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Handout #3



EXCELLENCE

"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude." Colin Powell

Dr. Cindy Petersen

**GATEWAY
COMMUNITY
CHARTERS
BLUEPRINT FOR EXCELLENCE
2018-19**

Gateway Community Charters

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Joi Tikoi Gateway International School

Dr. Deborah Avalos Higher Learning Academy

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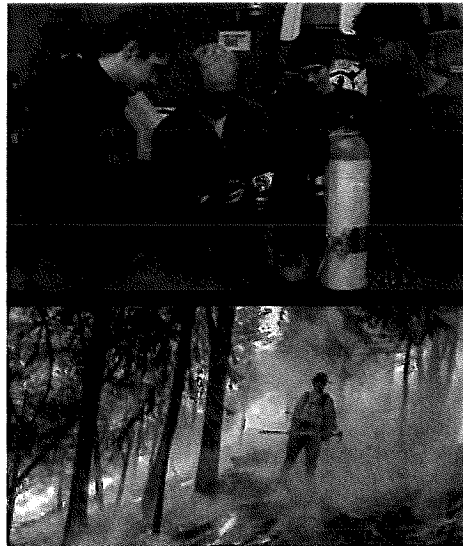
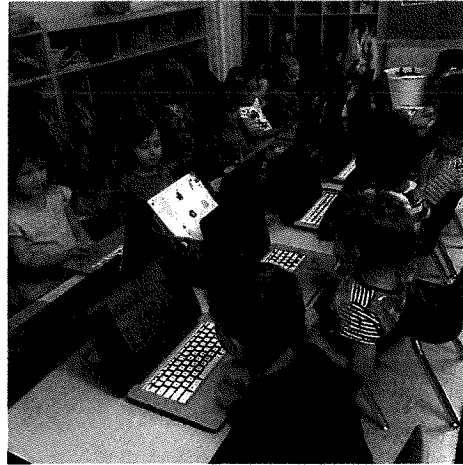
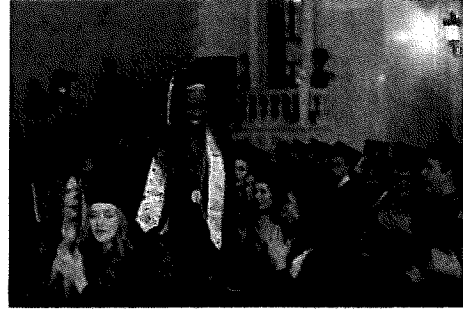
ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

As a charter management organization serving within five diverse school districts across two California counties, Gateway Community Charters creates opportunity for collaborative conversations and input on the direction of our organization and the implementation of its' vision and mission.

This document is a shared blueprint that outlines our work to ensure; a) that our students will be prepared to succeed in the world they live in now, and the one they will inhabit in the future and, b) that our organization retains its' focus on innovation, autonomy and sustainability.

A blueprint is a drawing, typically produced by designers, to specify a vision for successful execution in the real world. This blueprint has been designed and revised and adapted to include the voice of a variety of stakeholders. GCC staff and stakeholders have coalesced around a challenging shared vision for our students and our organization. We are committed to ensuring equitable access to high quality academic, social, and vocational learning – within a broad array of programmatic settings - so that students are prepared to excel in college, careers, and in life.

The purpose of this document is to make clear our words, our design, our intent and our plan to achieve excellence in this school year and beyond.



Gateway Community Charters

Quality School Choice a Gateway to the Future

Blueprint for Excellence 2018-19

#beBrave #BrighterTogether #IgnitePositiveChange

Letter from Superintendent

Dear GCC students, families, staff, supporters and community members,

On behalf of Gateway Community Charters I am pleased to present this *Blueprint for Excellence 2018-19*. This document is our Gateway Community Charters intent and plan to achieve excellence this school year and beyond.

The Blueprint for Excellence is a living document with input, revisions and additions made by multiple stakeholders including the GCC staff and cabinet, school site administration, our Community Business Advisory Council, GCC Foundation and the GCC Board. The Blueprint is designed to make clear the vision, mission, core values, priorities, goals and future plans of the organization. It is our bold desire, our calling and our focused intent to create a whole system of excellence, rather than episodic pockets of excellence.

We believe the Blueprint for Excellence documents a vision that is powerful, directed, and is meant to focus all stakeholders to the work of preparing our students for the world they live in now and the world they will inhabit in the future. We are committed to the use of data and metrics – qualitative, quantitative and anecdotal - to hold ourselves accountable for the success of our students.

As a Capturing Kids' Hearts organization we believe that strong positive relationships are the foundation for everything we do – from the classroom to the boardroom and out into the community.

This year and this work - and all of us together focused to serve our students and their needs – this is purposeful, meaningful and significant work.

I hope you are as excited as I am to be a part of the journey.

With heart,

Dr. Cindy Petersen

Introduction: Igniting Positive Change

Educators, parents, community and political stakeholders recognize the value of providing public school choice options, especially to those students who have historically been underserved. Gateway Community Charters (GCC) has been a cornerstone of Sacramento area public education, providing these options for over fifteen years. With nine charter schools, five authorizers and over 4,500 students, the GCC has demonstrated that it plays an important role in providing options for the diverse needs of youth in our region.

Gateway Community Charters continues to refine, improve and fulfill its' vision of creating quality school choice with an emphasis on serving vulnerable populations. As the GCC enters its sixteenth year, we are focused on our *'be brave'* mantra and our journey to excellence culture as we seek to *'Ignite Positive Change'*. We have recognized that our only way forward to excellence is together, and *'Brighter Together'* will be our rallying cry as we pursue coherence across our 9 schools and 19 physical locations.

Gateway Community Charters will seek to grow responsibly within its existing schools and facilities in order to reach building/site capacity. In addition to excellence in our nine charter schools, GCC will continue to expand efforts to increase our public charter school choice offerings and thus increase our impact on area youth. Specifically, GCC hopes to open three new charters in the next 5 to 7 years and grow enrollment to exceed 5,000 students by 2020.

Our people are truly the cornerstone of our service to the community. Gateway Community Charters currently has over 500 incredible staff members serving our students and families. The present and the future of the GCC is predicated on the administrators, teachers and site staff and their excellence. The GCC is committed to continuous improvement on each of our individual school sites as well as an organization– but more importantly we are committed to growing and developing our staff to reach their potential, as we know that it is the adults in the building that most significantly impact our student outcomes.

As our organization has grown, its' central office and infrastructure has, of necessity, grown. As we continue our journey, GCC continues to refine its business services, personnel services and other key central office functions to ensure optimal outcomes to support our schools in fiscally responsible ways.

The GCC and Our Schools

VISION:

A vision sets the direction of where we want to go and what we want to do as an organization.

Our GCC vision is to provide all students, regardless of circumstance, a safe, caring school choice with high academic and behavioral expectations where they can reach their fullest academic and social potential.

- ❖ Each of our schools has a unique vision:

Community Collaborative Charter School (CCCS):

The vision of CCCS is to establish a personalized setting, serving a full range of students, explicitly designed to cultivate their transition to successful post-secondary educational, vocational and personal endeavors.

Community Outreach Academy (COA ES and COA MS):

The vision of Community Outreach Academy is to continue successful implementation of a program that fosters high academic achievement in a safe, nurturing environment. Our vision is for faculty, staff and parents to work together to offer student the best educational experience possible. The program will retain the most highly qualified teachers as well as offer faculty opportunities to grow professionally, and offer students the highest quality of public education available.

Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC):

To prepare our students for the competitive global economy, EPIC will provide a safe learning environment that fosters student risk-taking, inquiry and independent thinking skills.

Futures High School (Futures):

Futures High School, working as a partnership between parents, administration, and faculty seeks to develop students to their fullest potential so they will have for themselves, a life filled with enriching opportunities. Futures provides students with a quality educational program focused on preparing students for success in a global society. We accomplish this by creating a supportive environment that is structured around the development of character development and 21st century skill. Programmatic choices

currently include Project Lead the Way, various Advanced Placement/Honors classes, and Service Learning. Using an integrated curriculum, students will be prepared to meet graduation requirements, successfully pursue higher education options, and be successful in their chosen career paths.

Gateway International School (GIS):

Gateway International School (GIS) will provide a safe learning environment where students are empowered to develop; international awareness, self-sufficiency, and a sense of pride in their academic and personal success.

Higher Learning Academy (HLA):

To prepare our students for the competitive global economy, Higher Learning Academy will provide a safe learning environment that fosters student risk-taking, inquiry and independent thinking skills.

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (3 charters: SAVA TRUSD, SAVA EGUSD, SAVA SCUSD):

SAVA's vision is to establish a personalized setting, serving a full range of students, designed to foster the transition of students to the world of work or post-secondary education. SAVA students have the opportunity to meet requirements for graduation with a high school diploma as well as meet the requirements for entry-level employment, apprenticeship programs, post-secondary career technical training or transition to two or four year colleges.

MISSION:

The mission is a declaration of the unique identify to which the organization aspires and its unique and specific purpose.

Gateway Community Charters, Inc. (GCC) is an independent non-profit agency that supports students, parents and the community through the conception, development, administration and governance of innovative, high quality, standards-based educational school choice options within the greater Sacramento region.

❖ Each of our schools has a unique mission:

Community Collaborative Charter School (CCCS):

It is the mission of CCCS to provide high quality curriculum, instructional support, and community and social resources to families and students in our community.

Community Outreach Academy (COA ES and COA MS):

Gateway Community Charters (GCC) and the Community Outreach Academy (COA) were founded with a commitment to develop the academic talents of its students, while nurturing their appreciation and understanding of their rich cultural heritage, and the place they take as citizens in our state and nation. In providing a multicultural education, including curriculum representing the student's language and literature of their heritage, delivered in a supportive environment, the faculty will develop the student's ability to apply lessons as they grow and maximize their individual, social, academic and personal development and contribute to our diverse community.

Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC):

All EPIC students will acquire knowledge, concepts, and skill to succeed in their choice of college and career in order to positively contribute to both their local and global communities.

Futures High School (Futures):

A dedicated and highly qualified faculty provides Futures High School students with an excellent, standards-based education that will prepare them for the rigor of the university and the competition of the workplace in a global environment. Our students are taught about the history and culture of their home countries, as well as the rich diversity and varied experiences of all who have come to the United States. Futures High School students take ownership of their education, are responsible in their behavior and virtuous in their character, make healthy choices in respect to their bodies and minds, and take pride in, and participate actively in all aspects of school life.

Gateway International School (GIS):

Our mission is to develop the whole child as a compassionate, life-long learner. Through inquiry, reflection and rigor, students will become globally aware and actively involved in their community and the world.

Higher Learning Academy (HLA):

All students at Higher Learning Academy will acquire knowledge, concepts, and skills to succeed in their choice of college and career in order to positively contribute to both their local and global communities.

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (Three charters: SAVA TRUSD, SAVA EGUSD, and SAVA SCUSD):

It is the mission of the Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (SAVA) to provide high quality curriculum, instructional support, and community and social resources to families and students in our community.

VALUES:

According to Patrick Lencioni, "Core values are the deeply ingrained principles that guide all of a company's actions; they serve as its cultural cornerstones."

Gateway Community Charters Core Values were arrived across multiple years and many stakeholder groups and are reviewed and reaffirmed by the administrators, the board and Gateway Community Charters annually. These Core Values drive our daily behaviors, decisions and actions and we honor and recognize staff who exhibit them on an ongoing and regular basis.

	Core Value	
S	Student-Focused	We make all of our decisions through the lens of what is best for our students, particularly in terms of safety, socio-emotional needs and academic outcomes.
E	Excellence	We relentlessly pursue excellence with a strategic focus on our vision, mission, priorities, goals, and outcomes.
R	Responsibility	We know that everything we do has an impact, therefore we act with intent and embody collective ownership.
V	Valuing People	In all of our actions, interactions and decision-making we seek to honor, recognize and invest in our stakeholders. We understand, acknowledge and live our Capturing Kid's Hearts culture throughout the organization.
I	Integrity	We are committed to a high level of ethical behavior and our daily actions and interactions are honest, transparent and consistent.
C	Collaboration	We create a culture that maximizes individual contribution while leveraging our collective intelligence through regular and ongoing systems of meaningful participation.
E	Empowerment	We provide opportunities for all stakeholders to learn, develop, grow and contribute to the GCC and its schools in meaningful ways.
	Service	We invest time, resources and energy in serving all stakeholders, while supporting a culture that values and practices service.

BELIEFS:

Beliefs are an expression of fundamental values, overriding convictions and inviolable principles.

We believe that all children can learn and we create opportunity through schools of choice that serve the educational needs of students focused particularly on vulnerable, un-served and underserved populations such as the disenfranchised, culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, homeless, parenting teens, working young adults, fifth year seniors, English language learners and more.

We believe in a compelling, different and vibrant future through the creation of shared purpose. This future is something that interests us, compels us, inspires us – it is something we work toward collaboratively and collectively – a magnificent and significant portrait of our bold desire to change lives and shape outcomes for our students and our world.

We believe in the power of enlisting other people in the dream, to shape the dream, to believe with us and to stay dedicated to the dream. We have an authentic desire to see people involved and enjoying this process of enlisting others to build this vision/ideal future together, partly because we understand that we support what we co create.

We believe Integrity is a process and we work tirelessly to create and ensure congruence between who we are, what we do, and how we do it. We believe in the empowerment of our stakeholders by providing connected autonomy, opportunity for input, resources, training, coaching and developing so that we can all succeed in carrying out our compelling vision. We believe in the power of reflection at all levels; observing, reviewing data, getting feedback, having powerful conversations and being open to change.

We believe that a foundation of organizational success is the commitment to build meaningful, productive relationships across and within our schools and our organization - with every student and every colleague.

***“We subscribe to the mind frame of excellence defined in multiple ways and for all.”
(Michael Fullan).***

PRIORITIES & GOALS:

An unrelenting focus and commitment to results that exceed our present capability/capacity.

Priorities for GCC Leadership, Cabinet and Board	
I.	Set a powerful, inspiring and unifying vision including current and future innovation and growth
II.	Align systems, accountability and resources to achieve excellence.
III.	Create a vibrant culture of connected autonomy and rich collaboration
IV.	Build strong and influential relationships in the community, districts, county, and state
V.	Provide and support robust data systems
VI.	Ensure fiscal solvency and deepen the effectiveness of operational functions in the central office

Priorities for GCC Schools
1. Support Student Learning and Academic Outcomes
2. Maximize Technology to Deliver and Enhance Instruction
3. Maintain a Safe, Nurturing and Healthy Environment
4. Build and Maintain Fiscal Integrity and Responsibility
5. Strengthen GCC, School, Family and Community Engagement
6. Recruit, Retain and Recognize Quality Staff

Priority 1 Goals: Support Student Learning and Academic Outcomes:

1A. GCC Schools will increase the level of student achievement for all students both overall and in significant subgroups, through data-driven decisions and research-based and innovative strategies.

1B. GCC schools will relentlessly pursue system coherence, deepening student learning by creating collaborative cultures where teachers and para-educators learn and develop their craft alongside each other while maintaining a strong sense of ownership, precision of practice and results-orientation.

1C. GCC schools will deepen, refine and extend the resources, strategies and processes needed to inform, measure and monitor learning in order to identify, prescribe and support with integrity the needs of all students from the most vulnerable to the highest achieving.

Priority 2 Goals: Maximize Technology to Deliver and Enhance Instruction

2A. GCC students will receive a quality education that prepares them to be competitive in the Global Economy through access and use of appropriate technology in order to acquire necessary skills for the 21st century: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity.

2B. GCC schools will support staff professional growth and development in technology with a focus on the support, enhancement and delivery of instruction.

Priority 3 Goals: Maintain a Safe, Nurturing and Healthy Environment

3A. GCC schools will ensure that every student is housed in a safe, clean and well-maintained physical environment that supports teaching and learning.

3B. GCC schools will support and reinforce students' mental, emotional, physical and social well-being and ensure students develop wellness skills and competencies utilizing Capturing Kids' Hearts, anti-bullying programs, character education and other strategies to teach students resilience, respect, acceptance, empathy and compassion.

3C. GCC schools will demonstrate efforts to reflect the diversity of their community and will value and respect diversity in all its' forms, including a commitment to policies, practices and attitudes that prepares staff and students to thrive in a cross-cultural world.

Priority 4 Goals: Build and Maintain Fiscal Integrity and Responsibility

4A. GCC schools will align resources and expenditures to correspond with the, vision, mission, priorities, goals and key GCC initiatives while monitoring and maintaining current and future budget solvency including the maintenance of sufficient reserves to support long term risk.

4B. GCC schools will engage in strategies to increase enrollment and average daily attendance while decreasing attrition.

Priority 5 Goals: Strengthen GCC, School, Family and Community Engagement

5A. GCC schools will create, maintain and refresh dynamic websites and ensure a significant digital presence on applicable social media sites in order to create brand, expand influence and provide useful information to stakeholders.

5B. GCC schools will build and maintain relational capacity with parents and families and throughout the organization, community and with partners, including expanding opportunities and active communication for input and collaboration.

Priority 6 Goals: Recruit, Retain and Recognize Quality Staff

6A. GCC schools will strive to offer and maintain an equitable and competitive salary schedule across job classifications and will review, revise and consider expansions of structures and incentives for continued growth and leadership in key initiatives.

6B. GCC schools will prioritize professional learning and growth for all staff with a particular emphasis on professional development to strengthen site teacher leadership as a key component of system coherence.

6C. GCC schools will create, build on, and refresh the regular recognition, affirmation and acknowledgement of site and central office staff.

SPECIFIC LOCAL GOALS FOR COHERENCE

In addition to the *Priorities and Goals* stated above, GCC schools have three explicit Coherence Goals across all schools which are reviewed and reset on an annual basis:

Math: *All GCC students will increase their math achievement by one or more years based on the GCC Math Assessment (Renaissance Learning – STAR Math).*

Reading: *All GCC students reading at grade level will make 1 year’s growth in reading (utilizing the Renaissance Learning STAR Reading Assessment) for one school year attended. All GCC students scoring below grade level will make more than 1-year’s growth for one school year attended.*

Writing – Expository Writing: *All GCC students will make 1 level growth per year or maintain a level 3 on a locally vetted expository writing rubric.*

Current Year Opportunities, Future Planning, Dreams and Aspirations

Current Year Opportunities:

Rancho Del Paso School Site:

Ten years after being awarded Prop1D facility funding, Higher Learning Academy and Futures High School will begin their first school year in the new facility in mid-August of this year. The 19.2 acre campus is fresh, clean and inviting, and we are excited for this new opportunity. Our opportunities are numerous from how to maximize the potential of the shared learning spaces, to how to share a campus with two very different schools and populations, to the potential expanded marketing possible with a new campus in a new community.

Firehouse Community Center:

We have extended our current SAVA TRUSD agreement at the Firehouse Community Center. In September SAVA TRUSD will transition formally to their new building in North Natomas. Planning has already begun on possible creation of a Café at the Firehouse that would be a joint venture of both CCCS and SAVA; currently ideas include serving coffee and lattes and SAVA culinary food, using the fresh produce at the Firehouse Community market for the making of salads and other healthy options, provide an Internet café and

help older community members, living history interviews/video, student run café to learn college and career readiness skills, customer service etc. Principal Elliott and Principal Campbell have met with CCSO Jason Sample and Superintendent Dr. Cindy Petersen for initial idea generation and development will be under way possibly by mid-school year.

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy – TRUSD – North Natomas Campus:

SAVA experienced the aftermath of a Shasta area legal case (Anderson) that changed the interpretation of geographic locations for independent study charter school resource centers. The outcome of that case was that SAVA was forced to seek both a SAVA Elk Grove and a SAVA SCUSD charter in order to keep its current sites open. It was an incredible relief to be granted those two charters. An additional opportunity was the need and desire to grow SAVA TRUSD and the Firehouse location was not sufficient to offer the many CTE pathways that we know attract, engage and serve our students' needs. We are excited to have planned last spring and now be in the final stages of construction of the SAVA TRUSD campus in North Natomas. Our program will be a significant service to students, families and the community in the coming school year.

Community Impact Academy at WIND Youth

Just a little bit of history regarding this item: GCC, and CCCS in particular, has historically had a partnership with WIND Youth at its former location on Dixieanne. Our classroom at the shelter served the needs of a large number of transient, homeless, or vulnerable youth during our time there before the site closed. WIND Youth will be opening downtown (located in the Sac City USD attendance area) and has reached out to the Gateway Community Charters via the Community Impact Academy (CIA) program and Vice Principal Summer (Sorosinski) Ash. CIA has been a program of CCCS since its inception. In order to re-enter a partnership with WIND Youth at this new location under the new Anderson case ruling, it would have to be a program of SAVA Sac City USD. At this time we have applied for and been granted a material revision by the SCUSD board at their August 16, 2018 meeting. We think this partnership and location is a solid opportunity for Community Impact Academy to launch it into even greater programmatic excellence and the enrollment opportunity is positive for this population and location.

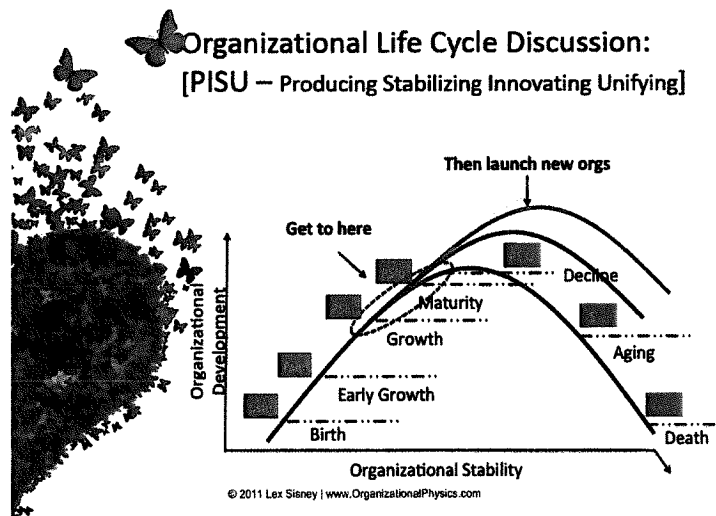
Special Education:

Gateway Community Charters began its' journey with charters that were 'schools of the district for purposes of special education'. This term means that all of the state and federal special education dollars went directly to the authorizer who was then responsible to serve the charter school students with identified special education needs. With our expansion to nine charters under five authorizers, this year we have four schools who are

their own Local Education Agency for the purposes of special education within the El Dorado County SELPA; Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC), Gateway International School (GIS), SAVA EGUSD, and SAVA SCUSD. Gateway Community Charters uses a variety of means to meet the needs of all students, from smaller class sizes to student study teams and rigorous Response to Intervention programs and strategies. With a rigorous and timely intervention process, students are more quickly identified for what supports will best meet their needs and special education services are more efficiently provided. Leveraging more local control over the generated special education funding for these students, GCC believes that our service, compliance and outcomes in Special Education will be higher. This year is our first year to bring the four schools together under the care and support of a GCC Coordinator of Student Services and Special Education as we seek to serve our students with excellence.

The Journey and the Future

Organization Life Cycle



The GCC is cognizant that at fifteen years into this journey we are moving into a new phase in the organizational life cycle. As we continue to mature, without awareness, data, reflection and innovative action within the organization may naturally decline. Successfully navigating the execution life cycle is like climbing a mountain that is forever growing. The mountain itself is made up of problems to solve. Why problems? Because entropy is always at work causing disintegration. Still, the point is not to solve all our problems (this would mean there's no more change and we're fundamentally dead). The point is being able to always move on to a higher class of problems. As a learning organization, we recognize that we must climb the mountain step by step remembering

that the higher we go, the better the view. Innovation, creativity, rejuvenation and re-birth are all necessary components to avoid organizational decline.

The Future

Special Education:

The GCC has created a timeline and a plan for moving all of its schools into the El Dorado County SELPA. This will be done carefully and with forethought and planning to ensure adequate staffing, knowledge and accountability. Gateway Community Charters anticipates that this will both be more cost effective and provide higher quantity and quality of service for the students being served.

Succession and Sustainability:

According to the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), seventy-one percent of the 400 charter school leaders surveyed for their 2010 study said they expected to leave their schools within five years. They go on to state “Schools succeed or fail based largely on who is leading the organization”. The data suggests that principals and superintendents in districts and in charters serve an average of approximately three years before changing jobs or organizations. Gateway Community Charters has had the benefit of a number of high quality principals and cabinet members who have far exceeded these averages.

The GCC needs to become more mindful and strategic regarding long-term succession planning. As a mature charter school management organization we need to be more intentional and deliberate in our succession planning for key leadership roles, from the superintendent to principals and extending to the board as well.

Dreams and Aspirations

Big Picture: We have completed much of the groundwork on a possible Big Picture charter school petition. The pedagogy and programmatic aspects have come alive in positive ways in the North Sacramento program of CCCS. At one point we had a draft timeline and aspirations regarding this transitioning from a program to a charter. We have had a few challenges; enrollment has not sufficient to stand alone and area politics were challenging during renewals. We expect this charter to stay on the back burner for a while but we have not given up and the board and staff will continue to monitor circumstances for further action.

Rancho Cordova: While we have no current expansion plans for this geographic area, the GCC has been approached on more than one occasion by the Slavic community in the Rancho Cordova area regarding a replication model of COA or GIS. With both COA and

GIS experiencing significant wait lists, this remains a board and staff discussion for possible future action.

TK/Pre-school/Early Childhood Learning: Board and staff level discussions have touched on the community interest in GCC increasing our offerings in relation to the younger child. Community and staff believe that access to quality learning environments at a young age lead to later academic success. This discussion has also included the understanding that the former HLA Plover site location may possibly be on the district's facility surplus list and would be under consideration for future development. Except for TK – this is a departure from our current funding sources and is a bandwidth issue as to expertise as well. [Note: In addition to the Plover discussion, multiple conversations have occurred over time regarding the desire of the Slavic community to have GCC provide quality pre-school.]

Community Impact Academy (CIA): CIA has been a program of CCCS and will now be a program of SAVA TRUSD. Strategic discussions regarding Community Impact Academy has always presented this as an incubation program. Should the program coalesce in its program, curriculum, enrollment and political will – GCC staff and board will consider its future as a charter school rather than a program.

Sac Metro Fire Academy: Numerous meetings have occurred over multiple years with Sac Metro as regards interest in the development of a public service pathway program. We have no current expansion plans for this Career Technical Academy. It remains on the list as a future possibility.

Aviation and/or Aerospace Pathway, Program and/or Charter: The GCC has a renewed relationship with our partner the Aerospace Museum of California. The new Executive Director is active on our Community Business and Advisory Council. Further meetings, discussion and research are proposed to discuss options and viability. [NOTE: The GCC held an aerospace charter for 5 years and voluntarily chose not to renew it due to quality considerations.]

International Baccalaureate (IB) High School: The GCC currently has three K-8 schools in various stages of IB implementation and certification. GCC board and staff have held strategic discussions over multiple years regarding a small IB High School for the three schools to feed into as a strategic future move. The location would need to be in the epicenter of the locations of the other three and transportation might need to be considered. It is expected that this charter petition would begin development concurrently with exploration of possible locations and political ramifications.

Quality school choice, a gateway to the future



GATEWAY COMMUNITY CHARTERS

GCC

