



We engage children in an inspiring, challenging, and civically active educational experience that embraces learning through the arts.

Building the Future of LFCSA

Dear LFCSA Family,

This is an exciting time for our wonderful little school. Last year we began conversations with families about expanding, and the Middle School Visit team saw innovative schools as far north as Hayward, and as far south as San Diego. The team came back with a synthesis of wishes for what the LFCSA Middle School could be. From that work, the vision for the school was born.

The time to implement the vision is upon us, and we held meetings last week and this week to share the updates on progress. For those who were not able to attend the meetings, this message serves to update everyone about the charter petition and facility needs.

Items in this e-blast:

- Rationale
- Submitting Charter Petitions
- Having 2 locations
- Timeline & Call for support

Rationale

Back in 2012, a petition for expansion to middle school was submitted to the LAUSD Board, and our Board of Directors decided to pause the expansion due to changes in leadership, and wanting to ensure that the elementary school was strengthened. The school is now in a better

place with respect to instruction, finances, operations, and governance, and verified by the LAUSD through their annual oversight visits.

In addition, with respect to our building, we moved in during the economic downturn, and our lease payments are about half the current market rate. Although the school has an automatic renewal of its lease for an additional 10 years, in 2019, we anticipate our lease agreement to nearly double from \$400,000 to over \$700,000.

Thus, the move to expand both grows the dream of expanding our school, and fiscally supports our ability to continue operating in our building, without impacting our instructional program.

Submitting 2 Charter Petitions for LAUSD Approval

Yes, two petitions will be submitted.

As a charter, we have two options. We can apply, via a material revision to our charter, to become a TK-8 school, and remain a 1-school District. The other option is to submit a new separate 6-8 petition, and we become a 2-school District.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both, and we have been preparing both, so that we keep all of our options on the table, given the political climate at the LAUSD Board.

The downside of the material revision is that there is no statutory deadline for it to be presented to the LAUSD Board, and the District can opt to take its time to review it. With a new separate 6-8 petition, although it creates a separate entity, it has a rigid timeline by which the LAUSD Board must decide on whether to approve or deny. The new petition also has appeal rights, so that we may request to be authorized by the County, or, if needed, by the State.

We are submitting the petitions next week, and I want to thank everyone for their patience and support in this process. This then starts the clock for our petitions to be reviewed. The new petition would most likely be brought to

the LAUSD Board at their January meeting.

We would be opening a 6th grade in 2018-19; adding one grade level each year. There would be three classes per grade level, with ~25 students each, and the scheduling of the day has both focused periods and large blocks of time for integration. We would be continuing with our interdisciplinary, arts integrated, project-based work.

Click [here to see a brochure](#) and [click here to a sample unit plan](#) for a trimester, and proposed schedule and content across the grades. Note the unit plan is a sample, and it will be even more flushed out with the team of teachers putting in their expert touches.

Having 2 Locations (Prop 39/Co-Location)

We have a Conditional Use Permit to be on our site. This was a rigor process with the city, and one of the criteria is that we cannot have more than 520 students on our campus. Thus, we need to open a second site as the organization increases its numbers.

There is a mechanism, which many charters utilize, which is to apply to use District facilities. You may have heard the terms for this: Prop 39 or co-locations. What we have applied for is to operate our lower grade students at a District site, as we feel our current building is better suited for the older grades. Plus, if the new petition is the one that ultimately gets approved, it would not be eligible to apply for Prop 39 until the following year.

For 2018-19 we would operate TK and K at the Prop 39 site, and the following year it would be TK, K, and 1st. The co-located site would be capped at 1st grade, and our private site would serve 2nd-8th. Each site would have a principal, and we are creating a shared model by which all administrators support both sites, so that curricular and operational integrity is maintained. We would also maintain specialist classes at both sites, and try to keep a high level of parity at both sites.

We have asked for co-location at schools that are either

close in distance and/or shortest by drive time.

We do understand that this impacts our current TK students, and families who may have TK students incoming in the future. For our current TK families, we will be evaluating our projections to see if we can accommodate those students whom are already on our current site. This will be better determined after the petitions have been submitted and we analyze numbers.

Timeline & Call for Support

In the next months, we may be calling on families to support advocacy efforts with the LAUSD Board to support the petition and our Prop 39 request. Below are significant benchmarks for us:

Next week:

Submit petitions to the District

January:

LAUSD Board hearing for petition approval

February/March:

Prop 39 location offer is made to LFCSA

March:

Lottery for middle school (possibly - we may not need to have a lottery)

May:

Prop 39 agreement is finalized

If you would like to sign up to join a middle school team, we need help in these areas: advocacy, operations, facilities, & PR. Please click [here to send an email](#) with the area that you're interested in helping with in the subject line.

In closing, LFCSA is a strong community, and this is a wonderful opportunity for us to undertake this challenge in support of each other. One aspect of our vision is to further impact the public education with the power of arts integrated, project-based, and civically engaged learning experiences, and extending to the middle school further achieves our vision. Thank you for your partnership in making this a reality.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lee

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