



LAUSD

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Supporting Meaningful Teaching and Learning in the Community Schools Initiative

November 21, 2024

Agenda

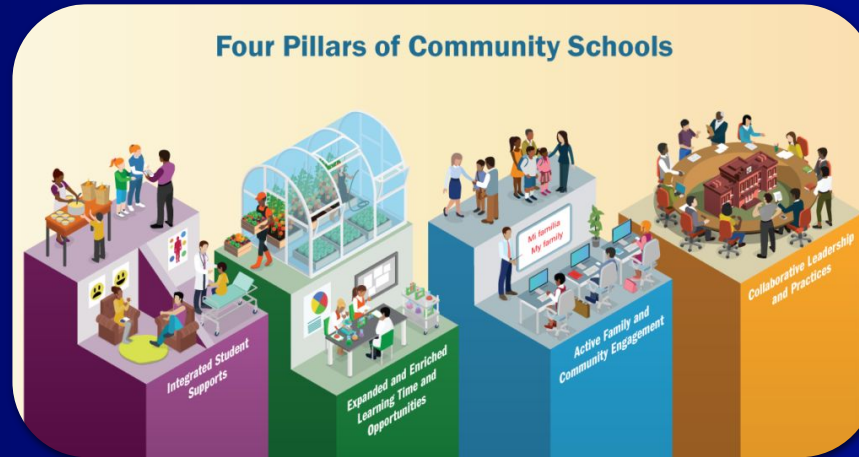
Welcome & “Supporting Meaningful Teaching and Learning” Resolution Objective	Cora Watkins, <i>LAUSD CSI Director</i>
Resolution Alignment with the California Community Schools Framework & Overarching Values	Marisa Saunders, <i>UCLA Center for Community Schooling</i>
Related Work that is Already Underway	Cora Watkins, <i>LAUSD CSI Director</i> Susan Canjura, <i>LAUSD Linked Learning Director</i>
Process for Implementation	Hannah Joravsky, <i>UTLA Community Schools Lead</i> Arelia Valdivia, <i>ROSLA Executive Director</i>
Questions and Discussion	

What the Resolution States: Objective



Resolved, That the District will establish the [Supporting Meaningful Teaching and Learning Initiative \(MTL\)](#) in order to strengthen the Los Angeles Unified School District Community Schools Initiative (CSI) and fully realize the promise of Community Schools as transformative for teaching, learning, joy and engagement, and student, family, and community well-being.





Resolution Alignment to the California Community Schools Framework & Overarching Values

California Community School's Overarching Values

Value 1:

Racially-Just, relationship- centered spaces



Community schools aim to build trust by bringing people together and authentically valuing diverse cultures, perspectives and strengths in schools and communities. A focus on relationships builds a positive school climate and culture that is racially-just, caring, identity safe and nurtures a sense of belonging. Racially-just, relationship-centered spaces build collaborative, supportive and sustainable spaces where everyone learns and grows together.

Value 2:

Shared Power



Recognizing and building towards shared ownership and deep engagement, through shared decision-making and collaborative strategies, is vital to building a democratic, inclusive and empowering environment. Through these strategies, all interest-holders feel that their expertise and commitment to the community is recognized and valued.

Value 3:

Classroom- community connections



Community schools are continuously linking classroom instruction to the broader community. Instruction is engaging, providing real-world and project-based learning opportunities. It is interdisciplinary in nature and rooted in the assets of students, families, educators, and local community members. Curriculum is responsive to local history, knowledge, values, languages, literature, institutions, cultures, and environments. Community schools ground student learning in civic engagement and address real-world issues.

Value 4:

A focus on continuous improvement



Working together, community schools participate in an ongoing cycle of reflection, analysis, shared learning, and revision with a focus on student learning conditions, well-being and outcomes. Community schools also ensure students, families, school staff and the community are valued, engaged and empowered. Community schools go beyond traditional metrics of educational success to reinvent systems of measurement rooted in asset-based, community-driven, and actionable data. Data becomes a tool for improvement that students, staff, families and community members can access, an instrument for reflection and mutual accountability – a flashlight, not a hammer.

California Community Schools Framework: 4x4

The Four Pillars

1. Expanded learning time and opportunities
2. Integrated student supports
3. Collaborative leadership and practices
4. Active family and community engagement

The Four Cornerstone Commitments

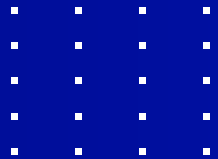
1. A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice
2. A commitment to racially just and restorative school climates
3. A commitment to powerful, culturally proficient and relevant instruction
4. A commitment to shared decision-making and participatory practices

The Four Key Conditions of Learning

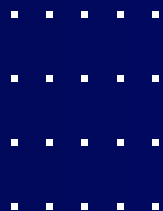
1. Supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community
2. Productive instructional strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning
3. Social and emotional learning (SEL) that fosters skills, habits, and mindsets that enable academic progress, efficacy, and productive behavior
4. System of supports that enable healthy development, respond to student needs, and address learning barriers

The Four Proven Practices

1. Community Asset Mapping and Gap Analysis
2. A Community School Coordinator
3. Site-Based and LEA-Based Advisory Councils
4. Integrating and Aligning with Other Relevant Programs



Related Work That is Already Underway



1

Academic Excellence

High Quality
Instruction

Enriching
Experiences

Eliminating
Opportunity Gaps

College and Career
Readiness

OUR PRIORITY

Focus on consistent implementation of high-quality instruction to improve student outcomes

WHY THIS MATTERS

An exemplary classroom education experience and evidence-based instructional practices are essential to prepare our students for postsecondary excellence

STRATEGIES

- Deliver impactful, rigorous, standards-based, culturally responsive, and inclusive instruction supported by high-quality curricular and instructional materials in all content areas
- Integrate technology and access to other critical resources, such as online learning tools and libraries, to elevate teaching and learning
- Institute comprehensive systems to observe classroom instruction and provide reflection and feedback to improve practice
- Implement high-quality, differentiated, and ongoing professional development and coaching grounded in data to support effective teaching, learning, and leadership
- Provide targeted professional learning opportunities and coaching for newly hired teachers at highest-needs schools that result in effective, equity-driven instruction
- Expand equitable grading practices, proficiency-based assessments, and personalized instruction to support all students in demonstrating grade-level proficiency of standards-based learning targets
- Analyze and act upon assessment data to guide instructional planning and personalized learning so all students reach proficiency

Community School Classrooms Are Centered Around The Four Key Conditions for Learning



Designing instruction using **evidence-based strategies**, including innovative **instructional technology** applications, that support motivation, competence and self-directed learning.

Teaching is **differentiated** and takes students' prior knowledge and experiences into account, providing the right amount of challenge and support.



Ensuring students are *Ready for the World* through **opportunity, access and real-world application**:

- **Career Exploration labs (Paxton Patterson),**
- **Linked Learning, Career and Technical Education,** and
- **Dual Enrollment** pathways to create lessons that connect current learning to their students' future selves.



SEL guides the way by integrating **SEL practices**, nurturing essential skills such as **social awareness, self-management, and self-efficacy.**

Fostering these competencies enables **academic progress** and **productive student behavior.**

Promoting **interpersonal skills** and **cultivating a positive growth mindset** supports **student resilience** and **productive action.**



Cultivating supportive ecosystems using **anti-racist** and **anti-bias** strategies that

- **foster strong relationships** and **community,**
- **emotional and identity safety,** and
- **a sense of belonging and purpose.**

Using **culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy** and **restorative practices** ensure all students are supported and valued in every classroom.



Refocusing classrooms on **Equitable Grading and Instruction (EGI)** using clear **learning targets.**

A **growth-mindset** approach is used for K-12 teaching and learning based on the understanding that all students can learn when provided with the **right conditions** and **support**, providing more students **academic success** and ultimately taking charge of their own learning.



Creating bridges to learning beyond the classroom by **connecting learning** to larger **social and economic issues** impacting the school community.

Instruction is **interdisciplinary and focuses on real world connections** to learning through **Project Based Learning (PBL)** and **Community Based Learning (CBL).**

Supporting Interdisciplinary Instruction



Defined

DEFINED LEARNING | CAREER CONNECTED PBL

A robust library that provides teachers with K-12 standards-aligned Project-Based Learning (PBL) units which are presented to students through the lens of modern-day STEM careers.

- engages students in authentic, real-world scenarios
- establishes connections to career pathways.

Spring 2024

- 16 Community Schools received the materials and professional development around interdisciplinary instruction.

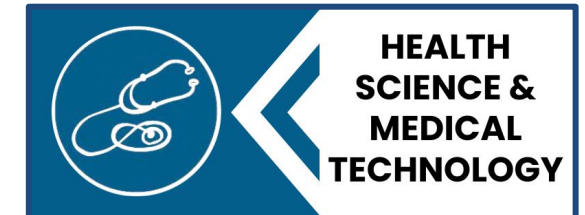
Fall 2024

- Began Defined Learning at 16 sites

Spring 2025

- Add additional Community Schools to the training.
- The 16 initial sites engage students in one PBL

Career Pathways at LAUSD Community Schools



Supporting Instruction Through Authentic Assessments

Portfolio Options Available Across Community Schools

Schoology



Defined Learning



Google Folders



Student Portfolio Defense

Capstone Project

Comprehensive academic project that students complete at the end of their academic program.

Performance Assessments

- Analytic essay on literature
- Social studies research paper
- Report based on original science experiment or engineering design
- Narrative of the process and solution of mathematical problem-solving.

Supporting Teaching & Learning Through Artificial Intelligence

Where AI meets Community: Learning Together, Solving Tough Problems for Real-World Impact:

- Solving community challenges with the help of Generative AI
- Collaborating with AI on creative solutions around topics learners care about:
 - Environment
 - Healthcare
 - Climate
 - Human Trafficking
 - Immigration



AI supports Community Schools teachers with:

- generating ideas for authentic assessments
- supporting lesson planning
- creating real-world learning simulations
- providing “trips” to explore other communities, states, countries through VR



Supporting Instruction through Related Professional Development

Defined Learning:

**Interdisciplinary Instruction continued at 16 schools with
80 educators**

Grades TK-12 (Aug. 2024-May. 2025)

Center for Powerful Public Schools:

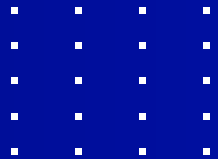
Professional development around

Project Based Learning at 10 school sites with 60 educators

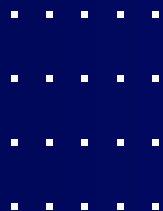
Grades TK-12 (October 2024-May 2025)

**CTE and Linked Learning Pathway Development School
Site Coaching**

Grades 6-12 (Sept.-Dec. 2024)



Process for Implementation & Suggested Timeline



Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That schools that participate in the five CSI cohorts will be eligible to apply to participate in the MTL, and the Community Schools Steering Committee (CSSC) will recommend approval or denial of applications based on established criteria that could include quality of implementation of the Community Schools Framework and evidence of strong academic progress for all student groups, and will be open to up to 10 schools;

Process

- Establish selection criteria.
- Create school application.
- Present to all Community Schools: Admin, PBL Champ, UTLA Chapter Chair, CS Coordinator, and ILT.
- Applications reviewed and recommendations (acceptance/denial) made by CSSC.
- District reviews CSSC's recommendations.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That MTL schools will be authorized to select a Community Schools Grant funded Community School Lead Teacher through the Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP), who will support the goal of “remodeling instructional program commitment”;

Process

- Once schools are selected, the CSI Director will request budget adjustment for approval from the California Dept. of Education to use CCSPP grant dollars.
- Suggest criteria for Lead Teacher role.
- Suggest guidance to schools for selecting CS Lead Teacher.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That Lead Teachers will receive professional development by Community School Coaches and the UCLA Center for Community Schooling, as well as other relevant partners as appropriate including those with expertise in the support and development of school leaders;

Process

- Identify potential partners to support the professional development series.
- Develop a professional development plan with UCLA Center for Community Schooling.
- Provide training for Lead Teachers related to community-based and project-based learning, interdisciplinary instruction, authentic assessment creation, etc.
- Provide facilitator and coaching training for Lead Teachers.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That MTL schools will demonstrate a team commitment that includes, at minimum, the principal, school staff, and the Local School Leadership Council and/or other bodies inclusive of student and parent leadership, and will commit to participating in the Cohort for three years;

Process

- Local School Leadership Council and other school decision-making groups will engage in discussion related to readiness to commit.
- Parents/families will engage in discussion related to readiness to commit.
- Schools will demonstrate commitment via the application by March 2025.
- Schools will sign commitment form after selection by May 2025.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That MTL schools will commit to remodeling their existing instruction program to integrate culturally relevant curriculum, community- and project-based learning, and civic engagement (e.g., through the integration of Linked Learning and/or other instructional strategies), and targeted AI integration;

Process

With support of the CSI Director, Specialists, Instructional Coaches, UTLA Lead, Instructional Leadership Teams, and/or other relevant experts identified by the CSSC MTL Subcommittee, participating schools will:

- Engage in an instructional audit/review process.
- Share results and solicit input with interest holders.
- Work with Regions.
- Remodel their instructional program.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That MTL Principals will commit to engaging in instructional planning, observation of project- based instruction, attend and provide professional development related to community- and project-based learning, and provide sufficient resources for teachers to fully implement project-based learning;

Process

- Required Principal and Regional Director agreement to commit upon selection.
- Identify professional development opportunities with PBL Champ and educators.
- Instructional resources to be selected and funded by the school sites.

Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved further, That MTL schools will work in collaboration with the Division of Instruction to develop and pilot innovative, authentic, rigorous and relevant assessments to provide information to teachers and parents regarding students' areas of strengths and areas of need. Once established, SMTLI schools will be excused from standardized testing with the exception of state-and federally-mandated assessments; and, be it finally;

Process

Based on findings and recommendations from the MTL Subcommittee, the Division of Instruction works with school teams to:

- **create authentic assessment types.**
- **implement authentic assessment types.**
- **pilot assessments.**
- **determine the effectiveness of the assessments regarding students' areas of strengths and need.**

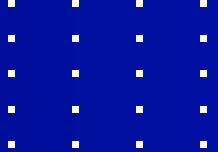
Resolution “Resolves” & Process

Resolved, That District staff, and labor and other partners, will form a team in the second semester of school year 24-25 to develop the operational aspects for how this initiative is to be implemented, and communicated across the systems and structures of the CSI, and to create an application and rubric for approval so that this new initiative can commence on July 1, 2025.

Process

- The CSSC and the Division of Instruction appoints partners to work on two teams: Selection and Learning, Design, & Implementation.
- Monthly meetings are held to develop the operational aspects of implementing this resolution.
- A school selection process is created to include:
 - application
 - rubric
 - selection criteria.

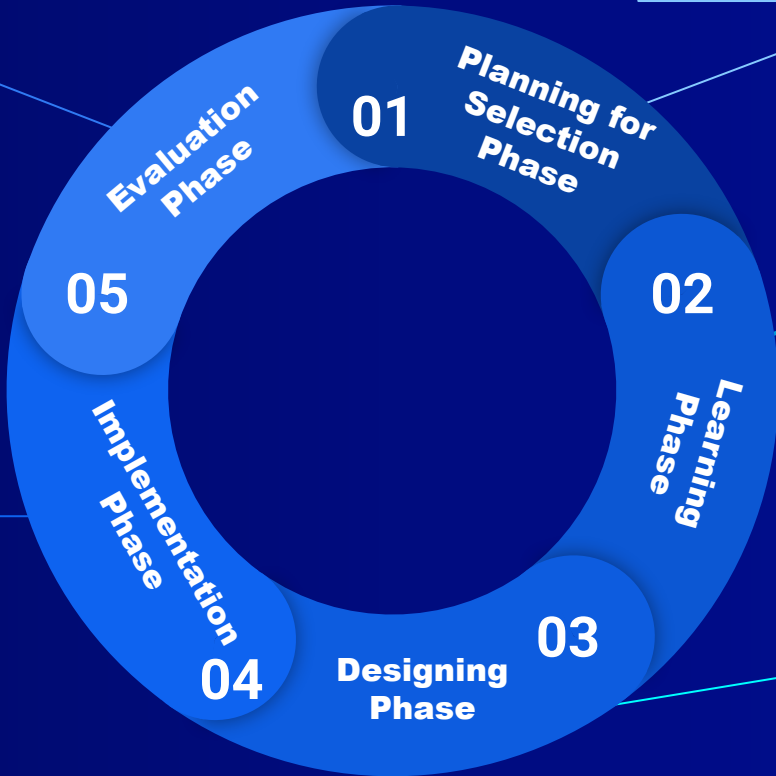
MTL Subcommittee Process Phases



Phase 1a: Planning for Selection of Schools
Identify and communicate clear criteria for selecting 10 SMTLI community schools. Thoughtfully engage and gather feedback from stakeholders, and share clear expectations and timelines for schools to inform their decision to apply.

Phase 1b: Learning Phase
Research existing best practices within and outside of LAUSD regarding authentic assessments, such as community- and project-based learning, interdisciplinary instruction, defense of student learning, etc.

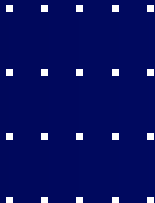
Phase 2: Designing Phase
Design a framework tailored to existing work within community schools. Ensure shared understanding of these terms and implications for teaching and learning, including Lead Teachers' role.



Phase 4: Evaluation Phase
Engage in an ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement process to monitor implementation progress, and assess the effectiveness of authentic assessments across schools.

Phase 3: Implementation Phase
Provide ongoing PD's, coaching, and trainings to support successful implementation for each school leadership implementation team. Pilot assessments and utilize PDSA cycles to monitor progress.

****Note:** These Phases will overlap and build on each other. Continuous assessments will be integrated into Phase 1b, 2, and 3, to monitor progress and gather feedback from stakeholders, ensuring each stage is examined to understand evolving needs and their implications.*



Questions and Discussion