

## ***Revised Submission***

# **Austin Independent School District Proposal For Repurposing Under the Rules For the Campus Formerly Known as Johnston High School Under Texas Administrative Code §§97.1051(2)(B)-(C)**

**June 16, 2008**

Pursuant to the correspondence received from Commissioner of Education Robert Scott dated June 4, 2008 ordering the closure of Johnston High School and presenting the option for AISD to apply for approval to repurpose the Johnston High School facility. AISD submits a proposal for repurposing of the Johnston High School campus under the rules of Administrative Code §§97.1051(2)(B)-(C).

### **Summary**

This Repurposing Proposal is consistent with AISD's effort to engage parents and the community in the design of a New Vision that will move beyond the limits of a traditional high school, changing dramatically to identify and meet the specific needs of students in the neighborhood served by the high school formerly known as Johnston, so that all students are prepared for college and career opportunities.

AISD proposes to open two new high schools by 2009-10 on the site of the former Johnston High School that will each utilize a new instructional model that focuses on rigorous college and career preparation and meets the requirements of repurposing under the rules.

In 2008-09, AISD proposes to open the first of these new high schools, to be called the **New Vision High School** for the purposes of this proposal only. In this first year, the instructional program at the New Vision High School will change significantly to prepare students for the rigorous college and career curriculum of the new instructional models that will be implemented in 2009-10 at each of the new campuses. This instructional program will address the institutional barriers to success that students face such as high mobility, low attendance rates, and a high dropout rate. Planning for the new instructional models, and for the opening of the second high school, will continue through 2008-09, and at least one new principal will be hired by October 2008 with the sole responsibility of opening the new campus and implementing the new instructional models.

In 2009-10, the second new high school will open, and at that time, both new schools will either complete the alignment of the new instructional model, or in

the case of the second new school, adopt the instructional model, with a focus on preparing every student for post-secondary opportunities. Although the AISD Board of Trustees will make the final decision on the selection of new models by October 1, 2008 based on an extensive community engagement process, the New Tech High and Early College High School models appear to most closely meet the needs of students in this neighborhood and to reflect the values of parents and the community at this time. The two new high schools may employ different instructional models (i.e., one may be a New Tech High and the other an Early College High School), but each will incorporate specific programmatic features that have been initiated in 2008-09 and have been proven to be successful, such as the Twilight School, Personal Education Plans, and/or attendance strategies.

AISD requests TEA approval to implement the New Tech High and/or Early College High School models and understands that approval of the Management Team will be required should a different instructional model emerge as a final recommendation to the Board.

AISD also requests approval to continue operation of the International High School at the newly repurposed facility.

#### **Request for New PEIMS Number**

As a part of this proposal, AISD requests a new PEIMS number for the New Vision High School and asks for approval by June 25, 2008 in order to meet the June 30, 2008 deadline for submission of the Title I application for all eligible schools in AISD.

#### **Calendar for Implementation**

Pending approval of repurposing proposal:

- June 16, 2008 PEIMS number requested for New Vision High School
- June 25, 2008 Deadline for receipt of new PEIMS number
- By June 25, 2008 Choice application mailed to parents
- July 11, 2008 Preferred RSVP date for return of choice applications
- By July 1, 2008 Recruitment letters mailed
- By July 31, 2008 New Principal hired for New Vision High School
- August 15, 2008 Initial community engagement process complete
- August 25, 2008 New Vision High School opens (first new school)
- By October 1, 2008 AISD Board approves new instructional models for 2009-10
- By October 1, 2008 Request for new PEIMS number for second school
- By October 1, 2008 New principal hired for second new school
- September 2008 – August 2009 Planning process for second high school and new instructional models

- January 2009 Choice applications mailed to parents
- August 2009 Second new high school opens  
Both new high schools open with related instructional models

### **Requirements of the Code**

AISD will comply with each section of the Code to meet the repurposing requirements, specifically:

- Proposal for a new name  
*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(B)]*
- Proposal for a New Campus Identification Number  
*[19 TAC Sec.97.1051(2)(B)]*
- Proposal to Serve no more than 50% of Students Previously Served  
*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*
- Proposal to Remove the Campus Administrator  
*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*
- Proposal to Reassign at Least 75% of the Instructional Staff  
*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*
- Proposal for a completely Different Instructional Program  
*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(B)]*

### **Implementation of Each Requirement of the Administrative Code**

#### **Proposal for a New Name** *[§§19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(B)]*

Names for the two new campuses will be selected, incorporating community input into the selection process.

#### **Proposal for a New Campus Identification Number**

*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(B)]*

AISD requests a new PEIMS number for the first new high school (New Vision High School) in this proposal, pending TEA approval of this repurposing proposal, with approval requested no later than June 25, 2008 in order to meet the June 30, 2008 deadline for submission of the Title I application for all eligible schools in AISD. The PEIMS number for the second new school will be requested no later than October 1, 2008 (required by the Accountability Manual).

#### **Proposal to Serve No More than 50% of the Students Previously Served**

*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*

In order to ensure the school choice options for every student who attends the two new schools at the repurposed facility, AISD will not assign students to either of the two new schools without the affirmative request from each student. The attendance zone will not be used to assign students until both new schools are

rated Academically Acceptable by TEA<sup>1</sup>. The two new high schools will become schools of choice open to all students in the district. Students previously assigned to the former Johnston High School attendance zone who have not already exercised their choice option will be provided the opportunity to attend any high school in the district via a choice application that will be mailed to every household. AISD staff will track responses and contact students who have not returned the choice application, making personal phone calls and home visits if necessary. The district will provide transportation to any high school that these students choose to attend as well as for students district-wide who choose to attend the new high schools at the repurposed facility.

AISD will launch an on-going recruitment campaign to inform all high school students in the district about the new high schools to be opened. Recruitment for the 2008-09 school year will focus on the individualized attention students will receive at the New Vision High School, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade experience, and the instruction that will be available to students to prepare them to take advantage of the new instructional models that will be implemented in 2009-10. As soon as the Board makes the final decision for the two models that will be implemented in August 2009, the district will begin to advertise those plans and recruit students for the two new schools for the following year. Efforts will be tailored to target different populations of students. AISD will use multiple media vehicles to inform parents and students, including mailing, electronic media, press, and campus meetings. More detail about the Recruitment Plan is included in Attachment A.

### **Proposal to Remove the Campus Administrator**

*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*

On May 20, the Johnston High School principal announced her resignation as of June 7. An interim principal has been appointed to oversee school operations until a principal search is conducted, and pending TEA's approval of AISD's Repurposing Proposal.

### **Proposal to Reassign at Least 75% of the Instructional Staff**

*[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(C)(ii)]*

1. All professional and instructional staff will be required to reapply for positions for the 2008-09 school year.
2. No more than 25% of existing teachers will be rehired at the repurposed campus.
3. A majority of teachers hired will have three or more years of successful teaching experience working with students in need of significant support structures to be successful.
4. TAKS performance over time and other assessment data from the teacher applicants will be used as criteria in determining which new or returning teachers will be chosen to staff the school.

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<sup>1</sup> \*The district will, however, continue to use the attendance zone for sole purpose of allocating Title I funds based on the resident population.

5. AISD will commit over \$700,000 to provide incentive pay for school year 2008-09 to hire and retain experienced teachers who have had success with high poverty, at-risk student populations.
6. Eight Master Teachers will be hired -- two in each of the four core academic areas, with a retention stipend of \$12,000 each plus \$3,500 for twelve extra duty days.
  - a. Other teaching staff will receive a retention stipend of \$6,000 plus \$1,200 for five extra duty days.
  - b. All teachers will receive an additional \$2,000 incentive for National Board Certification.

### **Proposal for a Completely Different Instructional Program** *[19 TAC Sec. 97.1051(2)(B)]*

The completely different instructional program will comply with the State's requirements for repurposing a campus under the rules and will be aligned with the New Vision emerging in the engagement process with parents and community. The instructional program in 2008-09 at the New Vision High School will prepare students for the rigorous college and career curriculum that will be implemented in 2009-10. It will address institutional barriers such as mobility and language, create additional safety nets, individualize support, and strengthen literacy and numeracy in a systematic way. In 2009-10, the second new high school will open. Each of the two new high schools will employ a proven instructional model that focuses on college and career preparation, using innovative methods.

#### **2008-09 – New Instructional Program**

AISD will create the first of two new schools in 2008-09, to be called the New Vision High School for the purposes of this proposal. It will open in 2008-09 with a different instructional program targeted at meeting the needs of students in systemic and innovative ways and preparing students for the new instructional model to be implemented at the school in 2009-10. The following programmatic elements will be included:

1. Create new structures for Small Learning Communities that support common planning time for English Language Arts, math, science and social studies teachers, a community of adults to guide and support the development of personal education plans, time for targeted professional development based on student performance data, and structural balance of time for academic and non-academic supports.  
*Note: “Academic” refers to the skills and behaviors specifically associated with formal learning as outlined in the TEKS, advanced and college-level courses, exit and college entrance exams, and TAKS preparation and performance. “Non-academic” refers to knowledge, skills, attributes and processes associated with students’ personal development, social and emotional competencies, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, knowledge of college and career structures, and a spectrum of metacognitive skills.*

- a. Students and seminar/core teachers will complete a Personal Educational Plan (PEP) for each student outlining high school and post-secondary goals and targeting growth in the academic and non-academic skills needed to be successful in BOTH college and work.
  - b. The PEPs will include a review of the students' previous assessment data and school history, a set of individual goals (including academic, behavioral, and non-academic) for the school year and for the high school career, as well as individual learning objectives and an action plan for achieving the objectives.
  - c. Every student will have a post secondary education goal.
  - d. The plans will be reviewed with the students' parents at the regularly scheduled conference days (October 13 and February 16) and each student will commit to the actions in writing.
  - e. The plans will be regularly reviewed with students as part of the Seminar/Advisory process.
2. Expand and enhance opportunities for continuous individual and self-paced instruction, including the numbers and types of courses and the hours in which students can be supported in this type of learning.
- a. The current Twilight School will be significantly revised to expand hours, increase individualization and engagement for students, and to add self-paced individual learning opportunities.
  - b. A College & Career Support Center will be initiated at the campus and will offer developmental courses, summer "bridge" programs for students at multiple levels through the current feeder pattern, and high stakes testing preparation (e.g., by Kaplan).
  - c. On-line course work and/or individualized learning packets will be available to ensure that students have opportunities for continuous learning throughout the school year.
  - d. Saturday School will be used to provide tutoring and academic interventions on a regular basis.
3. Implement intensive instructional interventions in reading and mathematics in all grade levels in both summer and during the school year
- a. A "JumpStart" summer program will be geared to rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders who did not meet standards in middle school. The program will be designed to target specific areas of low performance in reading and mathematics prior to entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade course work.
  - b. Summer Bridge programs with the Austin Community College will be offered to sophomores who have been selected by their teachers, and to juniors and seniors who did not achieve the College Readiness Standard on TAKS.
  - c. Students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades who read below grade level will be placed in a reading intervention program during the school year (e.g., READ180, Voyager, Corrective Reading) to accelerate reading growth.
  - d. Students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades who have mathematics skill deficits will be placed in a mathematics intervention program during the school

- year (e.g., Navigator, Ramp-Up) to provide for diagnostic teaching and focus on revising misconceptions.
- e. Juniors and Seniors will have opportunities to take ACC developmental courses or other Bridge programs in reading and mathematics as part of “double blocked” English III or IV and Algebra II in order to strengthen instruction and leave High School better prepared to complete college work.
4. Strengthen instruction in science and social studies so that students are prepared to be successful in the new schools. As noted below, the new school models for 2009-2010 are highly rigorous and based on inquiry- and project-based learning. Science and social studies instruction will be designed to emphasize the inquiry model, will use hands-on learning activities, and will require students to use primary source documents in a research-based format. The *History Alive!* program will be utilized for social studies and the Principles of Learning/Disciplinary Literacy science model will be the basis for the science programs.
  5. Strengthen and focus the Seminar/Advisory program to provide laser-like focus on the academic and non-academic skills one must attain and the roadblocks one must overcome to be college and career ready. Specifically, the curriculum will be revised to include an aligned package of products, college readiness topics, career readiness topics, and benchmarks for every student in grades 9-12. Each student’s PEP will serve to focus these products and skill sets on each student’s individual needs. The seminar period will continue to operate at least three days per week for 30 minutes each day to provide a redundancy of guidance and support opportunities.
  6. Schedule common planning times for English language arts, math, science and social studies areas to:
    - a. Create time to analyze student-level data and design interventions using appropriate, formal and informal protocols.
    - b. Collaboratively monitor implementation of student PEPs.
    - c. Focus and dramatically improve planning and delivery of instructional core, conduct collegial best practice visits.
    - d. Engage in targeted professional development within the school day.
    - e. Provide for district curriculum support to the subject area teams to ensure alignment with curriculum goals.
    - f. Require regular reporting to campus and district administration.
  7. Form a Data Review and Planning Team consisting of campus and district leadership to analyze data for the purpose of developing the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) and to regularly review, analyze and adjust campus actions based on data-driven needs of students.
  8. Develop rigorous tracking of campus progress against the CIP as follows:
    - a. Daily monitoring of attendance
    - b. Weekly monitoring of formative student assessments for core subjects
    - c. Monthly monitoring of CIP activities, common assessment for core subjects, discipline, attendance and student PEPs

- d. Progress Reviews of all execution indicators at six-week intervals presented to Redesign Executive Committee (composed of key district leadership, including Superintendent).
9. Provide 5 additional days of professional development for all staff designed to prepare them as a team to work with New Vision students in areas of high need. Professional development will be provided throughout the year geared to areas of need identified in the CIP and based on regular review of student needs.
10. Create intensive focus on 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition that includes:
  - a. Summer transition camp
  - b. Teaching “learning to learn” skills: study skills, organizational skills, and note taking
  - c. Extra summer professional development on creating new 9<sup>th</sup> grade culture
  - d. Routine and integrated academic assessment
  - e. Personal Education Plans (PEP) for each student
  - f. Intensive reading and math interventions as well as hands-on, project-based science and social studies instruction

## **2009-2010**

1. The second new high school will open in August 2009 on the campus formerly known as Johnston and will incorporate a new instructional model. In addition, the New Vision High School that opened in 2008-09 will complete its alignment with a new instructional model. Both models will focus on rigorous college and career preparation. These two new schools will join the International High School (IHS) that is already located on the site, serving recent immigrants in grades 9 – 10.
2. The continuing partnership with the Austin Community College (ACC) will be a centerpiece of both new high schools, providing extensive services to support the college and career focus and expanding services offered in the previous year. A college and career support center will be created as a part of the ACC partnership to provide resources to each new school including such services as a full-time college readiness coordinator.
3. Selection of new instructional models will follow an extensive process that includes community engagement, an in-depth analysis of relevant data and demographics, and site visits to model schools. Although final selection of instructional models has not been made at this time, early indications are that the New Tech High and Early College High School models appear to most closely fit the needs of students in the community.
  - a. Community stakeholders will be engaged beginning May 1, 2008 through August 15, 2008, with additional site visits in the fall 2008, in an extensive process to receive input on values related to new models. Activities will include: focus groups, surveys, site visits, information meetings, and a meeting to provide final recommendations. Community involvement in planning for the New Vision will continue throughout 2008 – 2009.

- b. An in-depth analysis of data will be conducted by The Parthenon Group of Boston, the team that has worked with AISD over the last two years to transform the protocols used by AISD to monitor project implementation and campus progress against goals and the Campus Improvement Plans.
- c. Research has been conducted on options for the new school models and site visits have been conducted as noted in section below.
- f. Selection criteria for the new schools are being developed using multiple factors that include: community input, data analyses of student needs, findings from site visits, and research on college and career readiness.
- g. Final recommendations for new instructional models at the two new schools will be made using the selection criteria.
- h. Letters of intent will be received from school models, and contracts will be negotiated with approval of the Management Team if the models selected are not New Tech High or Early College High School.

**Proposed Criteria for New Instructional Model(s):**

1. The model(s)) must focus on preparing all students for BOTH college and careers.
2. The model(s) must not have enrollment criteria that would exclude high poverty, at-risk students.
3. The teachers must have a proven academic record serving struggling, at-risk students.
4. The teachers must be well prepared for English Language Learners and Special Education students.
5. The academic and non-academic curriculum for the schools must provide individual attention for students, including provisions for enabling students to make up any skills or content knowledge that are below grade-level coming in.
6. The school leadership teams must provide a plan for ongoing management that tracks student performance through continuous assessment of leading indicators.
7. The faculty and staff must have a sophisticated understanding of the use of data to increase student performance throughout the school year.
8. The models must provide Advanced Placement and/or dual college credit opportunities for all students. College-level coursework will be an expectation for junior and senior students.
9. The models must work closely with the college and career support center to assure that all students are focused on college entrance and are supported in the college search and application process.

## **Recommended Instructional Models**

### ***Pending the Community Engagement Process and Board Approval***

AISD has researched and visited new instructional models across Texas and the United States to identify those that are best suited to address the complex needs of high poverty, at-risk students. Because TEA has requested that specific models be included for approval in the Repurposing Proposal, AISD includes the New Tech High and Early College High School as the two models that best meet the identified needs of students and community values at this time. However, no decision has been on the final selection of new models. The AISD Board of Trustees will make the final selection before October 1, 2008, pending the outcomes of the community engagement process. Should different models be selected at this time, AISD will submit these new recommendations to the Management Team for approval.

### **New Tech High**

New Tech High School has proven that an authentic academic reform is possible even for high poverty, at-risk high schools. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills that students develop in the New Tech project based learning system creates an academic culture where critical thinking, collaboration, trust, work ethic and strong written and verbal communication are the norm. The multiple layers of support provided by team teaching and student advisories helps students to transition their 21<sup>st</sup> Century skill set into meaningful participation in both college and career.

Rockman et al conducted a six-month study of New Technology High School (NTHS) alumni for the last eight years for the New Technology Foundation (NTF). The study was designed to gather feedback from NTHS graduates regarding their postsecondary education and/or career, 21st Century skills, knowledge and use of technology, and on what they valued most about their NTHS experience.

Data discussed in the report suggest that New Technology High School is meeting the academic and skill needs of its 21st Century students. Overall feedback indicated that:

- 89% of the responding alumni attended a 2-year or 4-year college/university or professional or technical institute.
- 92% of respondents have applied some or a great deal of what they learned at NTHS to their postsecondary education or career.
- 96% of the respondents would choose to attend NTHS again.
- 40% of the alumni respondents were either majoring in STEM fields or were working in STEM professions.

The Student Empowerment Academy (SEA) at Jefferson High School in South Central Los Angeles is a New Tech Academy where English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged students each make up greater than 90% of the student population, students very similar to the current student population anticipated at the New Vision High School in Austin.

SEA posted some of the largest academic gains in the district on the Academic Performance Indicator (API) in 2007:

- The State API standard for 2007 was 800
- SEA scored 638
- Jefferson students scored 457 (All of SEA's students would have otherwise attended Jefferson)

### Early College High School

Early college high school is a bold approach, based on the principle that academic rigor, combined with the opportunity to save time and money, is a powerful motivator for students to work hard and meet serious intellectual challenges. Early college high schools blend high school and college in a rigorous yet supportive program, compressing the time it takes to complete a high school diploma and the first two years of college. The schools are designed so that low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English Language learners, students of color, and other young people underrepresented in higher education can simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an Associate's degree or up to two years of credit toward a Bachelor's degree-tuition free (*from The Early College High School Initiative*).

Nationally, early college high schools have data showing higher achievement rates, attendance, and promotion rates than similar student populations in their districts. For example:

- Attendance rates for early college high school students average over 90%
- Grade-to-grade promotion rates exceed 90%
- Early college students outperform students in their districts on state-mandated math and English Language Arts exams.

(*from Early College High School Initiative*)

The Challenge Early College High School in Houston, Texas has shown that creating such a college going culture can and has resulted in excellent student performance. Student performance at Challenge exceeds district averages on many critical measures. For example:

- 85% of students passed all tests on the 2007 TAKS versus 62% for the district
- 99% passed ELA TAKS and 92% passed Math TAKS in 2007
- 28% score commended on ELA TAKS and 19% on Math TAKS in 2007
- 77% of the class of 2006 graduated college ready versus the district average of 25%

In collaboration with Austin Community College, AISD is poised to create such an environment for the students at the campus formerly housing the Johnston High School.

**Attachments**

Attachment A	Recruitment Plan for New Students
Attachment B	New Tech High
Attachment C	Early College High School