

## **I-DESIGN PROGRAM PROPOSAL, WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HIGH SCHOOL**

William Howard Taft High School (THS) is a public high school that is part of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). THS is collaborating with the iDesign Division, Local District 1, and other District offices to implement this program proposal, which will transition the school into a local governance and decision-making model with added school- and classroom-level accountabilities and improved learning outcomes.

**1. VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS:** THS will be a safe and supportive environment that encourages academic success, personal growth, social maturity, and responsible citizenship. The school believes in the equal value and dignity of all students and is committed to the education of all students to their maximum potential.

**2. OBJECTIVES:** The primary goal of THS is to increase student achievement. We believe this can be accomplished best in an environment where decisions are made at the school level. Our objectives as an iDesign school are as follows, to the maximum extent permitted by law:

- To provide THS with charter-like flexibility with the LAUSD
- To provide THS the opportunity to fully implement an Expanded School-Based Management Model that is consistent with applicable laws and with the terms of collective bargaining agreements
- To increase the ability of THS to control its budget
- To increase the school budget as a result of changes involving ADA
- To provide the school with the ability to plan its professional development activities tailored to the needs of the school
- To provide the school with the ability to make purchases directly
- To increase the flexibility of the school in its hiring practices
- To provide the school with the opportunity to apply for grants
- To increase the choices in determining the standards-based curriculum that includes the tight alignment of professional development, formative and summative assessments, and teaching strategies
- To provide THS with the ability to determine its own school calendar, bell schedules, and enrichment programs
- To provide THS the opportunity to build a management team that is collaborative and one that allows for the participation of all stakeholders

**3. PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF EXPANDED SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT MODEL:** The Taft High School Expanded School-Based Management Model will be based on the Six Elements of School-Based Management. These six elements are the belief that a school-based management program will thrive in the iDesign Division because the school will have, to the maximum extent permitted by law:

- Increased funding to the local school site based on the State ADA and categorical Funding framework
- Control over its financial resources (per pupil funding)

- Control over the hiring of administrative, certificated, and classified employees, with no must placements CBA
- Control over curriculum
- Control over professional development
- Control over bell schedules and school calendars

In keeping with these elements and with California Education Code provisions encouraging school-based management, our school-based management proposal seeks to facilitate improved staffing practices, budget management, parent involvement, and scheduling of time. THS will implement all aspects of expanded school-based management consistent with applicable laws and the terms of existing and future collective bargaining agreements. THS will honor all applicable bargaining agreements.

We at THS propose to allocate our financial and staffing resources to create a school where all students are actively engaged, instructional programs are supported, and parents are informed and involved in the learning environment of students with varying abilities, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds. One of THS's financial goals is to create the ability to reinvest excess funds back into the instructional program and/or the school's infrastructure.

Administrators, department chairs, lead teachers, and the chapter chair shall receive training to be developed by the school site in collaboration with other schools, Local District 1, and the District Offices that will create a team of school leaders prepared to carry out the function of running a school in the most effective, efficient manner that meets all applicable laws

**4. GOVERNANCE:** The Taft Governance Council will be the mechanism for expanded school-based management in order to ensure that a more collaborative decision-making process will result in more effective teaching and pupil learning. To this end, the Governance Council shall be exempt from LAUSD Board rules and District policies, except those required to ensure legal compliance. The Governance Council will be the primary decision-making body for Taft High School. It will take on all of the functions and responsibilities of the School Site Council (SSC) as outlined in District Bulletin BUL-1231 and in federal and state law, including the approval and monitoring of the Single Plan for Student Achievement. All election and composition rules that currently apply to the SSC will apply to the Governance Council. To provide for a smooth transition, all current SSC By-Laws shall be adopted by the new Governance Council until new By-Laws are written. Current SSC membership will transition to the new Governance Council with all members having been specifically elected to the Governance Council by the 2010-2011 school year. Consistent with Article XXVII, Section 2.4 of the LAUSD-UTLA collective bargaining agreement, and the current authority of the School Site Council, the Taft Governance Council will assume the following responsibilities, to the maximum extent permitted by applicable laws and collective bargaining agreements.

- **Personnel**

The Governance Council shall have authority over the selection of all school personnel including teachers, administrators, and classified employees. The Governance Council shall have authority to determine the roles and functions of teachers, administrators, and classified employees, as well as determining the need for additional teachers, administrators, and classified employees. The Governance Council shall have the power

to create, approve, and monitor personnel evaluation tools for all THS employees. The Governance Council shall not have the authority to fire personnel and must abide by all LAUSD-union bargaining agreements.

- **Instruction, Curriculum, and Assessment**

The Governance Council shall have the authority over curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

- **Budgets**

The Governance Council shall have authority over all budgets allowable by state or federal law.

- **Professional Development**

The Governance Council shall have authority over the scheduling, content, and design of professional development. It shall also have the authority to allocate funding to support professional development programs.

- **Student Discipline**

The Governance Council shall have the authority to make policies and procedures in regards to student discipline, in accordance with all applicable laws.

- **Scheduling**

The Governance Council shall have the authority to set the yearly calendar and the school day schedule.

- **Campus Environment**

The Governance Council shall have the authority over any additions, improvements, or changes to the physical campus and shall have the power to authorize and fund campus improvement projects. The Governance Council shall also review safety procedures for the school.

- **Use of School Equipment**

The Governance Council shall have the authority to make policies and procedures concerning the use and allocation of school equipment.

In order to carry out these responsibilities, the Governance Council shall have the power to create committees. These committees shall be charged with making recommendations to the Governance Council. Every attempt should be made to have all stakeholders represented on each committee. All committee meetings shall be open to the public. The Governance Council shall have the following standing committees:

- **Leadership Team**

Leadership Team shall be composed of department chairpersons, coordinators, and administrators. Leadership Team will advise the Governance Council on areas concerning academics, curriculum, professional development, assessment, campus environment, and student discipline.

- **Budget**

The budget Committee shall advise the Governance Council on all categorical budgets except EL, Title I, and GATE, or any other budgets not allowable by state or federal law.

- **English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC)**

ELAC will follow all appropriate state and federal guidelines and will advise the Governance Council on EL education and budget.

- **Compensatory Education Advisory Council (CEAC)**  
CEAC will follow all appropriate state and federal guidelines and will advise the Governance Council on Title I education and budget.
- **Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)**  
GATE will follow all appropriate state and federal guideline and will advise the Governance Council on GATE education and budget.
- **Personnel**  
The Personnel Committee will advise the Governance Council on hiring of teachers, administrators, and classified employees as well as the hiring of independent contractors. The committee shall also make recommendations on the need for fewer or additional teachers, administrators, and/or classified employees. In addition, the committee will advise the Governance Council on employee evaluation tools. The Governance Council shall have authority to create any ad hoc committees or new standing committees as it sees fit.

**5. FUNDING:** LAUSD will continue to provide THS with its allocation of funds. LAUSD and THS will continue to explore a per-pupil funding model to enhance local school control over budget.

**6. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY:** We the faculty of William Howard Taft High School agree to the following educational principles that will underlie all of the instructional strategies and curriculum that will be used in classrooms throughout the school. The intent will be to create a model school that will ultimately serve students, making them into self-initiated and life-long learners:

- Personalized instruction is essential so that corps of teachers work with the same students for prescribed period of time. This goal can be accomplished through small learning units or other such configurations. Whatever models are used, the goal is to put in place vertical teaching so that there is continuity and personalization in classes of consecutive grades.
- Individualized instruction is essential so that teachers can meet the needs of their students. Even within classes with students of similar abilities, the need for individualization is imperative. Students do not progress at the same rate of learning. Teachers must give additional practice to those students requiring more time on task as well as provide opportunities for those students who are ready to progress to the next level of instruction.
- Innovative instruction is essential so that teachers can continue to experiment with new approaches to instruction and curriculum while continuing to use what has proven to be successful as measured by both objective and subjective assessments. These changes may include offering courses in different instructional modes so that students have the opportunity to learn in an educational environment other than the self-contained classroom. Other reforms could include offering courses at times other than the traditional school day such as early classes beginning before 8:00 A.M. and other classes beginning after 3:00 P.M.

- Cost-Effective Instruction is essential so that teachers are held accountable to programs that can be created and maintained by the funds that will be available from the state or District. Whatever changes are instituted at the school must be done without losing sight of these fiscal limitations. Reducing class size in selected programs in order to personalize and individualize instruction may not be implemented unless there is an increase in the student-teacher ratio in other programs.

### **The Research and Development Center**

We propose to create a Research and Development Center that will have the responsibility to encourage teachers to offer the most effective teaching strategies and curriculum to their students. This center will help teachers measure whether their current practices are effective through both objective and subjective assessments. The intent of this center would not be to evaluate teachers themselves but to help teachers make the necessary changes that will increase student learning in their classrooms. Therefore, the center will be collaborative rather than hierarchical in that no changes will be imposed upon teachers. Any changes that do occur will be the result of teachers and staff from the center mutually agreeing to them.

A few of the reforms that the Research and Development Center may study and implement initially could include the following:

- Ninth-Grade Preparation Course for all in-coming freshman to cover life skills, study skills, and basic skills in grammar and computation.
- Behavioral and Social Standards to include the implementation of an effective tardy and attendance policy as well as requirement for a modified uniform.
- Various Parental Involvement Programs to help the school recruit parents more actively in the education of their children.
- Effective Formative Assessment Tools to supplement or replace the present District assessments in English, math, social science, and science.
- Model Lessons developed by the faculty of Taft to replace the design lessons that are now mandated by the District.
- Replacement of the grades of D and F with “No Credit” and/or the requiring of students to earn a grade of a C before matriculating to the next level course.
- The reduction of class size— particularly in the departments of mathematics, science, and world languages—without causing an adverse effect on other departments as a result of these reductions.
- Introductory classes for high-risk students to provide them with the basic skills in order to be successful in the A-G required classes.
- Intervention classes to assist students who are unsuccessful in specific classes that will provide them with the skills necessary to succeed in required classes.
- Other types of prerequisite classes to ensure that students will be successful in advanced classes.
- Alternative assessments that will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in specified courses.
- Diagnostic tests to insure that students are properly placed in the appropriate level so that their chance of success might significantly increase.
- The ability to use state-adopted textbooks selected by respective departments.

- The purchasing of extra state-adopted books so that instructors can have access to classroom sets to allow students to keep their individual textbooks at home.
- The expansion of technology in the classroom including the availability of electronic whiteboards and departmental computer labs.
- The use of college students to serve as tutors.
- Experimentation with various special education models so that increasing numbers of students in special education will be successful.
- Programs in partnership with the Education and Career Center to enlarge the offerings of vocational courses.
- Articulation programs with feeder middle and elementary schools.
- Expansion of programs using team teaching.
- Experimentation with alternate class schedules for English learners as well as students in other departments.
- Professional Development programs to meet the needs of the faculty.
- Changes in the school's calendar to allow the fall semester to end prior to the winter vacation and the spring semester to begin directly after the three-week vacation.
- The inclusion of an information curriculum into all academic subjects.

**7. MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. **TERM:** This term for this Program shall be five (5) years commencing on the date approved.
- B. **RENEWAL:** THS and LAUSD must agree in writing for a renewal or extension of this Program.
- C. **TERMINATION:** LAUSD may terminate, in whole or in part, this Program for cause prior to the end of the five year term if Taft High School has failed to meet its obligations as outlined in this document.

**APPROVAL:**

iDesign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Local District Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved on \_\_\_\_\_ by Los Angeles City Board of Education