

Mendoza Plaintiffs' Review and Comments to Second Drafts of TUSD Magnet Schools' Improvement Plans

April 2, 2015

Elementary Schools

School	Carrillo	Davis	Borton	Holladay	Drachman
Core Components ("CC")					
Theme/Program- CC	Communication & Creative Arts	Spanish Immersion & Arts/Music There was more discussion about Arts/Music than Spanish Immersion in the plan.	Project-based learning/ Systems Thinking	Fine and Performing Arts	Montessori
School Grade	B	B	C	C	A
Total Student Enrollment (40th day)	294	345	455	250	308
Academics Disparity Addressed CC	Yes- improved instruction and tutoring	Yes- Instruction, class size, tutoring Latino students are doing relatively well. Issue may not be disparities but strategies to move up to A grade overall.	Yes- Instruction	Yes- Improved Instruction	Yes- Improved Instruction , but no assessment of reasons for significant disparities
Leadership*	No indicators	No indicators	No indicators	No indicators	No indicators
School Program philosophy integrated into all instruction CC	Several indicators	Not explicit in plan	Several indicators	Several indicators	Montessori is integrated to all facets of plan.
Asset model CC	Several indicators	Some indicators	Several indicators; see comments for TAs	Several indicators	Add 3 Montessori teachers
Deficit model			Intervention for at risk	TAs and teacher separate	TAs used to support

			students	students by achievement. Pull out.	“simultaneous” instruction. Unclear.
Use of TAs** (it is not clear whether the FTEs are added or existing in some cases)	Yes- does not appear as though direct instruction will take place by TAs	Yes- several TAs added. Used for pull-out model Push-in model also used	Yes- several TAs added to support teacher guided diff. instruction. Training with teachers is important.	Yes. See above. Push-in and pull-out.	Eight (4-Hour) Part Time Teaching Assistants will work in K-3rd grade classes to support simultaneous Tier 1-3 instruction/acceleration/intervention
Budget CC	\$387,080.65	\$493,324.05	\$490,001.63	\$331,939.27	\$415,720.46
Transportation for afterschool program/academic boosting	After school tutoring offered- no indication of transportation needs	No indication of needs beyond what is in place.	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place
Recruitment/Goals CC	Several indicators	A few indicators Apparently does not expect to achieve integrated status. What more should it be doing?	Several indicators	Several indicators. Some items listed in recruitment are programmatic.	Several indicators. Goals need further explanation: how does school intend to change percentages between 40 th and 100 th day of same school year? (Assuming we are reading this correctly)
Interfacing with feeder school CC	No mention	No mention	No mention.	No mention.	No mention.
Parent Involvement CC	No mention	For recruitment; no other mention	No mention	Several indicators, including ESL instruction for parents.	No mention
Community/Corp Involvement CC	No mention	No mention	No mention	No mention.	No mention
Evaluation CC	On going data is mentioned	No specifics	Focus is on monitoring instruction	Monitoring lesson plans and classroom observation.	Monitoring of outcome data
Comments		Math Intervention Librarian to write CR lessons LSC from half time to full-time	Teacher coach added; instructional specialist and math consultant (from grant)	Plan includes targeted interventions for Exceptional Education Students, with an “ELD” teacher listed as the needed resource. Why would an English Language Development teacher implement such interventions?	Configuration issue not addressed.

School	Tully	Cragin	Robison	Bonillas	Ochoa
Theme/Program CC	Officially STEM Discussion is confused. Appears to be saying GIFTED will be a magnet theme.	Fine and Performing Arts	International Baccalaureate	Traditional Academics	Reggio Inspired
Grade CC	C	C	D	C	B
Total Student Enrollment (40th day)	378	369	364	414	225
Academics Disparity Addressed CC	Several indicators and funding focused in this area; shouldn't this support be provided by District?	Magnet Coordinator ("MC") position to fund lower class size but function for MC continues- very confusing.	Robison teachers will participate in weekly grade level PLCs with the Instructional Specialist Will this be sustained long term?	Yes- Improved Instruction Needs to address overall effort to improve from "C" status	Yes- But discussion makes little sense given that it is 91.5% Latino and is looking at the score of a single white student. Needs to address continued high achievement of its Latino students, not closing of a "disparity" compared to one student
Leadership CC	No indicators	No indicator	No indicator	No indicators	No indicators
School Program/philosophy integrated into all instruction CC	Per discussion during meeting with parties- District informed Tully will be phased out as magnet and will offer GATE as it did previously.	Per discussion during meeting with parties- District informed Cragin will be phased out.	NO	Traditional academics/basic curriculum methodology not mentioned.	Several indicators
Asset model CC	Some indicators, including lowering class size.	Several indicators. Lots of math and reading support requested; why is this not provided from curriculum support as a standard practice?	Several indicators provided through PD and instructional improvement.	Several indicators, including lowering class size.	Several indicators
Deficit model	TAs provide direct instruction to students by ability grouping.	After school tutoring- Identification of lower 25% achievement without indication of what will follow.	Aggressive suggestion to parent to enroll their children in before and after school 21 st century tutoring.	TAs used for direct instruction.	TAs used for direct instruction
Use of TAs	See above. Add 1 FTE.	No mention	No mention	See above.	See above.

Budget CC	\$292,092.60	\$158,205.40	\$186,777.18	\$294,509.10	\$229,619.00
Transportation for afterschool program/academic boosting CC	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place	No indication of needs beyond what is in place
Interfacing with feeder school CC	No mention; not applicable			Focus is on kindergarten recruitment.	Several indicators. Coordinated efforts with other magnet schools mentioned.
Parent Involvement CC	No mention.	No indication of needs beyond what is in place.	No indication	No mention of Dodge interfacing.	No mention.
Community/Corp Involvement CC	No mention.	No mention.	Non specific contact with surrounding neighborhood regarding recruitment.	Parent involvement limited to retention activities twice a yr.	Parent involvement limited to retention activities.
Evaluation CC	Monitoring of lesson plans & observation.	Monitoring of lesson plans & observation.	Monitoring of lesson plans & observation.	No mention	No mention
Comments	Concerns are noted below under general comments.	No mention	This plan does not set this school apart as a magnet.	Monitoring of Lesson Plans Frequent classroom observation	Limited to mention of TAs monitoring Reggio approach
	A magnet committee will be doing the job of a student study team, from the description given.	If common planning time is not sustained; is there any advantage to beginning the practice?	If common planning time is not sustained; is there any advantage to beginning the practice?	Has purchase of basic curriculum math and reading materials been a problem at Bonillas? If so, it would explain the need for purchase at this time. Is this a District responsibility, since it purchased math and reading materials for all other schools?	Reading, Achieve 300, Math, 21 st Century resources.

Middle Schools and K-8s

School	Booth Fickett	Roskruge	Safford	Mansfeld	Dodge	Utterback
Core Components(CC)						
Theme/Program-CC	Math and Science	Dual Language	International Baccalaureate	STEM	Traditional Academics	Fine and Performing Arts
School Grade	B	B	C	C	A	D
Total Student Enrollment (40th day)	1261	685	843	760	422	570
Academics Disparity Addressed CC	Several indicators-	Several indicators	Several indicators	Several indicators	Several indicators	
Leadership*	No mention	No mention	Reference to involving principal in recruitment	No mention	No mention	No Mention
School Program philosophy integrated into all instruction CC	Not clear that math and science are integrated into literature, reading, etc.	Dual language is focus of school.	There is a listing of many different programs to address achievement. It is unclear how this fits into the PYP IB program and its recommended curriculum approach	STEM will be infused (it is not yet) through offerings	Yes	To some degree.
Asset model CC	Several indicators; will provide students with accelerated opportunities --	Several indicators. Summer Spanish acquisition program is	Several indicators-including honors courses.	Several indicators inclusive of adding ALE offerings	Several indicators.	Few indicators.

	high school math, a course of high school science	innovative.				
Deficit model	Math interventionist to work with L25. After school and Saturday school also group L25.	Math intervention; Title I services.	Math and Reading interventionist. Mentors. Re-teaching methodology.	Math and Reading interventionist. Mentors	Intervention in math; targeted tutoring for “at risk” students, grade recovery.	Schedule revision to address L25. Clarification is needed on what will take place with schedule. Several other indicators: tutoring, math intervention, etc.
Use of TAs** (it is not clear whether the FTEs are added or existing in some cases)	No mention	Usage seems to be targeted at building language acquisition skill		No mention.	No mention	No mention.
Budget CC	\$526,337.33	\$703,394.98	\$944,460.04	\$512,270.60	\$289,953.00	\$650,455.60
Transportation for afterschool program/academic boosting	No mention of providing transportation for Saturday instructional services or after school instructional services	No mention of transportation being offered for boot camp, before and after school services.	No mention of providing transportation for Saturday instructional services or after school instructional services	No mention of providing transportation for instructional services offered after school instructional services	No mention of providing transportation for instructional services offered after school instructional services	No mention of providing transportation for instructional services offered after school instructional services
Recruitment CC	Several indicators	Several indicators	Several indicators-including support for recruiting students for UHS and Cholla IB.	Several indicators	Several indicators	Several indicators.
Interfacing with feeder school CC	No mention	Interfacing with other schools but no mention of feeder school collaboration.	Yes.	No mention	No mention	No mention of interfacing with Holladay.
Parent Involvement CC	Only mention is for retention efforts and newsletter	Mention of parent involvement in recruitment section; no other.	Parent strengthening. Parent meeting to support recruitment for Cholla and UHS. Parent	No mention	Parent involvement in recruitment and in PD.	Limited.

			surveys for elementary parents noting request for MS.			
Community/Corp Involvement CC		No mention- except U of A for recruitment.	U of A	U of A for recruitment	No mention	To some degree.
Evaluation CC	Frequent Classroom Observations for EEL implementation	Nothing specific.	Nothing specific.	Nothing specific	Data review	Pre and post assessment with no mention of how they are utilized.
Comments	No stated goal to improve grade from B to A; goal is to maintain grade of B. Creative interventions	Librarian will be doing direct instruction in reading and research. Is this a certificated position? No stated goal to improve grade from B to A; goal is to maintain grade of B. Creative interventions	Behavior is obviously an important issue which must be dealt with immediately. Dean of Students position added. Academic goal is to score fewer total points than in 2012-13. On recruitment, says African American enrollment will be no less than zero.		Printing math booklets for students. Why not purchase booklets? One of few schools to explicitly refer to reducing class size.	

High Schools

School	Tucson High	Pueblo	Cholla	Palo Verde
Core Components(CC)				
Theme/Program-CC	Fine and Performing Arts and Natural Science	Communication Arts	International Baccalaureate/ Law Related Studies	STEM
School Grade	B	C	B	A
Total Student Enrollment (40th day) ***	3,314	1537	1720	1065
Academics Disparity Addressed CC	Several Indicators	<p>Several indicators. Focus on magnet students at 25% or below. What about non-magnet students? How will the need to address be dealt with by the school outside the magnet plan?</p> <p>No explicit recognition that overall grades on math are very low, with no “disparity” given that relatively few white students scored so low but overall there is a need to raise performance. Scores on reading are relatively good. Question whether the magnet theme of communication arts has led to lesser emphasis on math? If so, how an that be addressed within theme?</p>	<p>Several indicators. It may be that magnet L25 students are grouped to a point of excess. Should be monitored. Are non-magnet students included in services?</p> <p>No express discussion of fact that math scores for all students are low and that the issue is not “disparity” since relatively small number of white students scored poorly but need to raise scores for all students.</p>	Several indicators with focus on tutoring Hispanic, ELL and African American students. Will this result in excessive ability grouping? And racial/ethnic grouping? How is this being planned given that there are for example no recent negative disparities for Latinos on the reported reading scores but some disparity vis a vis white students with the math scores?
Leadership*	No mention	No mention		No mention.
School Program philosophy integrated into all instruction CC	More is needed.	Some.	More emphasis on L25 than on theme.	More emphasis on L25 than on theme.

Asset model CC	Some indicators.	Several indicators. Purchasing book for faculty (The Culturally Relevant Educator); no expectations noted. Pre-AP and GATE strategies to support ALE teachers of Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts.	Several indicators.	Few Indicators.
Deficit model	Many indicators. Intervention strategies for L25. PD, teacher paired with 3 L25 students, math intervention, etc.	Many indicators.	Several indicators, including credit recovery, tutoring.	Many indicators. See concern above.
Use of TAs** (it is not clear whether the FTEs are added or existing in some cases)	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned.	1 TA to instruct ELL students.
Budget CC	\$1,663,736.26	\$555,961.74	\$1,026,722.51	\$363,183.50
Transportation for afterschool program/academic boosting	No mention of transportation needed for services provided outside of the school day.	No mention of transportation needed for services provided outside of the school day.	No mention of transportation needed for services provided outside of the school day.	No mention of transportation needed for services provided outside of the school day.
Recruitment CC	East side, private and charter school are focus. U of A proximity would seem like a natural recruitment strategy.	Several indicators with specific schools mentioned for recruitment.	Several indicators.	Several indicators.
Interfacing with feeder school CC	No mention	No mention	Interfacing with UHS-	No mention of work with Mansfeld.
Parent Involvement CC	No mention	No mention	Mention of increasing meetings including parents for recruitment but no specific ref. to family engagement.	Several indicators pertaining to language acquisition and L25. Family engagement should go beyond perceived deficits.
Community/Corp Involvement CC	No mention	No mention	Some	No mention
Evaluation CC	Tracking of grades is mentioned	Nothing notable. Review lesson plans and monitoring of instruction.	Walk-throughs are mentioned.	Data interventionist- No details of how monitoring or evaluation will take place.
Comments			Large amount requested for textbooks. Clarification on this is needed.	Sets a goal to be a B school but it is currently A.

Total Student Enrollment- Each plan should include current student enrollment with number of magnet and non-magnet students

*Leadership- There is almost no mention of the role and function of the school administrator. Leadership is one of the top core components listed in any literature that addresses the quality of magnet schools.

** Teacher Assistants may be instrumental in providing support to the teacher and students during teacher instruction for purposes of differentiation, behavior reinforcement, etc. but there is concern in using TAs for primary instruction, which appears to be the intent in many of these plans.. This reinforces grouping/tracking by achievement level.

*** Enrollment figures for magnet high schools are total enrollment figures. Mendoza Plaintiffs are not aware of a report that provides current numbers for enrollment in the magnet school programs/courses in these schools and any break down by race, ethnicity and achievement of students participating in those programs/courses. None of the enunciated goals and strategies in the individual school plans break out such information. Yet it seems essential if the success of the magnet programs in those schools is to be assessed.

General Comments:

In general, the Mendoza Plaintiffs are pleased to see that magnet principals are now involved in the magnet plans for their individual schools, which includes their school budgets. It is a good start to this planning.

- Many of the magnet school have presented a variety of proposals to address students who are performing at 25% or lower in reading and math, inclusive of professional development in differentiated instruction, culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as other PD in math and reading interventions. In review of the plans, as a whole, it almost appears as though this is the first time that attention has been given to students who are performing at 25% or lower in reading and/or math. Prior to the referenced training taking effect, many of the magnet school plans include pull-out and push-in tutoring, course scheduling of students to address L25, tutoring of ELL students, credit recovery, before and after school tutoring and a number of other such “interventions.” Without the full benefit of understanding differentiated instruction (in which teachers are instructing students at various achievement levels) and CR pedagogy, it may be that focus on grouping based on ability and/or ELL status, may actually be contradictory to some of the fundamental premises of the mentioned PD. Caution needs to be taken in **balancing** the obvious “rush” to deal with lower performing students and/or ELL students. Students, more than anyone, know when they are perceived and treated as being academically deficient.

- All schools, with the exception of A schools, should set objectives to improve their grade from B to A, from C to B (then A), from D to C (then B), etc. A schools should specify how they will maintain their A grade.
- Math intervention mentioned in most plans; some requesting materials and consultants. Is support provided to schools in this area from a math curriculum central office? Why are magnet schools needing to provide materials that are, by logical assumption, offered at other schools?
- Grouping of L25 students may be excessive, especially if they are being pulled from instruction for tutoring. There is NO mention of how this will be monitored by the individual schools or by the District.
- The plans use ethnic and racial terms inconsistently; sometimes the word Anglo is used, while other times the term Caucasian is used; other times the term white is used. Anglo refers to origins only from certain countries in Europe and Caucasian is a term which applies to Hispanics, in most cases. The inconsistency causes confusion.
- Which schools offer before and/or afterschool programs, specifically. How are these programs budgeted, since budgets did not mention cost for these programs unless tutoring is offered? Is transportation provided for students who participate in before school or after school programs, such as at Booth Fickett?
- There is great disappointment in not finding more creativity in these plans.
- The inconsistency in budgets from one school to another is not addressed. There may be the need to provide books and other instructional resources to a school such as Bonillas which has been lacking for the last several years, in an effort to compensate for historical indifference to the school. In such cases, an explanation is needed. Is there any type of magnet school formula allocation?
- While there are listed goals and objectives for improving academic achievement, these seem to be rather formulaic and to fail to take account of the actual reported test results in some schools or the manner in which the school theme should shape the goal/objective and related strategy. Further, there are seldom any delineated actions with corresponding timeframes. This makes each plan difficult to monitor and evaluate.
- With regard to integration benchmarks, schools are inconsistent about the grade levels for which improvement will be measured. For example, at the elementary school level, some schools indicate that the 2015-16 SY benchmark will be measured by improvements in kindergarten only, others are for kindergarten and first grade (most schools), and in some instances, no specific grade levels are cited. Consistency in this regard would help with the Special Master's and Implementation Committee's monitoring of progress.
- The goals for narrowing or eliminating the achievement gaps shown for African American and Latino students when compared to their non-minority counter parts are cut and pasted for every plan, showing minimal creativity in approaches. Generic goals are lofty and present the challenge of not being owned by each school.
- While there is consistent verbiage about differentiated instruction and culturally relevant instruction, it is clear that there remains a great deal of **grouping by ability with TAs as the primary point of intervention/instruction**. This model does not work and allows instruction from non-teachers.

- Math and Reading support requested from several schools, along with books and resources. Why aren't these resources routinely being provided to magnet schools as is the case (hopefully) for non-magnet schools.
- None of the plans give indication to what other interventions may be taking place at individual schools, such as consistent staffing or support from African American Student Services and/or Mexican American Student Services. Thus, the plans presumably give less than a full picture of what academic support is being provided to students.
- Before and after-school programs/tutoring are indicated at several schools, without any mention of the need for transportation. Does this mean that such services are not provided to students who are transported by bus or does it mean that students who are engaged in tutoring do not participate in other afterschool activities?
- The transition for Tully from a magnet school to one which will house a GATE program is confusing. It is stated that the MC funding will be used for a teacher to lower class size, however, the plan then references the MC in conducting a number of activities. It is critical that the District adopt a policy that will prevent a future situation as occurred in removing the GATE program from Tully.