



Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences  
Truth & Excellence through the Visual & Performing Arts and Sciences

## A Charter School Petition

For the term of July 1, 2025 – June 2030

Submitted to the

Palmdale School District

on:

Nov 5th, 2024

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[www.laityarts.org](http://www.laityarts.org)

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## **Affirmations and Assurances**


The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the charter school, including but not limited to:

1. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(de)(1)].
2. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences declares that it shall be deemed the exclusive public-school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(6)].
3. 3. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)].
4. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences does not charge tuition. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)].
5. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences admits all students who wish to attend The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, and who submit a timely application, unless The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application is given an equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) and Education Code Section 517 4 7 .3, admission to The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605( d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) (C). [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(C)].
6. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 ( actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code 47605(d)(1)].

7. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences adheres to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
8. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences meets all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5, California Code of Regulations Section 1967.5.1(f)(S)].
9. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences ensures that teachers in The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility is given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(1)].
10. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences at all times shall maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
11. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, for each fiscal year, offers at a minimum the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.S(a)(1)(A)-(D).
12. If a pupil is expelled or leaves Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)].
13. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences maintains accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)].
14. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences on a regular basis consults with its parents and teachers regarding LIAS' education programs [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605©].
15. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences complies with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to the locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 and 47605.1].

16. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences complies with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b) and 47610].
17. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences complies with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act ("ESEA"), as reauthorized and amended by Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").
18. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall comply with the Public Records Act.
19. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
20. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
21. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences meets or exceeds the legally required minimum number of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960].
22. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences complies with Education Code Section 51745 et seq. related to independent study.

  
James A. Goins Executive Director

  
Delayna E. Goins, Artistic Director

10/28/2024  
Date

10/28/2024  
Date

## Vision, Mission and Educational Philosophy Statement

**Vision:** The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Charter School envisions a world-class educational institution that seamlessly integrates the visual and performing arts with the sciences, creating a harmonious classical learning environment. We are dedicated to cultivating independent thinking and instilling a profound appreciation for the arts and sciences, both as tools for self-expression and instruments for comprehending the world.

**Mission:** Our mission at The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is to empower students to realize their fullest academic potential while immersing them in the exploration of an interdisciplinary curriculum. We focus on the visual and performing arts, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Through a collaborative, family-centered approach, we encourage parental involvement and community service to foster responsible citizenship.

**Educational Philosophy:** We firmly believe that the arts and sciences represent the highest form of human communication and expression. These disciplines inspire critical thinking about culture and environment, facilitate the thoughtful expression of principles and ideas, and provide a unique lens for comprehending past and present cultures and knowledge. By weaving these foundational elements into our curriculum, we offer students, parents, and educators' diverse opportunities for growth, development, and lifelong learning.

Our commitment to a range of educational approaches ensures that students are well-prepared for their educational journey beyond our school. We advocate for a cooperative, organic, and engaging learning environment that treats the arts and sciences as fundamental components, allowing students to accumulate a broad knowledge base and develop essential skills.

At The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, (LIAS) we passionately believe that truth and excellence can be discovered through the visual and performing arts, just as they can through science, technology, and other academic disciplines. Our goal is to equip students to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners who can easily adapt to changes and excel in high school, college, and beyond. Artistic and scientific truth is inherently objective, and we hold the conviction that these fundamental elements provide the means to explore and express this truth in our ever-evolving world.

In summary, our vision is to become a national standard of educational excellence by seamlessly integrating the Visual and Performing Arts with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Our mission is to offer a comprehensive classical education that stimulates our students, nurtures independent thinking, and prepares them for higher education and careers in the arts and sciences.

We are dedicated to guiding students in discovering 'Truth and Excellence Through the Visual and Performing Arts and Sciences,' as we believe these are integral components of a well-rounded education.

## **STUDENTS**

Most students at LIAS will come from the Antelope Valley community in California. This community has been characterized by residents experiencing social disorganization, along with perceived barriers to social and economic opportunities. LIAS aims to be a welcoming place for the community, providing abundant learning opportunities.

The institute will take responsibility for any student interested in attending the independent learning charter school and will admit students residing within the boundaries of Service Planning Area 1 (SPA 1) in Los Angeles County.

To gather information on incoming students, we will engage in conversations with students and parents, review existing records, and explore services provided by their previous schools. Whenever possible, we will schedule entry conferences between students' new advisors and teachers from their previous schools. The data collected will be utilized by the staff at LIAS to ensure the school aligns with the learning and social-emotional needs of these students upon its opening.

### **Academically Gifted Students**

LIAS aspires to make every student's educational experience rigorous. Teachers dedicated to working with gifted students will receive specialized training to provide additional challenges tailored to their abilities. Utilizing portfolios and exhibitions will be a crucial strategy to ensure that students are performing at their full potential.

Recognizing the varying paces at which students' progress, we will implement a system where students excelling in a particular subject may be paired with those who are struggling. This collaborative approach, supported by research indicating that students deepen their understanding of the material through teaching others, aims to foster a positive and supportive learning environment.

LIAS will also integrate cross-age tutoring as a fundamental and ongoing support feature, recognizing its value in promoting peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.

### **Academically Low-Achieving Students**

To address the needs of academically low-achieving students, LIAS will initiate a comprehensive diagnostic process conducted by our resolute staff. Staff members will undergo training to recognize signs of common learning differences, ensuring a higher likelihood of identifying and appropriately addressing these needs. Instructional activities will be tailored to accommodate diverse learning styles and draw upon students' various strengths.

As a small and nurturing independent learning school, LIAS is an ideal environment for students with non-standard needs. Each student will be assigned to a mentor group led by a credentialed teacher trained in best-practice mentoring strategies. The teacher/mentor will oversee the progress of the

students in their group and assist them in identifying areas where extra help is needed. In addition to the personalized attention within the small, tight-knit community at LIAS, a variety of assessment methods will be employed to direct students' educational plans and develop appropriate interventions, including:

- IEP reports
- CAT-6 Test scores.
- Graded tests and quizzes
- Teacher observations
- Class and project work

Interventions will be provided through the following means:

- One-on-one tutoring during the school day if needed.
- Subject-specific enhancement classes
- Actual homework support in after-school programs, along with asynchronous instructional support
- Counseling
- Parent support

### **English Learners**

At the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, bilingualism is not only considered an asset but a necessity. Given the demographics of the Antelope Valley community, proficiency in two languages is essential for all students. We will offer Spanish and English as a Second Language, recognizing the importance of language in fostering cross-cultural understanding. To achieve this goal, we will focus on developing both English and Spanish literacy skills for English learners and provide Spanish as a second language for English speakers.

In core academic classes, several strategies will be incorporated to support English learners in mastering the language. First, the English Language Development (ELD) standards will guide the structure of lessons and assessments. Second, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques will be employed to enhance understanding of core curriculum content, making the material comprehensible and aiding students in achieving more excellent proficiency in English. We aim to create a comfortable environment where students feel encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, draw from their own experiences, and find the material meaningful and exciting.

Teachers will receive pre-school-year professional learning (PL) on ELD and SDAIE techniques to inform their instructional and assessment practices. Additionally, they will undergo yearly "booster shot" professional learning sessions to reinforce pedagogical skills.



Using diverse instructional practices, teachers will ensure that English learners can successfully comprehend academic content. This includes using comprehensible language, expressing content in multiple modalities, incorporating visuals and manipulatives when appropriate, and providing many opportunities for students to develop proficiency in the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through directed interaction and flexible grouping, teachers will offer specific and targeted instruction, with English learners alternating between working with students of the same ELD level and diverse levels depending on the activity during weekly group work sessions.

Common assessments designed by teachers will measure various proficiency levels. During weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) time, teachers will use these assessments to inform their instructional practices and assess language development progress over time. ELD portfolios will be used to collect samples of student work, assess the level of progress, and will travel with students from year to year. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) will be utilized to identify English learners, diagnose areas for focus, and serve as one of the criteria for reclassification. We aspire that those students, continuously enrolled from their first day, will advance at least one level each academic year, such as progressing from beginning to early intermediate proficiency.

## **Students with Individualized Educational Programs**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is dedicated to closely monitoring students to ensure they receive the necessary support services. An integral objective of professional development learning is to ensure that teachers and administrators are well-informed about the diverse range of students' needs. The institute is committed to creating a supportive environment for students with exceptional needs, offering services tailored to those students who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

To achieve this goal, the school will:

1. **Regularly Assess Student Progress:** Continuous monitoring of students will be conducted to assess their progress and identify any emerging needs. This ongoing evaluation will inform the adaptation of support services to meet individual student requirements.
2. **Professional Development:** Teachers and administrators will engage in ongoing professional development to stay abreast of best practices and strategies for catering to students with diverse needs. This commitment aims to foster an initiative-taking approach to addressing the unique requirements of each student.
3. **IEP Services:** Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will actively collaborate with students, parents, and relevant professionals to implement services outlined in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This personalized approach ensures that students with exceptional needs receive the specific support necessary for their academic and overall development.

Through these measures, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive educational environment that addresses the unique needs of all students, creating a space where everyone can thrive.

## **Growing one grade Level Per Year**

Recognizing the pivotal role the first-year plays in shaping a school, the staff at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences understands the importance of establishing clear expectations and a positive school culture from the outset. The initial months set the tone for the school's future trajectory. Therefore, Laity Institute will commence its first school year with grade levels second through fifth, strategically designed to maximize the establishment of a robust and healthy independent learning culture.

This intentional approach is aimed at enhancing the likelihood of success in improving the abilities and habits of all students. By focusing on grades second through fifth initially, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences seeks to minimize potential variations attributed to inexperienced staff, new curriculum, and new students. This phased introduction allows the school to fine-tune its systems and processes before expanding to additional grade levels.

During this foundational year, the institute will closely monitor and evaluate its strategies, making informed adjustments to ensure a smooth and effective transition as it expands to include additional grade levels in subsequent years. By prioritizing a solid start with a concentrated grade range, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences aims to establish a solid foundation for sustained success and a positive learning environment for all students.

### **An Educated Person in the 21st Century**

At the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, we envision the educated person in the 21st century as one who embodies creativity, self-actualization, and enlightenment. This individual is initiative-taking, literate, bilingual, and a lifelong learner—resourceful, technologically proficient, and globally competitive.

Rooted in their own culture, our students possess a keen sense of self while respecting the cultures of others. They perceive themselves as integral parts of larger communities, demonstrating social responsibility, political awareness, and environmental stewardship. Utilizing critical thinking and creativity, they positively impact their surroundings, make healthy personal choices, and find balance in their appreciation for nature and the arts.

Honest and respectful, our students make ethical and moral choices, driven by a concern for social justice. They are equipped to create sustainable solutions through cross-cultural collaboration, respect for divergent opinions, and peaceful coexistence. Thinking globally and considering long-term solutions over short-term gains, these students embrace tradition while seeking new challenges and paradigms.

Driven by hope and courage, our students at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences are resilient in facing obstacles and making life-sustaining decisions. We are confident that the environment we cultivate will positively influence each student's potential to become an educated, productive individual in the 21st century.

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills Report (SCANS), developed by the US Department of Labor in 1991, outlines the skills necessary for today's youth to participate in the modern workplace. These skills include foundation skills like communication, thinking and reasoning, personal qualities, and competencies in information gathering and processing. At Laity Institute, we align with the report's conclusions, emphasizing that educated individuals in the 21st century must possess these skills to reach their potential and contribute to society.

In the rapidly changing and shrinking 21st-century world, information and communication are paramount. To function effectively, an educated person needs to:

- Acquire, manage, critically analyze, and use information in various mediums.
- Communicate effectively using spoken words, written text, and symbols (mathematical and graphical).
- Think creatively and logically to make decisions and solve problems.
- Adapt to change and work within a multicultural society.
- Effectively collaborate with others.

Additionally, an educated person requires a solid foundation in math, science, history, and language arts to understand and interpret current information and problems, as well as to communicate effectively. To adapt to a changing world, they must have a passion for learning how to learn and for asking questions. A lifelong learner, the educated person is self-motivated and driven to learn throughout their life, possessing extensive computer skills as information and communication transition to a digital medium.

### **How Learning Best Occurs**

At Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, we passionately believe that learning is most effective when the community is connected to the school, creating a warm, friendly, and welcoming environment. When there is a seamless connection between school, home, and community, everyone has a stake in creating a safe and nurturing school community—where humans are valued, nurtured, and empowered. Active participation of stakeholders, including students, staff, families, and the broader community, is encouraged and expected.

In the context of a small independent learning community, optimal learning occurs when students and teachers feel engaged in the learning process. Internal motivation, inspiration, and challenge are essential elements. Teachers and students ideally function as partners in the critical joint project of students' educational and personal development.

Within this small community, learning is most effective when students understand the relevance of what they are learning and can apply that knowledge to constructive projects and activities. Motivation is enhanced when students grasp the value of information or skills. Application of knowledge and skills to projects or problem-solving facilitates cross-disciplinary understanding, providing a holistic view of how bodies of knowledge fit together.

To the extent possible, learning is best when students discover knowledge for themselves. Self-directed learning is inherently more satisfying and engaging, fostering self-confidence and deeper exploration of topics.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences believes that learning is most effective when utilizing focused direct and project-based learning, cooperative independent learning environments, interdisciplinary courses, and individualized learning plans. Employing these varied yet focused instructional methods keep the student population excited and motivated about learning.

Recognizing the challenges in the Antelope Valley area, where a significant percentage of students are performing below grade level, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to addressing these issues. Strategies such as focused direct learning, project-based learning, and individualized learning plans are employed to combat these statistics.

Teaching is most effective when staff members:

- Believe that all children deserve access to an excellent education in their community.
- Have elevated expectations for all students.
- Provide rigorous, challenging academics.
- Link performance, content standards, and assessment to curriculum and instruction.

To achieve these goals, teachers will work collaboratively in teams, utilizing standardized test assessments, portfolios, and teacher assessments to develop individualized academic plans for each student. The Professional Learning Community structure allows regular meetings to focus on curriculum and instructional decisions that impact students. Parental involvement is crucial in the development of individualized performance goals.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences acknowledges that learning best occurs when students have numerous opportunities for success. Recognizing that some students may not start at grade level, support mechanisms, including extra time for literacy and writing, and skill-building exercises in mathematics and science, will be implemented. A student support program will provide homework help and tutoring to ensure student success.

An inclusive environment, recognizing and evaluating multiple intelligences, is essential for effective learning. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to developing a curriculum and instruction tailored to address various learning styles and specific needs. Learning is enhanced when technology, the arts, and science are integrated into an interdisciplinary core curriculum. Students at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will develop technological skills, engage in arts education, and participate in a sports program. These components contribute to a well-rounded education that fosters responsibility, teamwork, commitment, and a healthy lifestyle.

The Laity Social Studies in Community Action curriculum, developed and implemented by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, emphasizes respect for diversity and teaches social justice, equity, inclusion, and nonviolence. It instills self-esteem, acceptance, and a commitment to equality. The curriculum promotes environmental awareness, an understanding of one's place in the ecosystem, and a dedication to peace and social justice for all students enrolled in the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

## **Curriculum**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is dedicated to aligning its curriculum with the academic performance and content standards set by the California State Board of Education. We will supplement this alignment with proven research-based curriculum models, including the STEAM Philosophy and a STEAM Curriculum. The STEAM Philosophy emphasizes Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics, fostering a highly focused curriculum for all students within a creative and stimulating learning environment.

Our curriculum and instruction will be intricately linked to standards and assessments. Rather than a curriculum that measures students against each other, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will implement a curriculum valuing mastery of central concepts and skills. This approach aims to empower students to succeed in their academic lives and to seize opportunities in various facets of life.

In addition to academic standards, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences curriculum will incorporate leadership, human development, environmental, and peace education components. These components serve as a platform for students to engage in discussions relevant to their lives, encouraging them to reflect deeply on themselves and their surroundings.

The leadership and human development, environmental, and peace education components are designed to challenge students to explore their potential and contribute positively to their communities. Embracing STEAM Philosophy, our curriculum encourages students to utilize all aspects of their minds and fosters an appreciation for the interconnectedness of humanity, ecology, and the wonders of life.

By incorporating these elements into our curriculum, Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences aims to provide a well-rounded educational experience that not only meets academic standards but also nurtures the personal growth, leadership skills, and global awareness of each student.

## **STEAM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS and MATHEMATICS)**

### **Philosophy and Curriculum**

STEAM Philosophy emerged as an educational paradigm shortly after STEM Philosophy gained prominence, particularly among educators who championed the idea that children learn best through firsthand, experiential activities. Drawing inspiration from influential figures such as Maya Angelou, Howard Gardner, Alexander Rousseau, and Maria Montessori, educators embraced the concept of active learning.

At Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, we enhance these educational approaches by incorporating our deeply held belief in 'following the child.' Our philosophy recognizes that the role of educators is not merely to instruct children directly but to create a nurturing climate in which children can teach themselves and learn through creative activity and exploration.

A STEAM curriculum, rooted in research and an integrated approach to learning, utilizes Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics as entry points for guiding student inquiry, fostering dialogue, and developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This philosophy, evolving from human development principles, has sparked a significant educational movement, influencing child development approaches worldwide.

Structured around and promoting the child's natural, self-initiated impulse to become absorbed in an environment and learn from it, the STEAM Philosophy has led to the development of specific materials, techniques, and curriculum areas. These resources assist each child in reaching their full potential in a field of their choice, emphasizing personalized and direct learning experiences.

### **Multiple Intelligences and Constructivist Learning**

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences aligns seamlessly with Laity Institute's vision, emphasizing the importance of a creative and rich arts program to stimulate and develop the diverse intelligences within each student. The overarching goal of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is to provide numerous opportunities for children to develop their full capabilities—physical, cognitive, and artistic—while fostering imagination.

At Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, learners will explore various instructional delivery formats across subjects such as science, mathematics, arts and engineering, and English. This exploration extends to the visual arts, dance, drama, and music. It is essential to highlight that these topics will be addressed in a constructivist fashion, grounded in the STEAM philosophy. Rejecting a single authority, STEAM promotes an active process based on authentic experiences, inviting learners to derive meaning from their educational environment.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences passionately believes that teaching philosophies and practices should be learner-focused and encompass broader frameworks such as peace and environmental education. STEAM's approach encourages children to think critically and discover for themselves, extending beyond essential academic achievement to influence 'the whole child.' The curriculum at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is designed to empower

students to use their innate sense of discovery and individual experiences, making education personal and relevant in a rapidly changing technological society.

### **Curriculum Overview**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to adopting a curriculum and developmental framework that provides standards-based instruction and coherence across all content areas. Vertical articulation will be implemented, allowing teachers to coordinate a standards-based educational program within and across grade levels and content areas.

The core curriculum at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences encompasses English Language and Literature, Spanish Language and Literature, basic Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Technology, History (American, Black, and Hispanic), Physical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts. Additionally, each student will participate in a Life Skills program covering Decision Making, Communication Skills, Goal Setting, Accountability, Gender Issues, budgeting, and financing. Elective subjects will include Music, Economics, Foreign Language, Intramural, and Individual Sports, along with the standard curriculum of the Creating Change and Rural Action Environmental Learning programs.

Technology will be integrated into the curriculum to enhance learning, ensuring that all students become technologically literate. Teachers will utilize technology to improve communication, collaboration, and instruction, incorporating features such as video clips, simulations, and eSports.

To emphasize time on tasks, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will stress a minimum of one and one-half hours of reading/writing work and one hour of mathematics per day, excluding STEAM-implemented programs. LIAS staff will implement alternative, detailed reward systems, including learning contracts and a standards-based grading system that evaluates based on the Individualized Success Plan (ISP) and a normative emphasis on academic excellence. The school places a clear orientation on work and learning.

Teachers will employ early identification and research-based intervention to assist students who are not progressing. Collaborations with community service agencies will be formed to implement strong tutoring, after-school, and parental support programs.

Some of the programs include:

1. **Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences - Youth in Theater, Dance, and Music:** Multi-cultural productions will train youth in artistic and acting skills, enabling them to participate in play productions and perform in other schools and youth centers.
2. **Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Sports Program:** Providing health, team sports, plyometric training, and nutrition education.



3. **Summit Youth Adventures (SYA):** A non-profit educational corporation offering individual and team challenges, leadership opportunities, and educational expeditions through outdoor activities, team building, ropes courses, rock climbing, and wilderness trips
4. **California Science Center:** Providing direct activities to stimulate interest in science, math, and technology, allowing students to observe new and advanced technology in action.
5. **LACOE Outdoor and Marine Science Field Study:** A unique educational program offering science enrichment experiences, including a residential outdoor science school and on-the-water programs aboard the Marine Science Floating Laboratory.
6. **Project Pyramid:** An empowerment and enrichment program centered on parents and student participation, offering college outreach services, and utilizing culturally based instructional strategies for math/science.
7. **Access Books:** Improving the quality of school libraries by refurbishing them using donated materials and labor and providing them with excellent quality, interesting books.
8. **Crystal Path Team Mentoring, Inc.:** An after-school program focusing on team building, leadership development, and community services.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is dedicated to providing a comprehensive educational experience, combining rigorous academic instruction with a diverse range of extracurricular and community-based programs to foster holistic development."

### **Social Studies**

The Social Studies curriculum at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will align with and reflect the state content standards. Following the overarching philosophy of the school, Social Studies will be taught with a balanced approach that includes lectures using audio and interactive technology programs, firsthand projects, and seminar-style, Socratic discussions.

In contrast to traditional memorization of facts, middle school students will engage in primary source research, fostering the development of their interpretations of historical events. The curriculum encourages students to approach events with a nuanced perspective, examining facts and documents critically. The emphasis is on uncovering underlying circumstances and motivations, allowing students to understand the past and apply those lessons to their perceptions of the present and future.

Teachers will dedicate efforts to ensure that the Social Studies curriculum is accessible, meaningful, and relevant to both elementary and middle school students. Cross-curricular projects, such as creating a documentary film about a local historical event or figure for middle school students, will facilitate connections among subject areas and enhance students' understanding of their communities. These projects also provide opportunities for students to

explore their values, perspectives, and identities as they interpret, and present events based on information gathered through interviews, documents, and other resources.

### **Integrated Sciences**

The Science curriculum at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will follow the sequence of California content standards. Teachers will prioritize direct learning, aiming to integrate the Sciences as much as possible. Students will actively participate in field studies to establish a connection between theoretical knowledge and the real world. Middle school students will engage in small group laboratory work, making presentations to convincingly present conclusions supported by scientifically substantiated facts. The science curriculum aligns with national and state standards, employing inquiry-based methods, outdoor education programs, and traditional research and instruction.

Students will be introduced to the nature of science, understanding that scientific knowledge is subject to modification. The curriculum encourages students to engage in various scientific investigations, promoting the excitement of discovering the world around them. It follows a process-oriented approach, combining firsthand activities and content to cater to different learning styles. Students will explore questions related to their lives, design and construct scientific investigations, and develop critical thinking skills.

### **Arts**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences places significant emphasis on the arts, including music, visual arts, and performing arts. Students will gain an understanding of how artistic expressions such as dance, music, theater, and visual arts serve as avenues for communicating ideas and emotions beyond language. The curriculum focuses on developing communication skills in at least one artistic medium, with an emphasis on reflection, critical judgment, and imagination in the artistic process. Collaborating with the Los Angeles County Department of Education Arts Program will enhance arts education, offering classes to Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences students.

Middle school students' academic study of the arts will be complemented by advanced media arts job training courses, such as filmmaking and web design. Cross-disciplinary projects will draw upon students' artistic and vocational training, enabling them to create documentary films, websites, or performances related to other subject areas.

### **Foreign Language**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences aims to equip middle school students with proficiency in a foreign language other than English. Students will not only develop reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in a foreign language but also gain familiarity with the customs and culture of the respective country. Immersion classes in one or several languages will be offered when there is demand, and students will have the opportunity to learn that language.

## **Spanish**

Acquiring a second language is deemed essential for English speakers, providing them with cross-cultural communication skills and a competitive edge in the global arena. For Spanish speakers, strengthening language skills contributes to bi-literacy and proficiency in English. The curriculum begins in the second grade, with students progressing to an early advanced level in accurately speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending the Spanish language. Exposure to diverse cultures of Spanish-speaking people worldwide is integrated into the curriculum.

Students learning Spanish as a second language will start with basic grammar, vocabulary, sentence construction, reading, and comprehension, progressing to higher-level material. The Language Learning Continuum of the California Foreign Language Framework will guide the instruction, ensuring level-appropriate learning. Teachers will create an environment conducive to students taking risks, providing many opportunities for language practice at all stages of development. Special emphasis will be placed on developing writing and reading comprehension skills for native Spanish speakers, focusing on grammatical and orthographic accuracy.

## **Physical Fitness**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will prioritize physical fitness, making it a mandatory part of the curriculum throughout the school year. The sports program, including teams that students can join, will be a key component of this initiative. In addition to traditional sports, the school will offer various fitness options such as Golf, Tennis, and Martial Arts. Wilderness and outdoor orienteering activities will be provided by Youth Summit Adventures, Inc.

## **Humanities**

The Humanities program at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences adopts an interdisciplinary approach, linking History, Language Arts, and Social Studies to the Arts. While incorporating art and geography, the school's concentration will be on English Language Arts and History. Students will undertake Humanities courses during middle school.

## **English**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences focuses on developing effective written and oral expression, reading, and critical thinking skills in its English and Language Arts curriculum. The curriculum integrates creative and expository writing assignments, grammar, vocabulary development, and literature studies. The goal is to nurture skilled and reflective readers and writers among the students.

## **History**

The history curriculum at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences provides a global inquiry into civilizations. It aims to equip students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge necessary to critically engage with national and international issues. Students will assess historical materials, weigh evidence, and interpret historical scholarship. The curriculum strives to foster a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness between various civilizations.

## **Mathematics**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences offers a mathematics program designed to appeal to all learning modes and intelligences, preparing students for middle school, high school graduation, and beyond. The program employs a cooperative and competitive approach with various forms of assessment and daily challenges. Portfolio-based assessment, focusing on holistic evaluation, allows students to demonstrate proficiency in a mode consistent with their natural abilities. The curriculum also emphasizes the development of formal and standardized test-taking skills.

## **STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics)**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences integrates the STEAM philosophy into its curriculum, emphasizing creativity and innovation. The STEAM education approach encourages students to integrate skills from different subject areas to develop innovative solutions to real-world problems. This prepares students for success in college, careers, and responsible citizenship.

## **Leadership/Human Development**

The curriculum in Human Development at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences provides students with a platform to discuss age-appropriate issues openly and thoughtfully. The integrated approach aims to strengthen character, develop personal responsibility and values, and contribute to the student's overall well-being and self-worth. The course emphasizes life skills, conflict resolution, stress management, having a good relationship with others, respecting differences, and recognizing personal strengths.

## **Life Skills**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences' Life Skills program focuses on raising students' self-esteem, self-awareness, and appreciation of others. It includes working with diverse groups under pressure, coalition building, and experiential exercises. The program is gender-separate, allowing students to freely express themselves. The program encourages reflection on life, examination of relationships, and learning techniques in listening, speaking, cooperation, and respectful behavior.

## **Social Studies in Community Action**

The Social Studies in Community Action curriculum at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences promotes social, political, and moral understanding and respect through community service. By connecting students to their community, the curriculum aims to instill empathy, appreciation of diversity, and commitment to social justice, equity, and nonviolence. It teaches students to show concern for the environment, understand their place in the ecosystem, and commit to equality. The curriculum emphasizes peace across the academic curriculum, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and engagement.

## **Technology**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences recognizes the importance of technology in enhancing the learning experience. Students will learn to develop and manage digital portfolios for assessment purposes. Additionally, the curriculum includes website design using interface software programs, encouraging students to use the web as a tool in the community and at home. Students will be expected to leverage technology for desktop publishing, portfolios, written reports, and online research.

## **Environmental**

The Environmental Learning program integrates interdisciplinary teaching, emphasizing natural history and environmental issues. The curriculum incorporates firsthand discovery, sensory awareness, problem-solving, critical thinking, and cooperative learning. Service-learning community-based projects

will explore environmental issues, promote stewardship, and implement projects benefiting the community. Topics covered include biodiversity, air, energy, land use, solid waste and recycling, geology, winter ecology, aquatic explorations, natural rhythms, nature-inspired art, and the history and geography of local natural resource uses.

## **Special Education**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences operates within the chartering district (LA County) for special education purposes. Special education revenues generated by school enrollment will flow from the SELPA directly to the district. The school agrees to provide special education services in compliance with state and federal laws and SELPA policies. The district will reimburse the school for actual costs associated with special education, not exceeding revenues generated, less oversight fees. The district will absolve the school from the requirement to pay a prorated share of district special education encroachment.

## **English Language Learners**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences adheres to federal, state, and judicial mandates for English Learners. The school will assess English proficiency using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) for students labeled as English Language Learners. Up to a quarter of the student population is expected to be English Language Learners, and the school is committed to providing them with an exceptional education and transitioning them into English proficiency. The school values the students' native languages and cultures, reinforcing this through the core curriculum, enrichment programs, and life-skills curriculum.

Faculty will be hired with CLAD training, and staff will receive training in various teaching strategies to ensure that all students, including English Language Learners, have multiple avenues to access the curriculum. ELL students will receive tutoring at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences independent learning center site, and their progress will be monitored regularly. The school will ensure that all ELL students have access to the core content and will involve parents in all processes related to their child's English Language Development.

Translated materials will be provided to ensure clear communication with parents of ELL students.

### **Gifted and Talented Students**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences believes in recognizing the unique gifts and talents of all students. While not offering a formal, separate gifted and talented program, the school ensures that all students are challenged to reach their intellectual potential within the regular instructional program. Teachers may provide additional opportunities for project-based learning, discovery learning, or computer activities for students who exceed expectations.

### **Parental Involvement**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences emphasizes the importance of collaboration among teachers, parents, and students. Parental involvement is crucial to creating a quality educational environment. Parents are encouraged to join community input groups during the planning phase, assisting with facilities, funding, community support, and outreach. The school expects parents to support their child's education by helping with homework, contacting teachers with any concerns, providing a suitable study environment at home, and being available for meetings.

Parental involvement opportunities include report card pick-up, parent nights, newsletters, and local and end-of-the-year trips. Parents receive a parent/student handbook at the beginning of the school year, outlining expectations and commitments.

### **Professional Development**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences invests in ongoing professional development for its teachers. The faculty is educated in areas such as human growth and development, observational skills, teaching strategies, and classroom leadership skills. Teachers will engage in frequent meetings for lesson planning, progress assessment, and strategic development. Professional development plans are linked to the school plan and goals, and activities are teacher-driven, reflecting the principles of professional development.

The staff attends a weeklong professional development plan in-service training linked to improving student performance. The professional development program aims to build a learning community, involve teachers in examining school-wide achievement, and facilitate reflection on teaching practices. Each teacher has an individual professional development plan, derived from the school's plan. Resources for professional development are ensured, and partnerships with universities and educational institutions are utilized for high-quality workshops.

### **Staff Evaluation Plan**

A designated member of the school's faculty is responsible for staff evaluation and support. Performance evaluations consider goals and objectives set at the beginning of the year and include input from administration, peers, and parents/guardians. The school leader may contract part-time, qualified, and credentialed evaluation consultants for observations in the independent

learning center. Teacher evaluation and retention are based on performance outcomes, measuring student achievement, and the teacher's adherence to curriculum implementation.

Performance agreements are developed with each teacher before the school year, and the annual assessment is based on standards related to the commitment to the school's mission, successful curriculum implementation, professionalism, accomplishment, and effective team participation. Evaluation tools include written evaluations based on observations, self-evaluations, student performance assessments, and feedback from parents. Teachers failing to meet guidelines or evaluation specifications may be subject to dismissal based on the school leader's request.

### **Measurable Pupil Outcomes**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to meeting all statewide standards and conducting the necessary pupil assessments as mandated by Education Code #60605 and other applicable statewide standards. Pupil outcomes, as defined in the charter, refer to the extent to which all students in the school demonstrate the attainment of skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the educational program.

The school will incorporate specific skill-level standards aligned with current state standards. To uphold the commitment to ethnic diversity, student performance data will be systematically analyzed based on major ethnic groups, grade levels, and gender. This analysis aims to ensure that student performance remains consistent across all demographic groups.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will comprehensively address all state content and performance standards across its curriculum, specifically focusing on the "core" academic areas such as mathematics, language arts, science, history, and social science.

The school's approach to measurable pupil outcomes is designed to track the progress of students, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that the educational program is effective and equitable for all students, regardless of their background or demographic characteristics. Continuous assessment and analysis will inform instructional decisions and enable the school to adapt and refine its approach to meet the diverse needs of its student population.

**Measurable Student Outcomes**

Curricular Focus	Measurable Outcomes	Assessment Tools
English language and literature	Students will read with comprehension, write with clarity, speak with meaning, and possess familiarity with literary work.	CAT 6, Terra Nova / California Standards Test Student Progress Report Portfolios
Spanish language and literature	Students will read with comprehension, write with clarity, speak with meaning, and possess familiarity with literary works.	Student Progress Report Portfolios Student/Performance Skits CELDT
Mathematics	Students will conceptually understand and work with fractions, decimals, percents, statistics, probability, ratios, proportions, the formulas (i.e., circumference and area of a circle, the Theorem of Right Triangles) equations, exponents' conversions between different units of measurement, and graphing.	CAT 6, Terra Nova / California Standards Test Student Progress Report
Science	Through investigation and experimentation, students will understand the principals of Physical Science (Earth's Structure, heat/thermal energy, genetics, evolution, living systems, motion, forces, structure of matter), Life Science (chemistry of living systems, the periodic table, density, and buoyancy) and Earth Science (earth in the solar system, reactions).	CAT 6, Terra Nova / California Standards Test Student Progress Report Portfolios Science Expo
History	Students will demonstrate intellectual reasoning, reflections, and research skills related to chronological and spatial thinking (Explain how major events are related to one another in time), historical interpretation (explain the central issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a matrix of time and place), and research, evidence, and point of view (frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research)	CAT 6, Terra Nova/ California Standards Test Student Progress Report Portfolios



Visual and Performing Arts and Sports	Student Assessment is based on effort, willingness to take creative risks, and willingness to participate in the process of reflecting and working.	Student Progress Report
Leadership Development	Student assessment is based on willingness and participation in Community Outreach Activities	Student Progress Report Portfolio.

## **Assessment and Follow-Up**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences places a strong emphasis on continuous assessment to ensure students are well-prepared for state-standardized and performance-based tests. The measurable outcomes of this assessment and follow-up strategy include:

- **Alignment with Standards:** Lessons will consistently address state and district standards in all academic areas throughout the school year, ensuring alignment with curriculum expectations.
- **Variety of Assessments:** Students will undergo a variety of ongoing assessments, including teacher-developed tasks, tests, performance-based assessments, and grade-level assignments.
- **Growth Measurement:** Assessments will measure students' growth toward and mastery of state and district standards in core subjects such as mathematics, science, history, and English.
- **Follow-Up Strategies:** Appropriate follow-up strategies will be implemented based on assessment results, including re-teaching, the use of different teaching strategies, peer-to-peer teaching, and one-to-one tutoring.
- **After-School Tutoring:** After-school tutoring programs will be available to provide additional support to students, reinforcing concepts covered in class and addressing specific learning needs.
- **Parent Conferences:** Parent conferences will serve as a platform to provide support and ideas to parents on how to assist their children at home, fostering a collaborative approach to student success.

The goal is to create a comprehensive support system that ensures students receive targeted interventions and assistance based on their individual learning needs. By addressing assessment results with a variety of follow-up strategies, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences aims to maximize student achievement and foster a positive learning environment. Continuous communication with parents further strengthens the overall support system, creating a partnership between the school and families in promoting student success.

## Overall, School Outcome Goals

Measurable outcomes for overall school outcome goals include:

- **STEAM Education:** Students will benefit from STEAM education with teachers dedicated to implementing key concepts.
- **Family Partnership:** Families will be considered integral to individual development, forming a partnership with the school.
- **Multi-Aged, Multi-Graded Groups:** Students will be part of diverse, multi-aged, and multi-graded groups.
- **STEAM Materials and Experiences:** Students will have access to diverse STEAM materials, activities, and experiences fostering independence.
- **Uninterrupted Time for Problem-Solving:** The schedule will allow large blocks of uninterrupted time for problem-solving, interdisciplinary connections, and idea creation.
- **Social Interaction:** An atmosphere encouraging social interaction for cooperative learning, peer teaching, and emotional development will be maintained.
- **Safe Learning Environment:** A safe learning environment with shared expectations for behavior will be established.
- **Highly Skilled Instruction and Management:** Teachers will exhibit highly skilled instruction and management, utilizing various instructional methods and techniques.

## Curricular Outcomes

Measurable outcomes for various curricular areas include:

- **Language Arts:** Students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills.
- **Social Studies:** Students will apply knowledge of civics, history, and geography to be active citizens.
- **Mathematics:** Students will develop logical reasoning abilities and apply mathematical processes and concepts.
- **Science:** Students will utilize scientific research methods to understand and apply major scientific concepts.
- **Foreign Language:** Students will gain a basic understanding of a foreign language, focusing on English as a Second Language for Hispanic youth.

- **Computers and Media Technology:** Students will gain proficiency in technology skills, including programming, typing, word processing, and internet use.
- **Visual and Performing Arts:** Students will express themselves artistically and present their work to various audiences.

### **Assessment and Follow-Up**

Measurable outcomes for assessment and follow-up strategies include:

- **Preparation for Standardized Tests:** Students will be prepared for state-standardized and performance-based tests through ongoing assessments and tasks.
- **Student Growth:** Assessments will measure students' growth toward and mastery of state and district standards.
- **Interventions and Support:** Appropriate follow-up, including re-teaching, peer-to-peer teaching, and tutoring, will be provided based on assessment results.
- **Parental Involvement:** After-school tutoring and parent conferences will offer support and guidance to parents on how to assist their children.

### **College and Career Readiness**

Measurable outcomes for preparing students for college and career readiness include:

- **Academic Skills Development:** Students will develop academic skills necessary for success in high school and college.
- **Counseling Support:** Staff will provide counseling about college entry requirements and opportunities for financial assistance.
- **Test Preparation:** Students will be prepared for college entrance examinations.
- **Partnerships with Colleges and Universities:** The school will communicate with colleges and universities to raise awareness of its quality program and student achievements.

### **Observational Outcomes**

Measurable outcomes for the observational assessment of the development of the whole person include:

- **Self-Esteem Improvement:** Students will show improvement in self-esteem.
- **Amicable Social Relations:** Students will engage in positive social relations with peers.

- **Motivation to Learn:** Students will exhibit motivation and enthusiasm for learning.
- **Social and Academic Competence:** Students will demonstrate social and academic competence.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences acknowledges the challenge of quantifying the development of the whole person but emphasizes the importance of observing and fostering these qualitative outcomes to ensure a holistic educational experience. Continuous monitoring and assessment will guide the school in refining its approach and meeting the diverse needs of its students effectively.

## **ELEMENT A: ASSESSMENT OF MEASURABLE OUTCOME GOALS BY WHICH STUDENTS PROGRESS**

This section satisfies Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C), which requires a description of the methods by which students' progress in meeting those student outcomes is to be measured.  
Top of Form

**Assessment Methods:** Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences employs a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to measure student progress in meeting outcomes. The various assessment methods include:

1. **State-Mandated Standardized Tests:** Students will undergo assessments mandated by the state to measure their academic proficiency against established standards.
2. **Portfolios:** The school will maintain portfolios for students, providing a comprehensive collection of their work, achievements, and progress over time. Portfolios serve as a holistic assessment tool.
3. **Exhibitions:** Students will have opportunities to present their work and achievements through exhibitions, highlighting their skills in various subject areas, and fostering public speaking and presentation abilities.
4. **Ongoing Teacher Assessments:** Teachers will continuously assess students' performance through regular classroom assessments, allowing for immediate feedback and adjustment of instructional strategies based on individual needs.
5. **Criterion-Referenced Tests:** Students will be evaluated against specific criteria, ensuring that they have mastered the essential skills and knowledge outlined in the curriculum.
6. **Parent/Teacher/Student Self-Evaluation Techniques and Conferences:** Involving parents, teachers, and students in the evaluation process, with self-evaluation techniques and conferences to discuss progress and set goals collaboratively.

**Social/Interpersonal Skills Evaluation:** For middle school students, the assessment of social and interpersonal skills will involve private and public portfolio exhibitions. Additionally, participation in community service projects and cooperative group projects will contribute to the evaluation of these skills.

**Competency Assessment:**

- **Standardized Assessments:** Competency for non-special needs and non-limited English proficient students will be determined through standardized assessments aligned with pedagogical practices.
- **Portfolios and Exhibitions:** Portfolios and exhibitions will be assessed using school-wide rubrics, involving input from teachers and community members.

**Special Needs and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students:** For special needs and LEP students, competency will be defined according to their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and English proficiency levels, respectively.

**Additional Assessment Areas:** Beyond student outcomes, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will measure progress in other key areas, including parental involvement, professional development, teacher performance, and the school's financial solvency. These areas contribute to a comprehensive evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness and adherence to its intended outcomes.

Measurable Outcomes	School-wide Goals	Assessment Tools
Parent Involvement	<p>Seventy percent of children will have at least one parent/guardian attend ongoing parent/teacher conferences during the year.</p> <p>Fifty percent of children will have at least one parent/guardian attend at least one academic workshop during the academic year.</p> <p>Seventy percent will join the PTA</p>	Meeting records

Professional Development	<p>Ninety percent attendance at the annual retreats at the opening and closing of the school.</p> <p>Ninety percent of teachers will participate in subject-level staff development. and/or conferences designed to improve the level of instruction</p>	Meeting records
Teacher Performance	<p>Knowledge of curriculum Competence in pedagogy</p> <p>Professional attitude Effective teaching strategies</p>	<p>Student Test Scores Annual Administrative Staff/Self Evaluations, Peer Review Parent/Student Surveys</p>
Financial Solvency	No deficit in the operation budget	Annual Audit Forecast/Budget

The assessments and overall school evaluation will link quantitative data from state and school-developed assessments with more qualitative measures of student and school performance such as self-assessments, electronic portfolios, and measures of student conduct. Below is a descriptive list of some of the assessments of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

1. **CAT-6:** The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will administer the CAT-6 in compliance with state law. Results will inform instructional practices aligned with the school’s curriculum and expected student outcomes. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) results will also be utilized similarly.
2. **Teacher-Designed Tests:** Regularly administered tests and quizzes aligned with state content standards will assess students' mastery of core content area knowledge and skills. Grades will be assigned according to the established scale.
3. **Individualized Student Portfolios (ISP):** Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will use rubrics aligned with state standards to evaluate students’ work within their Individualized Student Portfolio (ISP). This includes essays and other assignments, assessing understanding of subject area concepts, and application of knowledge to authentic tasks.
4. **Written Qualitative Feedback:** Teachers, outside professionals, and peers will provide written and oral feedback to monitor student progress. This personalized feedback captures aspects of learning not covered by standard assessment tools.



5. **Student Self-Evaluation:** Students will evaluate their performance against state standards and personal learning goals using school-defined rubrics, fostering responsibility for their learning.

**Statistical Data for School Performance Evaluation:**

1. **Academic Performance Index (API):** API scores, both relative and absolute, will provide a snapshot of school performance.
2. **Average Daily Attendance (ADA):** ADA will serve as a benchmark for gauging school engagement with students and the community.
3. **Discipline Report:** Recording student misbehavior from tardiness to suspension, the discipline report will be monitored for trends and appropriate actions taken.

**The Infinity Community Audit Tool:** Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will utilize The Infinity Community Audit Tool for school-wide evaluation leading up to charter renewal. This longitudinal approach, beginning in the first year, will provide a consistent basis for future evaluations.

## **ELEMENT B: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL**

This section satisfies Education Code 47605(5)(D) which requires a description of: The governance structure of the school includes but is not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.

### **Public Operating Principles:**

- Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adhere to all federal and state laws and regulations applicable to charter schools.
- It will be non-sectarian in programs, admissions, employment practices, and all operations.
- The school will not charge tuition or discriminate based on a range of factors, including race, gender, marital status, disability, or age.

### **Legal Structure:**

- Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will establish itself as a California Public Benefit Corporation under California law, as specified in Education Code 47604(a).
- Charter amendments will undergo development and approval by the Board of Directors and legal counsel before submission to the Palmdale School District Board of Directors.

### **Duration of Initial Charter Period:**

- The initial charter period will be five years, beginning upon approval by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board and the Palmdale School Districts Board of Directors, and expiring on June 30, 3000.

### **Renewal Process/Timeline:**

- Charter renewal will follow the standards outlined in Education Code Section 47605. The renewal petition will be submitted by January 31st of the year the charter is scheduled to expire, adhering to the Palmdale School District policy.

## **Governance**

**Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences** plans to implement a school-based management process involving staff, administration, students, business leaders, and mentors from various community-based organizations, including churches, businesses, and police organizations. Parents will be encouraged to participate if available and willing.

The school-based management process promotes consensus. Governance at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be conducted through the Advisory Council and the Board of Directors of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. The Advisory Council aims to foster cooperation among teachers, students, school administrators, community-based mentors, and parents, ensuring the achievement of program goals and the development of the best possible education program for Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Advisory Council will be the Governing Council. Members will be elected from parent/mentor representatives, geographical zones described in the by-laws, faculty members, and representatives from the Board of Directors of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. A liaison from the Palmdale School District will also sit on the Advisory Council without voting rights. Sub-committees will be formed to develop policy and innovative programs and implement a strategic fundraising plan. The Governing Council will meet monthly during the first year and the first six months after the school begins operation. Afterward, the Council will meet three times a year, ensuring transparency in compliance with the Brown Act.

The specific duties of the Governing Council will be defined during the charter and school development phase and specified in the charter petition and By-Laws of the School. The Council is charged with assessing educational needs and establishing priorities to encourage each student to realize their maximum potential.

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors will govern and hold legal and fiduciary responsibility for the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. They will approve significant educational and operational policies, contracts over \$3,000, and the school's annual budget. The Board will oversee fiscal affairs, select and evaluate top administrative staff, and ensure effective organizational planning. Decision-making will strive for consensus, with majority voting prevailing according to nonprofit corporate law. The Board ensures the school operates consistently with its mission and goals.

The existing Board of Directors will designate all directors/board members. All directors will be selected at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, ensuring diverse community representation. Board members will include, but not be limited to, the Director (non-voting), Asst. Director (non-voting), faculty member, student, parents from elementary and middle school, community representative, legal representative, curriculum specialist representative, human resource representative, and one the Palmdale School District representative. A two-thirds vote of the Board may fill vacancies on the Board.

**Education Code Section 47604(b):** The Palmdale School District governing board shall be entitled to a single representative on the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors, as specified in Education Code Section 47604(b). However, under Education Code #47604(c), the Palmdale School District's representative presence on the Board does not make it liable for the debts or obligations of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

**Terms of Office:** The term of office for all members of the initial Board shall be one year. After the first year, the Board will provide for staggered terms of its directors, with approximately one-third having two-, four-, and six-year terms. Subsequent Directors' terms will continue for six years, except for current student and teacher representatives, whose terms shall be one year. The term of office for a director elected to fill a vacancy will begin on the date of the election and continue for the balance of the unexpired term or the term specified by the Board. A Director's term will not be shortened or extended beyond what is stipulated in the Bylaws or other Board action.

### **Removal of Directors:**

The Board can remove a director without cause, as stipulated by the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation law. A director may be removed for the following reasons:

- Failure to attend two or more of the Board's regularly scheduled meetings in any calendar year.
- Declaration of unsound mind by a final court order.
- The finding of a breach of duty by a final court order or judgment under the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law.
- Other worthy causes as determined by the Board.

### **How Board Decisions are Made:**

The Board shall consider no business if a quorum is not present. A quorum consists of the majority of the then-sitting voting directors. Decisions will be made by a majority vote (51% of the board members attending the meeting). Board meetings will adhere to Robert's Rules of Order and comply with the Brown Act. The Board members serve as the voices of stakeholder representatives in decision-making. A committee of the Board may make a decision authorized to act on behalf of the board on a matter in question. Directors shall not vote on issues involving self-dealing transactions, conflicts of interest, removal of that director, or any other matter at the discretion of the majority of directors present.

All non-closed Board session deliberations and documents will be announced and posted as a matter of public record in compliance with the Brown Act.

### **Advisory/Leadership Council:**

The Leadership Council ensures direct involvement in school decision-making. Comprising all stakeholders, it is responsible for developing the school plan, reviewing program implementation, and assessing its effectiveness in meeting benchmarks. Council members represent their respective groups, reporting to ensure decision-making reflects group needs. The Leadership Council includes:

1. Director of Operations and Director of Academic Affairs.
2. One faculty representative for each department.
3. One parent of an elementary school student.
4. One parent of a middle school student.

5. One classified staff representative.
6. Representatives from each School Support Committee.

A Leadership Council representative will be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors for effective communication across the governance structure.

### **School Support Committee:**

**School Support Committees** are operational groups strategizing on implementing the Leadership Council's recommendations. Committees will send proposals to the Leadership Council through their representatives and welcome students, parents, and community members. The committees may include:

1. Curriculum Support Services
2. Facilities Support Services
3. Student Support Services
4. Staff Support Services
5. Community/Parent Support Services
6. Technology Support Services

### **Process to Ensure Parental Involvement:**

Creating a small learning community, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors comprises parents, community members, and stakeholders. Increased parental involvement is seen as key to student achievement. Parent involvement and the inclusion of the parent voice will be ensured in the following ways:

- The formation of a monthly parent committee to discuss school issues and policies.
- Parent-teacher meetings are held at least four times per year for communication among parents, teachers, administration, and students, tracking student progress, and developing interventions.
- Encouragement for parents/guardians to form committees for planning events and fundraisers, reviewing curriculum and policies, and other areas of interest.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide at least three hours of service per month or equivalent, including classroom assistance, tutoring, translating, supervision, communications, facilitation, and clerical support.
- Open lines of communication maintained with parents, with teachers available for additional conferences as needed.

**Process to Ensure Teacher Involvement:**

Staff members present themselves professionally and as mentors to students. Each staff member works with small groups of students, focusing on mastering skills and content. Teacher involvement is ensured through the following:

- Election of a single teacher representative to serve on the Board of Directors annually, acting as a communications liaison and voting member, abstaining from salary-related votes.

**Process to Ensure Student Involvement:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences aims to foster strong relationships among students, teachers, and parents/guardians through an extensive mentoring and advisory program. Students can provide input on school policies and curriculum through:

- Assignment of students in grades fourth to eighth to advisory groups, meeting monthly, headed by an appointed student and overseen by an adult, parent/guardian, or community member.
- Mentoring sessions to ensure students are performing well and on track for graduation.
- Student representatives consulted in developing the student contract, school dress code, and student rules and attendance requirements.
- Monthly student assemblies for information dissemination and discussions, with student presentations and involvement in decision-making processes.

**Process to Ensure Community Involvement:**

Representatives from the business community and Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences community partners will serve as voting members of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors. The Executive Director, staff, and Board of Directors will actively seek community partnerships that enhance the instructional program and support the school's vision and goals.

External partnerships and resources, when appropriate, will be explored and negotiated during the proposal phase. These may include:

- Access Books: Improving school libraries by refurbishing them and providing quality, exciting books.
- Screen Actors Guild (SAG): Instructing students to compose their 6-chapter book, published and illustrated by the students themselves.

- Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Theatre Company: Inspiring students through creative writing, music, drama, and various performance projects.
- A Crystal Path Team Mentoring, Inc.: Providing enrichment programs focusing on team building, leadership development, and community services.
- Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Youth in Theater, Dance, and Music: Multi-cultural productions training youth in artistic and acting skills.
- Laity All Sports and Training: Providing youth, health, team sports, plyometric training, and nutrition education.
- Summit Youth Adventures (SYA): Offering adventure programs, including team building, ropes courses, rock climbing, and educational expeditions.
- Los Angeles Zoo and Long Beach Aquarium: Facility visits to reinforce understanding of organisms and challenge the use of animals for entertainment.
- California Science Center: Direct activities stimulate interest in science, math, and technology.
- Project Pyramid: Empowerment and enrichment program centered on parent and student participation, focusing on math/science.
- On the Right Course, Inc.: Providing individualized sports and stress reduction programs, including Tai Chi, Yoga, Golf, Tennis, and Martial Arts.

### **Severability:**

The terms of this charter contract are severable. If any provision is unenforceable or invalid under relevant statutes, the remainder of the charter shall remain in effect. The Palmdale School District and the Board of Directors of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will meet to discuss and resolve any issues relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good-faith fashion by dispute resolution procedures outlined in the charter.

### **Indemnification:**

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold the Palmdale School District, its officers, employees, and agents harmless from and against all claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings arising from the charter agreement. This includes claims relating to acts or omissions committed by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will defend any claims brought against it by any person or entity.

### **Liability of District/County:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, a California Public Benefit Corporation, relieves the Palmdale School District of liability for handling payments in case of default.

**Liability/Insurance/Legal:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will secure and maintain insurance to protect from claims arising from its operations, including:

- Workers' Compensation Insurance: By the California Labor Code.
- Comprehensive Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability: Coverage not less than \$5,000,000 for each occurrence.
- Fidelity Bond Coverage: To cover employees managing school funds, supplies, equipment, or other assets, with a minimum coverage of \$50,000 per occurrence.

**Insurance Certificates:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall provide the Palmdale School District with certificates of insurance signed by an authorized representative of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

- Insurance shall not be suspended, canceled, reduced in coverage, or non-renewed without thirty (30) days prior written notice to the district.
- Facsimile or reproduced signatures will not be acceptable.
- The County or the Palmdale School District reserves the right to require complete certified copies of the necessary insurance policies.

**The Palmdale School District and Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Operational Agreements:**

All services requested by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences from the Palmdale School District will be fee-for-service. Agreed-upon fees must be in place before the requested service. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences retains the right to negotiate contracts with outside contractors if it is in the school's best interest.

**Legal:**

According to California law, Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will constitute itself as a California Public Benefit Corporation, as outlined in Education Code #47604(a). The school will be governed by bylaws adopted by the incorporators and subsequently amended following the specified amendment process.

Charter amendments will be developed, voted upon by the Board of Directors, and reviewed by legal counsel before submission to the Palmdale School District for approval.

The Executive Director, along with the Assistant Director, will oversee day-to-day administration. An outsourced financial services company will provide business and financial



administration, including compliant financial accounting, cash flow management, accounts payable/receivable, and payroll. The company will work under the supervision of the Executive Director and the Board of Directors to maintain fiscal health, providing regular financial updates during board meetings.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will have a lean administrative structure. Credentialed staff members will teach, and an on-staff Academic Administrator will oversee pedagogy and instruction. Rotating teacher committees will manage discipline, policy development, student assessments, and professional development. Lead and Master Teachers will manage grade-level and subject-level academic affairs/curriculum development. The approach aims to distribute administrative duties to staff, eliminating the need for departments.

Outside professionals will assist core teachers during the day, allowing lead teachers to focus on daily curriculum development.

## **ELEMENT C: QUALIFICATIONS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS**

This section satisfies Education Code #47605(b)(5)(E), which requires a description of: The qualification is to be met by individuals employed by the school, including the credentials held by the teachers.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to hiring, training, and retaining staff who demonstrate a passion for children, education, and community and have received a certificate in the Infinity Community Solutions, Inc. STEAM Audit Tool and Passion Project Training curriculum. We will recruit self-motivated people who excel in their respective fields and academic subjects, have proven experience in contributing to positive student outcomes, possess cross-cultural child development competency, commit to ongoing professional development, work well as team members to contribute to the mission of the school, and participate in community and professional associations. Consistent with the school's mission and demographic makeup, efforts will be made to create a bilingual, multicultural staff.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will retain or employ teaching staff that hold appropriate California Teaching Certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These teachers will teach the core academic classes of mathematics, language arts, science, history, and social studies. These teachers will oversee the student's academic progress and monitor grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the school's operational policies.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may also employ or retain non-certificated instructional support staff where a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity. Instructional staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without a teacher's approval except in non-core courses and activities.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will seek administrative and operational staff that has demonstrated experience or expertise in the issues and work tasks required and will be provided professional development opportunities to ensure that they remain abreast of all relevant changes in laws or other operational requirements. All non-instructional staff will possess experience and expertise appropriate for their position within the school as outlined in the school's staffing plan and personnel policies.

Before the first day of work, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will require that each employee and volunteer of the school submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal of Director based on proven experience in educational leadership, educational vision for record summary as required by Education Code Section 44327. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adhere to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person convicted of a severe or violent felony. Each employee must furnish a Mantoux T.B. test clearance and documents for U.S. employment authorization. Food Services staff is hired, a medical clearance is required to obtain a Food Handler's Certificate.

## **Director**

The Founding Board of Directors will select a director on an application and interview basis. Selection experience with low-income and minority children demonstrated ability in program design and development, business management, fundraising experience, and commitment to educational reform.

### **The Director will have the following attributes and credentials.**

- A proven background in running one or more small to medium sized businesses at the C-suite level either as a startup or as a hire into a established business structure with a Master's in Business Administration. Preferably an Executive Master of Business Administration Degree.
- Excellence and leadership in curriculum and instruction at the classroom and school level. Strong organizational and interpersonal skills. A proven history of experience in education settings and in business "startup" efforts.
- Demonstrated management and leadership skills, including fiscal management skills, strong public and institutional relations skills, and the ability to lead and work with a board of directors.
- Excellence and leadership in curriculum and instruction at the classroom and school level. Strong organizational and interpersonal skills. A proven history of experience in education settings and in "startup efforts."
- Demonstrated management and leadership skills, including fiscal management skills, strong public and institutional relations skills, and the ability to lead and work with a board of directors.

## **Teachers**

The teaching staff of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences teaching staff of the core academic areas, will hold appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These teachers will teach the core and have experience in language, science, geography, history, mathematics, art, music, physical education, and community field trip experiences.

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will also hold certificates from the Infinity Community Solutions, Inc. Audit Tool Program for STEAM. These teachers will oversee the student's academic progress and monitor grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the schools' operational policies. The Academic Affairs Director will monitor such documentation and will be kept on file at the school subject to periodic inspection by the Palmdale School District.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences recognizes that credentials are requirements, and additional hiring considerations will be based on whether the teacher possesses an academic

degree in the subject being taught, has mastered the subject, and can convey it to the students in an understandable manner.

The administrative staff will select the teachers on an application and interview basis. The selection of teachers will be based on teaching experience, credentials, and subject matter expertise.

Teacher's responsibilities include:

- Preparing and implementing lesson plans that lead to student understanding of curriculum content.
- Communication with parents, students, and other community members.
- Assessing student progress and maintaining accurate records. Regular participation in professional development.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may also employ or retain non-certified instructional support staff if a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instruction support capacity. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve preparatory courses and activities (i.e., music, drama, and dance). All non-instructional staff will possess experience and expertise appropriate for their position as outlined in the school's staffing plan and adopted personnel policies.

Core subject's teacher qualifications:

- Valid teaching certificate, permit, or other document issued by the Commission on Teaching Credentialing.
- Certification to teach the STEAM Method of Learning.
- Expertise in the core subject they want to teach.
- Evidence of successful classroom teaching experience.
- Ability to work in a team environment and a willingness to embrace the school's educational focus.
- Willingness to take responsibility and exercise leadership for the school.

Non-core subject teaching staff qualifications:

- Expertise and practical experience in the field of instruction.
- Experience in teaching the STEAM Method.

- Experience working with and instructing diverse groups of people.
- Ability to work in a team environment and a willingness to embrace the school's educational focus.

### **Administrative Assistant**

The Administrative Assistant to the Director will manage office operations, assist with accounts payable, invoice reconciliation, personnel and payroll issues, purchase office and classroom supplies, develop/implement administrative procedures for daily school operations, prepare correspondence, reports, bulletins, files, forms, and memorandums, coordinate the publishing of school newsletters and updating the website.

### **Qualifications**

Applicants who have previously worked as an administrative assistant or in an office management capacity possess the following skills.

- Bilingual (Spanish English) is strongly preferred.
- Ability to coordinate multiple projects and meet deadlines in a challenging environment.
- Manage long-term assignments by organizing and prioritizing work.
- Knowledge of standard operating policies.
- Clerical and administrative support background.
- Organizational skills.
- Ability to work in a diverse environment.

The Administrative Assistant will provide direct administrative support. Under the direction of the Director, will also be responsible for overall front office administration, enrollment of new students, and ongoing maintenance of student records and databases.

### **The Board will evaluate the administrative staff on:**

- Overall student academic achievement.
- Maintaining a fiscally sound charter, including a balanced budget
- Maintaining an anti-bias atmosphere that is inclusive, nurturing, cooperative, and innovative.
- Completion of required job duties.

- Maintaining a safe, clean, aesthetically pleasing facility.
- Compliance with the Palmdale School District and other legal requirements.
- Overall leadership ability and contribution to the school mission.
- High stakeholder involvement.
- Effective communication with all stakeholders.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development, including knowledge of academic best practices and cross-cultural child development.

### **Administrators**

New administrators, excluding the position of School Director, shall be recruited and interviewed by a committee of teachers and approved by a super-majority (60%) of all full-time teaching staff. Following the teacher's vote, a simple majority approval of the Board of Directors of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be required to finalize the process.

### **Selection of Teachers**

New teacher candidates shall be interviewed and selected by the Chief Education Officer (School Director), the Master Teachers (pedagogic leaders of core subjects), and the grade-level Lead Teacher.

### **Qualifications**

All employees must have potential or demonstrated effectiveness in working with students and parents from diverse backgrounds. They must be willing to take on responsibility and exercise leadership for the school. They must have an educational vision consistent with the school's mission and educational program.

All classified candidates must read, sign, and comply with the Palmdale School District's legal requirements, policies, and Rules for Classified Employees.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may also employ or retain qualified, non-certified instructional support staff to serve in an instructional support capacity. These employees will have an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and a demonstrated ability to work successfully in the instructional support role. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without a teacher's approval except in non-core courses and activities.

### **Assessment**

The teachers and staff will take part in ongoing assessments. The school Director, lead teachers, and expert teachers will perform at least bi-yearly assessments with all the teachers. Each teaching team will perform their own internal evaluations on a quarterly basis. More frequent

assessments may be performed as needed. The lead teachers and expert teachers will be responsible for monitoring teacher performance between the bi-yearly assessments.

At the end of each school year, the school Director, lead, and expert teachers will perform a year-end evaluation of all the teachers, incorporating student performance and student evaluations. Suppose a teacher consistently underperforms based on a series of negative assessments over a year. In that case, the teacher will be put on probation for one semester. If the teacher does not improve by the end of the semester, the teacher may be let go by the staff based on the recommendation of the school director, lead, and expert teachers.

## **ELEMENT D: SAFETY PROCEDURES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5) (F), which requires a description of the school's procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require that each school employee furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Education Code #44237. The guidelines shall also address safe housing and employee clearance for tuberculosis.

### **Policies**

Before commencing instruction, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies will be incorporated as appropriate into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed continuously in the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies. These policies will be developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and, at a minimum, will address the following topics:

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adhere to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person convicted of a severe or violent felony. Each employee must furnish a Mantoux T.B. test clearance and documents for U.S. employment authorization. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will require that each school employee submit a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237.

A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free workplace. In addition to providing students with substance abuse education, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will maintain a drug, tobacco, and alcohol-free environment through intervention and disciplinary action. Any student found in possession of or under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco will be disciplined according to the school policy. Any student found selling drugs or alcohol will be expelled from the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

Teachers and staff at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be mandated reporters for suspected child abuse. The procedure for each mandated individual will be to file a report within 36 hours of first becoming aware of a suspected case of child abuse. The information will be filed with either the Police Department's Child Abuse Unit or the Department of Children and Family Services. The mandated individual will meet the appropriate authorities accordingly. Staff will receive in-service training and sign a document verifying notification and understanding regarding this responsibility.

A policy requires that instructional and administrative staff receive first responder emergency response training. Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens. Guidelines and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes. Policies for responding to emergencies on field trips.



## **Procedures-Safe School Plan**

**Prescription Drugs.** Parents must bring prescription medication in the original containers with the prescribing physician's name, the student's name, and the dispensing instructions. Parents will complete the appropriate authorization form to administer medications. Medications will be stored in a locked cabinet or refrigerated as needed. Designated staff will log times for administering medications for each student and dispense accordingly. In the case of long-term prescriptions, designated staff will attempt to provide parents with one week's notice to alert them that additional medication is needed.

### **Disaster Drills (e.g., earthquake)**

A seismic engineer will inspect the facility in which Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences resides, and the fire safety marshal and the school will keep current required inspections and permits.

Disaster drills will be conducted regularly. Students will be made familiar with the “duck and cover” technique. A disaster drill commencing with the “duck and cover” routine will be an announcement by the administration. Staff and students will hear, “This is an emergency drill. Duck and cover.” During this drill, the teachers will turn off lights and get students under a desk or table or against the wall away from the windows. Students must remain quiet and orderly to hear additional instructions when given. All drills will be concluded with an “all clear” announcement or a visible signal from the administrative staff.

In the case of a real earthquake, everyone must engage in the “duck and cover” technique immediately and remain in position until the teacher determines that it is safe to leave the building. If remaining in the room becomes dangerous, or when the shaking stops, teachers will proceed with their students to the evacuation site or another safety zone. If students are on the playground or other outdoor area when a disaster drill is called or during an actual earthquake, they are to drop immediately to the ground, away from trees and power lines, and cover their heads with their hands. They are to remain in that position until given additional instructions.

In the case of disasters other than earthquakes, the administrative staff will contact each room, advise staff of potential dangers, and give further directions or orders. Teachers and students will remain in their classrooms until instructions are received for an all-clear or an evacuation.

For safety purposes, no one is to leave the rooms. If there has been a chemical spill, the teacher must make sure that all doors, windows, and vents remain closed. The school site maintenance staff will turn off the gas. All unassigned staff will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other communal areas, including outdoor facilities.

Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an earthquake or other national disaster, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the administrative staff.

## **Fire**

Fire drills will be held at least twice a semester. Office personnel will maintain a record of fire drills held and the total required time for complete evacuation. When the fire drill signal sounds, teachers will lead the students in their rooms along the route indicated on the evacuation map posted for that purpose. Before leaving the room, teachers will see that all windows and doors are closed and that they have their class attendance roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the fire drill signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for the purpose of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take student roll ensuring that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the office personnel, and the designated staff will attempt to locate them. Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the administrative staff gives the “all clear” signal.

## **Evacuation Plan**

Whenever the administrative staff has determined that the Institute must be evacuated, the designated personnel will verify the name and position of the person placing the alert. Once confirmed, school personnel will give the evacuation code word “safe school drill” at a designated time. Teachers will proceed with their students to the nearest exit indicated on the evacuation map posted for this purpose. Before leaving the room, teachers will make sure they have their class roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for purposes of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Prior to evacuation, offices, bathrooms, and all other communal areas, including outdoor facilities, will be searched by unassigned staff members designated by the administrative staff. Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to ensure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to office personnel, and an individual will be assigned the task of finding them. Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency.

In the event of an evacuation, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the administrative staff. Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the administrative staff gives the “all clear” signal.

In the event students cannot return to the school site, the administrative staff will notify parents and/or the media as to where the students can be picked up. The office personnel will sign out students as they are being picked up by the parent or other adult listed on the emergency information card. Parents will be asked to remain in a designated area, and students will be escorted to the designated area for release. An emergency map will be posted in each room and will contain the following information and locations:

- Student/staff assembly areas – inside and outside the building. Emergency Student/staff evacuation routes
- Incident Command Center
- Search and Rescue Routes
- Utility Shut-off locations.
- Fire hoses and extinguishers
- First aid center
- Hazardous materials storage areas Emergency toilet facilities
- Emergency food, water, and blankets. Emergency equipment – flashlights, etc.

### **Other Disasters, including in the case of a School Shooter**

In the case of disasters other than earthquakes and fires, the administrative staff will contact each room, advise staff of potential dangers, and give further instructions. Teachers and students will remain in their classrooms until instructions are received of an “all clear” or an evacuation (unless the teacher perceives that the immediate threat of remaining is greater than leaving to evacuate to the safety zone). No one is to leave the rooms. If there has been a chemical spill, the teacher must make sure that all doors, windows, and vents remain closed. In the case of a school shooter, the designated staff will turn off the gas. All unassigned staff will report to the office or other pre-designated spot for assignments such as clearing offices, bathrooms, and all other communal areas, including outdoor facilities. Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an earthquake or national disaster, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the administrative staff.

### **Bomb Threats or School Shooter**

All bomb threats will be taken seriously and at face value. The person receiving the call or letter will note the time of day, wording of the message, background noises, and quality of the voice to try to determine if it is a young child or an adult. This person will delay the caller as long as possible while they alert another adult to the crisis. The adult will immediately notify the telephone company to trace the call and, immediately thereafter, notify the police using 911.

The school will be evacuated, and designated personnel will coordinate information requests to law enforcement and/or fire department officials and parents. The school will remain evacuated until law enforcement and/or fire department officials have deemed it safe to return. Students and school staff will not be allowed back in until the site is officially cleared.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall employ a part-time nurse who will oversee and supervise 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 the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

Prior to the commencement of instruction, the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and, at a minimum, will address the following topics:

Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes, based on the guidelines set forth by the Palmdale School District. Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.

A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response once per year, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent

Storage of water, food, and first aid supplies for three days as outlined in the Palmdale School District emergency preparedness bulletin.

Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.

A policy that the independent learning center will be housed in facilities that have received Fire Marshal approval and have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard.

A policy that the school location and facility will be investigated, inspected, and evaluated to determine that it is free from environmental hazards.

A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free workplace.

A policy mandating that all teachers and staff at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences report suspected child abuse in accordance with California State Law reporting procedures.

These policies will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies.

In addition, the school will participate in the Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program to help stop substance abuse in students before it begins.

### School Safety

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will maintain a Safe School Plan in accordance with California State Law.

### Facilities

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will lease property located **TO BE DETERMINED** within Los Angeles County, Supervisorial District 5. The Palmdale School District will approve the final property and facilities and will comply with Uniform Building Codes, federal American Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health, and structural safety codes. This property will be used as the home base for the Institute.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will inform the Palmdale School District about the location of its independent learning center and administrative offices by May 1, 2025, for the 2025 – 2026 school year. If Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences cannot open for enrollment by May 1, 2025, it will begin as a Distance Learning Charter School under sponsorship by the Palmdale School District.

### Affirmative Action Policy

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences has a policy of hiring the most able, energetic teachers possible. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences believes it is of considerable value to its students and the community at large to employ a diverse teaching staff and will make thorough efforts to ensure a broad range of backgrounds and cultures among its employees.

## **ELEMENT E: MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL/ETHNIC BALANCE REFLECTING THE DISTRICT AND ITS ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(%) (G), which requires a description of:

The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is committed to maintaining a diverse student body and will take the following steps to achieve a racial, ethnic, and gender balance that is reflective of the Palmdale School District as a whole.

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will recruit a socio-economically, racially, and academically heterogeneous group of students from across the community of the Antelope Valley. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall attempt to achieve a stable pupil population that represents the racial and ethnic diversity of the area that the Antelope Valley covers. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences start-up budget allows for an extensive community outreach program to disseminate multi-language information and brochures about enrollment in the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences to all students in school districts within the Antelope Valley area. Outreach meetings will be conducted throughout the Antelope Valley area by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences staff and school community partners in Spanish and English.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will publicize enrollment timelines and enrollment process, utilizing local newspapers, radio, churches, synagogues, mosques, social and fraternal organizations, and community-based organizations. This will allow for a broad-based recruiting and application process, including parent orientations.

The Laity Institute of Arts and Sciences Director will meet with community leaders from different racial and cultural backgrounds to enlist their support and advice in recruitment.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will conduct outreach through civic-oriented community organizations (Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, etc.) in the Antelope Valley to seek parents and students interested in becoming socially and environmentally responsible leaders, lifelong, initiative-taking learners who can access their creativity, make healthy choices, and embrace diversity.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences plans to achieve this racial and ethnic balance stated above by continuing outreach efforts by distributing information and related materials to community meetings, public housing, neighborhood meeting areas, religious institutions, and other areas where diverse families might be reached.

**Title One Funds and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

By current federal legislation and Every Student Succeeds, the school will have 182 days of instruction. (ESSA) In total, the school will have 182 days of instruction. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may receive Title 1 funding based on students' eligibility. Expenditures of Title 1 funds will conform to all guidelines, rules, and regulations about the spending of such funds as outlined in Every Student Succeeds (ESSA).

## **ELEMENT F: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5) (H), which requires a description of:

### **Admission Requirement**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will not discriminate against any student based on race, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. By Education Code Section 476045(5) (H), the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall admit all students who wish to attend up to the school's enrollment limit. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be non-sectarian and non-discriminatory in all areas of operation and will not charge tuition.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will recruit a diverse population of students residing within the community of the Antelope Valley: those who are enrolled in private/parochial schools, students and families who are not currently happy with their public school options, and families who understand and value our mission and are committed to our instructional and operational philosophy. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences recruitment strategy will target students directly, announcing the program through after-school programs and sports activities by placing advertisements in the local papers. It will receive recommendations from teachers and counselors of students who would benefit from the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences model. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will outreach to students throughout Palmdale, Lancaster, Quartz Hill, and the communities that lie within the 2,625 square miles of the Antelope Valley.

As part of the application process, students and parents or guardians will be expected to attend an orientation session to learn more about the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences educational program. The application process will involve parents and students interested in enrolling in Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, who will meet with Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences personnel to discuss their reasons for seeking admission. The orientation is not designed to disqualify an applicant. Still, the requirement helps to ensure that families and their children are seriously interested in attending the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

- The school will give admissions priority to the following students:
- The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences School project Founding Families, not to exceed 20%
- Children or wards of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Staff
- Siblings of students currently enrolled or wards of their parents
- Residents of Palmdale, Lancaster, Quartz Hill, and the communities within the 2,625 square miles of the Antelope Valley.
- Youth referred to Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences by the Palmdale School District

Suppose the number of applicants exceeds enrollment capacity at the application deadline. In that case, students will be admitted to the school through a public random lottery or placed on a waiting list (respecting the admissions priorities stated above). Siblings of children whose names are drawn will automatically be given the next enrollment slot to help keep families together.



Parents and students admitted to the school are expected to attend an orientation session to review the policies and expectations of the school. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will work to ensure that all families understand these policies and expectations and know how to be involved in the school's operations and decision-making process. Each family will be given a handbook that includes the rules and regulations of the school.

### **Admission Requirements**

Admission policies are under the purview of the Board of Directors. As noted above, students and their parents/guardians must complete an application and submit it directly to the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. All students will be required to attend an orientation before the opening of the school year. Parents and students must sign an agreement that they will abide by the school policies on academics, attendance, and conduct. According to California State Education Code 47605 (d)(2), a public random drawing shall be used when admissions requests exceed the available space. To build a sense of community, the Board of Directors may consider on an annual basis the issuance of special permits (e.g., continuing enrollment, children of staff, siblings of students, etc.) based on available space and provided that these permits are consistent with the school's obligation not to determine admission to the school base on geographic place of residence of the pupil or their parents/guardians.

## **ELEMENT G: INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDIT**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code 47605(5)(1), which requires a description of the manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and how audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will retain the services of an independent public accountant certified by the State of California to audit the school's financial statements per GAAP (accepted accounting principles). The audit will verify the accuracy of all Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences financial statements, attendance, and enrollment accounting practices and will review Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences internal controls. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in any relevant Office of Management and Budget Circulars. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within four months of the close of the fiscal year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the chief financial officer of the Palmdale School District, the LA county superintendent, California Department of Education, and the State Controller. The Laity Institute of Arts and Sciences audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will report to the Palmdale School District regarding how the abnormalities and deficiencies have been or will be fixed to the satisfaction of the Palmdale School District.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will compile and provide the Palmdale School District with an annual performance report. This report will, at minimum, include the following data:

Summary data showing student progress toward the goals and outcomes specified in Element B from assessment instruments and techniques listed in Element C.

An analysis of whether student performance meets the goals specified in Element B. This data will be displayed on both a school-wide basis and disaggregated by major racial ethnic and language categories to the extent feasible without comprising student confidentiality.

A summary of major decisions and policies established by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors during the year, including any changes in the Board's composition.

Data on parent involvement in the school's governance and volunteer programs and summary data from an annual parent and student satisfaction survey.

Data regarding the number of staff working at the school and their qualifications.

A copy of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences health and safety policies and a summary of any significant changes to those policies during the year.

Information demonstrating whether the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences implemented the means listed in charter Element G to achieve a racially and ethnically balanced student population.

An overview of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences admissions practices during the year and data regarding the number of students enrolled on waiting lists and the number of students expelled and suspended.

Analyses of the effectiveness of the school's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of disputes and complaints.

Other information regarding the educational program, staff development, and the school's administrative, legal, and governance operation relative to compliance with the terms of the charter.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will seek input from the Palmdale School District as it continues to design an accountability system for the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, including submitting an annual programmatic audit report. The Palmdale School District will request reasonable information from the charter school as part of its oversight responsibility.

## **ELEMENT H: DISCIPLINE POLICY SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5) (J), which requires a description of the procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled (and a description of any appeal process).

The approach of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is to lead the child toward self-discipline. We try to avoid spending unnecessary time responding or reacting to behavior problems. The STEAM method addresses the need to effect change toward positive behavior through lesson planning or teaching. Another famous quote by a STEAM Educator and The Passion Project Director is, "The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others, not by being told he is naughty." Discipline is, therefore, primarily a learning experience and less a punitive experience if appropriately dealt with.

At the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, the child's opinion is respected, and they are asked to share their views. Children want to follow the rules if the adult clearly defines the rules and then invites the child to assume responsibility for their behavior. Taking responsibility for behavior is to understand and accept the consequences of violating rules.

All students and their families will receive a handbook, including school rules and students' rights to appeal. A written remediation plan will clearly describe progressive discipline measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum/maximum number of consecutive days, and provision for student's education while suspended. Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of others may be suspended or expelled.

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section and related to school activity or school attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

During, or while attending, or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.

### **Discipline Procedures and Possible Consequences**

First Offense: The teacher redirects the child to other work material.

Second Offense: The teacher explains or reviews class or school rules.

Third Offense: The teacher personally communicates the problem with the child's parent(s)

Fourth Offense: The teacher again communicates the problem with the child's parent (s).  
The teacher applies appropriate consequences.

Fifth Offense: The administrator reviews with the teacher what future disciplinary steps will be taken from the office.

Continuing Situation: The administrator will communicate the problem to the parent(s) and apply appropriate consequences.

### Reasons for Suspension

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may suspend a student for any of the following reasons, including but not limited to any of the next:

- Caused, attempted to drive, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another.
- Possess, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object; Unlawfully possess, used, sold, or otherwise provided, or been under the influence of any controlled substance.
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any product containing tobacco or nicotine products in any form; Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.
- They knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- He/She possessed an imitation firearm.

### Appeal of Suspension/Expulsion

The suspension or expulsion of a student will be at the direction of the Director. A parent/guardian may appeal to the Board of Directors against a student's expulsion within five (5) working days. The student will be considered suspended until the appeal hearing and a decision is rendered. The Board of Directors will convene a meeting to hear the appeal within ten (10) days of the suspension/expulsion. A parent/guardian must attend to present their request. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors will hear the appeal. An appeal hearing includes the Director, the student's parent, teachers, and any other pertinent person, including counsel for the parent/child. The decision of the panel of representatives of the Boards of Directors will be final.

In the event of a decision to expel a student from the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county, and private schools to assist with the placement of the student who has been expelled. Any severe and violent behavior incident will be communicated to the district/school where the student matriculates.

**Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities will not be disciplined in a manner inconsistent with IDEA and state special education. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will obey all the IDEA requirements for special education.

## **ELEMENT I: RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code # 47605(5) (K), which requires a description of:

How will charter school staff members be covered by the Staff Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal society security?

Staff at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will participate in the federal social security system except as delineated below and will have access to other school-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the board of directors and adopted as the school's employee policies. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences retains the option for its board to elect to have Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences teachers and staff participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) and/or Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and coordinate such participation as appropriate, with the social security system or other reciprocal systems in the future should the board find that participation enables the school to attract and retain a higher quality staff.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences anticipates that its board will elect all eligible teachers and staff to participate in STRS. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences further expects that staff members not suitable for STRS will participate in Social Security and can elect to participate in a school-sponsored 403(b) plan. If the school should join the STRS or PERS systems, the Palmdale School District shall cooperate as necessary to forward any required payroll deductions and related data. The school shall pay the district a reasonable fee for such services.

### **Mandatory Benefits for all Full-Time Staff Members**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will provide mandatory benefits by the law. These include:

- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Unemployment Insurance
- Medicare
- Social Security (if applicable)

### **STRS**

All full-time certified employees of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences can contribute to STRS. The employees will contribute the required percentage, and the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will contribute the employer's portion. All withholdings from employees and the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be forwarded to the STRS fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS.

**PERS**

All classified employees of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences can contribute to PERS. All withholdings will be forwarded to the PERS fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of PERS.

Certified, classified, and other staff members at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall retain all previously vested rights in their respective retirement systems, including buy-out not limited to STRS, PERS, and the social security system.

**Health Benefits**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will provide a health and wellness stipend to all full-time employees at a level the Board of Directors determines.

**Salary Schedule**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will establish salary schedules based on employee preparation and experience. The Salary schedule will be reviewed on an annual basis. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will adopt the salary schedule of the Palmdale School District in its first year but reserves the right to explore options in developing a performance-based system for salary allocation in the future.

**Illness/Personal Days**

These contract terms include accrued illness days for long-term illness and childbirth leaves exceeding 20 days. Upon exhaustion of illness/personal days granted by the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, employees may access their condition/personal necessity days.

Certificated and classified employees will earn illness/release days each school year at a rate to be determined by the Board of Directors before the start of school.

**Vacation Days**

Qualifying certificated and classified employees will receive the same number of earned vacation days per bargaining contract terms for the initial year of operation but reserves the right to develop their own plan.

All employees on charter school leave who have accrued vacation days with the charter school will keep their accumulated vacation balance with the Palmdale School District's vacation bank.

**Paid Legal Holidays**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will offer the same legal holidays the Palmdale School District offers.



**Workdays**

All teachers at the school will be required to be at the school during school hours, which will mirror the Palmdale School Districts school hours in the first year.

**Process for resolving Complaints and Grievances and Due Process**

Suppose a staff member has a complaint or grievance. In that case, he or she may approach the director directly with their concern or voice their concern through the teacher committee representative on the board, who will take the issue to the director or board as appropriate. Suppose the staff member is unsatisfied with the resolution. In that case, the teacher may escalate the matter directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors and ask for a closed or open session hearing of the issue at the next board meeting.

## **ELEMENT J: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5)(L), which requires a description of:

The public-school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is a school of choice. No student is required to attend, and no person is required to work at the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. Students do not have to live within the attendance area of the Palmdale School District to attend the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. Alternatives to Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences for these students living within the Palmdale School District attendance area who opt not to attend the charter school will be the same as those offered to all other students currently residing in the Palmdale School District. These students may participate in other district schools or pursue an inter-district transfer by existing enrollment and transfer policies of the Palmdale School District or the county of residence.

## **ELEMENT K: RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES**

This section lets the requirements of Education Code #47605 (5) (M), which requires:  
A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, any rights of return to the school district after engagement at a charter school.

If hired, staff will be at-will. Any Palmdale District employee offered employment and chooses to work at Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will not have reemployment rights with the district.

## **ELEMENT L: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5) (N), which requires a description of The process to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes related to provisions of the charter.

Charter school/chartering authority dispute resolution

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to:

- Resolve disputes within the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences under the schools' policies.
- Minimize the oversight burden on the Palmdale School District.
- Ensure a fair and timely resolution of disputes.
- Frame a charter renewal process and timeline to avoid disputes regarding renewal.

### **Disputes arising within the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences**

Disputes arising from within the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences, the Board of Directors, and administrative staff will resolve all conflicts among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and school governing board members. The Palmdale School District will not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the Board of Directors of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. It will refer any complaints or reports regarding such disputes to the Board or administrative staff of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences for resolution. The Palmdale School District agrees not to intervene or become involved in the dispute unless the dispute has given the district reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related laws or agreements has occurred. The Board of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences may also request that the Palmdale School District intervene in the dispute.

Disputes between Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences and the Palmdale School District  
The staff and governing board members of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences and the Palmdale School District agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter under the terms of this section. Both will refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute-resolution process. Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement shall be handled first through an informal process by the following procedures.

- (1) Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising from or relating to the charter agreement, or 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 by personal delivery, facsimile, or certified mail. The Written Notification 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. Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To: Charter School: Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences  
3053 Rancho Vista Blvd. STE H336  
Palmdale, CA 93551- 3577

Palmdale School District  
39139 10th St. East  
Palmdale, CA 93550

- (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 occur within fifteen (15) business days from the date the other party receives the Written Response. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, facsimile, or certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered upon the date of the 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 controversy, claim, or dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, then either party may request that the matter be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediators’ fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 60 days of the date of the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon selecting a mediator to resolve the controversy or claim at dispute. The mediator must be selected from the approved list of mediators the American Arbitration Association prepared. Mediation proceedings must be administered by the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association.
- (4) If mediation is unsuccessful, then the parties agree to settle the controversy, claim, or dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator by the rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the California State Bar or a retired judge of California's state or federal judiciary. Any arbitration award rendered shall be final, binding, and legally enforceable upon all parties. Judgment of any arbitration award may be entered in any court having proper jurisdiction. Each party shall bear its costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator’s fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties.

- (5) Any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration shall bear all costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy, claim, or dispute.
- (6) Either party's failure to comply with the prescribed timelines outlined in Paragraphs One and Two of this Section shall result in the parties proceeding with mediation. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 160 days from the date the Written Notification was tendered.

### Terms and Renewal

This charter for the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be for a term of five years. The time will begin on July 1, 2025, and expire on June 30, 3000. The Palmdale School District may renew the charter for subsequent five-year terms.

### Reasons for Expulsion

Students may be expelled from the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences for reasons including but not limited to the following:

- Causing serious physical injury to another person.
- Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object
- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- Robbery or Extortion.
- Assault or battery upon any student or school employee.

### Process for Suspension and Expulsion

The following steps will be taken in the event of a suspension or an expulsion:

- (1) Informal conference. Suspension will be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the administrative staff, with the student and the student parent. The conference may be omitted if the administrative staff determines that an emergency exists. An emergency involves a clear and present danger to the students' or school personnel's lives, safety or health. If the student is suspended without a conference, the parent will be notified of the suspension, and a conference will be requested as soon as possible.
- (2) Notices to Parents. At the time of suspension, a school employee will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent by telephone or in-person to be followed up with a written notification. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the information may also state the date and time the student may return to school. Suppose the school official wishes to ask the parent to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension. In that case, the notice may note that the parents are required to respond to this request without delay and that violations of school rules can result in expulsion from the school.

- (3) Length of Suspension. The length of suspension for students may not exceed ten (10) continuous days unless an administrative recommendation has been made and agreed to by the student's parent. Suppose a student is recommended for a period of suspension of more than (10) continuous days. In that case, a second conference will be selected with the parent to discuss the progress of the suspension upon completing the tenth day of suspension. All arrangements will be made to provide the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will follow the guidelines of Education Code 48915 (c) and may immediately suspend and recommend for expulsion any student who possesses, sells, or furnishes a firearm, brandishes a knife at another person, unlawfully sells a controlled substance, or commits or attempts to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery. Expulsion may also be recommended for causing significant injury to another person, except in self-defense, possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, robbery or extortion, assault, or battery upon any school employee. When other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct or there exists a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others, expulsion will be recommended for repeated threats of violence, damage to school or private property, stealing or acts of harassment.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will send written notification of the student expulsion to the parent/guardian of any expelled student. This notice will contain the following:

1. The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in "Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion."
2. Notice of the parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks future enrollment of the student's status with NECS.

Expulsion Hearing Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student shall be expelled. The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after the school administrator determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The Charter School Board may preside over the hearing, or an administrative hearing panel appointed by the Board. Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

1. Date and place of the hearing.
2. Statement of the specific facts, charges, and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
3. Copy of the disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation.

4. Indication of the opportunity for the student's parent/guardian to appear in person at the hearing.

### **Amendments and Severability**

Any amendments to this charter will be made by mutual agreement of the governing boards of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences and the Palmdale School District. Material revisions and amendments will be made under the standards, criteria, and timelines in California Education Code section 47605.

The terms of this charter contract are severable. Suppose any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason. In that case, the remainder of the charter will remain in effect unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Palmdale School Districts and Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. The district and school agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good-faith fashion.



## **ELEMENT M: LABOR RELATIONS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5)(O), which requires a description of The Educational Employment Relations Act.

### **Educational Employment Relations Act**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be the exclusive public employer of all charter school employees for collective bargaining purposes. As such, Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”) and act independently from the Palmdale School District for bargaining purposes. By the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for professional and employment relationships. However, unless the employees elect to be represented by an organization for bargaining purposes, all employees will be individually contracted.

## **ELEMENT N: CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSING**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code #47605(5)(P), which requires: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for the disposing of any net assets and the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Charter School, whose sole function is to operate said charter school, operates Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences as an incorporated charter school. In the event of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences closure, the corporation will dispose of the school's assets per the asset disposition provisions of the school's Articles of Incorporation. The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences shall conduct a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. Plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupils' records, as stated in the Education code 47605(b) (5) (O), would take place in a timely fashion.

The records office of the Palmdale School District will have custody of transcripts and other relevant information upon school closure. Thus, parents, students, and the Palmdale School District will possess copies of potentially necessary pupil records in the event of a school closure.

## **FACILITIES/BUDGET/BUSINESS/ACCOUNTING**

This section satisfies the requirements of Education Code Section 57605(g), which states: Petitioners provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including, but not limited to, the facilities to be utilized by the school, how administrative services of the school are to be provided, and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and the Palmdale School District.

### **Facilities**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is a Charter School with the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Administrative Office in Palmdale, CA. The Palmdale School District will be furnished with all documentation pertaining to the facilities according to the Palmdale School District Policy. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be responsible for securing and paying for its services, such as food and custodial services.

The Palmdale School District and Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Operational Agreements the Palmdale School District may, at its discretion, provide service to Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences on a fee-per-service basis, if requested by the Charter School to do so. In such a case, the Palmdale School District will determine the cost of providing such services, and these fees must be in place before the requested service. Any service agreements will be subject to MOUs. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences is not planning to contract with the Palmdale School District for any services.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences reserves the right to negotiate a contract with an outside contractor at any time if such a contract is in the school's best interest.

**Revenue Flow:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the California Department of Education (CDE,) the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the Palmdale School District personnel to achieve a direct revenue flow from CDE to the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. Funds transferred directly from CDE to Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will be transferred to the Charter School account in the Los Angeles County Treasury by the Palmdale School District in the most expeditious manner possible. Revenue Limit funds still flowing through the Palmdale School District will be transferred via journal voucher entry two weeks after receipt of funds by LACOE. Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will apply directly for all categorical funding not included in the block grant.

**Budget Development/Fiscal Reports/Audit:**

Budget development will begin each year immediately following the January announcement of the State of California Governor's K-12 State Budget Proposals. It will be continually refined through the May revision to the state Budget Act. Budgeted resources will always be consistent with the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences goals identified by the governing council. Two interim reports and a year-end estimated budget will be submitted to the Palmdale School District unless all parties agree to a different system.

Please see the attached Proposed Budget: **ATTACHMENT D**

**Depository/Accounting/Payroll:**

All Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences revenue will be deposited in the Los Angeles County Treasury. All payments (including payroll) will be drawn from the county treasury, which enables the county PBAS (Program Budgeting and Accounting System) to account for all revenue and expenditures. Two revolving accounts with a local financial institution will be maintained for day-to-day spending from the General Fund. Other payment arrangements may be made if mutually agreeable to the County Treasury and Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences.

**AB 544 Direct Funding Model:**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will follow the process outlined in AB 544 relative to the Direct Funding Model.

**Attendance Accounting:**

Attendance accounting procedures will satisfy CDE, LACOE, and the Palmdale School District requirements. Daily attendance will be recorded on attendance cards by classroom teachers. Official registers will be completed monthly, documenting the month's attendance. Required reports regarding daily attendance will be completed and submitted to the requesting agencies. This includes reporting enrollment and attendance figures to the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Palmdale School District.

**Financial Service:**

The Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences Board of Directors sets policy, and the school Director and staff will conduct day-to-day operations. An outsourced school business services company will provide business consultation and support for the school director. The accounting system will adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, and there will be adequate internal controls. The school Director will oversee the work of the business services company, which will manage the timely and appropriate reporting regarding student outcomes, budget, etc. Specific agreements between the school and the sponsoring district will implement reporting. Evaluation and hiring criteria, decisions, and procedures are outlined in this petition.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will follow the Palmdale School District's school calendar for single-track instruction. School will commence on September 10, 2025, and conclude on June 20, 2026.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences will not be open on the following days of the school year:

Veteran's Day	November
Thanksgiving Day and the day after	November
Christmas Vacation, three days before and eight days after	December
Martin Luther King Day	January
President's Day	February
Spring Break, the first week of April	April
Memorial Day	May

Teacher professional development days will be as follows:

- The first Friday in October
- The day before Thanksgiving in November

In total, the school will have 182 days of instruction.

## **MISCELLANEOUS CLAUSES**

### **TERMS:**

The term of this charter shall begin on \_\_\_\_\_ and expire on \_\_\_\_\_.

### **AMENDMENTS**

Any amendments to this charter shall be made by the mutual agreement of the governing boards of the charter school and the granting agency. Material revisions and modifications shall be made under the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605.

### **SEVERABILITY**

The terms of this charter are severable. Suppose any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason. In that case, the remainder of the Charter shall remain in effect unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Palmdale School District and the Board of Directors of Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences. The Palmdale School District and the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good-faith fashion.

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

All communications between the Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences and the Palmdale School District granting agency will be sent to the following addresses via First Class Mail or appropriate means.

Laity Institute of the Arts and Sciences  
3053 Rancho Vista Blvd. Ste. H336  
Palmdale, CA 93551