or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. If a parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school ensures his/her participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone or meeting at the parent's home. A copy of the IEP is given to the parent.

Upon the parent or guardian's consent, the IEP is implemented by Sol Aureus College Preparatory. The IEP includes all required components and be written on the Sacramento City Unified SELPA forms. Some of the elements the IEP consist of include:

- The rationale for placement decisions;
- The services the student will receive and the means for delivering those services;
- A description of when services will begin, how often the student will receive them, who will provide them, and where they will be delivered;
- Annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance;
- A description of how the student's progress will be measured and monitored; and
- Transition goals for work-related skills.

IEP meetings are held according to the following schedule:

- Yearly to review the student's progress and make any necessary changes;
- Every three years to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress;
- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- When a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress;
- When an Individual Transition Plan is (ITP) required at the appropriate age;

- When a special education student has been suspended, especially if they demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior, to determine if changes to the IEP are required to address the misbehavior; and
- A manifestation determination meeting occurs no later than 10 days after a decision to impose a change in placement.

IEP Review

The IEP team formally reviews the student's IEP at least once a year to determine how the IEP is meeting his/her needs. In accordance with IDEA regulations, the IEP team also conducts a formal review of the IEP once every three years, in which the student is reassessed and the IEP is reviewed as part of an overall comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress.

If a parent or faculty member feels the student's educational needs are not being met, they may request a reassessment or a review of the IEP by the IEP team at any time during the year via written notice to the school. Once the request is received, Sol Aureus has thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

Reporting

Sol Aureus collects and maintains the following information on students with IEP's:

- Students being provided special education services by age, grade, category of disability and the number of students with disabilities who are English Language Learners;
- The number of students provided with test modifications and the types and the number of students exempted from District assessments;

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate/timely reporting is the responsibility of the Sol Aureus Principal or Special Education Manager. The School Leader ensures that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEP's is maintained and that this file is locked and confidential, in accordance with IDEA guidelines. The School Leader oversees access to these records, and is responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP have access to a copy of the IEP and are informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

Due Process and Procedural Safeguards

Parents or guardians of students with IEP's at Sol Aureus must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child, be included in the decision-making process when change in placement, is under consideration, and be invited, along with teachers, to conferences and meetings to develop their child's IEP.

Any concerns or disagreements raised by parents are acknowledged by the school within five days, after which a meeting between the parent and school is

scheduled to seek resolution of the disagreement. At any point, the parent(s) or guardian(s) has the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child.

The school provides the parent with all notices of procedural safeguards as well as with information on the procedure to initiate both formal and informal dispute resolutions.

Complaint Procedures

Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with the District, and California State Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education.

Special Education Strategies for Instruction and Services

Sol Aureus College Preparatory complies with the federal mandate of the “least restrictive environment”, meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers. Sol Aureus mainstreams all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each individual IEP, offering a comprehensive inclusion program that includes specialized individual tutoring through ’s extended day and year. Each student’s IEP requires different kinds of modifications for instruction and services, therefore the educational strategies of the IEP are built around the student’s needs and how these fit within the general educational program of the school. The instruction outlined in each student’s IEP are delivered by personnel qualified to do so.

Special Education Funding

Sol Aureus College Preparatory and Sacramento City Unified School District (the SELPA in this case) work together to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs.

The District collects an encroachment from the Sol Aureus. The charter schools encroachment contribution is equal to the percentage of general funds encroached by the District to support the Special Education Program for the prior fiscal year. The annual encroachment percentage collected from Sol Aureus varies from year to year depending on the District’s internal encroachment.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory and the District annually review the fee for services to be provided. The school shall enjoy reasonable flexibility to decide whether to receive services, funding, or some combination of both pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b). Sol Aureus and the District establishes and documents the specific terms of this relationship in an annual fee for service contract and memorandum of understanding.

English Language Learners

Sol Aureus complies with all federal, state, and judicial mandates for English Language Learners. The school has a Sacramento City Unified School District assigned evaluator test and assesses the English proficiency of students having an English Language Learner (ELL) label, using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

Sol Aureus has historically served between a 3% and 10% ELL student population and expects that somewhere between 5%-30% of its students will continue to be classified as English Language Learners. The discrepancy in numbers between Sol Aureus and other neighborhood schools seems to be that a higher percentage of African American students attend Sol Aureus at a rate of 3 and 4 to one percentage wise. About 1/3 to 1/2 of the Latino population of Sol Aureus has been assessed through the CELDT. That data is collected annually. Because the goal is to help these students with an exceptional education and transitioning them into English Proficiency as soon as possible an emphasis on vocabulary development and reading comprehension is implemented or not only ELL students but all Sol Aureus students. Their student progress is tracked through their grades, STAR test results, and teacher meetings to discuss progress with specific students. Some of the classroom library books are in Spanish to continue to develop their literacy skills in their native language to help to continue to assist in acquisition of English language skills. Sol Aureus also recognizes the importance of valuing students' native languages, and reinforces an appreciation for the cultures, customs, and languages of all its students through the school's core curriculum, enrichment programs, and life-skills curriculum.

Sol Aureus seeks to hire faculty who have received CLAD (Cross-Cultural Language Acquisition Design) training. Two current Sol Aureus teachers have this designation – one in Hmong and one in Spanish. In addition, staff are trained in various teaching strategies including scaffolding techniques, songs and chants, and the use of graphic organizers, to ensure that all students are provided with multiple avenues to access the curriculum.

Students who enter the school with an ELL label are tutored during study hall or the enrichment period. Immersion in the regular classroom is the preferred model for mastering the English language. Sol Aureus ensures that all ELL students have access to the core content.

All parents or guardians of students classified as English Language Learners are notified in writing. The school translates materials as needed to ensure that parents of ELL students understand all communications and are involved in all processes related to the English Language Development of their child.

Gifted and Talented Students

Sol Aureus College Preparatory offers an accelerated program for all students in that high expectations are held for all students. This will mean different things for different students. The commonality is that each student is expected to perform up to and beyond their capabilities. The Sol Aureus philosophy is an efficacy model which operates from the perspective that all students can attain knowledge and skills at a

proficient level with repeated effort, practice, and guidance. Because the school challenges each child to reach their intellectual potential within the instructional program, the school does not offer a formal, separate gifted and talented program. During the enrichment period, teachers work with students who are exceeding expectations by providing opportunities for project-based learning, discovery learning or computer activities. Students who would be designated as Gifted and Talented Students in their normal public schools benefit from the opportunity form close relationships with their teachers receiving extra attention, praise, and leadership opportunities. Historically, we have seen high performing students continue to perform high in high school or if they return to their neighborhood public schools. Frequently they and their parents have said that they felt “ahead” because they were challenged at such a rigorous and high level. Student who have not performed as well in school have benefited from achieving even limited success at high levels but more consistent performance at an adequate level because the expectations are high. Teachers will work with individual students to help students overcome skill deficits and learning challenges. We have seen students on the lower and higher levels of student achievement benefit from the program in place – students who were not very high performers at their last schools making the honor roll at Sol Aureus.

Parental Involvement

Sol Aureus operates under the premise that the teachers, parents, and students must work together as partners to create the potential for a quality education. Parents are a vital part of this partnership. Sol Aureus conducts monthly parent meetings doing everything from presentations by teachers, high school administrators, and the School Leader. Food is offered or brought by parents to share with all to further develop a sense of community. Parents are consulted on major decisions such as facilities and given informal opportunities to give input through the School Leader’s “open door” policy as well as a more formal and anonymous way of an annual mid-year survey (see Appendix D). Additionally, parents are part of a school “site council” that reviews data such as attendance and suspension rates to help give the staff input on how to continually improve the school. Parents are encouraged to perform 20 hours per school year to support the efforts of Sol Aureus. Opportunities for parent involvement include parent meetings, local field trips, occasionally volunteering at the school, donating money, services, or school supplies, and visiting their child’s class during school hours. All volunteers not under constant direct supervision of a school employee will be required to be fingerprinted and receive a background clearance prior to volunteering within Sol Aureus. Sol Aureus parents are encouraged to join the Parent Association. Lastly, parents are encouraged to attend the monthly Parent Support Group, led by a trained counselor and held on Saturday School days.

The Commitment to Excellence Form outlines the ways in which Sol Aureus expects and needs parents to support the educational mission of the school (see Appendix G). The commitments for parental support include helping with homework each night, reading with their child each night, ensuring that homework is completed every night, assisting their child in contacting the teacher regarding any problem or question on an assignment, providing a quiet place with light for their child to study at home, and being available to meet with the teachers at home or at school if the need arises.

Community Involvement

Building strong links with the local community is critically important to Sol Aureus College Preparatory's success. Sol Aureus has partnered with individuals and organizations in the community that are dedicated to helping students obtain their academic goals. Sol Aureus has partnered with the Same Pannell Community Center Extended Day Program, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch Library, Capitol Heights Academy, the Girls Scouts, and various community organizations in Sacramento.

Sol Aureus continues to reach out to a wide range of organizations like these throughout the charter development process and enlist participation on several start-up committees.

Sol Aureus also creates opportunities to involve members of the community in supporting the school. School volunteers perform several duties, including small group tutorials, office assistance, and serving as guest presenters during life skills classes.

The school's health curriculum includes various community-based organizations that will help Sol Aureus students understand nutrition, hygiene, drug and alcohol abuse, and family crisis management. Sol Aureus strives to foster a supportive family environment inside the classroom and throughout the school and community in order that students have pride in themselves, their school, their family, their heritage, and their community.

Professional Development

At Sol Aureus College Preparatory, staff development supports the school's mission and basic values by fostering a positive campus culture, sharing the best instructional practices, and encouraging individual teacher growth. Beginning in staff orientation before summer school, the School Leader ensures that teachers fully understand and support the school's mission, goals, and basic values, emphasizing a rigorous, standards-based college preparatory program. This orientation involves specific activities designed to align the staff and foster teamwork.

During the school year, staff development continues through professional development days, whole staff meetings, content area meetings, and grade level team meetings. Sol Aureus teachers will receive two weeks of in-service during which they are trained to function effectively within the parameters of the school and to meet the goals outlined in the accountability agreement. Teachers receive ongoing training in their discipline area, communication strategies, and diversity training. They are also informally and formally observed and evaluated by the school leader, board members, community members, district officials, visitors, and each other, receiving regular feedback on their performance, goals, and growth. Staff development involves not only structured whole staff and small group practices, but is also individualized to best serve each teacher's needs. Every moment of staff development is maximized and aligned with the school's goals.

Sol Aureus has created the position of Lead Teacher to help the School Leader train and support the instructional development of its teachers. The Lead Teacher formally observes the teachers 6 times through the school year. Some of these observations are video taped and discussed with the teacher as part of the follow-up debriefing meetings. The Lead Teacher also meets with faculty after school in small groups or one-on-one to discuss relevant teaching strategies and areas for growth and improvement. All professional development discussions with teachers involve the use and analysis of data – formative, daily, and summative. The school relies heavily on the six formative assessments students are given throughout the year. Professional Development Half-Day and Full-Day Meetings are scheduled to be held the same week as the schoolwide formative assessments so that the data and student progress can be discussed and changes made to instructional practices. Sol Aureus staff have also benefited from professional development opportunities provided by attending conferences sponsored by the KIPP Foundation, California Charter Schools Association, the Charter Schools Development Center, and Association of School Curriculum Development.

Table A: Sample Teacher 1st Week Summer Training

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Staff Handbook Student Handbook HR Policies	STAR Test Analysis and Discussions	Curriculum Development: Backwards Mapping Room Set-Up	Scope and Sequence Lesson Planning, <i>Do Nows</i> , and <i>Daily Aims</i> Standard Classroom set-ups	Room Set-up
Sol Aureus Culture	Curriculum Development:	School Culture: Classroom Design	School Culture: Student Work Standards	Room Set-up Individual Meetings
Student Orientation Planning	Student Orientation Planning	Curriculum and Data Meetings Student Leader Training	New Student Orientation & Benchmark Assessments	New Student Orientation

Staff Evaluation Plan

The Principal is responsible for evaluating all teachers and support staff. School staff evaluation includes input from administration, peers, and parents/guardians. Input includes, teacher self-evaluations, student evaluations of the staff, and school wide evaluations of the program and staff completed by parents (see Appendix H). A critical part of teacher evaluation and retention is based on performance outcomes, measuring

students' achievement and the teacher's implementation of the curriculum. Annual performance assessments of teachers are based on agreed upon "best practices".

The performance criteria for teacher performance reviews of Sol Aureus faculty also include:

- Commitment to the Sol Aureus mission and goals;
- Successful implementation of the curriculum and educational philosophy;
- High level of professionalism;
- High level of accomplishment; and
- Effective participation in Sol Aureus staff "team".

Tools used in the evaluation process include:

- Written evaluations based on classroom observations;
- Self-evaluations completed by teachers being evaluated;
- Student performance on major assessments; and
- Feedback from parents.

Those teachers failing to adhere to the guidelines outlined above and in the Commitment to Excellence form, and/or failing to meet the specifications of the evaluation plan are subject to dismissal at the request of the School Leader.

ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Sol Aureus College Preparatory is modeled after the highly successful KIPP schools that are in operation in inner-city neighborhoods of Houston (1994 and 2001), the South Bronx (1995), Anacostia, Washington, D.C (2001), and in rural Gaston, NC (2001). All student and school outcome goals of Sol Aureus are aligned with California Content Standards. Goals will be continually refined and developed to reflect the growing needs of Sol Aureus and the newly adopted Common Core Standards.

STUDENT OUTCOME GOALS

Commitment to the educational philosophy of Sol Aureus empowers Sol Aureus College Preparatory students to achieve the following:

Academic Outcome Goals

I. Sol Aureus College Preparatory students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the District in English-Language Arts and Mathematics;

II. Each student will maintain progress towards benchmarks of proficiency in all academic subjects as defined by the California Core Content Standards and soon to be adopted Common Core Standards;

III. Students will be effective and confident communicators, able to write and speak with clarity, accuracy, and precision;

IV. Students will be critical thinkers and problem-solvers;

V. Students will demonstrate the ability to design and conduct a valid scientific experiment; and

VI. Daily homework assignment completion will be a daily metric of effort and consistency on the students part and appropriateness, relevancy, and engagement on the teachers part.

Life-Long Learning Skills

Social Skills

All students develop specific social skills necessary to exist positively in society, including but not limited to:

- Making and maintaining eye contact;

- Shaking hands in a proper manner;
- Addressing adults with respect; and
- Understanding where and when responses are appropriate.

Work Ethic

Adhering to the Sol Aureus values of *Preparation, Responsibility, Respect, Community, & Excellence*, all students will learn to approach their required work with attitudes and skills necessary to be successful in life, including but not limited to:

- Perseverance
- Attention to detail
- Completeness
- Accuracy
- Neatness

Study Skills

All students will develop academic skills necessary to be successful in subsequent schools, including but not limited to:

- Research techniques
- Reading for a variety of reasons
- Note-taking skills
- Organizational skills
- Literary analysis

Values

All students develop the character traits and skills that allow and encourage them to become concerned and active citizens of their communities, nation, and world beyond. These values include but are not limited to:

- Preparation
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Community
- Excellence

SCHOOL OUTCOME GOALS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory provides a meaningful educational experience to its students by showing them what they can accomplish in a single year of dedicated commitment, perseverance, preparation, and hard work, and the level to which they can enhance their self-confidence through academic achievement. Furthermore, Sol Aureus instills in students the belief that through effort and preparation they can develop the skills necessary to succeed and excel in a post-secondary field or career of their choosing – attending college, a vocational school, or some other post-secondary educational or training institution.

ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT OF MEASURABLE OUTCOME GOALS

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT OUTCOME GOALS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory's has effectively administered the state mandated STAR Tests every year. The school continues to monitor the progress of its former graduates in their respective high schools, forging relationships with high school admissions staff and administrators. The school gets updates from these high school staff members and administrators that are both anecdotal and quantitative. Students continue to come back to tutor current Sol Aureus students as well as contacting their former teachers at Sol Aureus directly to get advice and give them updates.

ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL OUTCOME GOALS

See STAR Test Scores for detail. Sol Aureus attendance has mirrored SCUSD and held at an average of 95% or so for each of the first four years. It has also performed higher than or comparable to area schools. In 1-2 subjects and in 1-2 grade levels the scores have not always been as high for every subject. As a whole, Sol Aureus has demonstrated that it has made an impact with three groups that have historically been the most challenging to show progress in closing the achievement gap with – low income, African American, and Latino students.

ADDITIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROVISIONS

High school and college placement as well as graduation rates are two key measures that Sol Aureus would hold itself accountable. Sol Aureus has one class of 8th graders who graduated from Sol Aureus. The competitive, college preparatory high schools they attend appear below.

SCUSD High Schools

- Health Professions High School (17)
- New Technology High School (10)
- Luther Burbank High School (3)
- Sacramento Charter High School (12)
- West Campus High School (11)

Private High Schools

- Christian Bros. High School (8)
- Cristo Rey High School (8)
- Sacramento Country Day School (1)

ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL ISSUES

The governance of Sol Aureus is designed to meet the needs and interests of both the Sacramento City Unified School District as well as Sol Aureus students, their families, and the greater community where the school is physically located or where the communities Sol Aureus students live. This structure is to ensure that there is local “ownership of the school and its mission garnering community-based support, grassroots involvement with and local responsibility for the success of Sol Aureus. Two parents are formal members of the Board. One additional parent has been added during the charter renewal process.

LEGAL STRUCTURE

Sol Aureus College Preparatory is a duly constituted California Public Benefit Corporations, governed in accordance with applicable California Corporations Code sections, and wholly accountable to the Sol Aureus Board of Directors with the grantor of the charter (Sacramento City Unified School District’s Board of Education) having oversight responsibility for the school. Sol Aureus is a federally recognized non-profit entity with its own tax-exempt federal tax ID. #.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory maintains non-sectarian programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, does not charge tuition, and does not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, national origin, gender or disability.

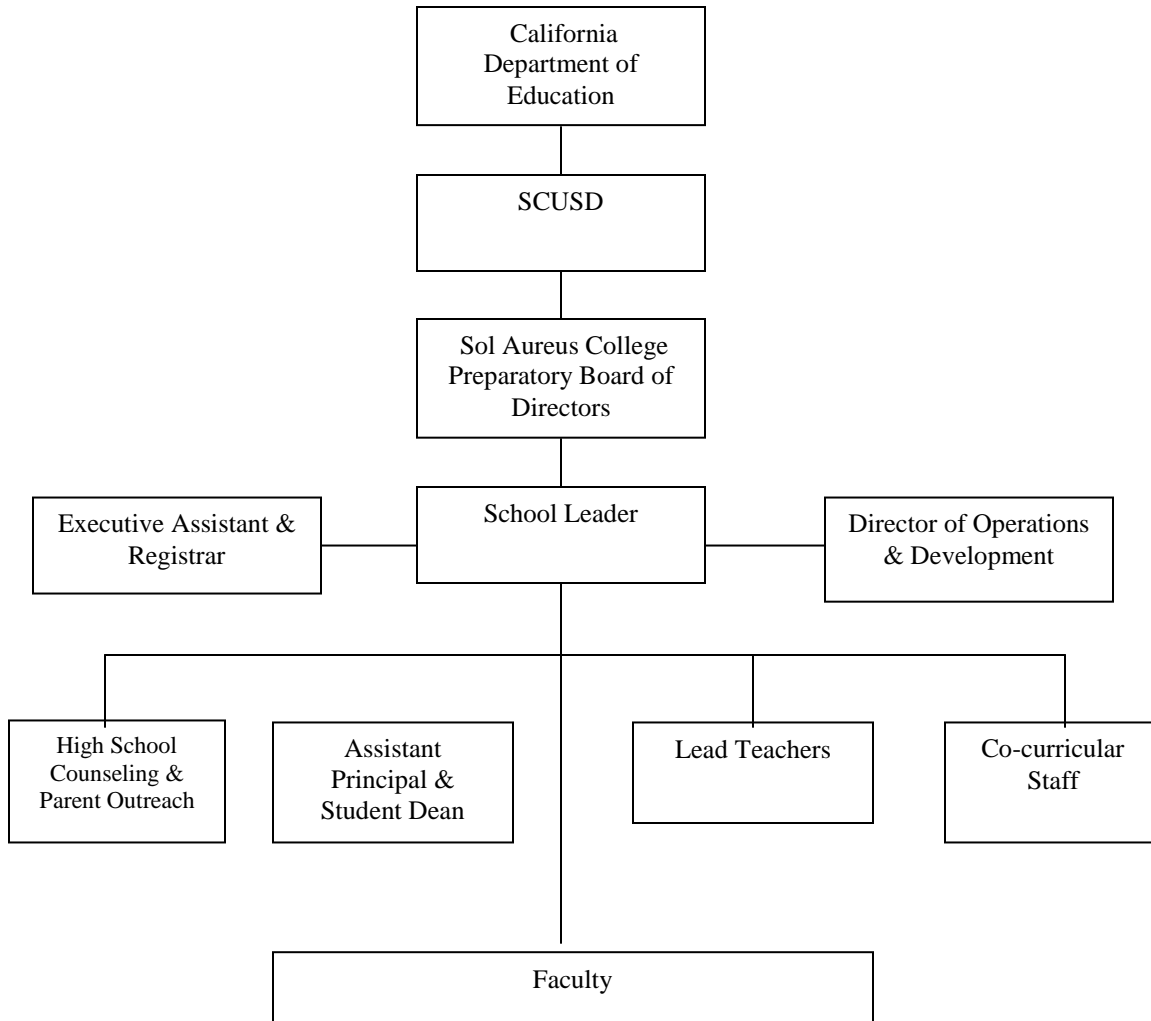
The school complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws. It retains its own legal counsel when necessary. It has purchased and maintained, as necessary, general liability, automotive liability, errors and omissions, property, workers compensation and unemployment insurance policies in accordance to State and locally mandated levels of coverage. (see copies of insurance coverage provided).

The Sacramento City Unified Board of Education and SCUSD shall be responsible for implementing the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and any other applicable laws in a good faith manner, and to cooperatively pursue any necessary waivers or approvals (e.g., any State Board of Education requirements or Sol Aureus College Preparatory grant applications needing a Local Educational Agency signature) required to implement the charter or seek appropriate funding.

GOVERNANCE

Below is an organizational charter of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, including the Board of Directors and teaching staff:

Figure 1: Sol Aureus College Preparatory Organizational Reporting Structure



Board of Directors

Governance and policy-making authority and fiduciary responsibility for Sol Aureus rests with the Sol Aureus College Preparatory Board of Directors. The Board of Directors works closely with the School Leader to implement the stated mission and vision of the school as outlined in the charter and influenced by the original Five Pillars of KIPP, as outlined in its original charter petition. The Board of Directors of Sol Aureus is responsible for governance and policy-making. The school maintains D & O insurance.

The Board of Directors of Sol Aureus is representative of the community the school serves and holds public meetings in accordance with the Brown Act. The Board members support the mission of the school and serves because they believe in its goals. The members represent a broad area of expertise and a broad cross-section of the

school community and community-at-large, including but not limited to at least one financial expert, one fundraising expert, one community leader, one parent, and an educational leader. The by-laws, adopted and approved by the Sol Aureus Board of Directors, address future board appointments and turnover. The current Board has representatives from a variety of backgrounds, fields of expertise, ages, and ethnic diversity to play a role in governance.

The Board is comprised of board officers and the following committees (with additional committees to be added as determined by the Board): Finance Committee, Audit Committee, Board Selection Committee, Facilities Committee, and Fund Development Committee. The Sol Aureus Board meets monthly with the Board President/Chairperson of the Board presiding over the meetings. Sol Aureus Board meetings of any kind follow the Brown Act. The Principal has also received training on compliance of the Brown Act from the Charter School Development Center.

Sol Aureus has one parent of a S.A.C. Prep alumnus on the Board of Directors. This parent maintains contact with the parent group to formally and informally bring attention to the Board of Directors.

Recruitment, Selection, and Development of Sol Aureus College Preparatory Board Members

The School Leader works closely with the Board of Directors to ensure that they are in full alignment with the school's mission, culture, and goals. The qualifications sought in those candidates interested in serving on the Board would include but not be limited to:

- A dedication to furthering the vision and mission of Sol Aureus College Preparatory;
- Willingness to volunteer for one or more board committees and the ability to contribute appropriate time and energy necessary to follow through on assigned tasks;
- Ability to work within a team structure;
- Expectation that all children can and will realize high academic achievement; and
- Specific knowledge, experience, and/or interest in at least one element of governance for Sol Aureus College Preparatory.

The Sol Aureus Board of Directors has their own Commitment to Excellence “contract” that each member signs upon joining the Board and re-visits annually (See Appendix I).

Please see Appendix L for the Board Roster of current Board Members.

Separation of Duties - Roles and Responsibilities

Sol Aureus College Preparatory's decision-making process rests with the school's Board of Directors setting policies and the School Leader carrying out those policies. The School Leader coordinates all campus level planning and decision making that will involve the school's professional staff, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the school's educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. This allows the School Leader, teachers, parents, and the community to make school-based decisions within the boundaries of the decisions and policies set by the Board of Directors. Each Board member must sign a Conflict of Interest Statement outlining the Conflict of Interest policies for Sol Aureus (Appendix J).

The Sol Aureus College Preparatory Board of Directors' primary responsibility is to help set policies and work with the School Leader guiding Sol Aureus. The Board of Directors holds annual retreats to continue to align the needs of the schools with their efforts. Board members are presented continuous opportunities for board training and development. A limited number has undergone training through the Non-profit Resource Center. The Board is empowered to:

- Ensure that the school adheres to the goals outlined in this charter, as well as state and federal guidelines and other Sol Aureus College Preparatory policies;
- Hold the School Leader accountable for the academic and fiscal responsibility of the school;
- Provide support to the school for additional fund-raising, marketing and other services as needs arise; and
- Advocate on behalf of the school by working to establish partnerships with community organizations, institutes of higher learning, non-profit foundations and corporate entities that support education through noncommercial relationships.

The role of the School Leader, in the operation of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, is to assure that the diverse components are functioning as designed and that the mission, goals, and objectives of the school are being fulfilled. He/She is empowered to but not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Hire, terminate, manage, and evaluate all instructional and non-instructional staff;
- Design the academic program;
- Coordinate student and teacher programming, including curriculum development;
- Manage everyday operations including crisis management and life safety compliance;
- Maintain school financial records;
- Sign, or co-sign all school checks; and
- Serve as the lead person for cultivating community partnerships.

The School Leader will be responsible for ensuring that overall curricular policy remains faithful to the school's mission. The School Leader will implement that policy and develop and maintain, with input from teachers, a cohesive fifth through eighth grade

curriculum. The School Leader will also be responsible for implementation of the California Content Standards and for working with parents and teachers to provide differentiation where necessary to meet the needs of students not achieving expectations.

Alton Nelson, Founder & Principal for Sol Aureus College Preparatory

Mr. Nelson was the initial founder of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, successfully completing the yearlong KIPP School Leader Fellowship before opening and leading the school through its first five years beginning in August 2003. Before founding the school, Mr. Nelson worked in education for more than twelve years in a variety of capacities, including seven years of teaching experience. In addition to his classroom teaching experience, he has worked as a program officer at a Chicago foundation, served as the Chair of the History Department at The Branson School (an independent, college preparatory high school), co-directed and was mentor teacher of the *Making Waves* tutorial program (a Summerbridge program), coached basketball, and was a intern and afterschool coordinator at an east Oakland middle school through the East Bay Conservation Corps. Mr. Nelson received his B.A in History from the University of California, Los Angeles and his Masters in Education from Harvard University. For full resume please see Appendix K.

ELEMENT E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory currently employs four full-time teachers, one part-time executive assistant/registrar, and independent contractors for accounting services, grant-writing, and extracurriculars. Sol Aureus will hire more full-time teachers and administrative staff when the school expands to add Kindergarten through 4th grades. The current plan for growth would call for having one class per grade – no more than 20 per class in K-4; and between 16-25 in grades 5-8. If 2 classes of 20 Kindergartners could be accommodated (an AM and PM group), this could have an impact in 1st through 4th grade enrollment in subsequent years. The current projections call for two Kindergarten classes by the 2014-15 school year.

The School Leadership will change beginning in 2011-12 as the Founder and current Principal, Alton Nelson, vacates the position. A search for the next School Leader is underway. The search is being handled by a Committee of the Sol Aureus Board of Directors with the help of Alton Nelson, the current School Leader. The next School Leader and Board of Directors will be responsible for the implementation of the Sol Aureus College Preparatory charter.

QUALIFICATIONS

Certification

Sol Aureus College Preparatory retains or employs teaching staff who hold appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These teachers instruct the core academic classes of mathematics, language arts, science, and history/social studies. These teachers are responsible for overseeing student academic progress and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the School's operational policies. The School maintains a current copy of teacher certificates on file and ready for inspection.

Commitment

All prospective staff must show a strong desire to teach an academically intense curriculum, commit to an extended school day, and continue their professional development during the school's prescribed professional development days. Additionally, all staff must meet any additional guidelines and standards set by the Sol Aureus College Preparatory Board of Directors.

Sol Aureus incorporates the Commitment to Excellence in the process of hiring staff. All staff sign the Commitment to Excellence at the beginning of each academic year, in addition to the formal Sol Aureus College Preparatory employee contract. (See Appendix G)

All of the faculty of Sol Aureus commit to:

- Abide by federal, state, and local laws;
- Maintain a professional relationship with all students;
- Refrain from the abuse of alcohol or drugs during the course of professional practice;
- Exemplify honor and integrity in the course of professional practice, particularly in the use of public funds and property;
- Comply with state, federal, and local laws regarding the confidentiality of student records;
- Fulfill the terms and obligations detailed in the Sol Aureus College Preparatory charter and contract;
- File necessary reports of child abuse;
- Agree to a voluntary criminal background check;
- Maintain a high level of professional conduct; and
- Adhere to the Commitment to Excellence Form.

HIRING PROCEDURE

Sol Aureus College Preparatory recruit teachers through education publications such as EdJoin, the Sacramento Bee, and local job fairs sponsored by the CA Charter Schools Association, teacher networks such as Teach for America, and graduate, undergraduate, and alternative certification teacher education programs in both public and private colleges and universities such as Sacramento State University, UC Davis, Stanford University, San Francisco State University, UC Berkeley, Columbia Teachers College, and Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Each prospective teacher has to demonstrate teaching a lesson here at the school or their current school shows a strong command of the subject area. Each applicant undergoes formal and informal interviews to ensure that his/her values are aligned with the educational philosophy. The School Leader is responsible for the final hiring decision.

All faculty and staff undergo a criminal background check and fingerprinting to be conducted by the Department of Justice, as well as a child abuse registry check. The applicants are required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding prior criminal records. All staff are required to produce documents for U.S. employment authorization. For medical safety, all staff will have medical clearance including proof of medical examination and a tuberculosis (TB) test.

COMPENSATION

Sol Aureus College Preparatory offers wages that are competitive with the Sacramento City Unified School District wages, but which also reflect the longer school day and year. Salary and stipends, along with standards of professional conduct, are outlined in the annual contract. Performance evaluations are conducted by the School Leader based on goals and objectives set forth at the beginning of the year. The School Leader is evaluated by the school's Board of Directors.

ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Sol Aureus staff oversees and supervises compliance with the requirement that all students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the same extent that this is required for non-charter public schools within Sacramento City Unified School District.

Sol Aureus has a set of emergency procedures that give specific detail regarding steps to be undertaken during emergencies that threaten the health of students and staff. Some of these items are included in the Parent/Student Handbook (see full 2010-11 Handbook) and a separate Sol Aureus Emergency Procedures Manual.

As stated in Element E (Employee Qualifications), all faculty and staff undergo a criminal background check. Applicants are required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding prior criminal records. All staff are required to produce documents for U.S. employment authorization. For medical safety, all staff will have medical clearance including proof of medical examination and a tuberculosis (TB) test.

The current facilities of Sol Aureus College Preparatory is a SCUSD facility which complies with all state building codes, federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements. Sol Aureus maintains complete records documenting said compliance, and maintains on file a copy of all facility inspection records.

ELEMENT G: MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

Sol Aureus strongly believes that a wide cross section of students with a variety of life experiences adds to the learning experience of all. Students will need to learn from others how to respect different viewpoints and find the commonalities in all people. Sol Aureus takes the following steps to ensure that students who are representative of the school's respective communities will be recruited and feel welcome:

- Identify, recruit, and employ a diverse staff, including relevant foreign language-speaking teachers;
- Post flyers and notices in local supermarkets, restaurants, businesses, churches, community centers, and apartment complexes;
- Develop marketing materials in multiple languages;
- Place bulletins and ads in local churches of varying denominations.
- Visit and speak at local community based organizations in south Sacramento and the District;
- Visit and explain to prospective students and their families the purpose of Sol Aureus College Preparatory in their homes;
- Conduct parent information sessions to elaborate on the commitment involved with attending Sol Aureus College Preparatory and on occasion provide interpreters;
- Canvass neighborhoods to reach interested families;
- Promote the school at neighborhood festivals such as the Black Expo, La Familia, and Hmong New Years festivals;
- Make local school visits;
- Encourage referrals from other former and current students and families;
- Speak at civic organizations, with a particular focus on local community populations;
- Place advertisements in local newspapers and community association newsletters;
- Speak on local radio stations;
- Invite local television and print media reporters to report on the school; and
- Encourage teacher referrals from other campuses.
- Provide incentives to parents for them to refer friends and family to attend Sol Aureus.

Sol Aureus has done all of the aforementioned strategies to try to endure a more culturally diverse student body. Sol Aureus College Preparatory provides translation services for all promotional material and any person-to-person interaction requiring translation. The school also keeps on file documentation of the efforts the school has made to achieve student racial and ethnic balance and the results it achieved, as well as an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school.

The most significant three ways students have been successfully recruited have been through parent/student referrals, placing inserts in the Sacramento Bee (5,000 to 10,000) targeting various south Sacramento zip codes in multiple languages, and canvassing the neighborhood door to door or at community festivals and events.

ELEMENT H: ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Sol Aureus is a free public school that is open to all residents of the State of California. Sol Aureus does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or any of the characteristics listed in Section 220 of the Education Code of the students and the parents or guardians.

Any student who expresses his/her intent to enroll by signing Sol Aureus's Commitment to Excellence Form, and has his/ her parent or guardian sign this Commitment, are invited to attend Sol Aureus. This form specifies that the student, parents, and teachers all have the *desire, discipline and dedication* to do everything in their power to support student education. The Sol Aureus framework encourages and motivates students and their families to view an intense academic commitment as the key to future success.

Formal recruitment of incoming students will begin in January of each calendar year for the following school year. In January, Sol Aureus College Preparatory's staff and parents advertise open registration. After this point, interested families are able to meet with the Sol Aureus staff and review the expectations of the school. The enrollment induction process includes the following steps:

- Filling out enrollment application forms that include pertinent family contact information, emergency contact information, a language survey, a survey of special needs, Parent and Student "contract (Commitment to Excellence forms – CTE's), general parent survey, enrollment form, and request to transfer cumulative file form.
- Attending an orientation for new students/families which are held monthly beginning in January through August.
- Scheduling a home visit to meet with parents to discuss their hopes and dreams for their child
- Scheduling a "shadow day" for their child to attend classes at Sol Aureus for part of the day to get a sense of how the school operates.
- Meeting with the Principal to discuss any further questions or concerns about the program.

If the number of applicants to Sol Aureus College Preparatory exceeds capacity, a public random drawing selection process for admission will be used. Preference will be given to the following students:

- (1) The school will give priority to residents of SCUSD.
- (2) While the school is co-located with Freeport, admissions preference will also be given to these students as well as those in the attendance area near the SCUSD facility where the school is housed. Education Code Section 47605.3.
- (3) As the school grows, priority will be given to siblings of current students at Sol Aureus.

Thus far, the school has not had to resort to a lottery to determine student enrollment. Students added to waiting lists for any existing grade levels are taken on a first come, first serve basis in order of when the completed forms are turned in to the school.

After filling all seats, a waiting pool is established in the event that space becomes available. If seats remain, applications are accepted on an on-going basis and seats are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

The above procedures are to be followed to fill vacant seats in all grades should seats become available.

ELEMENT I: FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC AUDIT

FINANCIAL AUDITS

The Board of Directors of Sol Aureus College Preparatory has an Audit Committee. The Audit Committee oversees the process in preparation for the audit and the analysis of the audit data. They also make recommendations to prepare for future audits. Initially, a board member requested bids from three different firms for the initial 3 year audit engagement. The auditor chosen is Thomas Gilbert and Associates. The Board has elected to retain their services for the last two fiscal years. This independent audit firm has conducted an annual audit of Sol Aureus College Preparatory's financial books and records in each of its first four years. This audit has been conducted in accordance with the applicable Generally Accepted Accounting Principle and continues to be updated as new elements are required for charter schools and non-profits. Gilbert is very reputable in the field for its level of scrutiny and the number of charter school audits it has conducted. Gilbert and Associates has verified the accuracy of Sol Aureus College Preparatory's financial statements (including its Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Cash Flow Statement), attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and review internal controls. To the extent required by federal law, the scope of this audit will be expanded to include any relevant items or processes identified by the Office of Management and Budget. To this date, there have been no major or significant findings in any of the audits conducted since the inception of the school.

A new audit firm, Mann Urrutia Nelson, was selected at for the Year Six, Seven, and Eight Year Financial Audit. Year Six and Seven Audits have been completed. The new firm has worked well with the management team, Audit Committee, and the Board of Directors to make the transition a smooth one.

The annual audits are completed within six months of the close of Sol Aureus College Preparatory's fiscal year and completed and filed by December 15th with a copy of the auditor's findings forwarded to Sacramento City Unified School District, Sacramento County Office of Education, the State Controller's Office, and the California Department of Education by December 15th as well. Sol Aureus's Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations to the school's full Board as to how these have been, or will be, resolved. Sol Aureus's Board will act upon these recommendations, and report its actions to Sacramento City Unified School District.

PROGRAMMATIC AUDITS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory has submitted comprehensive programmatic audits annually that permit its Board, as well as Sacramento City Unified School District, to closely monitor the school's achievement of its goals and outcomes.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory annually provides Sacramento City Unified School District with a complete performance report that will includes at least the following elements:

- Data demonstrating student progress towards the goals and outcomes specified in Element B, based on the assessment tools and techniques set forth in Element C. To the extent that it is feasible to do so without compromising student confidentiality rights, this data will be displayed on both a school-wide basis and disaggregated by appropriate racial and/or ethnic categories and socio-economic categories;
- A summary of significant policies or decisions established by Sol Aureus College Preparatory's Board;
- Data indicating the level of parental involvement with Sol Aureus College Preparatory, as well as the results of any surveys of parental and student satisfaction;
- Data demonstrating Sol Aureus College Preparatory's success in serving an educationally underserved and racially and ethnically diverse student population;
- A summary of Sol Aureus College Preparatory's admission practices and experience, including the number of students enrolled, the number on waiting lists, and the number expelled or suspended; and
- An analysis of the resolution of any disputes or complaints.

ELEMENT J: STUDENT DISCIPLINE, PUPIL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Sol Aureus College Preparatory. While students need a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers and proper materials, they must also have a secure learning environment in which they feel safe. Sol Aureus will adhere to the Commitment to Excellence as a guideline for in-class disciplinary action, suspension or expulsion of students (see Parent Student Handbook)

All Sol Aureus students are required to wear the Sol Aureus uniform every day. The uniform consists of a variety of Sol Aureus shirts, available for sale at cost from the school. Parents expressing an inability to purchase the uniform are offered the uniform in installments or at no charge for a minimum number of shirts and pants. Students can also wear plain white, grey, or blue collared sport shirts OR plain white or grey t-shirts. Clear and constant reinforcement of student standards – as defined by the student Commitment to Excellence “contract” and the Parent/Student Handbook – help to create the kind of safe learning environment needed by many of the students the school serves.. By starting each school year early (before Labor Day) students are acculturated to these values and expectations prior to the onset of the traditional academic year. By doing so, Sol Aureus creates a school environment in which inappropriate behavior is recognized by teachers, parents and students as harmful to the interests of all and, therefore, not acceptable. These expectations are presented and reinforced consistently.

Code of Conduct for S.A.C. Prep Students:

Commitment to the S.A.C. Prep Mission:

- To prepare all students with the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to compete and be successful in college.

Adherence to the S.A.C. Prep Values

- Preparation
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Community
- Excellence

Adherence to the **Commitment to Excellence Form** including:

- Be on-task at **all** times during class and display your SOL (Sit up straight, On task and track the speaker, and Listen).
- Be organized and prepared for **all** classes. All students should bring at least 4 sharpened pencils with erasers, and paper in their notebooks. Work should always be completed and presented neatly. The S.A.C. Prep Heading should be used on all papers. Finally, all papers should be kept neatly in binders and folders with the proper heading (Assignment title on Left Margin and name, date, & “Be prepared.” on the Right Margin).
- Respond appropriately to all questions.
- Conduct oneself in an orderly manner, demonstrating respect to the educational mission while at S.A.C. Prep or at a S.A.C. Prep function.
- Do the right thing without being told.

The school seeks to remedy misconduct, in appropriate cases, by allowing for a variety of in-house disciplinary actions that could include:

- Additional assignments to be completed at home and/or at school;
- Detention after school;
- Mandatory homework study hall after school;
- Loss of incentives and school trips; and
- Student Plans, where a plan is created to help the student by developing clear goals, clear measures for how their efforts in meeting the goals will be evaluated, and what the consequences will be if the goals are not met as well as the incentives to be received if met. These plans are created with the input from both the student and the parent(s), and in some cases the school counselor. These plans are designed for both academic and behavioral intervention – as “failure” in either area can lead to discipline problems out of student frustration or unclear expectations by teachers or parents/guardians.

By creating the following standards and procedures for suspensions and expulsions, Sol Aureus College Preparatory ensures that no student presents a danger to people or property, disrupts school activities, or threatens campus peace, safety or security.

TRANSFERS

Students will be able to withdraw from S.A.C. Prep at any point in time and return to their local zoned public school or any other school to which they can gain admissions.

SUSPENSIONS

S.A.C. Prep adheres to the S.A.C. Prep Commitment To Excellence Form as a guideline for in-class disciplinary action, suspension, or expulsion of students. In-class disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- Time Outs – sitting away from the group or being sent to another classroom for short time.
- Referrals – Students are sent to the Assistant Principal or Principal to determine consequences along with a phone call to parents/guardians.
- In-School Suspension – Students spending the day in the office to do work or spending the day in the Assistant Principal's classroom.

In addition, students may be subject to any of the disciplinary actions listed below if it is determined that they committed any of the infractions listed below and/or listed in the S.A.C. Prep Commitment To Excellence Form:

"Suspensions" shall refer to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of five or fewer days.

"Expulsions" shall refer to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons.

Suspensions

A student who is determined to have broken the S.A.C. Prep Commitment To Excellence Form or has committed any of the infractions listed below shall be subject minimally to a suspension, unless the School Leader determines that an exception should be made based on the individual circumstances of the incident and the student's disciplinary record. Depending upon the severity of the infraction, the student may be subject to expulsion or referral to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Disciplinary Infractions include the following:

- Attempt to assault any student or staff member.
- Vandalize school property causing minor damage.
- Endanger the physical safety of another by the use or force of threats of force, which reasonably places the victim in fear of imminent bodily injury.
- Engage in conduct, which disrupts school or classroom activity, or endanger or threaten to endanger the health, safety, welfare, or morals of others.
- Engage in insubordination.
- Fail to complete assignments, carry out directions, or comply with disciplinary sanctions.

- Cheat on quizzes, exams, or commit plagiarism.
- Use forged notes or excuses.
- Steal, or attempt to steal, or possess property known by the student to be stolen.
- Commit extortion.
- Engage in gambling.
- Trespass on school property.
- Abuse school property or equipment.
- Use obscene or abusive language or gestures.
- Engage in acts of verbal or physical sexual harassment.
- Make a false bomb threat or pull a false emergency alarm.
- Possess tobacco or alcohol.
- Possess pagers, beepers, or portable/cellular telephones not being used for Instructional purposes.
- Wear inappropriate, insufficient, or disruptive clothing or attire, or violate the KIPP Student Dress Code.
- Refuse to identify him/herself to school personnel.
- Commit any other act which school officials reasonably conclude disrupts the learning environment of the school.
- Repeatedly commit minor behavioral infractions which, in aggregate, may be considered an infraction' subject to formal disciplinary action.

Procedures for Suspension

The School Leader may impose a suspension. Before imposing a suspension, the School Leader shall verbally inform the student of the suspension, the reason for it, and whether it will be served in school or out of school. The student shall be given an opportunity to deny or explain charges. The School Leader also shall immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing that the student has been suspended from school. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of the suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident, or incidents, which resulted in the suspension and shall offer the opportunity for an informal conference with the School Leader (within 24 hours or the next business day if on a weekend or after a holiday). At the parents request, notification can be translated into the dominant language spoken by the parent(s) or guardian(s) and arrangements can be made for an interpreter to be present for informal conferences in the dominant language of the parent(s) of guardian(s).

EXPULSION

Expulsions

A student who is determined to have committed any of the infractions listed below shall be subject to expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement authorities..

Disciplinary infractions include the following:

- Possess, use, attempt to use, or transfer of any firearm, knife, razor blade, explosive, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student in school.*
- Commit, or attempt to commit arson on school property.
- Possess, sell, distribute or use any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana on school property or at school-sponsored events.
- Assault any other student or staff member.
- Intentionally causes physical injury to another person, except when student's actions are reasonably necessary to protect him or herself from injury. Vandalize school property causing major damage.
- Commit any act that school officials reasonably conclude warrants an expulsion.

If a child is being considered for expulsion from S.A.C. Prep, the Principal shall provide written notice to the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) that the student is being considered for expulsion. Such notice also shall set a time and place for an informal conference with the Principal and shall inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to be accompanied by an individual of their choice. Except for those items that, under state and federal law, require immediate expulsion, the Principal may not expel a student unless a prior written and verbal warning for expulsion has been issued to both the student and his/her parent or guardian. In that "final warning", documentation must appear which clearly demonstrates which rules in the S.A.C. Prep Parent/Student Handbook have been violated or any infractions listed and stated in Education code Section 48900 et seq. and why these violations warrant expulsion if continued. If, following the informal conference, the Principal maintains that the student should be expelled, the Principal shall issue a recommendation of expulsion to an impartial hearing officer. The recommendation would include a description of the behavior and/or academic problems indicative of the need for expulsion, a description of the alternatives explored, and prior action taken to resolve the problem. The impartial hearing officer could conduct a confidential hearing at the parent's request. An appeal of the hearing officer's decision could be heard by the S.A.C. Prep Board of Directors. The parents, should they so choose to do so, can also present materials to the Board. The initial expulsion proceedings – including the investigation by an impartial hearing officer – should occur within 30 school days of the initial formal recommendation by the Principal.

Alternate Instruction

Students who are suspended during the expulsion process will be provided with alternative instruction. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family for the delivery of services, pick-up/delivery of work, and the making up of any missed assignments and classroom instructional support.

Due Process Procedures

Students with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other students, and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses listed above. If a student with disabilities has an IEP that includes disciplinary guidelines, then that student will be disciplined according to those guidelines as required by IDEA. Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the standard school policy listed above. A manifest determination meeting will be scheduled for students with an IEP to determine if any of the disciplinary infractions the student is cited for are the result of their identified learning difference – as described in their IEP.

Student Discipline and IDEA

Sol Aureus College Preparatory will comply with all federal laws regarding student discipline for children with disabilities and will stay apprised of any developments in the IDEA legislation. If a student with disabilities has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that includes disciplinary guidelines, that student will be disciplined according to these guidelines.

ELEMENT K: RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Sol Aureus College Preparatory participates in the federal Social Security system and offers staff the option of enrolling in a 403(b) plan with TIAA-CREF.

Sol Aureus College Preparatory retains the option for its board to elect to participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) and/or Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) in the future should it find that participation enables the school to attract and retain higher quality staff. If the school elects to have its teachers participate in the STRS system in the future, then all of the teachers will do so. If Sol Aureus should opt to participate in the STRS or PERS systems, the parties will cooperate as necessary to forward any required payroll deductions and related data. Sol Aureus shall pay the Sacramento City Unified School District the actual costs for the provision of such services.

ELEMENT L: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

A student who chooses not to attend Sol Aureus College Preparatory may choose to attend either the local public school in the student's attendance zone, other District schools, or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of Sacramento City Unified School District.

ELEMENT M: DESCRIPTION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

ORGANIZED RESERVE FORCES

Any person who is a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States will be granted, in accordance with Section 59 of Chapter 33 of the General Laws, a leave of absence, without loss of pay, during the time of his/her annual tour of duty, provided that such leave does not exceed 17 days.

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 defines four types of leave categories during which an employee is entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any period of twelve consecutive months:

- The birth of an employee's child
- A child is placed with the employee for adoption or foster care
- The employee's spouse, child or parent has a serious health condition
- The employee has a serious health condition that prevents performance of job functions

Staff members must apply for the leave and should notify the Principal as soon as possible. During the leave, benefits will remain in effect. Upon return from FMLA leave, S.A.C. Prep will make every effort to place the employee in his/her original or equivalent position.

Personnel Records

Sol Aureus College Preparatory maintains a personnel record for each employee containing work related records. These files are confidential and are open only to the employee and the Principal.

It is the employee's responsibility to supply Sol Aureus College Preparatory with accurate information. Please inform the Principal should your personal information change in any of the following areas: NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, MARITAL STATUS, NAMES OF DEPENDENTS, AND PERSON TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. It is your responsibility to inform any service provider such as the insurance companies of any changes.

Grievance Procedure

During the day-to-day operation of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, misunderstandings and problems that require attention may arise. Although Sol Aureus College Preparatory has a formal grievance procedure to ensure equitable resolution of serious complaints, it is expected that most problems will be settled through informal discussions among the individuals involved.

Should you feel that the problem cannot be resolved informally, or for any other reason, you should use the following grievance procedure:

1. If, for any reason, a problem cannot be resolved informally, you may discuss it with the Principal. You are encouraged but not required to write up the events or situation in question and bring that to your meeting.

2. If you are unable to reach a satisfactory solution in discussion with the Principal, you may submit a written statement to the Board of Directors. After a careful inquiry, the Board will communicate its decision concerning the matter directly to you.

As an employee, you are encouraged to take advantage of the Sol Aureus College Preparatory formal grievance procedure for issues that cannot be resolved informally, without fear of reprisal as the result of exercising this option.

HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

Sol Aureus College Preparatory brings together a diverse group of individuals. It is guided by the principle that respect and consideration for all individuals is foremost in all school activities. It is unlawful to discriminate against any individual based on race, color, religion, sex, nationality, sexual orientation, age or handicap status. S.A.C. Prep is not only obligated to uphold the law concerning equal opportunity but regards the spirit of these laws to be the very core of its values. S.A.C. Prep wishes to stress that it is the responsibility of every member of the S.A.C. Prep community to observe and uphold the principles of equal opportunity as they affect staff, faculty and students in all aspects of school life. It is the responsibility of every member of the S.A.C. Prep community to actively promote appropriate workplace behavior. Any form of coercion or harassment that insults the dignity of others or impedes their freedom to work and learn will not be tolerated. Any such form of coercion or harassment will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including, discharge.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is any form of uninvited and unwanted physical or verbal behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education or employment. Examples of inappropriate behavior include:

- Verbal or physical abuse or threats
- Sexual harassment
- Obscene or demeaning remarks, jokes, or insults
- Uninvited pressure to participate in illegal activities
- Public display of explicitly offensive or demeaning materials
- Comments or actions demeaning to race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, or sexual orientation
- False accusations of harassment
- Retaliation toward someone making a complaint about harassment

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can be a form of sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title IX Education Amendments of 1972. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a person's employment or advancement or participation in a school activity
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person's work or academic performance, or intimidating or humiliating a person

Creating a harassment-free environment requires the diligent effort of our community. We must continually improve our practices.

Response to Harassment

Sol Aureus College Preparatory is committed to equitable and swift resolution of harassment issues. Any student or employee experiencing harassment should follow any or all of these measures:

1. Let the offender know you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Do not apologize.
2. If you are not comfortable confronting the offender alone, ask a friend to accompany you, or write a letter to the offender, keeping a copy.
3. Make a record of when, where, and how you were mistreated; include witnesses (if any), direct quotations, and other evidence.
4. Students should notify the Principal, or if they are uncomfortable doing so, they should speak with another adult.
5. If you are an adult, notify the Principal or any member of the Board of Directors.

As soon as possible, the adult notified will report to the Board of Directors and Principal. The Director or Board will notify the authorities, if necessary. The Director of Board will appoint a small group to investigate the matter in a swift and equitable manner. The group will bring a recommendation to the Board. The Board or Principal will communicate the final decision directly to the parties involved.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL

S.A.C. Prep values a productive and mutually satisfactory employment relationship with each employee. However, both the employees and S.A.C. Prep reserve the right to terminate the working relationship at will, without notice.

Terminations occur in all organizations, and the usual reasons for termination are as follows:

- **RESIGNATION:** Employment termination initiated by an employee who chooses to leave voluntarily. In the case of resignation, the employee is requested to give as much notice as possible, in accordance with the Sol Aureus College Preparatory Employee Contract.
- **DISCHARGE:** Employment termination initiated by Sol Aureus College Preparatory for disciplinary or performance reasons. If you violate a basic rule or demonstrate gross misconduct, Sol Aureus College Preparatory reserves the right of immediate discharge without warning.
- **MEDICAL TERMINATION:** Employment termination initiated by Sol Aureus College Preparatory or the employee when an employee is unable to continue work due to health reasons.

The Principal will schedule a wrap-up meeting for terminating employees in order to discuss taxation, benefit issues and employee rights.

**ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS, OVERSIGHT,
REPORTING AND RENEWAL**

The following provisions are intended to define a mechanism for: (a) the resolution of any disputes within California, within Sol Aureus College Preparatory, or between California and Sol Aureus College Preparatory pursuant to their policies; (b) ensuring the high operational standards of Sol Aureus College Preparatory while minimizing the oversight burdens on Sacramento City Unified School District; and (c) the efficient and effective resolution of any concerns regarding California or Sol Aureus College Preparatory. With respect to each of these procedures, it is California's intention that all public commentary be withheld pending full resolution.

DISPUTES

***Disputes Between Sol Aureus College Preparatory &
Sacramento City Unified School District***

Any controversy, claim or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement shall be handled first through an informal process in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

- 1) Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement, of the breach thereof, must be submitted in writing ("Written Notification"). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the dispute. The Written Notification may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such noticed if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail. Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To Sol Aureus College Preparatory: Sol Aureus College Preparatory
7485 Rush River Dr.
Suite 710, PMB 121
Sacramento, CA 95831
Attn: Alton B. Nelson, Jr.

To SCUSD Charter Oversight Staff Member: Chiem-Seng Yaangh
Sacramento City Unified
School District
5735 47th Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95824

- 2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss and resolve the controversy, claim, or dispute at issue (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon the date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

- 3) If the initial written complaint, response, and conference procedure does not resolve the dispute mediation will only take place upon *mutual* agreement of the District and Sol Aureus College Preparatory.

ELEMENT O: LABOR RELATIONS

Sol Aureus College Preparatory shall be deemed the exclusive and independent public school employer of the employees of Sol Aureus College Preparatory for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act.

ELEMENT P: SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

In the event of closure or dissolution of Sol Aureus College Preparatory, the Board of Directors shall delegate to the School Leader the responsibility to manage the dissolution process. This process shall include:

- In addition to parents of Sol Aureus students, the Sacramento City Unified School District, Sacramento County Office of Education, and California Department of Education, and the Federal government (through the CDE or SCOE depending on the source of how federal funds were disbursed to the school) would all be notified immediately of the school's closure and effective last day of operations in writing and via phone call. At this time, agents from Sol Aureus will confirm any protocols or expectations each agency has with regard to procedures for closure in addition to any procedures laid out in the Education Code. The notification in writing will include a list of students, their statewide ID number, and their District of Residence.
- A final audit to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the school that will be conducted by an independent auditing firm, likely one that has performed an audit of Sol Aureus College Preparatory previously. The expectation would be that the audit would be completed within 6 months or by December 15th (whichever date comes first) of the closing of the financials for the fiscal year in which the school last operated and was closed. The audit will include information regarding all of the elements in audits conducted during regular operations such as a Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Inventory of Assets, Aged Payables, and Accounts Receivable. The audit will also delineate public funding sources, private funding sources, restricted revenue and unrestricted revenue.
- Funds – restricted and unrestricted – will be returned to their funding sources along with an itemized account for any monies spent or assets purchased. In the case of private sources of funding, the school will solicit recommendations as to what to do with any assets purchased with grant funds for instance. Final reporting of the grants use will be the formal was this information is communicated to the source of funding.
- Retirement systems (TIAA-CREF) that employees participate in would also be notified in the event of a school closure.
- Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.33, the school will provide for the transfer and maintenance of personnel records, pupil records, transcripts, all state assessment records, and all special education records in accordance with the applicable law, completion and filing of any required annual reports
- Parents of children enrolled in the school would be notified both in writing, over the phone, and in a final meeting if possible to alert parents of the reasons for the closure (if it does not involve any legal entanglements that the school might be involved in that would preclude a more thorough explanation). At this time, information would be provided to the effect of a) reason for closure, b) next steps in supporting parents to transfer their children to other schools, 3) alerting them of plans that might already be under way that would allow them to transfer to other area charter schools and their local neighborhood schools. The school would have contacted a variety of schools on their behalf, notifying them of the closure of Sol Aureus and requesting information on how to expedite transferring students to their new schools.
- Additionally, a list of enrolled students will be sent to the Sacramento City Unified School District as well as a final list of where the students transferred to.

- Sol Aureus College Preparatory shall follow existing protocol of having request for transcripts in writing from the new school. Sol Aureus will work to expedite this process as soon as possible.
- Sol Aureus will insure that there is sufficient funding for closure activity if needed.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Financial Plan and District Impact Statement

Sol Aureus College Preparatory operates a sound financial school. Please refer to the five-year budget. This section lists the planning assumptions for those components and the accompanying worksheets.

The operation of the school is designed to be self-sufficient. However, the school will discuss with SCUSD various operational services that they could provide to the school, including the use of or funding for the facility.

Finances

Sol Aureus College Preparatory's funding sources are diverse. The per pupil payments from local and state sources and federal school funding programs are combined with other grants and donations. Sol Aureus has also been successful with getting local businesses and organizations to donate goods and services as in-kind donations as well as make financial contributions.

The School Leader of Sol Aureus submits an annual budget to the Sol Aureus College Preparatory Board of Directors during the spring of each year. Sol Aureus College Preparatory's annual fiscal period runs from July 1 through June 30. The Board of Directors, as per Sol Aureus By-Laws, must approve the annual budget by June 30 of each fiscal year.

The Financial Services consultant, Utonomy, Inc., under the direction of the School Leader, tracks all revenue and expenses using a financial accounting software package. With the help of the Director of Operations and a consultant with financial record keeping experience, the School Leader maintains the financial records and prepares a financial report for every meeting of the Sol Aureus Board of Directors and Finance Committee of the Sol Aureus Board of Directors. The School Leader and the Treasurer of the Board of Directors has authorization to sign all school checks, with items over \$10,000 requiring both signatures.

Net Assets

The Net Assets consists mainly of classroom furniture, office furniture, technology and classroom equipment (including computers), and miscellaneous marketing materials. Sol Aureus does not lay claim to any capital equipment in excess of \$10,000, including vehicles or real estate at this time.

Estimated Revenues

Sol Aureus’s projected ADA is based upon a student enrollment of 20-25 students per classroom and no more than 60 or so students per grade level. The targeted full enrollment is between 80 and 210 students.

Fund Raising

Sol Aureus has been very successful raising money from both public and private sources (see list below). Sol Aureus conducts extensive fund raising efforts during the year. Fund development includes applying for foundation grants and corporate sponsorships, as well as parent and student fundraisers. The annual goal of this campaign will be to generate additional operating funds to offset the costs of the Saturday lunches, school supplies and instructional materials for the extra classroom time, and out-of-state field trips. The annual fund development goal typically reflects 10% of the total public monies awarded the school through ADA.

Source	Award	Amount
Board Contributions	Board Giving	\$12,000
Faculty, Staff, and Parents	Community Investment	\$1,000
Private & Corporate Grants	Foundations & Corporations	\$40,000
Private Contributions	Individual Giving	\$5,000
Federal and State CDE	Entitlements & NCLB	\$50,000

Estimated Expenses

The cost structure for Sol Aureus is based recent history and historical and comparative analysis providing an added level of certainty in the budget development process. In addition to base salaries, the budget includes stipends for extended time in school. The school maintains a lean administrative staff and low overhead to funnel more funds to direct instructional materials.

Financial Planning Assumptions

Sol Aureus College Preparatory operates independently from SCUSD and is directly funded from the State of California, Office of Education. The school receives full and equitable funding pursuant to the Charter School Funding Model for all funds included in the model.

- The school will continue to operate for Grades 5th-8th Grade with between 100-160 students. It is expected that more than 50% of the students will qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program as historically the number of students qualifying has been over 60%.
- The school employs full time employees consisting of a minimum of five teachers, an administrative assistant, the School Leader, a Dir. of Operations and Development, and various part-time staff for counseling, coaching, meal service, and extracurriculars.
- The school receives revenues from the following sources: state ADA money and eligibility requirements, a categorical block grant, economic impact aid, and state lottery funds. The school will apply directly for funds not included in the charter school categorical block grant that are deemed eligible to Charter Schools, such as federal entitlement monies, staff development, deferred maintenance, and the After School Learning and the Safe Neighborhood Partnership Program.
- Pursuant to section 15417 of Chapter 14 of Division 1 of Title 5, for programs which the school cannot apply for directly and which are not included in the categorical block grant, Sol Aureus College Preparatory will engage SCUSD in securing its equitable share, based on its student population and eligibility of program funds. These funds include, but are not limited to, integration, transportation, forest preserve, sales and use taxes, parcel taxes, ad valorem taxes, and property taxes. Per section 47635 (a) of the California Education Code, SCUSD will transfer the appropriate percentage of funding in lieu of the local property taxes to the charter school by the 15th of the month.
- The budget worksheet lists the assumptions that are in line with state and federal guidelines. The expenditures reflect the school design plan and prevailing market costs for payroll costs including tax, retirement, and insurance costs. The estimates are based on SCUSD published information and successful operation of Sol Aureus for years 2003-2008.
- This long-term analysis includes inflation assumptions of 2% for revenues, 3% for expenditures, and 5% for salaries.
- Sol Aureus assumes that other expenditures will increase as the number of students grows and the school's facilities expand.

District Impacts of Sol Aureus College Preparatory

Sol Aureus College Preparatory will minimize its impact on the District. The following impacts are restated here for clarity.

1. Enrollment

Sol Aureus College Preparatory will recruit and enroll approximately between 100-140 students during the 2008-09 school year, 5th-8th grade classes would ideally have no more than 27 students per class. Based on enrollment patterns through the first five years, The school expects that the majority of students will reside within SCUSD (over 80%) with the remaining 5% to 20% residing out of SCUSD district boundaries.

2. District Services

Sol Aureus College Preparatory will continue to work with SCUSD to discuss maintaining any existing SCUSD services and the terms and conditions of the provision of such services. All such services would be sought on a fee-for-service basis. If SCUSD is unable to provide any such services, or if Sol Aureus chooses not to purchase any services from the District, the school will continue to operate and will not be hampered in meeting the goals and objectives of this charter.

3. Financial benefits

A supervisory fee of up to 1% of public funds, excluding funds secured by the charter school on its own behalf and restricted funds designated solely for specific purposes, is eligible for collection by SCUSD for actual costs of oversight. The District also benefits from fees in being the fiscal agent and oversight authority of the federal ASES grant to S.A.C. Prep. Lastly, S.A.C. Prep procures food services from SCUSD Nutrition Services.

4. Facilities

The future facility needs will be addressed by a facilities use agreement between the District and Sol Aureus. Sol Aureus will have one facility located within the District boundaries.

5. Special Education

The school will seek to operate as a public school within SCUSD for special education purposes remaining a member of the SCUSD SELPA.

6. Legal Structure

Sol Aureus is an independent, non-profit corporation registered in the State of California with a federally designated tax-exempt identification number. Sol Aureus does not expect the District to assume any debt on behalf of the school.

7. Liability and Indemnity

The school will have in force its own liability insurance and hold harmless and indemnify SCUSD from all liabilities. The school and the District will work together to ensure that, as a term of the operational MOU, Sol Aureus will insure that all insurance coverage meets the District's criteria for sufficient coverage. The school currently has insurance coverage in all the required areas including a \$4,000,000 umbrella coverage policy.

8. Supplies and Equipment

The school will be responsible for all supplies and equipment that it purchases and, in the event of loss of fire, disaster, or theft, the District shall have no responsibility for such items. Prior to the start of Sol Aureus, any items of supplies or equipment rented by the school from the District shall be protected by fire, disaster and theft insurance satisfactory to the District and will provide certification proof thereof. Furthermore, Sol Aureus provides that the District shall have no responsibility for losses of student property for any reason whatsoever and shall hold the District fully harmless from any such losses.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS PLAN

Sol Aureus has successfully operated for the past 7 ½ years. In this time it has had seven independently conducted “clean” audits with no major findings. The School Leader has worked with on-site staff and consultants to insure proper financial accounting procedures, financial planning and reporting systems, budgets, producing monthly financial reports and designing a policy of internal controls to ensure fiscal responsibility. The School Leader and the Sol Aureus Board have also effectively developed other policies and procedures including employee benefits, compensation, evaluations, dispute resolution, disciplinary actions, student information systems, and parental involvement.

Systems for Managing Cash Flow, Purchasing, Payroll, and Audits

Sol Aureus has successfully established strict policies governing internal controls. These policies will ensure that the internal control mechanisms address legal compliance, conflicts of interest, signature authorities, government access to records, accounting procedures, cash management, budget development, financial reporting, property management and procurement.

Sol Aureus, with its Board of Directors, has adopted by-laws regarding the signing of checks. These by-laws state that the Treasurer of the Board will co-sign all bills, notes, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, and checks of the Corporation in any amount over \$10,000. The School Leader or staff member under guidance from a staff member or consultant prepares a financial statement for the Board of Directors at each regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board formally approves any expenditures for services in excess of \$10,000.

Attendance Accounting

The school will report attendance requirements to SCUSD in a format acceptable to SCUSD, the County and the State. Required reports regarding daily attendance will be completed and submitted to the requesting agencies.

Tools Used for Tracking and Reporting Financial Matters

Sol Aureus use a QuickBooks accounting software package to aid in preparing for monthly financial reports and end-of-year audits. This computer system is in parallel with the day-to-day record keeping that Sol Aureus uses through traditional paper check register and bill-filing systems. The Financial Management consultant and Finance Committee of the Board of Directors works with the School Leader to prepare financial reports (a Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and Statement of Cash Flows) in preparation for monthly Board meetings.

Sol Aureus has purchased a school database software package called Principle Data Systems to manage student data. The system has proven to be very robust allowing the staff to integrate student contact and enrollment status information, grades, and future financial management capabilities. The portal, web-based system also allows

parent to have access to their child's grades in each class 24 hours a day on the internet through the portal page.

Sol Aureus will work with an accountant to prepare regular financial reports according to GAAP and will submit them to SCUSD on a regular basis. The school will submit two interim reports and one final report each fiscal year.

Purchasing

Sol Aureus's largest annual expense is payroll. After payroll, various services through SCUSD are the next biggest expense for facilities, food services, special education encroachment and oversight fees. Sol Aureus will continue to contract for food service through SCUSD or through a private company – depending on the needs of the school and the capacity of the facility. With respect to other expenses, the School Leader, Executive Assistant, and on occasion, board members (in the case of identifying bids from competing audit firms), are responsible for soliciting bids from various vendors for larger services or jobs. Accurate records of vendors are maintained and used regularly for basic office supplies. Vendor contracts in excess of \$10,000 require a second signature of the Treasurer of the Board of Directors or Board Chair.

Payroll

Payroll expenses are approximately half of Sol Aureus's total expenses. Sol Aureus uses ADP for payroll services: tax withholdings and other benefit expenses from paychecks, filing the relevant returns with taxing authorities, and producing end-of-year income tax forms for employees.

Budget Allocation and Vendor Selection

The Board of Directors is responsible for approving annual budgets, with substantial input from the School Leader. The School Leader develops the budget proposals and has the latitude in determining vendor selection and how funds are best used within budget categories. The Board of Directors is responsible for long-range financial and facilities planning. The Board of Directors intends works with an outside service provider to for bookkeeping services and to ensure compliance with state financial accounting procedures.

Audits

Sol Aureus has conducted and completed seven annual independent financial audits through with no significant findings, penalties, or recommendations. Gilbert & Associates completed the first five engagements. Beginning in the 2008-09 fiscal year, Mann Urrutia Nelson has been the audit firm utilized for the audit. Both Gilbert and Mann Urrutia have charter school and non-profit audit experience. The school maintains a master schedule of items needed in preparation of the interim audit as well as the end-of-year audit.

Potential Users of Financial Information

Financial statements such as a Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and Statement of Cash Flow will be prepared by the Director of Operations or consultant with the School Leader. Financial statements will be used by the independent auditors who Sol Aureus hires each year. The school also expects the financial statements to be requested by such institutional sources of financing as Sol Aureus may require, including commercial banks and issuers of bonds. The financial statements will also be available for review as desired by any of the school's officers, managers, or Board Members who want to assess the school's financial condition. In addition, Board Members will use the financial statements to confirm existing policies or to create new policies. Finally, Sol Aureus will submit its annual audited financial statement to the appropriate authorities within both SCUSD and the California State Board of Education.

Transportation Services

Sol Aureus currently does not provide for transportation for students from home to school or school to home except in order to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). In the near future, S.A.C. Prep has explored providing transportation to students through a bus company. Those costs are estimated in the 5 year Budget. Transportation for extracurricular activities, such as field trips, will be contracted with either SCUSD or a licensed contractor.

Food Services

Sol Aureus will contract for food services with Sacramento City Unified School District or a private company. Sol Aureus will consider the District for services as much as possible but will contract with private vendors where appropriate. Eligible students will be provided meals for free or at a reduced rate in accordance with federal and state nutritional guidelines. It is projected that 60% or more of Sol Aureus's students will be eligible for this program, and all eligible students will be included in SCUSD's reported student counts.

Insurance Coverage

Insurance coverage (Appendix M) has been provided by ISU Lovering Insurance Services, L.L.P. Budget estimates are based on actual costs through the first five years of operation.

Role of Authorizing Agency

The Sacramento City Unified School District has the right to monitor Sol Aureus College Preparatory through site visits and reviews of reports. Sol Aureus will annually set aside 1% of its public funds to go to the District for oversight fees.

Facility

The future facility needs will be addressed by a facilities use agreement between the District and Sol Aureus. Sol Aureus will have one facility located within the District boundaries.