



# Los Angeles Unified School District

## School Review

Final Write Up  
For Submission to the:  
Office of the Superintendent  
Office of School Choice

Academy of Medical Arts  
Local District South

Principal: Darvina Bradley (interim)  
Date of School Review: April 20, 2017

Reviewers:

Veronica Aragon, Director  
Matthew Burger, Lead Teacher, AMA  
Cecilia Duenas, Teaching and Learning Coordinator  
Eric Grow, ELA Coordinator  
Maricel Masongsong, Math Coordinator  
Amber McKinney, Science Coordinator

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## Section 1: The School Context

Academy of Medical Arts, 7656, Local District South

**Grade Levels Served:** 9-12

**Principal(s) names:** Darvina Bradley

**Number of Certificated Staff Members:** 27

**Number of Classified Staff Members:** 12

**Student Population:**

**Asian:** 3%

**Pacific Islander:** 4%

**African American:** 9%

**White:** 2%

**Filipino:** 41%

**Special Education:** 10%

**Latino:** 39%

**English Learners:** 4%

AMA traces its roots to Carson High School, which was placed under the Public School Choice (PSC) Program 3.0 by LAUSD during the spring of the 2011 school year. The Public School Choice Program sought innovative plans to improve chronically underperforming schools, and it accepted proposals from within the district and from outside organizations (e.g. Charter Schools). Teachers themselves were provided an opportunity to organize and submit proposals, and in the fall of 2011 the AMA Design team—choose the health science and medical technology based on school and community where stakeholders were polled and an overwhelming 88% expressed a strong desire for a program in health science and medical technology prompting the of teachers from and the Carson Health and Medical Partnerships (CHAMPS)—submitted a proposal. Three proposals from within Carson High School were submitted: one for the Academy of Medical Arts (AMA), the AEE plan, and a separate plan for Carson High School. Both AMA and AEE selected the Pilot School model. To the Design Team at AMA, this model offered several advantages—autonomies in curriculum and assessment, more control over the staffing and retention of teachers, and the opportunity to create meaningful Principal and teacher reflection to better drive interdisciplinary instruction and management to prompt collaboration amongst grade level teams.

In the spring of 2012, all plans were accepted, and the Carson Complex—with its three separate schools was born. Each school maintains its own principal, bell schedule, and set of classes. Students are passported to other schools on an as needed basis and the three schools have committed themselves to shared extra-curricular activities and athletics. All students at the Carson Complex attend the same Homecoming and Prom, graduation and “grad night”, and root for each other at sporting events.

### **AMA: Three Academies in One School**

AMA has two established pathways within the school—Patient Care and Biotech. AMA offers a rigorous Freshman Summer Bridge Program designed to create a seamless and successful transition for incoming 9th graders. Historically, 9<sup>th</sup> graders have struggled at Carson HS—in 2009-2010, only 56% of 9th graders completed enough credits to move to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and that number dropped to 54% in the next year; this is well below the district average of 65%. AMA offers all incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders ‘Exploring Health Careers’ as an intensive course that exposes 9<sup>th</sup> graders to our Patient Care and Biotech pathways as well as careers in the medical field while providing support in the transition to high school. There are several

interventions employed to improve 9<sup>th</sup> graders achieving proficiency in their core classes and successfully matriculating into 10<sup>th</sup> grade; these interventions include the Freshman Summer Bridge with our areas of concentration mental health, Public and Community Health, Patient Care and Biotech, with the Habit of Heart and Mind(Facing History) intertwined throughout the curriculum and anti-bullying. In order to help students reach proficiency, AMA in the past has offered a Math tutorial class, in addition to the rigorous everyday instruction, AMA is designed to encourage student to be globally aware prompting critical thinking skill, collaboration, creativity and how to be effective communicators, through the usage of the Habits of heart and Mind, a tenant of ‘Facing History and Ourselves’. At the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students select one of the career themed pathways, Patient Care or Biotech.

Patient Care, which has been a California Partnership Academy since 1998, is an established program that prepares students for Health Science and Medical Technology. Electives include Hospital Occupations, Medical Terminology, Sports Medicine, Sports Therapeutic and Physical Therapy.

The goal of Biotech is to prepare students for careers in Health related problems through research. In the 2016-17 school year, this pathway was designed to strengthen critical thinking skills and expand student exposure to career options, to meet the demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century society. Biotech electives also include Biotech, Kinesiology, First Responder and Advanced Placement Psychology. The vision for Biotech students is to pair the hands on skill set of practical experience with a theoretical framework from which to understand, analyze, and address issues of importance within society.

## Current School Data

### Graduation (cohort graduation rate)

2014-2015	2015-2016	LAUSD Average
89%	60%	48%

### % Student on Track to Meet A-G Requirements

Grad Year	% Tier 3: Missing 5+	% Tier 2: Missing 3-4	% Tier 1: Missing 1-2	% On-Track	# of Students
2016	100%				4
2017	9%		2%	89%	116
2018	9%	11%	18%	62%	99
2019	16%	7%	18%	59%	128
2020	8%	8%	19%	65%	132
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>479</b>

### School Experience Survey Participation Rate

Group	2014-2015	2015-2016	LAUSD Average
Parents	24%	46%	38%
Students	89%	99%	77%
Staff	94%	55%	74%

Source: 2015-16 School Report Card

**Parent Engagement**

Question	Responses
I feel welcome to participate at this school	93%
This school encourages me to participate in organized parent groups.	80%
I am a partner with this school in decisions made about my child's education.	80%
The parent center provides useful resources (information, classes) to help me support my child's education.	86%
My child's teachers let me know about my child's progress	63%

**School Safety**

**Suspensions**

2014-2015	2015-2016	As of April 2017
0%	0%	0%

**Safety**

Prompt	Students	Parents	Staff
School grounds are safe	66%	94%	94%
Adults at this school respond to bullying	71%	89%	100%

**Attendance**

**Staff Attendance YTD Summary**

Unprotected Absence Rate	Percent @ 96% Cert.	Percent @ 96% Class.	Percent @ 96% Total	Target	Difference
6%	71%	75%	72%	76%	(4%)

**Student Cumulative Attendance Rate**

Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
97.7%	97.5%	97.3%	97.1%	97.1%	96.9%	96.8%	96.8%	96.7%

**Section 2: Key Areas of Focus**

AMA has moved to address several of our Schoolwide Goals. We have also utilized Professional Development time to planning interdisciplinary units by grade level, including Fall Olympics which encompasses all content areas such as English, History, Science and Psychology, LOTE elective courses as well as the Physical Education which promotes the collaboration amongst all staff and students. Additionally, we have worked to build a more coherent and vertically aligned curriculum experience for our students. Leading to establishing focus standards, examining student work and presenting best practice teaching strategies.

Upon entering an AMA classroom, observers should notice students engaged in standards based learning in a positive and challenging environment. In any given classroom, there will be moments of teacher directed learning—taking notes, explaining and clarifying concepts and ideas, the posing of questions to stoke higher level thinking; periods of collaborative work: small group’s reading and analyzing text, think pair share, partners solving a math problem, teams clarifying primary source documents in a history class; time for individual work—students writing a timed essay, students writing code in computer science, reflecting on learning in a journal or writing an exit slip, for example. An observer will note a high level of engagement in student *and* teacher alike. There will also be technology elements to employed by teachers and students—an interactive Nearpod, students using Chromebooks to research a problem or build skills with IXL. There is positivity on our campus—this should be evident in anyone’s conversation with teachers or students. There is a shared belief among that students are improving and going places, and that our work is crucial to our students and community.

Given our emphasis on shared instructional strategies, we used the following *Teaching and Learning Elements* to guide our School Review:

- 3b2 Discussion Techniques and Student Participation
- 3c2 Purposeful and Productive Instructional Groups
- 3c1 Standards-Based Projects, Activities, and Assignments
- 2a1 Academic Climate

DOK, intervention, interdisciplinary curriculum instruction

### Section 3: Tools & Resources

We used the following tools

- Classroom Observation Tool – We followed an “Instructional Rounds” process to observe all the classrooms at the school Fowler-Finn, T. (2014) *Leading Instructional Rounds in Education*
- Teaching and Learning Framework (TLF)
- Data Collection and Alignment Process – following the classroom observation, team members sorted evidence into categories based on the school’s focus, aligned evidence to the Teaching and Learning Framework\*, and then made recommendations and commendations based on the evidence.

\*Note: The school was not rated using the Teaching and Learning Framework because the framework’s rubric language is specific to teacher practice, not schoolwide practice.

We also conducted three focus groups: parents, teachers and students.

### Section 4: Commendations & Recommendations

#### Classroom Observations

<p><b>Standards-Based Projects, Assignments and Activities</b>  <i>Instructional projects, activities and assignments are aligned to the instructional standards, require higher levels of thinking*, are</i></p>	<p><b>Summary of Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 out of 31 are DOK 1 level</li> <li>• 5 out of 31 are DOK 2 level</li> <li>• 7 out of 31 are DOK 3 level</li> <li>• 3 out of 31 are DOK 4 level</li> </ul>
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<p><i>culturally relevant, and may include real-world application. Students are cognitively engaged, constructing their own understanding and exploring content. The learning activities are differentiated, as necessary, to meet all student learning needs.(TLF)</i></p> <p><i>*DOK Levels</i></p>	<p><b>Commendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple levels of DOK are evident</li> <li>• DOK 3 and 4 level tasks are diverse- problem based, project based</li> <li>• Task requires students to justify and provide evidence</li> <li>• Most of the high levels task encouraged student driven conversation (student centered)</li> <li>• Intial use of differentiated DoK level questions in some classrooms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use more high level tasks (DOK3/4) for culminating activities</li> <li>• Tasks/Presentations include a component where students synthesize resources, analysis to engage them into an argument (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning)</li> <li>• Align tasks to the CA Framework standards in all contents and the SBA claims and targets</li> <li>• Modify or extend questions from the textbook to increase the rigor</li> <li>• Foster higher level of thinking by responding to students with a follow up question that require critical thinking and students to explain their thinking</li> <li>• Provide accountability for students listening during presentations in all classrooms</li> <li>• Build structures for cooperative learning so all students are responsible for the learning and the task.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interdisciplinary Curriculum</b></p> <p><i>In every class, there should be a theme, present in the activity or in a unit they are doing. What you might see are essential questions, vocabulary lists for content areas as well as standards. Also look for connections between content areas and writing across the curriculum.</i></p>	<p><b>Summary of Evidence</b></p> <p>Evidence was categorized into (1) assessment and (2) questions that addressed other content areas.</p> <p><b>Commendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We saw a conscious, thorough effort to integrate the disciplines.</li> <li>• Teacher’s questions intentionally reminded students of content integration.</li> <li>• Assessments were crafted in a fashion that promoted individual accountability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to ask questions after presentations and require something from them in writing (eg., exit tickets)</li> <li>• Ask students to link curricula; determine how what they are learning in one class relates to what they are learning in others. (eg., Question Formulation Technique (QFT)).</li> </ul>

<p><b>Academic Climate</b>  <i>The classroom environment is safe and supportive; risk-taking is encouraged, students freely contribute their ideas, and student mistakes are treated as learning opportunities, never with ridicule.</i></p>	<p><b>Summary of Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student-to-Student Interactions – evidence of sharing opinions</li> <li>• Teacher asking questions – student responses (some taking risks, one evidence of no response)</li> <li>• Evidence of teachers directing students to help each other</li> <li>• Some evidence of safe/welcoming Environment</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Commendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students given opportunities to share ideas and work with each other and interactions are positive</li> <li>• Some evidence of student risk-taking while responding to questions</li> <li>• Evidence of positive feedback</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See recommendations from Focus group data</li> </ul>

**Recommendations based on Focus Group data**

- Change name of “Intervention” to Academic Assistance/Enrichment, or some other term that doesn’t have a negative connotation
- Revisit the “Big sib/little sib” program
- Provide Mastery Grading professional development to the staff
- Coordinate assignments (assessments, projects) between teachers
- Provide positive Cultural & Climate professional development to the staff

**Focus Groups**

<p><b>Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students were more vocal than others, sometimes difficult to get them to respond.</li> <li>• The students understood “intervention” to mean people talking in a group or family or friends get together to talk about a problem and help someone cope with it. They also saw it as a situation where to connect to each other, be open minded and have personal growth.</li> <li>• Besides talking with teachers, students said they would talk to their friends or siblings if they needed help. They would also talk to AMA alumni for advice on academics.</li> <li>• Some students go to tutoring after school to get help for an upcoming quiz or test. They go once a week but notice tutoring/intervention overlaps with extracurricular activities. They note that teachers help them understand better. Students admit they need to focus on managing their time better and work better.</li> <li>• Students would like to have “big sib/little sib” back at AMA. (Big sib/Little sib is a pairing of a 9<sup>th</sup> grader with an 11<sup>th</sup> grader or a 10<sup>th</sup> grader with a 12<sup>th</sup> grader to connect with on campus for academic or personal help)</li> <li>• Students say when a teacher they are comfortable with is there it helps, but they want to work their peers, like big sibs.</li> </ul>
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- Would like to see interventions about life in general, what they go through when they get older, how to cope with it.

**Teachers**

- The teachers see “intervention” as a way of helping a student academically, but also addressing outside factors that may be hindering their academic success such as personal matters or home life. They also take student data into account, such as grades, providing steps to make students successful, but also hold them accountable.
- After each grading period, every 5 weeks, each grade level has an “intervention list” with students who have 2-3 or more “fails” in their classes.
- Teachers have their own list of students to help on an individual basis, those with whom they may have a close bond. Meeting one on one to help them. Teachers asking these students how they are doing in their other classes, to check in on them.
- Weekly interventions are taking place among grade level teams, one day after school for a certain grade level. 9<sup>th</sup> grade meets every Thursday, walk students over to a classroom where they are provided a teacher from all disciplines and students can choose which class to get help with.
- Students know several teachers are assisting them.
- Instruction is tailored to help struggling students in classes, more individual attention to those students in class, or pairing struggling students with a more successful student in class to help them to do better.
- Bring AMA alumni to talk to students about academics, ways to cope with struggles and how they became successful. Better coming from them than teachers sometimes.
- The intervention program has raised awareness from all of the students. Students seem more eager to turn in work, even if it’s late.
- Transition from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup> grade is difficult, but more so because of workload that we have here.
- How do you put structures so that something you missed in 9<sup>th</sup> grade gets taken care of before 12<sup>th</sup> grade?
- A challenge is students not taking advantage of intervention offered.
- Get students to think about themselves and see that they can change.
- Teachers at AMA care about and want to help students, but they have to make an effort to do better in class or make a conscious decision to attend tutoring/intervention.

**Parents**

- They were glad to take part in this focus group and help out at school.
- They understood “intervention” to be additional assistance or help, collaborative tutoring, mentioned Ms. Cheatham, after school to see teachers for supplemental help.
- They know that AMA offers interventions such as school counselor, Ms. Cheatham, Engrade, Boys and Girls Club, after school tutoring 1-1 or groups, teacher meetings with parents.
- Parents say they talk to their child daily about school, asking about homework, test dates, why are assignments missing on Engrade.
- Students will talk to parents sometimes, depends on their mood, sometimes they don’t respond. Students are sometime overwhelmed, parents question why everything is due at once.

- Parents say their child has talked to them about tutoring or intervention, group with Ms. Cheatham. Students don't always respond to parents or in any detail about school. Parents say their child says they don't need to go to or stay for tutoring.
- Parents support son/daughter by giving time to study and work at home, encourage them to communicate with teachers and talk to them (parents) as well.
- Parents tell students to write out information/material, not just study, or to make flash cards to help them study.
- Parents offer rewards to their child for doing well in school, or take away privileges at home if they don't work.
- Parents say that their child was not failing classes before coming to AMA, their motivation and confidence has gone down. Some teachers give support and others do not. Some teachers are super involved and some are not.
- One parents says that their child started with a bad grade in a certain class, but slowly bringing the grade up, get confidence when bringing up the grades.
- Their son/daughter is exited to go to certain classes but not others for Open House.
- Parents stopped emailing certain teachers do not respond. Wonder why if child is missing assignments, they don't hear back from teachers.
- Parents were very honest and upfront about their children's attitude toward school, that they do try to encourage them at home, that the kids feel overwhelmed but want to do well at school.

### Section 5: School Goals

**School Goal #1:** Develop a comprehensive system to increase the percentage of students on track for meeting A-G requirements by 3% in each grade level over the next five years.

**School Goal #2:** Develop a comprehensive system to increase percentage of parent and community involvement in school wide sponsored events by 5% per year over the next five years.

**School Goal #3:** Develop a comprehensive system to increase the percentage of students taking and passing the Advance Placement exam with a 3, 4 or 5 by 5% every year over the next five years.

### Section 6: Crosswalk: Applicable Plans

Objective/Goals /Strategies addressed by problem of practice	Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)	WASC	Public School Choice (PSC) Plan
Goal 1			●
Goal 2			●
Goal 3			●

**Section 7: Feedback Letter to the School**

*See attached.*

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**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Administrative Office  
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 25<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90017  
Telephone: (213) 241-4822  
Fax: (213) 241-8977**

**MICHELLE KING  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**DR. FRANCES GIPSON  
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

**GEORGE BARTLESON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SCHOOL  
CHOICE**

April 27, 2017

Re: 2016-17 Public School Choice School Review

Dear Academy of Medical Arts Team,

Thank you for reflecting on your school's progress, and for preparing and submitting the report containing your findings. The review is intended to be a meaningful tool that supports your school's ongoing efforts toward realizing your mission and achieving your student learning goals. The process provides a collaborative opportunity for your school community to engage in thoughtful reflection, while also providing a mechanism for us to review your progress and findings. With this shared learning in mind, I/we offer some of my/our reflections after reviewing your reports. Please note that you are not expected to respond to this letter.

I found a number of items in your report to be noteworthy, including but not limited to:

- In your classroom observations, there is an effort to integrate content as evidenced by teacher's questions intentionally reminding students of content integration.
- In your classroom observations, all four depth of knowledge (DOK) levels were evident in both questioning and assigned tasks.
- Your review team included feedback in the form of focus groups for all stakeholders: teachers, parents, and students.

Additional reflections I have since reviewing your report include:

- Student focus groups seem to indicate that students are not taking advantage of the services offered. In addition to your recommendation for changing the name of "intervention" to academic

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assistance/enrichment, consider expanding targeted intervention to students who are also receiving a “D” on their progress reports.

- Continue to address the recommendations made by the 2015-2016 Pilot School Quality Review, specifically
  - Develop a more robust curriculum that offers courses (including AP) and electives focused on medical arts
  - Expand communication efforts to students about the advantages of taking AP courses and strengthen support system to help students prepare for and take AP examples.
  - Ensure that the school calendar supports time for teachers to collaborate on interdisciplinary instruction
  
- Given the competition with other schools in the Zone of Choice, take advantage of the focus groups to determine why students stay at AMA as well as why students are choosing to leave.

Overall, your reflections seem to indicate that your school is moving in a positive direction. I hope our reflections provide useful input as you move forward with your work. I will be looking at your school review information along with any summative data that might become available. The Office of Alternative Education will be in further contact with you about next steps in school review once the new school year commences.

I hope you find this feedback constructive. Please contact Christina Esguerra ([christina.esguerra@lausd.net](mailto:christina.esguerra@lausd.net)) at the Office of School Choice with any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Veronica Aragon  
Instructional Director, LD South