

# INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION TO THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

For

**Pitts Middle School**



**Pueblo City Schools**

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# PITTS MIDDLE SCHOOL APPLICATION

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Executive Summary                           | 4           |
| 2. Mission and Core Values                     | 5           |
| 3. Academic Achievement Results                | 7           |
| 4. Leadership and Governance                   | 11          |
| 5. Engagement and Communication                | 13          |
| 6. Innovations                                 | 18          |
| 6.1. Program Innovations                       | 18          |
| A. Description                                 | 19          |
| B. Changes to Programs, Policies, or Documents | 23          |
| C. Waivers to State Statutes and Rules         | 28          |
| D. Waivers to District Policies                | 28          |
| E. Waivers to Collective Bargaining Provisions | 29          |
| F. Cost Savings and Increased Efficiencies     | 29          |
| 6.2. Time Innovations                          | 30          |
| A. Description                                 | 31          |
| B. Changes to Programs, Policies, or Documents | 32          |
| C. Waivers to State Statutes and Rules         | 33          |
| D. Waivers to District Policies                | 33          |
| E. Waivers to Collective Bargaining Provisions | 34          |
| F. Cost Savings and Increased Efficiencies     | 35          |
| 6.3. People Innovations                        | 36          |
| A. Description                                 | 37          |
| B. Changes to Programs, Policies, or Documents | 40          |
| C. Waivers to State Statutes and Rules         | 41          |
| D. Waivers to District Policies                | 42          |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| E. Waivers to Collective Bargaining Provisions                           | 43 |
| F. Cost Savings and Increased Efficiencies                               | 44 |
| 6.4. Money Innovations   | 45 |
| A. Description   | 45 |
| B. Changes to Programs, Policies, or Documents                           | 47 |
| C. Waivers to State Statutes and Rules                                   | 47 |
| D. Waivers to District Policies  | 48 |
| E. Waivers to Collective Bargaining Provisions                           | 49 |
| F. Cost Savings and Increased Efficiencies                               | 50 |
| 7. Operations and Management Services                                    | 51 |
| 8. Budget and Finance  | 53 |
| 9. Evaluation  | 55 |
| 9.1. Student Achievement   | 55 |
| 9.2. Student Data Management   | 57 |
| 9.3. Student Data Reporting  | 57 |
| 9.4. Innovation Program Review   | 58 |
| 10. Evidence of Support - Administrators, Teachers, and Advisory Council | 59 |
| 11. Letters of Support - Staff, Students, Parents, and Community         | 59 |
| 12. Students with Disabilities (IDEA) Section 504 and ADA                | 59 |
| 13. List of Attachments  | 60 |

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pitts Middle School serves 255 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Pueblo's southwest quadrant. From 2003 to 2011, the percent of students at Pitts who qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch increased from approximately 60% to 80%, and student achievement was on a downward trend. Nearly one-third of local families (31.5%) have incomes at or below the federal poverty level. Teaching staff, unprepared or trained to deal with the changing demographics, struggled to provide high quality instruction to a disparate student population. Now staff, students and parents are reclaiming Pitts and ensuring it will once again become the neighborhood's foundation for educational success.

On June 14, 2012, the Pueblo City Schools Board of Education approved the middle school realignment proposal, allowing each middle school to reinvent itself and develop a unique educational focus to facilitate improved achievement. We propose to transform our underachieving 7-8 middle school into a 4-8 academically-focused visual and performing arts program.

Pitts Middle School will become a premier school with a Pre-Advanced Placement (SpringBoard) academic curriculum infused with multi-disciplinary learning through the arts. Teachers will utilize SpringBoard's integrated content, teaching strategies, and assessments to provide high quality first best CORE instruction differentiated to student needs and goals. The creative arts curriculum, ENCORE, will be implemented through a practical and innovative structure providing opportunities to foster creativity, build self-confidence, and engage in a meaningful and successful educational experience. Every student will participate in at least two ENCORE studies. Options include: instrumental music; vocal music; graphic design; drama/theatre; 2-D and 3-D art; dance/movement; video production; photography; technical production; and speech/debate. Our community-based Arts Advisory Team is already forming. Mandatory student leadership training for all students will include elements such as perseverance, goal setting, accountability, problem solving and teambuilding.

Innovation strategies include a longer school day and school year for both students and teachers. The lengthened instructional time ensures opportunities for project based learning and enrichment as well as targeted interventions to increase student academic growth rates. These will be supplemented by Saturday School and Summer Academies. ENCORE instructors will incorporate current arts masters already in the school or district as well as professional artists from the community. Licensing waivers will be necessary in the latter case.

One of Pueblo City School's most telling statistics is that more than 130 students leave the district for middle school only to return for high school. It is our intention to create a unique school for Pueblo and surrounding communities, engaging and retaining at least 20% of students who would otherwise leave. Pitts Middle School will provide the excellence long missing from our neighborhoods.

## 2. MISSION AND CORE VALUES

### A. MISSION

The realignment foundation board for Pitts Middle School, which includes the building leadership team and key members of the Pueblo arts community, propose the create of a middle school academy of rigorous academics infused with visual and performing arts:

***Pitts Middle School***  
***A premier school of academics and arts infusing***  
***the rigor of advanced academics***  
***with the creativity and beauty of the arts.***

Our realignment foundation team established the following vision, mission and values to guide our work.

#### **Vision**

*We believe all students can achieve excellence.*

#### **Mission**

*Our vision will be accomplished by cultivating a safe, student-centered learning environment that fosters academic achievement, creativity, character development, a passion for learning, and a sense of belonging through teamwork, high expectations, meaningful and challenging academic instruction, continuous improvement, and a commitment to our school values.*

#### **Values**

*Respect, Accountability, Commitment, Fairness, Integrity, Teamwork*

### B. NEEDS

Pitts Middle School serves 255 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Pueblo's southwest quadrant. Its primary feeder schools are Sunset Park, Carlile, Columbian, Goodnight, and Heritage Elementaries. In 2008, Corwin Middle School was reconstituted and an International Baccalaureate Magnet School was established. Boundaries for the school were redrawn, and the former Corwin students were redistributed to Pitts and Roncalli Middle Schools. From 2003 to 2011, the percent of students at Pitts who qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch increased from approximately 60% to 80%, and student achievement was on a downward trend. The Pitts Middle School staff was not prepared nor trained to deal with the changing demographics. Nearly one-third of local families (31.5%) have incomes at or below the federal poverty level,

compared to 22% for Pueblo (city-wide) and 12.5% for Colorado statewide.<sup>1</sup> Families generally lack the resources to transport their children to non-neighborhood schools, restricting their choice options. Thus it is imperative to provide the highest quality education possible to every student. The current student population includes:

- 81 % FRL Eligible/Economically Disadvantaged
- 13% Students with Disabilities;
- 5.6% Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners;
- 70% Hispanic, 22% White, and 8% other minorities.

The 2003-2004 academic school year was the last time Pitts Middle School made Adequate Yearly Progress or Growth. In 2005, Pitts failed to make AYP in reading. In 2005, Pitts failed to make AYP in math. In 2006, 2007, and 2008 Pitts failed to make AYP in reading and math. By 2009, Pitts was identified as one of the lowest performing schools in Colorado, and was placed on Turnaround Status. The 2012-2013 academic school year marks the start of Turnaround Year 3. In addition to the decline in academic achievement, Pitts Middle School experienced a drastic turnover in principal leadership, changing every year for five years. The current principal is the first principal to remain for more than one year since 2008.

### C. RATIONALE

Pitts’ students come from primarily low-income households. School is viewed as a necessity lacking engagement and connectivity to real-world issues. Students often struggle to see the connection between core classes and future career success. Innovation status establishes the flexibility to go beyond the standard curriculum to provide extended learning opportunities in both academics and the arts. Project-based learning will not only engage students but connects student goals and dreams to planning, hard work and success. However, the rigorous expectations for both students and teachers create change and require diligent effort. Staff identified seven barriers to implementing change which can be reduced through innovation status designation.

| Barrier  | Solution  |
|--|---|
| 1. The academic impact of poor instruction cannot be over emphasized. 19 staff members who were employed at Pitts Middle School during the 2011-2012 school year were no longer teaching at the school. Too many teachers lacked appropriate content knowledge. Although they were considered “Highly Qualified”, they were not highly effective. The ability to recruit and retain highly-qualified, highly effective teachers is critical to innovation success. | Consistent adherence to SB191 and mutual consent. |
| 2. District placement of staff without regards to their buy-in of the Pitts Middle School program, standards, or philosophy.   | Consistent adherence to SB191 and mutual consent. |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 3. District recruitment, hiring, retention, and dismissal practices do not align with the innovation plan.   | The innovation plan will provide for site-based hiring of all staff except for the principal.  |
| 4. District compensation schedules do not reflect the needs of the innovation plan particularly as they reflect extended school day, school year, and professional development expectations.               | The innovation plan provides for site autonomy in determining incentives based on student growth and signing/retention bonuses for hard-to-fill positions. |
| 5. District directed professional development that does not reflect the needs of the building's focus.   | The needs of the innovation plan will take precedence over all district required professional development.   |
| 6. The current adopted district calendar and school day do not reflect the necessary increase in instructional time and student engagement to achieve accelerated growth rates.                            | The innovation plan's response to and reflection of student needs will take precedence over all district adopted calendar and school day                   |
| 7. The lack of a district level benchmark assessment for science in 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grade results in the absence of data regarding science performance prior to 8 <sup>th</sup> grade. | The Pitts Middle School will move to Galileo benchmarking assessments at all grade levels.   |

### 3. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS

#### A. RESULTS OF INNOVATION

Our current and future plans are bold strategies necessary to reinvent our school for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and improve academic achievement by:

- Providing a school of choice with a targeted focus in the visual and performing arts and explore a new grade level configuration. The ele-middle model of 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade has proven itself to be very successful in Pueblo. The visual and performing arts will provide a meaningful and relevant venue for our students to access learning. Initial input from the community has been very positive.
- Providing a guaranteed, viable, and rigorous academic Pre-AP curriculum with highly-effective, research-based instructional strategies creating a seamless educational system with our nearby high school.
- Increasing blended learning opportunities for students.
- Establishing recruiting, hiring and retention policies which provide incentives and pay for performance.
- Continuing our partnership with the Flippen Group to improve school climate.

Our plan will take us beyond the foundations built in the turnaround process strengthening our work in data walks, lesson design, curriculum development, research based instructional strategies, safety nets, focused and collaborative coaching.

## **B. SIGNIFICANT TRENDS AND PRIORITY NEEDS**

Pitts Middle School Unified School Improvement Plan was developed collaboratively utilizing the expertise of stakeholder teams. Stakeholder participation included the administrative team, instructional coaches, content specialists, the building leadership team, paraprofessionals, parent volunteers, and community members. Reviewing the School Performance Frameworks, teams evaluated CSAP/TCAP and ACCESS-pro achievement in the areas of reading, mathematics, writing, and science. Unfortunately, the school did not meet state and federal achievement expectations in any content area. With a proficient and advanced percentage of <46% in reading, <21% in mathematics and science, <31% in writing, and school percentiles below 12, performance is substantially below the district and state mean and the improvement challenge is significant. Growth outcomes were similar. With a median growth percentile of 33 in reading, 22 in mathematics, and 30 in writing, the magnitude of the performance challenges are substantially below the district and state. However, Pitts did receive an “Approaching” rating for ELL students. Teams rated three areas as priority performance challenges:

1. Consistently low levels of academic achievement in all content areas across all grade levels and sub groups.
2. Consistently low median growth in all content areas for all grade levels.
3. Consistently low median growth percentile performance in all content areas across all identified sub groups.

Trend data is presented in the table on page 9 and confirms the long-term prevalence of these issues. The USIP is available in Attachment 2. 2012 Achievement Framework data are available in Attachment 3.

**Three Year Trend Data: Pitts Middle School CSAP/TCAP Scores**

| Academic Achievement:  | Academic Growth:  | Academic Growth Gaps:   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><u>Reading: 3 year trend</u><br/>The percent of ALL students who scored proficient or advanced on reading CSAP/TCAP decreased slightly then increased from 46.76% to 41.80% to 46.38% (-0.38%) between 20010-2012, which is below the district and state averages.</p> <p><u>Math: 3 year trend</u><br/>The percent of all students who scored proficient or advanced on math CSAP/TCAP has remained relatively flat from 19.38% to 21.12% to 21.68% (+2.3%) between 2010-2012, which is below the district and state averages.</p> <p><u>Writing: 3 year trend</u><br/>The percent of all students who scored proficient or advanced on writing CSAP/TCAP increased then decreased from 28.18% to 32.58% to 31.07% (+2.89%) between 2010-2012, which is below the district and state averages.</p> | <p><u>Reading: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in reading increased slightly from 30 to 31 to 33 (+3) between 2010-2012, which is below the adequate growth percentile target of 44 (-11) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-12).</p> <p><u>Mathematics: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in math increased slightly from 21 to 21 to 22 (+1) between 2010-2012, which is significantly below the adequate growth percentile target of 82 (-60) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-23).</p> <p><u>Writing: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in writing increased slightly from 28 to 38 to 30 (+2) between 2010-2012, which is significantly below the adequate growth percentile target of 66 (-33) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-15).</p> <p><u>English Language Proficiency (ACCESS-pro): 2 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile for English language proficiency among ELLs as measured by ACCESS-pro increased from 9 to 40 from 2011-2012, but remained below the adequate growth percentile target of 47 (-7) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-5).</p> | <p><u>Reading: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in reading increased slightly from 30 to 31 to 33 (+3) between 2010-2012, which is below the adequate growth percentile target of 44 (-11) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-12).</p> <p><u>Mathematics: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in math increased slightly from 21 to 21 to 22 (+1) between 2010-2012, which is significantly below the adequate growth percentile target of 82 (-60) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-23).</p> <p><u>Writing: 3 year trend</u><br/>The total median growth percentile of all students in writing increased slightly from 28 to 38 to 30 (+2) between 2010-2012, which is significantly below the adequate growth percentile target of 66 (-33) and below the minimum state expectation of 45 (-15).</p> |

## ANNUAL TARGETS

Pitt's staff recognizes the need to set high goals for all students in reading, writing, math, science. Subgroups, specifically ELL students, students with disabilities, and students eligible for FRL exhibit significantly disparate scores from grade level composites. We also recognize that significant improvement requires more than one year. The following growth targets have been established for all grade levels and all subgroups. We recognize that alignment to district and state expectations requires significant growth and improvement from 2012 TCAP /ACCESS scores and is unlikely before 2015-2016.

| Target Area | 2013-2014<br>% P/A | 2014-2015<br>% P/A | 2015-2016<br>% P/A | Median Growth<br>percentile/year |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Reading     | 55%                | 70%                | 80%                | At least 45                      |
| Math        | 35%                | 50%                | 65%                | At least 45                      |
| Writing     | 45%                | 65%                | 75%                | At least 45                      |
| Science     | 35%                | 50%                | 65%                | At least 45                      |

## C. INTERIM MEASURES, METRICS AND TARGETS

Pitts Middle School will implement significant improvements in formative assessments and progress monitoring assessments. Benchmark assessments will be administered three times during the year (August, December and May), using the district assessment (currently Galileo). Items have been aligned to Colorado Academic Standards and are highly predictive of TCAP/ACCESS summative assessment outcomes. Short cycle assessments include the following:

- End of Unit Assessments will be administered after each instructional unit (reading, math, social studies and science) for an estimated 5-8 times during the school year. At least 75% of all students will score proficient or advanced before teachers move to the next unit.
- Study Island supports instruction in reading, math, and ELL achievement through computer assisted learning. The program's progress monitoring will be conducted weekly. Teachers will use outcomes to assess student growth, skills gaps, retarget achievement goals and improve instruction.
- Pre and post Common Writing Assessments (Write Tools) with a common rubric will be administered quarterly in the four genres (narrative, informative/explanatory, persuasive, and comparative writing). The target is to increase the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient/advanced to at least 75%.
- Additional assessments include Scholastic Reading Inventory and Scholastic Math Inventory (online and reported to the district and state), Accelerated Reader and SpringBoard (pre-AP).

Core classroom progress will be measured by comparing formative assessment data to data accrued through informal and formal classroom assessments. The Professional Learning Community (PLC) will use backwards mapping in order to identify the skills needed for the students to demonstrate content mastery for the given units. The PLC teams will identify strengths and weaknesses in content delivery, as well as weaknesses in curricular design. The

Building Leadership Team (BLT) will convene weekly to review, analyze and communicate interim benchmark data.

**Galileo**

|                |           |            |           |
|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Science        | 8/26/2013 | 12/09/2013 | 5/27/2014 |
| Social Studies | 8/26/2013 | 12/09/2013 | 5/27/2014 |

**Spring Board Pre-AP**  
**End of Unit Assessments (EUA's) Embedded Assessments**

|      |            |            |           |           |           |           |
|------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ELA  | 10/17/2013 | 12/12/2013 | 2/14/2014 | 4/22/2014 | 6/5/2014  |           |
| Math | 10/09/2013 | 11/19/2013 | 1/17/2014 | 2/28/2014 | 4/17/2014 | 5/28/2014 |

**TCAP (Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies)**

|  |
|--|
| ACCESS January 6, 2014 – February 7, 2014<br>Reading, Writing, Math March 3, 2014 - March 21, 2014*<br>Science and Social Studies – April 14, 2014 - May 2, 2014 |
|--|

\*Early testing window. The District has been using early window.

In conjunction with the building Arts Coordinator, instructors will develop performance-based assessments. The assessment process will incorporate a portfolio of work, student demonstration of their work in relation to content standards, a 95% attendance rate for classes, and 100% complete rate for assignments/projects. Parents and community will be invited to attend performance-based assessments and activities (music or other concerts, art-walks, content area performance events, student-led parent conferences.)

**4. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

The current school principal, Ms. Ortiz, will be the Pitts Middle School principal. Ms. Ortiz was a Blue Ribbon recipient for turning around Columbian Elementary in Pueblo City District 60. If she would need to be replaced, the Pueblo City Schools District 60 Superintendent would oversee the hiring process.

- **Principal Support and Accountability:** Pueblo City Schools District 60 (PCS D60) established the Principal Support and Supervision Group (PSSG) and School Monitoring, Accountability, and Support (MAS) program in 2012. The Assistant Superintendent and PSSGs coordinate and facilitate the key processes to build capacity for high performance

leadership and embed vertical leadership development, accountability and support. MAS members work as coaches, assisting principals to implement and develop their Building Leadership Teams and Professional Learning Communities with fidelity. They also coach schools through data investigations, aligning data to instruction, and using data to drive the school goals and processes inherent in the Unified School Improvement Plan. Quarterly reviews are conducted and reported on the District Initiative Walk-through form.

The PSSG comprises all senior district leadership. They directly supervise and evaluate building principals, holding them accountable for academic achievement results. The dialogue evaluation process utilizes documents aligned to the district's strategic goals and student outcomes including, the Unified School Improvement Plan, the 2014 Turnaround Plan, Supervision and Evaluation Standards, Understanding by Design – Moving from Units to Lesson Plans: a Guide for Administrators, Writing Across the Curriculum, Responsive Classroom, the BAS: Assessment Manual for District Benchmarking and Common Assessments, and distributed leadership structures. Walkthroughs and dialogues are conducted quarterly between a PSSG member and each principal (See Attachment 4 for PSSG Review and Walk-through forms). The PSSG and MAS processes form the foundation for principal evaluation, feedback, and improvement.

Pitts Middle School principal will be responsible for hiring, evaluating, and, if necessary, releasing all other building staff. All teachers will participate in grade level and team-based Professional Learning Communities (PLC's). PLC's will be the foundational support for building teacher leadership capacity and providing a venue to review data and develop instructional data driven decisions that focus on the needs of individual students and instruction.

- **Teacher Qualifications:** Teachers and staff must be highly skilled and committed to the mission, vision, and goals of the school. New teachers will be required to participate in additional professional development relevant to innovation expectations. They will be supervised by department heads/academic coach and evaluated by a school administrator. (See required commitment letter, attachment 5.)
- **Accountability:** Pitts Middle School principal will adhere to SB 191 standards for teacher effectiveness. After pilot implementation in spring 2012, the district's assessment rubric reflecting five standards (content knowledge, classroom environment, learning facilitation, reflective practice, and leadership) is being refined. The principal will be guided by district coaches to maximize observation walkthroughs and feedback to teachers.

The Building Leadership Team (BLT) currently consists of 13 members with representation from each content area and grade level. (The BLT membership will expand in 2013-2014 to accommodate additional arts content specialists.) The BLT meets weekly to support the principal in school governance. BLT responsibilities include:

- Delineate a mission-driven decision-making structure and organizational chart that is clear and understood by all stakeholders.
- In conjunction with the administrative team, instructional coaches, and content specialists, the BLT will review historic and current CSAP/TCAP data, Colorado Growth Summary Reports, Alpine Achievement Data, School Performance Frameworks, and formative assessment data to delineate school successes and gaps, identify root causes for gaps, and develop annual USIP goals/action plans for student academic and behavioral growth and achievement.
- Provide leadership for students, teachers, parents, business and community partners, arts institutions, institutions of higher education, in assessing and steering the Innovation Plan, monitoring quarterly progress towards innovation goals.

An Arts Council will be created to support arts leadership. The council will include an array of community members from the Pueblo Symphony, Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, Colorado State University Pueblo, Sol-Via, Union Arts Group, local dance troops, the *Pueblo Chieftain*, and high school student leadership councils. The council will meet quarterly to provide feedback on the school's arts implementation, contribute expertise to arts and interdisciplinary curriculum units, provide linkages to community art experts, and review innovation outcome data.

The Building Accountability Committee (BAC) comprised of parents and neighbors will continue to meet quarterly. They will review student academic outcomes, budget, discipline, and school climate issues. At least one member will represent Pitts Middle School at the District Accountability meetings, serving as a key conduit for school outreach to the larger district audience.

## 5. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Pitts Middle School receives Title I funds and has, for many years, had a parent compact and parent meetings to explain school programs, expectations, and answer questions. During 2012, the Pitts principal and BLT expanded this effort, utilizing the parent involvement committee (comprised of parent volunteers, community members, and staff members) to review and analyze three years of student data. This was the first step in moving the school towards innovation and transition to Pitts Middle School. Five goals were established for the family and community sectors as part of the innovation planning.

1. Create a collaborative culture where educators, community members, parents and students work together as a community of learners for a highly diverse population.
2. Hire non-licensed arts experts for *ENCORE* subjects who are not required to meet NCLB highly qualified criteria.
3. Establish partnerships with arts organizations in the areas of dance, drama, visual arts, music and multidisciplinary arts and with supportive business organizations.
4. Foster a unified focus on student achievement.

5. Create extended learning opportunities for students and teachers based on student needs.

The BLT then developed five strategies to achieve these goals.

### **Outreach and Communication**

Initial outreach on innovation was contained in a letter to parents. The letter was distributed during November parent-teacher conferences (see Attachment 6). Since then, it has also been available at various meetings and school activities. During October and November 2012, the staff at Pitts created a video; highlighting school assets, students, commitment to the arts and the innovation process (see <http://pitts.pueblocitieschools.us/>). It is being shown at meetings and school events plus runs continuously in the school office.

- **School activities:** The video plays at these events: Dec. 11, string orchestra concert; Dec. 12, school science fair; Dec. 13, concert band; Dec. 18, Goodnight Elementary choir concert; March 7, South Quadrant Strings at South High School; March 21, South Quadrant Band Festival; April 9<sup>th</sup> Goodnight Music concert, April 25, Goodnight Choir concert; April 30 Goodnight music concert; May 16, Pitts String Orchestra concert; May 21, Pitts Band concert; May 28, Goodnight music concert; May 30, Goodnight music concert; Title-1 parent nights December through May.
- **School office/counseling office:** Continual looping of video during school hours began December 11, 2012.
- **School website:** The video was added to the school website December 17, 2012.
- **Channel 19:** The video was added to Channel 19 television December 17, 2012.

The video provides an opportunity to answer questions, paint a “future vision,” and recruit potential students. The school’s webpage is being updated to include the school calendar, classroom calendars, student activities, school data, celebrations of achievement and arts products, plus content standards and benchmark expectations. Pitts media and technology staff led by Russ Avina intend updates to be completed by spring 2013.

### **Expectations**

Pitts Middle School is expanding its Title I Parent Compact and creating a Parent/Student/School Compact. The compact establishes a system of mutual accountability per policy where responsibilities of parents, students, and school are clearly noted so all are held accountable for their role in the educational process. Key components include:

- Attendance expectation of at least 95%.
- 100% homework completion.
- Each parent volunteering at least four hours per year.
- Parent participation in discussions related to the education of children and positive use of extra-curricular time.
  - Attendance at parent/student/teacher conferences at least two times per year.
- Parent support of school activities and innovation.
  - Sign-in sheets at all activities.
  - Surveys conducted annually.
- Maintenance of appropriate behavior per school and district guidelines.

- Students who not meeting proficiency levels will be expected to attend summer academy and before/after school programs.
- Teachers will be expected to maintain updated student progress and attendance through Infinite Campus as a primary means of communication with parents.

The compact will be completed by March 2013. (See student/parent commitment letter, attachment 5).

**Recruitment**

Pitts Middle School will begin 2013-2014 as a school for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. (Sixth grade represents an expansion from 2012-2013 and will include four self-contained classrooms.)

| School Yr | 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade       | 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade       | 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade       |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2013-2014 | 0                           | 0                           | 4 self-contained classrooms |
| 2014-2015 | 0                           | 2 self-contained classrooms | 4 self-contained classrooms |
| 2015-2016 | 2 self-contained classrooms | 2 self-contained classrooms | 4 self-contained classrooms |

The key for school expansion is the recruitment of a) students interested in academic challenge (pre-AP CORE curriculum), b) the arts (ENCORE curriculum), and c) who attend local elementary schools who value a 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade ele-middle option. Staff will actively outreach to south and east quadrant parents during spring 2013 and during “choice” windows in subsequent years.

Pitts Middle School will host an open house for potential parents and students prior to the school choice deadline. The open house will provide a forum for educating our parents and our potential families on school of choice process. Invitations will be sent out to our students and those at all other local elementary schools. We will also have invitations available at the music events detailed in the outreach section above. The open house will begin with Mrs. Ortiz providing an overview of innovation and the upcoming year. The video will be shown of our student life augmented by a community spokesperson (e.g., Dave Feamster, a local business owner). Teachers will provide a summary of their programs and curriculum. Student work will be displayed as well as student musicians performing throughout the halls. The principal and assistant principal will host a question and answer coffee in the media center after the main presentation. The school will create and distribute a newsletter outlining curricular options for the 2013-2014 schools year. Available in print and electronic forms, the newsletter will serve as a hand-out at the open house and advertise upcoming events. The school will also secure advertising coverage through radio, television and newspaper ads.

Prior to the choice dealing, selected students and groups will travel to feeder schools and give a presentation about Pitts and its expansion to. Targeted students include members from clubs, groups, performers from Mr. Bushkovski’s music program etc. Students and staff will also attend community events (parades, booth at the Chili Festival, www day, 5k runs, Colorado State Fair, etc.) to promote the school.

## Engagement

The arts require knowledge and skills beyond the purview of current staff. Pitts' families traditionally come to school for student events but are less forthcoming in engaging with the student expectations and academic success. Pitts MS will benefit from two teams currently under development.

- 1) The Building Advisory Team - Arts Council (Arts Council) will consist of 8-15 community partners. Current individuals and organizations under consideration include: June King, Pueblo Symphony; Jackie Henderson, Sangre de Cristo Arts Center; Mark Hudson, Colorado State University Pueblo; Union Arts Group; dance company representatives; parents, high school leadership council students, the *Pueblo Chieftain*; and Sol- Via Modern Arts Center (which will also provide contract consulting services). The school will host an evening to discuss and share the innovation plan and include visual, creative and performing arts information. The Arts Council will help guide, advise, and communicate our vision to the community and stakeholders.
  
- 2) The Family and Community Engagement Team (FACET) will consist of family, community, and school staff members. FACET will organize parent events and training sessions encompassing topics centered on the parents' role in advocacy regarding academic achievement and the social/ emotional well-being of students. FACET will solicit interest surveys from families and community partners. Members will then coordinate, encourage and implement activities to support family engagement and community involvement.

Preliminary topics for exploration and training include:

- a) Positive Parenting workshops (Parenting, Communicating, Decision Making, Learning at Home);
- b) Community Resource Fair at Open House in conjunction with community agencies;
- c) Develop activities directly related to the 6 types of parent involvement:
  - Monthly Art Integration Nights to provide families with core content lessons demonstrating an integration of visual/performing arts and strategies (supports student learning at home).
  - Instructional sessions on use of Parent Portal (supports communication, learning at home, parenting, and decision making);
  - Bi-annual student-led conferences (supports communication and learning at home);
  - Use of student planners (supports communication, learning at home, parenting);
  - Conduct home visits prior to the start of the school year and at transition points (supports parenting, communication, learning at home);
  - Provide clear information on choosing schools/courses, programs, activities, and delivering school policies, reforms, transitions, etc. (supports communication, decision making);

- Utilize parent volunteers to assist in classroom, parent resource center, and for disbursement of school communications (supports communication, volunteerism);
- Create a Family Resource Center including computer access which will be open to families twice weekly for job search, resume development, Parent Portal access, student ICAP, etc. The Media Specialist will supervise the resource center and assist families as needed (supports communication, parenting);
- Provide information to families on the knowledge and skills required for students in each subject at each grade level (supports communication, learning at home);
- Provide service integration through partnerships with school, civic, counseling, and other organizations (supports volunteerism, community collaboration);
- Support student/family service opportunities such as recycling, art or music projects, activities for seniors, etc. (supports volunteerism, communications, community collaboration);
- Organize family/student advocacy nights (supports communications).

The principal will oversee the establishment of a FACET including the volunteer application requirements and background processing. All FACET members will receive training regarding their roles and responsibilities. Training includes a strength/interest inventory, federal mandates (e.g., Title I,) for family engagement, role specific training, and evaluation processes. The Arts Coordinator will oversee integration of visual and performing arts into the FACET calendar and core curriculum. The FACET chair will lead communication of all events to appropriate team members who will then disseminate information via web, phone, etc. and conduct monthly FACET meetings.

### **Results Updates and Progress**

A Response to Instruction (RtI) coach will be hired to support the implementation of the RtI process. Responsibilities include support to instructional staff, RtI problem solving meetings, and advocacy for students and parents with wrap-around services. The RtI coach will also develop or assist in the development of a “student PLC” framework for the implementation of student data binders. This might include a monthly lesson in each class focused on data discussion, analyzing individual data with students, graphing, summarizing, and understanding of individual goals and progress. The RtI coach will, in collaboration with ESS staff, conduct family meetings promoting advocacy, assessments, academic support, understanding the RtI process, and understanding Parental Rights and Responsibilities.

Student-directed conferences will be held twice a year, spring and fall. Students will prepare their conferences in leadership class for all core content areas. They will focus on their current academic status, attendance, behavior, and goals to increase performance in all areas. Students will also share specific data from benchmark assessments, end of unit assessments as well as formative assessments.

Academic results for classrooms, grade levels and subgroups will be communicated through the website, electronic and print distribution to parents and the community, plus progress monitoring data displayed within the school.

## 6. INNOVATIONS

Over the last two years, Pitts Middle School has benefitted from the Tiered Intervention Grant funds. The grant provided substantial resources to help our school realize true reform efforts. These reform efforts have resulted in improved instructional practices and student achievement. We have implemented the Colorado Academic Standards, created instructional sequences for the core content areas, created a building leadership team, implemented professional learning communities, and provided professional development for our staff in best practices and research-based strategies. We understand that in order to sustain our progress we must ensure that we have a guaranteed and viable curriculum centered on the teaching and learning cycle, a healthy school culture, and quality embedded professional development. We will continue to focus our organization and implementation in five areas: 1) Leadership for Learning; 2) Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning; 3) Student Centered Learning; 4) Professional Development; and 5) Parent and Community Engagement in order to maximize innovation and choice for the Pueblo community. Our goal is to create an Academy of Excellence, which will become a premier school of academics and arts infusing the rigor of advanced academics with the creativity and beauty of the arts.

### **PROGRAM INNOVATIONS: OVERVIEW**

- Offer educational programming that is academically rigorous, customized to the learning needs of students, and infuses the arts to offer engaging application of concepts, critical thinking and creativity, project-based, experiential learning, and artistic demonstration of knowledge and skills.
- Create necessary conditions for students to receive the intensive support essential to a rigorous college prep curriculum and which enables them perform at or above grade level.
- Adopt research-based core curriculum materials and supplies and Tier 2/Tier 3 interventions to meet the innovation goals.
- Develop and implement a homework policy that supports the education program and requires mandatory before or after school support and/or Saturday school for students not meeting academic achievement targets.
- Establish mandatory Summer Academy for those students not meeting academic achievement targets.
- Implement student data notebooks ensuring a process for students to monitor their own progress and establish learning goals.
- Develop and implement procedures for field trips and extended day excursions.
- Adopt a grade level configuration that aligns with the innovation plan. (Grades: 4-8)
- Foster a unified focus on student achievement allowing parents and students choice into the school while a parent/student compact.
- Adopt a policy for promoting, retaining and accelerating students through the education plan that

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| aligns with the innovation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 95% attendance rate;</li> <li>○ completion of assignments;</li> <li>○ mandatory homework recovery;</li> <li>○ extended learning day (before / after school and Saturday); and,</li> <li>○ academic achievement targets.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>INNOVATION IMPACT: PROPOSED WAIVERS</b>  |  |
| Collective Bargaining   | District/State   |
|   | IHA Basic Instructional Program  |
|   | IA Instructional Goals and Learning Objectives                                   |
|   | IJJ Textbook Selection and Adoption  |
|   | Section 22-32-109(1)(1(t): Determine Educational Program and Prescribe textbooks |

### 6.1.A PROGRAM INNOVATION DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE

The Pitts Middle School team identified several root causes to address the various challenges at our school. Root causes are both programmatic and systemic. The overarching programmatic root cause is the Lack of consistent, effective and rigorous Tier 1 instruction. This includes

- Lack of understanding in a systematic approach to standards-based instruction in English Language Arts (reading)
- Lack of knowledge and understanding in the utilization of backward design (UbD) toward the development of standards-based lessons and activities.
- Lack of understanding in curriculum development and the use of aligned assessments to guide instruction using effective teaching strategies.
- Reliance on Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention strategies has narrowed the ability of teachers to provide high-quality effective Tier 1 instruction for all students. Students are always in catch-up mode and may not have the opportunity to focus on grade-level and above instruction.
- The lack of appropriate accommodations and differentiated instruction within the instructional day and regular classroom for students on individualized education plans (IEP) is often limited.
- Inconsistent academic performance expectations.
- Lack of responsive instructional strategies and materials aligned to the curriculum maps and Colorado Academic Standards.

Systemic root causes derived from lack of instructional and behavioral support systems. They include

- Lack of a balanced assessment system resulting in limited use of data for instructional improvement. (Including formative and summative assessments as well as progress monitoring tools)
- Lack of consistent embedded professional development for providing support to teachers in the implementation of high-yield Tier 1 instructional strategies, which target identified low-performing evidence outcomes in all content areas resulting in school-level capacity and ensuring sustainability.

- Lack of consistent and cohesive academic, behavioral and social expectations for students, staff, and stakeholders resulting in a safe school environment, with high expectations, positive relationships and culture for learning.

### Discipline and Behavior

Over the last three years, there has been a notable increase in the number of student discipline issues resulting in student referrals to administration, student suspensions, and referrals to counseling – including drug, alcohol, and mental health. This past year, the staff began the process of implementing a positive behavior intervention support system (PBIS) with consistent school wide rules and expectations. The philosophy of the PBIS system was not universally supported by all staff, but we have made significant gains in developing a consistent language, creating structures and processes, and recognizing positive behaviors. After reviewing our discipline data, it is obvious and apparent that we needed to do something immediate to ensure that we are providing a safe learning environment for all students and staff. The sheer number of discipline referrals is reflective of the lack of discipline interventions available to teachers. It also identified the number of days students missed due to behavior issues which negatively impacts learning. Over the last three years, attendance rates have remained relatively stable with only a slight fluctuation. Unfortunately, the number of students referred to truancy court is on the rise. Our community advocate currently monitors 22 Pitts Middle School students for attendance-related / truancy issues. She works one-on-one with the students and their families to advocate for compulsory school attendance. We currently have 9 students actively involved in truancy court due to significant absenteeism with a failure to respond to the interventions we have put in place.

The results of the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey revealed that there is a marked increase in the number of students who become engaged in risk behaviors as they progress through our school. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, less than 20% of our students have ever used alcohol or marijuana. By 7<sup>th</sup> grade, that percentage jumps to nearly 50% and by 8<sup>th</sup> grade approximately 60% of our students have used alcohol and marijuana. The use of inhalants and other drugs also increases between 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We have begun the process of providing in-school interventions for our most “at-risk” students, but the limited resources we have available prevents us from reaching all students in need. Through a partnership with Spanish Peaks Mental Health Institute and Crossroads Alcohol and Drug Counseling, we provide 4 days of treatment and support for our students. Students are able to participate in this program during the school day.

Program innovations address both the programmatic and systemic supports.

### Research Based Strategies

Pitts Middle School program is formed around four strategies: a rigorous pre-AP core; additional arts infused studies utilizing project based learning; leadership development for all students; and behavioral supports.

### Pre- Advanced Placement

*CDE: Innovation School Application  
Pueblo City Schools: Pitts Middle School*

*April 26, 2013  
Page 20*

SpringBoard, a pre-Advanced Placement (pre-AP) curriculum from The College Board, builds on cognitive learning theory to provide a rigorous curriculum in language arts and math. Cognitive models of learning are inseparable from language and language proficiency since all new information and experiences are filtered through various modes of language-based communication. Cognitive strategies facilitate learning by providing general guides for information processing. A rigorous longitudinal comparison study using over a million observations from school districts in Florida, found SpringBoard had significant benefit in increasing student achievement, particularly in reading. The average growth varied by initial (pre-SpringBoard) performance levels. Low performers, in the bottom quartile, gained an average of 90.5 developmental scale score units. Students in the top quartile grew less, averaging a gain of 27.6 scale score units. Students at all levels benefitted significantly with the effect ranging from 2.5 months to more than a year of additional growth per year directly attributable to SpringBoard. Outcome effects were similar in math. Low performers in the two bottom quartiles on average grew the most in one year, 89.9 and 90.1 developmental scale score units respectively. Students in the top quartile grew less, 38.7 scale score units.<sup>2</sup>

### The Arts

Schools integrating the arts into the curriculum as part of a comprehensive education reform strategy are documenting positive changes in the school environment and improved student performance.<sup>3,4</sup> In a national study using a federal database of over 25,000 middle and high school students, researchers from the University of California at Los Angeles found students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement tests than students with low arts involvement.<sup>5</sup> From four longitudinal studies, researchers found teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic status (SES) who have a history of in-depth arts involvement show better academic outcomes than do low-SES youth who have less arts involvement. Arts engagement also positively impacted post-secondary enrollment.<sup>6</sup> While in school, researchers found six types of benefits associated with the arts:

- Reading and language skills;
  - Certain forms of arts instruction enhance and complement basic reading skills, language development and writing skills.<sup>1</sup>
- Mathematics skills;
  - Students consistently involved in orchestra or band during their middle and high school years performed better in math at grade 12. The results were even more pronounced when comparing students from low-income families. Those who were involved in orchestra or band were more than twice as likely to perform at the highest levels in math as their peers who were not involved in music.<sup>7</sup>
- Thinking skills;
  - A group of 162 children, ages 9 and 10, were trained to look closely at works of art and reason about what they saw. The results showed that children's ability to draw inferences about artwork transferred to their reasoning about images in science. In both cases, the critical skill is that of looking closely and reasoning about what is seen.<sup>8</sup>
- Social skills;

- A Canadian study reported on the progress of students, aged 9 to 15 years, from low-income communities who participated in community-based youth arts programs. Over a three-year period, students in the program showed significant gains in social and artistic skills and a significant reduction in emotional problems, compared to the control group.<sup>9</sup>
- Motivation to learn; and
  - Students at risk of not successfully completing their high school educations cite their participation in the arts as reasons for staying in school. Factors related to the arts that positively affected the motivation of these students included a supportive environment that promotes constructive acceptance of criticism and one where it is safe to take risks.<sup>10</sup>
  - An ethnographic study of seventh grade boys in special education revealed use of the visual arts helped them become more sophisticated, less reluctant readers. Described as learning disabled, the boys were encouraged to use visual forms of expression to convey their understanding of reading assignments. After a nine-week course of “visualization training,” they also took a more active role in reading and began to interpret text rather than passively reading it.<sup>11</sup>
- Positive school environment.
  - The arts transform the environment for learning. Schools become places of discovery when the arts are the focus of the learning environment. Arts change the school culture, break down barriers between curriculum areas, and can even improve the school’s physical appearance. Seaman (date) found that arts-immersed schools demonstrate positive social and environmental factors, and strong school ecologies.<sup>12</sup>

Learning in the arts is comprehensive creating linkages between concepts, creativity and individuals. The benefits associated with study of the arts are inclusive of all students, although they can be greatest for those who are educationally or economically disadvantaged.

### Student Leadership

The Social change model of leadership delineates that the primary goal should be to “facilitate positive social change at the institution or in the community.” By emphasizing values such as equity, social justice, self-knowledge, personal empowerment, collaboration, citizenship, and service, structured leadership training encourages students to understand their own talents and interests so that they can mobilize themselves and others to serve and work collaboratively.<sup>13</sup> Research by Williams, Townsend, and Linder suggests that leadership knowledge learned in an academic classroom can be retained by students up to three years after course completion.<sup>14</sup> A later study found that student perceptions of their own leadership skills improved over the span of a semester when both practical and theoretical skills were provided in a structured setting.<sup>15</sup>

### Behavioral Support – Capturing Kids Hearts

Capturing Kids’ Hearts is a research-based process designed to strengthen students’ connectedness to school through enhancing protective factors (strong bonds with teachers,

clear rules of conduct that are consistently enforced) and targeting modifiable risk factors (inappropriate behavior, poor social coping skills). Results from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health demonstrated that student connectedness reduced negative behaviors in four domains of adolescent health and morbidity: emotional health, violence, substance use, and sexuality.<sup>16</sup>

Effect on academic achievement was measured using passing rates in English, Math, and Social Studies. Compared with students in the control group, students participating in *Capturing Kids Hearts* demonstrated a 19.3% greater passing rate in English (95.5% vs. 76.2%), an 11.9% greater passing rate in Math (92.6% vs. 80.7%), and a 7.5% greater passing rate in Social Studies (98.5% vs. 91.0%). In addition, intervention students exhibited an 11% lower failure rate.<sup>17</sup> Student connectedness was measured in a study involving students who participated in the semester-long Teen Leadership/Capturing Kids’ Hearts class. Intervention students were significantly more connected to their teachers and also made significantly smarter choices than those in the control group.<sup>18</sup>

**6.1.B. CHANGES TO PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND/OR OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

**Pitts Middle School Components**

| <b>CORE: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies</b>  | <b>Implementation</b>   |
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| <p>SpringBoard is the foundational component for the College Board’s College Readiness System.</p> <p>SpringBoard content builds knowledge and skills through vertical articulation. Content is mapped to standards that prepare students for success in Advanced Placement courses and post-secondary learning. Each lesson provides instructional opportunities to introduce, model, practice and evaluate reading, writing, oral proficiency, collaboration, and problem solving. Instructional materials are grounded in real-world situations and are designed to be engaging and interactive, offering students the opportunity to master knowledge and skills in manageable steps, with tasks that require reading, writing, discussion, problem solving, collaboration, questioning, and</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will participate in a daily 58 minute class in each core subject.</li> <li>● Teachers will utilize SpringBoard’s integrated content, teaching strategies, and assessments to provide high quality first best/Tier 1 instruction differentiated to student needs and goals.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intentional planning and teaching will be enhanced through the mandatory use of backward design (Understanding by Design).</li> <li>○ Lesson plans will reflect differentiation for subgroups, student skills/knowledge gaps, and student learning styles.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Classroom and media technology staff will work together to create blended learning throughout the core content areas including simulations, online research and project development programs, and problem-based learning. School staff will utilize district and consultants to iterate course design/outcomes, goals for group dynamics and facilitation methodology.</li> <li>● ELA staff will develop a scope and sequence for writing instruction to align with that of reading and ELA incorporating various writing genres.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Writing instruction will include monthly writing prompts given across the content areas and score through the arena scoring process. A uniform rubric has been created for short constructed responses to be utilized in all content areas and classrooms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Galileo benchmark assessments will be conducted three times per year (August, December and May) with ongoing student progress measured through formative assessments. Assessments will be used to guide and inform instruction.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teachers will create End of Unit assessments using the NWEA item bank. Outcomes will be compared to benchmarks and goals</li> <li>○ SpringBoard Standardized formative assessments with scoring rubrics are embedded in each lesson. In addition, units are structured to include time</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

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| <p>elaboration.</p> | <p>to review student work, monitor student talk, and observe cognitive organization in action. Computer-based diagnostic assessments are available and can be used as is or can be customized by the teacher. The diagnostic assessment reports offer explanations for each incorrect response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Common pre-/post-writing assessments will be developed in the various genres and scored utilizing a common rubric.</li> <li>○ Short constructed response items will be implemented across the curriculum and scored on a common rubric.</li> <li>○ Student data notebooks will be implemented for individual goal setting and to provide a process to engaging students to examine their own outcome data and progress.</li> <li>● Students will maintain planners for organization skills and ongoing communication between school and home.</li> <li>● Students will participate in at least two student-led conferences each year to practice communication, organization and leadership and support self-evaluation, self-reflection, goal setting, and family engagement.</li> <li>● Daily PLC time will be embedded into every day to further support the analysis of student data and subsequent planning for instruction.</li> </ul> |
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| <p><b>CORE INTERVENTIONS:<br/>Language Arts and Math</b></p>  | <p><b>Implementation</b></p>  |
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| <p>Springboard, continued</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers will be supported by two instructional coaches to provide embedded modeling and mentoring in research-based instructional practices, lesson planning, data analysis, data dialogues, program implementation, and classroom management.</li> <li>● An instructional mentor will support teachers new to the school or any teacher struggling with classroom instruction and management.</li> <li>● Partner with area high schools to ensure seamless Pre-AP/AP curriculum alignment and student transitions</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Provide interventions beyond Tier 1 classroom instruction for students performing below proficiency as well as acceleration and enrichment opportunities for students above proficiency.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the educational opportunities for students by creating flexibility in work schedules and student schedules, extending the school day/school year, and exploring the options for providing a quality instructional program, including the early release on Friday when student contact will be 5 hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement a mandatory extended year summer academy for students who have not met grade level expectations or demonstrated satisfactory progress.</li> <li>○ Implement a Saturday School to provide students with access to support and enrichment opportunities. Saturday School will operate 2 Saturdays per month.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Research, acquire and implement intensive Tier 2 reading intervention/s aligned with benchmark assessment gaps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement Study Island, an individualized computer assisted technology program, which includes a reading intervention component and an ELL component.</li> <li>○ Implement Corrective Reading as a Tier 3 reading intervention</li> <li>○ Teachers will participate in intensive professional development to develop their Tier 2 reading intervention skills and strategies to deliver blended learning.</li> <li>○ Purchase and implement Accelerated Reading for students requiring support in reading vocabulary and comprehension.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research, acquire and implement intensive Tier 2 reading intervention/s aligned with benchmark assessment gaps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Study Island and Corrective Reading are two potential programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Lesson plans will reflect differentiation for subgroups, student skills/knowledge gaps, and student learning styles.</li> <li>● Response to Intervention (RtI): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use web-based (AIMSWeb) benchmark and progress monitoring system to track data and support student intervention planning.</li> <li>○ Use the RtI coach to support the implementation of the RtI processes including Tier 2 and Tier 3 classroom support to instructional staff, organization of RtI meetings, PLC data review, and student advocacy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Students will be progress monitored at least bi-weekly or in accordance with the IEP or RtI plan.</li> <li>● Hire two academic intervention teachers to provide instructional safety nets, supports for students, enrichment and extension.</li> </ul> |
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| <b>ENCORE</b>  | <b>Implementation</b>   |
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| <p>ENCORE will serve as the creative arts component of the curriculum. The goal is to foster creativity, build self-confidence, and engage problem solving skills making middle school a meaningful, successful educational experience.</p> <p>ENCORE’s philosophy emphasizes process over product. Students will explore techniques and materials and learn to make sense of art. Teaching partners may decide that a culminating product, such as a portfolio of work or a final performance, is a key element of the unit instruction, but the new skills, knowledge, and understanding gained in the process of creation are just as important as the product itself. Projects will focus students on demonstrating their knowledge by involving them in discovery learning and creative problem solving.</p> <p>We intend to organize visits and conversations with thematically aligned (Pre-AP &amp; Visual &amp;</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Every student will participate in at least two ENCORE studies. Options include: instrumental music; vocal music; graphic design; drama/theatre; 2-D/3-D art; dance/movement; video production; photography; technical production; and speech/debate.</li> <li>● Hire an Arts Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the ENCORE program.</li> <li>● Partner with an external Agency (Sol-Via Modern Arts Center) to provide on-site professional development, program coordination, side-by-side coaching, cross-curricular unit writing/lesson planning, and grant writing toward effective implementation.</li> <li>● Utilizing curricula from other successful arts/arts integration programs, expertise from practicing artists, expertise from local arts educators/organizations, and district resources, the Arts Coordinator will work with staff to create rigorous, articulated content in each of the studies enumerated above and aligned to Colorado Academic Standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Curriculum will include didactic knowledge, training practicums, research-based pedagogy, performance-based assessments, and a multi-tiered/differentiated delivery system.</li> <li>○ Project-based learning modules will respond to real-world issues, themes or problems. Each will incorporate ENCORE study-area skills, reading, writing, and math, technology, and workplace relevance/application. In addition, projects should reflect students’ interests to they learn to make their own creative decisions, working independently or in groups.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Students will demonstrate mastery based on periodic assessments/rubrics and public (non-classroom) presentations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rubrics will be developed using resources such as <i>The Chicago Guide</i> or similar instruments (see <a href="http://chicagoguide.cpsarts.org/planning-instruction/sample_rubrics/music">http://chicagoguide.cpsarts.org/planning-instruction/sample_rubrics/music</a> or <a href="http://chicagoguide.cpsarts.org/planning-instruction/sample_rubrics/visual">http://chicagoguide.cpsarts.org/planning-instruction/sample_rubrics/visual</a> for examples)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Instructors may include current arts masters already in the school or district as well as professional artists from the community. Licensing waivers will be</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Performing Arts) high-performing Innovation Schools to build relationships with similar schools to support the implementation of the Innovation Plan.</p>   | <p>necessary in the latter case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide professional development for ENCORE staff in differentiated and research-based instruction, Colorado Academic Standards, and assessments.</li> <li>● ENCORE supplies, materials, and equipment (e.g., dance barrés, costumes, cameras, etc.) will be acquired through community partnerships (gifts-in-kind, grants, donations, and/or district/school funding sources).</li> <li>● Provide professional development for non-ENCORE staff in arts integration.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b></p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Implementation</b></p>  |
| <p>Student leadership creates self-empowered individuals who take the initiative to lead themselves and rely on the skills they've learned to help them succeed in life. Students learn not to wait for someone else to do things for them. Once these life-long lessons are learned, students show more responsibility by completing homework assignments on time, taking pride in their work, following directions, feeling better about their performance, working toward goals, and improving their test scores. This gives students an advantage that many of us have never had when we were in school. It provides skills that are essential for effective communication when working with peers and adults.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement student leadership training for <u>all</u> students (an expansion of current leadership classes) as a core mandatory class empowering them with 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills. The curriculum would include elements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Asking for help before it's too late;</li> <li>○ Working through the stages of learning;</li> <li>○ Perseverance;</li> <li>○ Utilizing and developing talents for the benefit a group or community (versus individual power);</li> <li>○ Connectivity to their passion/avocation;</li> <li>○ Goal setting and accountability;</li> <li>○ Problem solving; and</li> <li>○ Teambuilding skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Impact assessments will include a district-sponsored climate survey for students and staff twice per year, Olweus Bully survey, and the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey</li> </ul> |

| <b>BEHAVIOR AND SCHOOL CLIMATE</b>  | <b>Implementation</b>   |
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| <p>Positive Behavior Intervention Support was initiated in the 2011-2012 school year to support consistent, school-wide behavioral rules and expectations. The PBIS philosophy was not universally supported by all staff, but we have made significant gains in developing a consistent language, creating structures and processes, and recognizing positive behaviors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PBIS Action plan developed in conjunction with district coaches</li> <li>● Staff will develop and implement an “alternative to suspension” program to increase student in-school learning time.</li> <li>● Program supported by the Behavioral Intervention teacher who also aggregates all data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conduct PBIS surveys and evaluation as embedded in the program.</li> <li>○ Data used to identify key locations for negative behavior. This is used to modify student and teacher actions.</li> <li>○ Data used to quantify the gains in instructional time through improved school climate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Mentor groups will meet on Fridays where student advisors can conduct behavioral and academic data dialogs and design interventions</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Initiated in 2012, Capturing Kids Hearts (Flippen Group) is changing our school climate. The in-depth curriculum and significant training for administrators, teachers and students is resulting in quieter common spaces and improved/positive classroom management.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish and implement consistent and cohesive academic, behavioral and social expectations for students, staff, and stakeholders resulting in a safe school environment, with high expectations, positive relationships and culture for learning.</li> <li>● Participants learn proven, repeatable skills that help: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop safe, trusting, self-managing classrooms;</li> <li>○ Improve classroom attendance by building students' motivation and helping them take responsibility for their actions and performance</li> <li>○ Decrease delinquent behaviors such as disruptive outbursts, violent acts, drug use and other risky behavior</li> <li>○ Utilize the EXCEL Model™ to reinforce the role of emotional intelligence in teaching</li> <li>○ Develop students' empathy for diverse cultures and backgrounds</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Assessments are tied to curriculum unit lessons with oversight from the Process Champion/s.</li> </ul> |

The principal and assistant principal will conduct walkthrough observations at least three times per week and provide coaching consultation and feedback. They will use the Flippen template for comprehensive instructional and behavioral walkthrough observations (see Attachment 7).

The staff will meet daily in content/grade level PLC’s to analyze and discuss data from any available relevant assessment. The PLC’s will use backwards mapping in order to identify the skills needed in order for the students to demonstrate content mastery for the given units. The PLC teams will identify strengths and weaknesses in content delivery, as well as weaknesses in curricular design.

The BLT will convene weekly in ongoing data analysis to support and monitor PLC implementation. It will also review and analyze data to determine innovation adherence to USIP objectives and innovation program effectiveness and direction.

### 6.1.C. WAIVERS TO STATE STATUTES AND RULES

*Tables containing synopses of all requested waivers are available in Attachment 8.*

Section 22-32-109 (1)(t) C.R.S. to determine the educational programs to be carried on in the schools of the district and to prescribe the textbooks for any course of instruction or study in such programs.

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests flexibility to adopt its own education program including selecting curriculum and textbooks.
- **Rationale:** Pitts Middle School will be responsible for its integrated arts and core curricula, the textbooks to support the curriculum, and professional. By waiving the state statute and district policies, the school will be able to implement the programs, curriculum and provide training to support the implementation of the instructional programs they have selected.
- **Replacement Plan:** The school's innovation plan details the curriculum, textbook and training.

### 6.1.D. WAIVERS TO DISTRICT POLICIES

GCL: Professional Staff Schedules and Calendar

- **Request:** The school has developed its own calendar and professional development schedule.
- **Rationale:** The school will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements for school year and school day.
- **Replacement Plan:** The school calendar, hours of work year and work day, will be determined by the planning team and published for Pitts' employees.

IJJ Textbook Selection and Adoption

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers for the Board's textbook selection and adoption policy, allowing the school to purchase curriculum aligned with the innovation.
- **Rationale:** Pitts Middle School will be responsible for its integrated arts and core curricula, the textbooks to support the curriculum, and professional development. By waiving the state statute and district policies, the school will be able to implement the programs, curriculum and provide training to support the implementation of the instructional programs they have selected.
- **Replacement Plan:** The school's innovation plan details the curriculum, textbook and training.

IHA Basic Instructional Program

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests the flexibility to determine a curriculum structured to meet the needs of its students.
- **Rationale:** Pitts Middle School will be responsible for its integrated arts and core curricula, the textbooks to support the curriculum, and professional development. By waiving the state statute and district policies, the school will be able to implement the programs, curriculum and provide training to support the implementation of the instructional programs they have selected.

- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts MS has developed a plan that outlines the instructional program and how it will meet the needs of all students.

#### Superintendent's Annual Goals/Initiatives

- **Request:** By waiving the superintendent's goals, the school will be able to concentrate their instruction on the innovation plan.
- **Rationale:** The school's education program will meet or exceed minimum standards of the superintendent's initiatives. The school will continue to implement the district-wide implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC)'s.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts MS has developed a plan that outlines the instructional program and how it will meet the needs of all students.

#### **6.1.E. WAIVERS TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROVISIONS**

N/A

#### **6.1.F. EXPECTED COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES**

Pitts Middle School will leverage funds from other sources. Title I-A funding will pay for Summer School costs, and six teacher FTEs. Title II-A will support performance pay, sign-on/stay-on bonuses, and Teach for America fees for five teachers. Pitts also benefits from its third year of a TIG grant. Funds will pay for Pre-AP/SpringBoard and integrated arts training. Professional development that supports new curriculum will increase the school's efficiency and ability to focus on the elements of the instructional strategies to support the needs of the students in the school.

One of Pueblo City School's most telling statistics is that students leave the district for middle school only to return for high school. In real numbers, over 130 students leave the district for other middle school alternatives. Part of Pitts' impact will be to offer a high quality neighborhood choice at middle school. Pitts Middle School expects to attract at least 30 new students who would otherwise attend private or District 70 schools. At a per pupil rate of \$6,416.22 the change to innovation status will generate an additional \$192,487 per year in district revenue.

Primary source of cost efficiencies are derived from improved school climate and increased student learning time. Pueblo City District 60 spends just over \$3,100 on each student assigned to truancy court or district interventions. With the implementation of PBIS and Capturing Kids Hearts, Pitts Middle School expects that referrals for district interventions will drop from an average of 11 per year to 1. This is a district cost savings of \$31,000. In addition, the change in school climate is already lessening the number of office referrals. Current numbers are not available yet, but in a similar setting, a local school went from 67 referrals per month to 16. At an average of 16 minutes of lost instruction per referral, the school recovered 122.4 hours of lost instruction. Pitts Middle School anticipates similar results.

## 6.2 TIME INNOVATIONS

| <b>TIME INNOVATIONS: OVERVIEW</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide extended learning time for all students to allow for intensive intervention in reading, math, and writing (language development) as well as engaging arts experiences.</li> <li>• Develop school annual calendar and daily schedule that meets or exceeds minimum statutory and district standards to provide for an extended day and year.</li> <li>• Establish a calendar of teacher work days, vacation days, and holidays based on school needs.</li> <li>• Determine teacher pupil contact, which will meet or exceed the minimum standards of the district and state.</li> <li>• Provide time for teacher collaborative planning, reflection and creativity.</li> <li>• Establish additional professional development time for teachers and staff.</li> <li>• Establish a schedule of days off and late starts/early releases based on school needs.</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>INNOVATION IMPACT: PROPOSED WAIVERS</b>   |   |
| Collective Bargaining  | District/State  |
| Article 10: Contract Year - Hours<br>10-2 School Day hours<br>10-3 School day hours  | ICICA School Year/School Calendar<br>Section 22-32-109(1) (n) (I), n (II) (A), C.R.S. Schedule and Calendar |
| Article 11: Teaching Load<br>11-4-1 Flexibility with planning<br>11-5-Required meetings  | GCM: Professional Staff Work Load   |
| MOU Early Release Individual Planning Time   | GCI Professional Staff Development  |

## 6.2.A. DESCRIPTION OF TIME INNOVATION AND RATIONALE

Extended learning time is critical to improving student achievement.

*Programs that extend the school year can do more than reduce summer learning loss. They can increase academic achievement, especially for children in poverty. However, simply extending the school day or school year has little effect on student learning unless programs make use of effective teaching strategies and curricula designed to engage students.<sup>19</sup>*

Since the majority of students are not performing at the proficient or advanced levels, extending the school day and school year a logical choice for all Pitts Middle School students. Research also indicates that high quality extended learning opportunities enrich student learning by complementing rather than duplicating school learning, employ and adequately compensate qualified staff, and provide regular professional development for staff.<sup>20</sup> Each of these items points to the need waivers through innovation status.

Pitts Middle school will begin the school year on August 5, 2013. Teachers will attend professional development in arts integration, pre-AP, data mining, project-based learning, and classroom management for instructional differentiation. The two weeks of professional development plus three days during the year will be critical for the arts integration focus. Our staff has little background in using creativity and multi-modal learning to enhance academics and capture student passion. Sol-Via will work extensively with staff to ensure this vibrant new aspect to our school is implemented effectively. SpringBoard and the pre-AP curriculum are also unfamiliar to our staff. Curricular expectations, delivery, and assessment will require in-depth didactic professional development with follow-up coaching.

Students begin school August 14. Students from each grade level will have one transition day to meet their teachers and learn about school changes and expectations (6<sup>th</sup> grade – Aug. 14, 7<sup>th</sup> grade - Aug. 15, 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Aug 16). During the school year, the student day will begin at 8:25 and end at 4:25 (including breakfast and lunch) Monday through Thursday. Fridays begin at 8:25 with dismissal at 1:25. The teacher work day will be 7:30 – 4:30 Monday through Thursday and 7:30 – 3:30 on Fridays. PLCs (team and grade level) occur daily between 7:30 and 8:15. (see schedule – Attachment 9).

Fridays will be structured to support progress monitoring/data analysis, interventions, enrichment, and school climate. A Town Meeting first thing in the morning provides 15 minutes to share successes, encouragement and announcements. Students will then move to their Advisory/Mentor group. These small groups provide time (36 minutes) to discuss behavioral and academic progress and design student-initiated goals. Students will remain with the same teacher-advisor throughout their tenure at Pitts MS. A lower students load (15-20) helps ensure teacher-advisors get to know their students and can intervene before truancy, homework, or skills impede academic progress. After the Advisory period, students will participate in three 73 minute periods of enrichment and/or interventions. The need for and intensity of interventions will be determined through benchmark and formative assessments.

Students must consistently score 70% or higher on formative assessments before being exited from interventions. Enrichment classes will focus on the arts. Students will choose a track of classes (e.g., visual arts, performing arts) each quarter. The day ends with another 35 minutes in the Advisory/Mentor group, supporting students with homework and project organization. Teachers will use the two hours after student dismissal for team and personal planning. Every other Friday, teachers will leave when students leave.

Every nine weeks, the entire school takes a one week break. However, this does not mean learning stops. Teachers will use one day as a teacher work day and one as a professional development day. Students will participate in three arts integration days. These will be interspersed with student-led parent/teacher conferences.

Saturday School will provide additional intervention support twice monthly. Students will be recommended for participation based on formative assessments. The four-hour block (8am-noon) will incorporate instructional strategies which supplement the regular curriculum, many of which (e.g., Study Island) will be technology based. Summer Academy will be used to minimize learning loss over summer vacation. The school year will be extended until June 5. Then the one to two week Summer Academy (8 a.m.-noon) will take place in July in collaboration with Pueblo Community College.

### **6.2.B. CHANGES TO PROGRAMS, POLICIES, OR DOCUMENTS**

In addition to four self-contained 6th grade classes (2013-14), teaching assignments will be determined by the principal to ensure small class sizes that will support student achievement particularly in the areas of ELA and Math. The following items require changes in current policies regarding time allocations:

- Flexibility in the number of teacher plan time allocated based on preps and payment required.
  - Daily lesson plans.
  - Teachers will utilize Understanding by Design for lesson planning (begun in 2012-2013) plus detail the use of engagement strategies, checks for understanding, and differentiated instruction.
- Flexibility in holding teachers accountable for implementing the professional development as a part of the evaluation process.
  - Administrative walkthrough document used to monitor effective implementation of well-designed lesson plan.
  - Flexibility in the current use of time during the day by classroom teachers and instructional coaches to meet with teachers/peers and provide observation feedback to increase teacher efficacy and skills.
- Flexibility to extend the school year through Summer Academy and Saturday School for students not scoring proficient/advanced as well as to provide extended enrichment opportunities for students who are scoring in the proficient/advanced range.

- Teachers will work with students in extended day or year programs to support students in academic achievement. Students will remain in extended learning opportunities until they consistently score 70% or higher on formative assessments.
- Send a letter to parents of all unsatisfactory students in reading inviting them to participate in extended day opportunities. Goal = 50 students
- Re-contact each parent who does not complete the form and discuss student data and importance of participating
- Saturday school will be held twice monthly from 8am-noon. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Funding to support Saturday School comes through a 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant. Study Island, Accelerated Reader and other research-based interventions will be used to propel student learning forward
- Summer Academy will be held for one to two weeks in July

Due to the longer day, Pitts intends on phasing out its extracurricular athletics. Students will have the opportunity to compete through other schools. The phase-out allows for extracurricular activities aligned with our arts focus (e.g. speech, debate, sculpture, dance, etc.)

### **6.2.C. WAIVERS TO STATE STATUTES AND RULES**

***Tables containing synopses of all requested waivers are available in Attachment 8.***

#### Section 22-32-109(I)(n)(I), n(II)(A), C.R.S. Schedule and Calendar

- **Request:** The school has developed its own calendar and professional development schedule.
- **Rationale:** The school will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements for school year and school day.
- **Replacement Plan:** The school calendar, hours of work year and work day, will be determined by the planning team and published for Pitts Middle School employees.

### **6.2.D. WAIVERS TO DISTRICT POLICIES**

#### GCL Professional Staff Schedules and Calendar

- **Request:** The school has developed its own calendar and professional development schedule.
- **Rationale:** The school will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements for school year and school day.
- **Replacement Plan:** The school calendar, hours of work year and work day, will be determined by the planning team and published for Pitts Middle School employees.

#### GCM: Professional Staff Work Load

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests the flexibility to develop its own requirements for staff planning and preparation.
- **Rationale:** Pitts Middle School will have the flexibility to vary PLC, planning and collaboration time. With this variation, planning periods may not be uniform. However,

teachers will have a minimum of five individual planning periods each week. Some meetings may be scheduled at times other than at the end of the normal school day.

- **Replacement Plan:** The BLT will establish expectations for staff work load and publish them for employees.

#### GCI Professional Staff Development

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests flexibility in determining the type and amount of professional development to support the work of its innovation plan rather than participating in district professional development opportunities.
- **Rationale:** The school's innovation plan incorporates new curriculum (Pre-AP SpringBoard and arts integration) and instructional strategies which are new to its staff. Effective implementation, and thus student learning and outcomes, is dependent on in-depth professional development including coaching and embedded observation/feedback.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts MS has incorporated expanded professional development plan requirements within its innovation plan.

#### **6.2.E. WAIVERS TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROVISIONS**

##### 10-2 School day - 7hrs. 30 minutes and

##### 10-3 Regular school day

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests flexibility in determining the length of the school day.
- **Rationale:** To be successful, students require extended learning opportunities. This includes more time for core subjects and pre-AP curriculum, time for project-based learning, interdisciplinary arts and additional time for catch-up and intervention activities. The new curriculum components and instructional strategies also require deliberate, frequent individual and team lesson planning, PLC data disaggregation, and time for student-led conference development. Both components will require teachers to invest in a longer school day.
- **Replacement Plan:** Extra performance beyond Appendices B & C, hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and published for Pitts Middle School employees.

##### 11-4-1 Planning Time (minimum of 5/week) and

##### 11-5 Required Meetings

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests the flexibility to develop its own requirements for staff planning and preparation.
- **Rationale:** Pitts Middle School will have the flexibility to vary PLC, planning and collaboration time. With this variation, planning periods may not be uniform. However, teachers will have a minimum of five individual planning periods each week. Some meetings may be scheduled at times other than at the end of the normal school day.
- **Replacement Plan:** The BLT will establish expectations for staff work load and publish them for Pitts Middle School employees.

#### **6.2.F. EXPECTED COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES**

We anticipate the cost of paying teachers per the negotiated agreement and paying for the additional student contact time would increase based on the increase in the number of student contact days. Waivers to the Collective Bargaining Agreement will allow meetings that are needed throughout the year to be conducted without the limitation of nine (9) meetings/year requiring additional pay for teachers. Based on the needs of the school and the teachers hired, there may be a minimal cost savings.

Waivers to the length of the school day and what can happen during the regular school day prescribed in the collective bargaining unit allow the school to increase student contact time as well as the length of the day to accommodate professional development. Students will gain 166 hours of instructional time under the new calendar. The new Friday schedule increases opportunities for student interventions and teacher professional development.

Improved school climate is already lessening the number of office referrals. Current numbers are not available yet, but in a similar setting, a local school went from 67 referrals per month to 16. At an average of 16 minutes of lost instruction per referral, the school recovered 122.4 hours of lost instruction. Pitts Middle School anticipates similar results through PBIS and Capturing Kids' Hearts.

## 6.3 PEOPLE INNOVATIONS

### **PEOPLE INNOVATIONS: OVERVIEW**

- Select effective teachers and leaders to provide intensive and customized support to every student.
- Create conditions necessary to support teachers and leaders to deliver the highest caliber learning experience.
- Hire non-licensed contractors for non-core subjects who are not required to meet NCLB highly qualified criteria.
- Hire staff that is committed to the mission and vision of the school.
- Establish school policy for staff dress and grooming.
- Maintain flexibility in recruitment, hiring, staff selection and employment terms.
- Establish a compensation system that meets or exceeds PCS D60 rates including adjunct faculty and provides incentives and stipends.
- Establish a calendar of teacher work days, vacation days, and holidays based on school needs.
- Develop and implement professional development content and schedule as determined by the school needs.
- Retain the option to participate in any professional development offered by the district.
- Establish staff assignments, transfers within the school, schedules and job sharing.
- Create committees that align with the innovation plan.
- Hire teachers as vacancies become known and/or adopt a hiring schedule that best meets the needs of the school.
- Hire teachers for summer programs consistent with its staffing plan as determined by innovation.
- Be exempt from direct placements or transfer of teachers by the district.
- Establish class sizes and teaching loads that support the innovation.

### **INNOVATION IMPACT: PROPOSED WAIVERS**

| Collective Bargaining  | District/State   |
|--|--|
| <p>Article 13 – Transfers</p> <p>13-1-4 and 13-1-4-1-Timeline for transfer<br/>                     13-2-1 and 13-2-1-1 Posting of vacancies<br/>                     13-1-6-1 Licensure and Endorsement</p> | <p>GCF: Professional Staff Hiring Process</p> <p>22-63-206 Transfers<br/>                     A teacher may be transferred upon the recommendation of the chief administrative officer of a school district from one school, position or grade level to another within the school district for which they are qualified by virtue of academic preparation and certification . . . no discrimination to school, position, or grade, because of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, creed, etc.</p> |
| <p>Article 15 –Reduction in Force<br/>                     (Currently in negotiations, SB -10-191)</p>   | <p>GCQA and GCQA-R Instructional Staff Reduction in Force</p>  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>19-1-2 Number of teacher days/year</p> <p>19-1-2-1- Counselors</p> <p>19-2-1 Experience Step</p> | <p>GCF : Professional Staff Hiring Process</p> <p>Section 22-63-201 C.R.S. Teacher Employment Act – Requirement to hold a certificate</p> <p>Sections 22-63-201 through 203, 22-63-301 through 302, and 22-63-401 through 403, C.R.S.<br/>(These sections from the Teacher Employment, compensation, and Dismissal Act may be waived to allow innovation schools to hire unlicensed teachers, to operate free from teacher employment contracts, to employ teachers as at-will employees, and to determine compensation for teachers.)</p> |
|   | <p>Section 22-63-201 C.R.S. Teacher Employment Act – requirements to hold a certificate.</p>   |

**6.3.A. DESCRIPTION OF PEOPLE INNOVATION AND RATIONALE**

Pitts Middle School will hire and retain teachers, leaders, and staff who are highly skilled and committed to the mission, vision, and goals of the school. The principal and assistant principal will provide leadership that models the vision and mission created through the collaborative efforts of the entire staff. They will ensure that the building leadership continues to function as a representative group that leads others in the reform initiatives and serves as role models toward the strategies in the USIP and innovation plan.

**Staffing**

The teaching staff has worked diligently to design and prepare this innovation plan. Most staff is committed to implementing the changes and following through to program success. However, the school anticipates needing to recruit and hire high quality academic staff, coaches, and art specialists.

- Any changes to the administrative team plus hard-to-fill positions (ESS, Math, ELA and Science) will be secured prior to June 1 of each school year.
  - 100% of all staff members will be highly qualified per NCLB.
  - The percentage of probationary teachers will be less than 40%.
- The school will enter into an agreement with Teach for America to retain five highly qualified, highly effective teachers for 2014-15.
- Many current staff lacks strong skills in first best instruction, PLCs and data mining, problem-based learning, and differentiation. Integrating the arts, a new academic curriculum, behavioral and leadership interventions all require support for embedded, ongoing professional development. The school will hire:
  - Two instructional coaches to provide academic professional development, modeling and mentoring on research-based instructional practices, lesson

- planning, data analysis, data dialogues, program implementation, and classroom management. (Title I funding)
  - An Rtl Coach to support the implementation of Rtl processes including classroom support to instructional staff, organizing Rtl problem-solving meetings, and advocacy for students and parents receiving wrap-around services. (Title I funding)
  - An additional school-based counselor for instructional support (particularly as it pertains to time management, organizational skills, family support, etc.) and student leadership course implementation. (Title I funding)
  - Hire a behavior intervention teacher to support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. He/she will be responsible for supporting Capturing Kids Hearts and PBIS, leadership classes, and extended student contact hours. (Title I funding)
- Pitts Middle School will actively participate in job fair recruiting, early position posting to secure the most highly qualified candidates possible, and use TeachInColorado.org to post available positions nationwide.
  - The school will support these recruiting efforts with a high quality advertising brochure (see Attachment 10), the school video, television commercials, and PSAs. During innovation years 2 and 3, the school will showcase student work and submit displays to the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center.
- Quality substitutes will be available in classrooms when the teacher is absent.
  - Substitutes will be recruited and trained in school-wide structures, processes, routines, and procedures. They will be paid more in as a substitute in a Turnaround School. Substitute training will be conducted by the Turnaround Director in CORE and PBL as well as organization- and rapport-building with students.
  - Quality lesson plans will be provided to all substitutes.
- BLT members will serve as on-site instructional mentors for teachers not in the district induction program but who struggle with classroom instruction and management.

### **ENCORE Staffing**

A highly experienced Arts (ENCORE) Coordinator will be hired as quickly as possible. This individual will be responsible for: arts curriculum planning and development; serving as the liaison to the Arts Council, Sol-Via, and external partners; and hire and supervise adjunct staff. This position will be funded through TIG (year one) and Title I (years 2 and 3). The ENCORE program will be staffed, primarily, through adjunct professionals. Recruiting for the Artists-in-Residence (ARTs) teachers will utilize school, district, and Arts Council partners. A committee including the Arts Coordinator, members of the Arts Council and building leadership conduct employment interviews. Observation of ARTs applicants' teaching techniques will be a required component of the interview process. In accordance with NCLB, teachers in core content areas will be HQ. The *Encore* staff may not necessarily hold a license and will not be responsible for the supervision of students or the assignment of grades.

### **Hiring and Supervision**

In conjunction with a school-based team, the principal will be responsible for all issues related to hiring personnel. Additionally, the principal will supervise and evaluate all staff. In order to collect and analyze walkthrough data on certified staff and coaches, the school will purchase two IPADs – one each for the principal and assistant principal. A Walk-through document has been created by the district that allows principals to document their classroom observations and track the data into a spread sheet. This will help principals monitor the school's initiatives and provide feedback to individual teachers as well as to the entire faculty. Support from district administration was iterated in the Leadership and Governance Section. A copy of the Walk-through document is available in Attachment 4.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development will be intensive during summer 2013 plus add 15 days to the school year for teachers. Targeted professional development includes the following. All are followed by embedded coaching, observation, modeling, and feedback.

- Targeted professional development on:
  - SpringBoard and Pre-AP;
  - Capturing Kids Hearts and PBIS;
  - Classroom management strategies, structures, routines and rituals through school-wide professional development on student-centered classrooms;
  - RtI and differentiation;
  - Blended classrooms and project-based learning through technology;
- Provide coaching for instructional staff in arts integration. 10 staff members will attend the Leadership Institute In and Through the Arts at the Center for Integrated Arts Education at the University of Northern Colorado. The school representatives will work with university personnel to develop 5-year strategic plans and curriculum models for arts and arts integration programs.
  - During the year, staff will participate in additional professional development on and have planning time to align innovation themes (Pre-AP, visual and Performing Arts, leadership, and school culture).
- All staff and coaches will participate in professional development in the use of AIMSWeb, a web-based assessment, data management and reporting system that supports RtI, Scholastic Reading and Scholastic Math to facilitate progress monitoring.
- Coaches will receive professional development in coaching strategies to improve their ability to support the Pitts Middle School staff.

Professional Learning Communities will continue. They are organized by grade level and content specific teams. PLC groups will work collaborative in an ongoing process of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for students. An additional PLC will be developed for Saturday and after school intervention. Staff will present peer-based professional development on a monthly basis to assist each other with lesson development, instructional strategies, and data analysis. Key BLT members will attend ongoing PLC training sessions sponsored by the district.

### **6.3.B. CHANGES TO PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND/OR OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

Innovation status will support the flexibility necessary to implement the school's proposed changes. Each of the following items will require policy changes at local or state levels.

#### **Staffing**

- Flexibility in recruitment, hiring, retention, involuntary transfers, and staffing based on needs of the school versus the uniformity of middle schools and other limitations.
- Ability to screen applicants and interview based on the needs of the school.
- Ability to hire highly qualified teachers who are elementary certified (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades at a future date).
- Incentive pay for hard to fill positions such as math, computer science, middle school trained, and instructional coaches.
- Ensure quality substitutes will be in classrooms when the teacher is absent.
- Non-probationary teachers hired before approval of the Innovation Plan will be grandfathered into existing employment terms (e.g., continuing employment rights within the District including those outlined in the Teacher Employment Compensation and Dismissal Act with exception of specific waivers required for implementing the Innovation Plan).
- Any teacher new to the district, hired after the innovation plan approval, will receive an (at-will) contract.
- All current teachers and any within Pueblo City Schools will agree to the extended number of professional development days.
- Teachers will work an extended day Monday through Friday, 7:30am – 4:30pm. Teachers will receive compensatory pay for additional time.

#### **ENCORE Staffing**

Pitts Middle School may hire adjunct faculty for its ENCORE courses. The Artists in Residence Teachers (ARTs) must have at least BA in performing or fine arts or 4 years of experience in their field of expertise as well as experience in teaching their craft to young adults. ARTs will be held accountable to the Performing/Visual Arts standards for the state of Colorado. All ARTs teachers will be required to have a background check and attend professional development on some building or district required initiatives. The school will comply with the Federal requirements for all core teachers to meet the highly qualified requirement from NCLB,

#### **Professional Development**

- Extended year for all teachers for professional development.
- Flexibility for the building to focus on only the professional development that impacts the school.
- Flexibility to offer professional development outside of student contact hours to preserve the integrity of the student instructional program.

- Flexibility to implement additional evaluation criteria to provide teachers with feedback related to the school’s initiatives as a part of the evaluation process.

**Expectations**

- Extended day/year for all teachers to support extended student learning opportunities.
- Flexibility in the number of teacher plan times allocated based on preps and payment required.
- Flexibility in holding teachers accountable for implementing the professional development as a part of the evaluation process.
- Flexibility to offer professional development outside of student contact hours to preserve the integrity of the student instructional program.

The current principal intends to continue through the innovation process. However, if she decides to leave or is dismissed, the Superintendent will select and hire a replacement with input from the school staff. The new principal must have the capacity and commitment to carry out the innovation plan.

**6.3.C. WAIVERS TO STATE STATUTES AND RULES**

*Tables containing synopses of all requested waivers are available in Attachment 8.*

22-63-206(1) Transfers A teacher may be transferred upon the recommendation of the chief administrative officer of a school district from one school, position or grade level to another within the school district for which they are qualified by virtue of academic preparation and certification . . .no discrimination to school, position, or grade, because of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, creed, etc.

Sections 22-63-201 through 203, 22-63-301 through 302, and 22-63-401 through 403, C.R.S.

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers from these sections of the Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act to allow the school to hire unlicensed teachers in non-core areas to operate free from teacher employment contracts, to employ teachers as at-will employees, and to determine compensation for teachers.
- **Rationale:** The school has the authority to issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The letter will outline the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district’s attorney.
- **Replacement Plan:** See rationale above. In accordance with NCLB requirements, all core content instructional staff employed at Pitts MS will have a valid teaching license and meet subject matter competency requirements for the teaching subject. In addition, the District’s salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will

determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule. The schools have negotiated a waiver from the Pueblo Education Association (PEA) for experience credit, pay for performance, and compensation which will be adjusted accordingly.

Section 22-63-201 C.R.S. Teacher Employment Act – Requirement to hold a certificate

- **Request:** Pitts Middle School requests waivers from the Teacher Employment Act for only those staff that would be in a non-core content area. Pitts MS requests a waiver from the requirement to hold a teaching license.
- **Rationale:** In accordance with NCLB requirements, all core content instructional staff employed at Pitts MS will have a valid teaching license and meet subject matter competency requirements for the teaching subject.
- **Replacement Plan:** If there were a position that is in a non-core subject area, such as the *Encore* Coordinator, the school would require the individual to have a minimum of 4 years experience or certification in their field of expertise as well as experience in teaching their craft to young adults. They would be responsible for the Performing/Visual Arts standards for the state of Colorado (CAS) and follow the district's application and hiring process including background checks, fingerprinting and equal employment policies. Observation of ARTs applicants' teaching techniques would be a required component of the interview process.

**6.3.D. WAIVERS TO DISTRICT POLICIES**

GCKA: Instructional Staff Assignments and Transfers

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers to hire all personnel. No employees will be placed in the school by district administration.
- **Rationale:** To implement change and ensure student success, Pitts requires a stable, highly qualified, highly motivated staff. The school will have the authority to hire its own personnel and to issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The school will follow district application processes including background checks, fingerprinting, and equal employment policies. A letter will outline the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney. Hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and contained in the Personnel Staff Contract. The school year will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements. Staff applying for transfer into an innovation school shall be permitted at any time during the year. Vacancies shall be posted until filled.
- **Replacement Plan:** The District's salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule. The schools have negotiated a waiver from the Pueblo Education Association (PEA) for experience credit, pay for performance, and compensation will be adjusted accordingly. A process will be developed collaboratively with the school district, innovation school and the teacher's association in the spring of 2013 regarding transfers.

### GCF : Professional Staff Hiring Process

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers to allow the school to hire non-licensed teachers in non-core areas, to operate free from teacher employment contracts, to employ teachers as at-will employees, and to determine compensation for teachers.  
**Rationale:** To implement change and ensure student success, Pitts requires a stable, highly qualified, highly motivated staff. The school will have the authority to hire its own personnel and to issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The school will follow district application processes including background checks, fingerprinting, and equal employment policies. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. Compensation will be agreed upon and communicated in advance. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney. A letter will outline the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. Hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and contained in the Personnel Staff Contract. The school year will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements.
- **Replacement Plan:** The District's salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule. The schools have negotiated a waiver from the Pueblo Education Association (PEA) for experience credit, pay for performance, and compensation will be adjusted accordingly. A process will be developed collaboratively with the school district, innovation school and the teacher's association in the spring of 2013 regarding transfers.

### GCI Professional Staff Development

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests flexibility in determining the type and amount of professional development to support the work of its innovation plan rather than participating in district professional development opportunities.
- **Rationale:** The school's innovation plan incorporates new curriculum (arts integration and pre-AP) and instructional strategies (project-based learning) which are new to its staff. Effective implementation, and thus student learning and outcomes, is dependent on in-depth professional development including coaching and embedded observation/feedback.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts has incorporated expanded professional development plan requirements within its innovation plan.

## **6.3.E. WAIVERS TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROVISIONS**

### Article 13 - Transfers

- 13-1-4 Timeline for transfers
- 13-1-4-1-Transfer placement
- 13-1-6-1 Licensure and endorsement

- 13-2-1 and 13-2-1-1 Posting Vacancies
- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers to hire all personnel. No employees will be placed in the school by district administration.  
**Rationale:** To implement change and ensure student success, Pitts Middle School requires a stable, highly qualified, highly motivated staff. The school will have the authority to hire its own personnel. Staff applying for transfer to an innovation school shall be permitted at any time during the year. Vacancies shall be posted until filled.
- **Replacement Plan:** The District's salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule. The schools have negotiated a waiver from the Pueblo Education Association (PEA) for experience credit, pay for performance, and compensation will be adjusted accordingly. A process will be developed collaboratively with the school district, innovation school and the teacher's association in the spring of 2013 to determine regarding transfers.

Article 15 - Reduction in Force (currently in negotiations SB -10-191)

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests the authority to make reductions in teaching staff to meet the needs of its innovation plan and students.
- **Rationale:** Flexibility in class sizes to optimize a multi-disciplinary learning environment is inherent in the Pitts' innovation plan. Although, reductions in teaching staff are not anticipated at this time, instruction will benefit from the school's authority to make decisions regarding reductions or increases in teaching staff.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts will follow the proposed Reduction in Force language currently in negotiations with SB-10-191.

### 6.3. F. EXPECTED COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES

The school needs to have the ability to hire teachers that want to implement the school of innovation's curriculum, calendar, and professional development to ensure the success of program. Low student performance and high poverty have been correlated in numerous studies.<sup>21</sup> A 1999 study found that, after controlling for student poverty, the two highest predictors of test scores were teacher experience and teacher preparation.<sup>22</sup> One of the highest costs for low performing poverty schools is turnover. Although all current core teachers are highly qualified per NCLB and meet the comparability expectations of Title I, and will continue to do so, Pitts and other innovation schools suffer from high teacher and administrator turnover. Thus student learning occurs through teachers with less expertise and less experience than the district average. Additionally, the school loses at least \$10,000 per teacher in recruiting and training costs. Pitts Middle School will offer sign-on/stay-on bonuses to attract teachers. More importantly, the Pitts Middle School will maintain teacher salaries at the current negotiated rates and pay teachers for their extended day/extended year time. Pitts Middle School intends to attract and retain the best qualified teachers possible. There may be some cost savings for at-will contracts.

## 6.4 MONEY INNOVATIONS

**MONEY INNOVATIONS: OVERVIEW**

- Leverage financial resources to maximize the impact of spending on student achievement, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
- Use financial resources creatively to provide incentives, support the development of student leadership, perseverance, and aspirations, and offer a variety of innovative learning opportunities outside the classroom.
- Increase accountability and investment in student achievement through flexibility, autonomy, and transparency.
- Directly contract for goods and services. Leverage financial resources to maximize the impact of spending on student achievement, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

**INNOVATION IMPACT: PROPOSED WAIVERS**

| Collective Bargaining  | District/State   |
|--|--|
| Article 19 – Salaries<br>19-1-2 183 teacher days<br>19-1-2-1 Counselor<br>19-2-1 Experience Step | GCB: Personnel Staff Contracts and compensation<br>GCBA: Instructional Staff Contracts/Compensation/Salary Schedules<br><br>IIB: Class Size  |
|  | Section 22-32-109(1) (f), C.R.S. Section outlines local school board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay. Waivers from this statute allow innovation schools to select their own personnel and determine pay.   |
|  | Sections 22-63-201 through 203, 22-63-301 through 302, and 22-63-401 through 403, C.R.S.<br>These sections from the Teacher Employment, compensation, and Dismissal Act may be waived to allow innovation schools to hire unlicensed teachers, to operate free from teacher employment contracts, to employ teachers as at-will employees, and to determine compensation for teachers. |

#### **4. A. DESCRIPTION OF MONEY INNOVATION AND RATIONALE**

Pitts Innovation Team dedicated time and energy to exploring the financial impact and options inherent in innovation status. Our goal is to leverage financial resources to maximize the impact of spending on student achievement, critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. To that end, financial resources will be used to:

- Acquire curriculum aligned with student academic needs.
- Support the development of student leadership, creative expression through the arts, and student personal goal setting.
- Develop partnerships which extend learning beyond the classroom.
- Implement curriculum and teaching strategies that not only engage current students but provide options and choice for middle school students throughout the district.
- Extend the school day and school year for increased student learning opportunities.
- Provide incentives which reward teacher expertise, positive impact on student academic growth, leadership, and dedication.

To fund these goals, the Pitts team examined its resources:

- General fund;
- TIG funding for 2013-14;
- Title I allocations;
- Title II-A allocations;
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning grant.

Pitts is currently on track this year to spend \$2,070,084 in the general fund versus the revenue generated at Pitts (254 students x \$6416.22 per pupil revenue = \$1,629,720 + categorical revenue). The average salary plus benefits for the district is \$60,000 per teacher while the average salary plus benefits at Pitts is \$66,344 per teacher.

Additional budget details are available in Section 8.  
The budget spreadsheet is available in Attachment 11.

#### **6.4. B. CHANGES TO PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND/OR OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

The following items represent the significant innovation changes which impact budget.

- The student calendar has been extended to eight hours daily for 180 days. The teacher calendar will be extended to nine (9) hours per day (including lunch) for 190 days plus five (5) for professional development. This plan adds 7 total days (45 hours) to the teaching contract to accommodate teaching assignments and professional development.
- Sign-on/Stay-on bonus of \$944/year (including benefits)
- Pay for performance
- Additional FTE – Teachers: drama, dance, vocal music, video production\*, technical production\*, debate\*, photography\*; Coaches: arts TOSA, Math Springboard coach, Language Arts Springboard Coach, instructional coach, RtI/Data.
- starting 2014-15 school year
- Consultants: Sol-Via for arts integration; five (5) Teach for America teachers (year 2 and 3); external program evaluator
- Supplies/materials/program: SRI-SMI assessments; Pre-AP/Springboard curriculum; graphic arts technology; dance studio components.

Additional budget details are available in Section 8.

The budget spreadsheet is available in Attachment 11.

#### **6.4. C. WAIVERS TO STATE STATUTES AND RULES**

***Tables containing synopses of all requested waivers are available in Attachment 8.***

Section 22-32-109(1) (f), C.R.S. Section outlines local school board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay. Waivers from this statute allow innovation schools to select their own personnel and determine pay.

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers from this statute to allow the school to select its own personnel and determine their compensation.
- **Rationale:** Teacher skills, qualifications and retention are key determinants of student academic success. Pitts Middle School will hire the most qualified candidates available and, to bolster retention, compensate teachers for additional performance, hours of work year, hours of work days, and additional duties. The school will have the authority to hire its own personnel and to issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The school will follow district application processes including background checks, fingerprinting, and equal employment policies. Pitts and other innovation

schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. Compensation will be agreed upon and communicated in advance. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney. A letter outlining the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney. Hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and contained in the Personnel Staff Contract. The school year will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements.

- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts' innovation planning team and BLT will determine the expectations, duties, and calendar and publish them for all employees.

Sections 22-63-201 through 203, 22-63-301 through 302, and 22-63-401 through 403, C.R.S.

- **Request:** Pitts requests waivers from these sections of the Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act to allow the school to hire unlicensed teachers in non-core content areas, to operate free from teacher employment contracts, to employ teachers as at-will employees, and to determine compensation for teachers.
- **Rationale:** The school will have the authority to select staff and set rates of pay beyond the negotiated salary schedule, issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The letter will outline the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney.
- **Replacement Plan:** See rationale above. In addition, the District's salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule.

#### **6.4. D. WAIVERS TO DISTRICT POLICIES**

GCB: Personnel Staff Contracts and compensation

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers from this policy to allow the school to select its own personnel and determine their compensation.
- **Rationale:** Teacher skills, qualifications and retention are key determinants of student academic success. Pitts Middle School will hire the most qualified candidates available and, to bolster retention, compensate teachers for additional performance, hours of work year, hours of work days, and additional duties. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district's attorney. Hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and contained in the Personnel Staff Contract. The school year will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts' innovation planning team and BLT will determine the expectations, duties, and calendar and publish them for all employees. The District's

salary schedule will be used as a guideline and the schools will determine the placement of teachers on the salary schedule.

GCF: Professional Staff Hiring Process

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers from this policy to allow the school to select its own personnel and determine their compensation.
- **Rationale:** Teacher skills, qualifications and retention are key determinants of student academic success. Pitts will hire the most qualified candidates available and, to bolster retention, compensate teachers for additional performance, hours of work year, hours of work days, and additional duties. The school will have the authority to hire its own personnel and to issue its own employment offer letters to newly hired teachers. The school will follow district application processes including background checks, fingerprinting, and equal employment policies. Pitts and other innovation schools will have the same compensation structure for additional work, incentives, and performance pay. Compensation will be agreed upon and communicated in advance. The teacher contract will be developed in collaboration with the district’s attorney. In addition, the school has the authority to establish its own additional compensation system for all employees. A letter will outline the terms of employment, including at-will employment for those teachers hired new to the district.
- **Replacement Plan:** Pitts MS has developed a letter of expectation which will accompany each employment application. New job descriptions have been developed to align with innovation school expectations.

**6.4. E. WAIVERS TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROVISIONS**

Article 19

19-1-2 Teacher days - 183

19-1-2-1 Counselors

19-2-1 Experience Step credit

- **Request:** Pitts MS requests waivers from this provision to allow the school to select its own personnel, determine their compensation, and determine the length of the school year.
- **Rationale:** To be successful, students require extended learning opportunities. This includes more time for core subjects, time for project-based learning and interdisciplinary labs, additional time for catch-up and intervention activities. The new curriculum components and instructional strategies also require deliberate, frequent individual and team lesson planning, PLC data disaggregation, and time for student-led conference development. Both components will require teachers to invest in a longer school day. Professional development to effectively implement these changes requires additional teacher days to extend the school year. The school will meet or exceed minimum statutory requirements for school year and school day. Additionally, Summer Academies and Saturday school will be offered to students. Teachers will provide instruction and be compensated for this additional time. In

consultation with the district's Office of Human Resources and the superintendent, Pitts Middle School may offer experience credit beyond that allowed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement as part of the extended year compensation.

- **Replacement Plan:** The school has the authority to establish its own additional compensation system beyond Appendices A, B, and C for all employees. Extra performance beyond Appendices B & C, hours of work day, duties, and lunch duty will be determined by the planning team and published for Pitts Middle School employees.

#### **6.4. F. EXPECTED COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES**

The school needs to have the ability to hire teachers that want to implement the school of innovation's curriculum, calendar, and professional development to ensure the success of program. Low student performance and high poverty have been correlated in numerous studies.<sup>23</sup> A 1999 study found that, after controlling for student poverty, the two highest predictors of test scores were teacher experience and teacher preparation.<sup>24</sup> One of the highest costs for low performing poverty schools is turnover. Although all current core teachers are highly qualified per NCLB and meet the comparability expectations of Title I, and will continue to do so, Pitts and other innovation schools suffer from high teacher and administrator turnover. Thus student learning occurs through teachers with less expertise and less experience than the district average. Additionally, the school loses at least \$10,000 per teacher in recruiting and training costs. Pitts will offer sign-on/stay-on bonuses to attract teachers. More importantly, Pitts Middle School will maintain teacher salaries at the current negotiated rates and pay teachers for their extended day/extended year time. Pitts Middle School intends to attract and retain the best qualified teachers possible. The cost impact of transfers will not be known until, and if, there are any teachers who are not able to be placed in the first year through mutual consent.

Pitts Middle School will leverage funds from other sources. Title I-A funding will pay for Summer School. Title II-A will support performance and sign-on/stay-on bonuses. Pitts Middle School also benefits from its third year of a TIG grant. Funds will pay for Pre-AP/SpringBoard and integrated arts training.

One of Pueblo City School's most telling statistics is that students leave the district for middle school only to return for high school. In real numbers, over 130 students leave the district for other middle school alternatives. Part of Pitts Middle School's impact will be to offer a high quality neighborhood choice at middle school. Pitts Middle School expects to attract at least 60 new students who would otherwise attend private or District 70 schools. At a per pupil rate of \$6,401.04, the change to innovation status will generate an additional \$384,062 per year in district revenue.

Primary source of cost efficiencies are derived from improved school climate and increased student learning time. Pueblo City District 60 spends just over \$3,100 on each student assigned to truancy court or district interventions. With the implementation of PBIS and Capturing Kids Hearts, Pitts Middle School expects that referrals for district interventions will drop from an

average of 11 per year to 1. This is a district cost savings of \$31,000. In addition, the change in school climate is already lessening the number of office referrals. Current numbers are not available yet, but in a similar setting, a local school went from 67 referrals per month to 16. At an average of 16 minutes of lost instruction per referral, the school recovered 122.4 hours of lost instruction. Pitts Middle School anticipates similar results.

## 7. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Pitts Middle School examined its annual budget and the services provided by Pueblo City District 60 (PCS D60). PCS D60 has no mill levy override. Consequently, operational budgets are derived from total program funding and categorical funding provided by the state. This revenue comprises 98% of general fund revenue. If Pitts accepted its total per pupil allocation generated (population of 254 students in 2012-2013) along with its categorical revenue, and then purchased services from the district or local providers, the school would not be able to cover its costs due to the low student number and the cost of the teaching staff, which averages \$66,000 for salary and benefits. The district-wide average cost for salary and benefits for a teacher is \$60,000. Pitts has chosen to maintain the financial management through PCSD60. The district intends to hire an additional accountant/bookkeeper starting in School Year 2014/2015 to support the Innovation School's needs. This person will be housed at the Central Office and report to the Chief Financial Officer. It is believed that this additional support will allow the principal to focus on instructional leadership.

The district will provide the services outlined below.

- A. Budget and Finance
- B. Payroll and Purchasing
- C. Community Relations – District level
- D. Enrollment and Admissions
- E. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension - District level
- F. Professional Development – District level, on an as needed basis to be determined by the school
- G. Transportation
- H. Food Services
- I. Facilities Management – District level
- J. Maintenance
- K. Health and Wellness
- L. Counseling and Social Services – District level
- M. Safety and Security
- N. Information Technology – District level
- O. Human Resources - District in conjunction with building
- P. Serving Students with Disabilities - District level
- Q. Serving English Language Learners - District level
- R. Athletics – District level

Through building level resources and innovation waivers outlined in section 6, the building will provide:

- S. Community Relations - Building Level
- T. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension - Building Level
- U. Professional Development - Building Level (see waivers)
- V. Counseling and Social Services - Building Level
- W. Information Technology - Building Level
- X. Human Resources - Building Level (see waivers)
- Y. Serving Students with Disabilities - Building Level
- Z. Serving English Language Learners - Building Level
- AA. Extra Performance Duties- Building Level

Pitts intends to take a different focus for extra curricular activities. The extracurricular activities will align to our arts focus and may include (e.g. speech, debate, sculpture, dance, etc.).

## 8. BUDGET AND FINANCE

Pitts Middle School will blend funding from several sources to implement innovation. Since Pitts will access its PPR through standard district distribution streams, the information presented in this section focuses on innovation details controlled by the school.

A spreadsheet projecting innovation program costs over five years is presented in Attachment 11. An overview is presented below:

| Category                                 | Detail  | Projected Funding Source                              |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |   | Year 1  | Years 2 & 3   |
| <i>Supplies/Materials /Program</i>       |   |   |   |
| Graphics Arts Technology                 | Hardware and software for student coursework  | General fund/<br>community contributions <sup>1</sup> | General fund/<br>community contributions <sup>1</sup> |
| Dance Studio costs                       | Flooring, mirrors for student coursework  | General fund/<br>community contributions <sup>1</sup> | General fund/<br>community contributions <sup>1</sup> |
| <i>Contracted Services</i>               |   |   |   |
| Sol-Via                                  | Arts integration, curriculum development,   | TIG   | General fund/<br>community contributions <sup>1</sup> |
| External Evaluator                       | To assess implementation fidelity and outcomes. This contracted individual will evaluate all PCS D60 innovation schools | General fund  | General fund  |
| Teach for America                        | 5 teachers in 2014-15<br>Year 1 funds will be used for recruitment.   | General fund  | Title II-A  |
| SRI-SMI Assessments                      | Reading and math short cycle assessments  | TIG   | Title I-A site allocation                             |
| Pre-AP/Springboard curriculum            | \$40 per student  | TIG   | Title I-A site allocation                             |
| <i>Personnel</i>                         |   |   |   |
| Extended Day/Extended Year               | 190 days  | Title I-A;<br>general fund                            | Title I-A;<br>general fund                            |
| Additional Professional Development days | 5 days x 8 hours/day @ \$17.50/hour + benefits  | Title I-A and general fund                            | Title I-A and general fund                            |
| Sign-on/Stay-on Bonus                    | 25 teachers/year  | TIG   | Title II-A  |
| Pay for performance                      | TBD in conjunction with PEA   | N/A   | Title II-A  |

| Category   | Detail   | Projected Funding Source       |                          |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
|  |  | Year 1                         | Years 2 & 3              |
| <i>Personnel, continued</i>                                  |  |                                |                          |
| 1.0 FTE Drama teacher <sup>2</sup>                           | Certified or non-certified   | General fund                   | General fund             |
| 1.0 FTE Vocal Music teacher <sup>2</sup>                     | Certified  | General fund                   | General fund             |
| Video Production teacher <sup>2</sup>                        | Certified or non-certified;<br>Begins 2014-2015  | N/A                            | General fund             |
| Technical Production teacher <sup>2</sup>                    | Certified or non-certified;<br>Begins 2014-2015  | N/A                            | General fund             |
| Speech/debate teacher <sup>2</sup>                           | Certified or non-certified;<br>Begins 2014-2015  | N/A                            | General fund             |
| Photography teacher <sup>2</sup>                             | Certified or non-certified;<br>Begins 2014-2015  | N/A                            | General fund             |
| 1.0 FTE Arts TOSA <sup>3</sup>                               | Additional staff ; Certified   | General fund                   | General fund             |
| 1.0 FTE Math Springboard Coach <sup>3</sup>                  | Additional staff ; Certified or non-certified  | General fund                   | General fund             |
| 1.0 FTE Language Arts Springboard Coach <sup>3</sup>         | Additional staff ; Certified or non-certified  | General fund                   | General fund             |
| 1.0 FTE Instructional Coach <sup>3</sup>                     | Additional staff   | Title-IA site allocation + TIG | Title-IA site allocation |
| 1.0 FTE RtI/Data Coach <sup>3</sup>                          | Additional staff   | Title-IA site allocation + TIG | Title-IA site allocation |
| <b><i>Additional Expenditures – all innovation sites</i></b> |  |                                |                          |
| Transportation   | Additional bus runs to accommodate extended day/year and Choice movement to innovation schools | General fund                   | General fund             |

<sup>1</sup> Community contributions will be sought from local arts organizations, arts/community patrons and Pueblo-focused foundations.

<sup>2</sup>Teacher salaries are based on the PCS D60 average.

<sup>3</sup>TOSA and Coach salaries are based on the PCS D60 average.

Pitts has chosen to maintain the financial management through PCSD60. The district intends to hire an additional accountant/bookkeeper starting in School Year 2014/2015 to support the Innovation School's needs. This person will be housed at the Central Office and report to the Chief Financial Officer. It is believed that this additional support will allow the principal to focus on instructional leadership.

## 9. EVALUATION

### 9.1 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Pitts Middle School currently uses benchmarking, short cycle assessments (primarily end of unit testing), and summative assessments. However, in-depth data mining is lacking through strategic PLC discussions and the school lacks a robust data system for capturing and conveying aggregate results by student, teacher, classroom, or grade level.

1. **TCAP (State Level).** In accordance with Colorado statutes, TCAP assessment shall be administered annually and serve as a means of collecting data. TCAP/CoAlt data is housed in the Alpine database, which is available to all staff and administration. Decisions on student placement in the master schedule will be based heavily on TCAP data. Additionally, the new science and social studies assessments as well as WEDA ACCESS for English language proficiency will be administered and serve as data for teachers to place student's appropriately. The CoAlt for reading, writing and mathematics will be used if needed as well as alternate assessments for science and social studies.
2. **Galileo District Benchmark Assessments (School Level):** Galileo assessments will be administered three times per year: August, December and May. Galileo will be the standard by which improvement in academic performance is measured. Galileo data will be used to monitor the progress of student learning and identify areas for curricular development.
3. **End of Unit Assessments (District Level):** End of Unit Assessments may be administered after instructional delivery in science and social studies as prescribed by Pueblo City Schools (Rubicon Atlas). Data analysis of EUA provides guidelines for instructional adjustments and future lesson planning.
4. **SRI and SMI (Scholastic Reading Inventory and Scholastic Math Inventory.) (School Level)** Online assessment tool that will aid in benchmarking math and reading. Data from these sources will be reported to the district and the state. This data will also be used for instructional adjustment.
5. **Writing (School Level):** Common pre-/post-writing assessments will be developed in the various genres and scored utilizing a common rubric. Short constructed response items will be implemented across the curriculum and scored on a common rubric.
6. **Study Island (School Level):** Study Island is a building-based, individualized computer assisted technology which includes a reading intervention component, math component

and an ELL component. Study Island data may be used to monitor individual student reports on a bi-weekly basis. This data analysis will assist classroom instruction.

7. **SpringBoard (pre-AP) (School Level):** SpringBoard Standardized formative assessments with scoring rubrics are embedded in each lesson. In addition, units are structured to include time to review student work, monitor student talk, and observe cognitive organization in action. Computer-based diagnostic assessments are available and can be used as is or can be customized by the teacher. The diagnostic assessment reports offer explanations for each incorrect response.
8. **Performance-based assessments (School Level)** in conjunction with the building Arts Coordinator, instructors will develop performance based assessments. Parents and community will be invited to attend performance based assessments and activities (music or other concerts, art-walks, content area performance events, student-led parent conferences.) Student participation in performance based assessments will be required.
9. **Accelerated Reader (School Level):** The school will purchase and implement “Accelerated Reader” to assess student reading levels and motivate students to read and assist in the school-wide reading program that builds on vocabulary and comprehension.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Progress will be continuously monitored from the classroom to the district level. AIMSWeb is a web-based assessment, data management and reporting system that provide the progress monitoring (reading and math) framework for Response to Intervention (RTI) and multi-tiered instruction. Short constructed response items will be implemented across the curriculum and scored according to a common rubric. (WRITE Tools.) Classroom progress will be measured by comparing formative assessment data to data accrued through informal and formal classroom assessments, End of Unit Assessments (Rubicon Atlas), SRI & SMI, SpringBoard data, and state standardized tests (TCAP).

### **Data Analysis**

The two instructional coaches will help compile student data as well as train the PLC groups in methods of data compilation, disaggregation, and re-presentation/analysis. Student data will be posted on the data display in the PLC room and monitored throughout the school year. The staff will meet daily in content/grade level PLC's to analyze and discuss data from any available relevant assessment. The PLC's will use backwards mapping in order to identify the skills needed in order for the students to demonstrate content mastery for the given units. The PLC teams will also identify strengths and weaknesses in content delivery, as well as weaknesses in curricular design. Critical elements of ENCORE and project-based learning will be evaluated, analyzed, interpreted and modified to improve learning/instructional cycle using the assessment rubrics (yet to be developed).

Students will monitor their own progress through the use of a Student Data Notebook. The data notebook is intended for use as a tool in the process for engaging students in examining their own data and setting learning goals. The students will also engage in the reporting of their own data through student-led parent/teacher conferences.

The Building Leadership Team will convene on a weekly basis in order to review, analyze and communicate interim benchmark data. If implementation benchmark and summative assessment targets are not reached, the BLT, will apply its continuous improvement cycle.

Components include:

- a quarterly review of data by teacher, classroom and grade level;
- root cause analysis;
- development of SMART goals and action planning to remediate the cause/s;
- action plan revisions as indicated through follow-up data analysis.

Teaching staff will be held accountable for the success or lack of benchmark achievement. The principal and instructional coaches will work with teachers to identify key areas for skill or knowledge development as well as establish measurable, time sensitive expectations through a teacher's Instructional Support Plan and an Instruction Improvement Plan. Principal Walkthroughs and coach observations will serve as progress monitoring assessments, keeping teachers apprised of progress towards individual goals. Using a continuous improvement cycle, the BLT will review progress monitoring on a monthly basis to address the concerns/successes class by class. Teachers who are showing success will share their specific strategies in PLC's; teachers will observe and co-teach with their peers to improve instruction and implementation of the innovation plan with fidelity.

The BLT will also monitor the effective implementation of the action steps identified in the USIP and innovation plans.

## **9.2 STUDENT DATA MANAGEMENT**

Pueblo City School D60's summative assessment data is available through the Alpine Achievement System. The result will be a dashboard for each student, classroom, teacher, content area, and grade level. The school's data manager will create a spreadsheet for additional formative assessment outcomes. Data will be added weekly, facilitating a multi-faceted view of each student. Both sets of data will be used to support students requiring additional support to achieve targeted growth goals.

## **9.3 STUDENT DATA REPORTING**

Pitts Middle School believes in transparency and regular outcome reporting. The school is enhancing its website to include an improved Assessment/Accountability page. Administration will create a monthly "Report to the Community" outlining classroom, grade level, and content area progress towards benchmark and summative targets. The report and data will be communicated to parents, stakeholders, district administration, and CDE using electronic (web and parent alerts) and print media. Data will also be posted in the school foyer.

## **9.4 INNOVATION PROGRAM REVIEW**

Key to keeping the innovation progress on track will be regular data evaluation and analysis. The BLT will examine critical elements of the SpringBoard, pre-AP and ENCORE will be evaluated, identified, analyzed and interpreted and modified to improve learning/instructional cycle. An external evaluator will be charged with assessing implementation fidelity and efficacy.

## **10. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT – ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, COUNCIL**

Statement of the level of support from:

- Administrators employed at the school
- Teachers employed at the school
- The school advisory council

See Attachment 12.

## **11. LETTERS OF SUPPORT – STAFF, PARENTS, STUDENTS, COMMUNITY**

Statement of the level of support from:

- Other persons employed at the school
- Students and parents of students enrolled at the school
- The community surrounding the school

See Attachment 13.

## **12. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (IDEA) SECTION 504 AND ADA**

Pitts Middle School acknowledges and understands that it is subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, including the Individual with Disability Education act (IDEA), the Colorado Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

See Attachment 14.

## **13. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- 1. REFERENCES**
- 2. UNIFIED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (USIP)**
- 3. 2012 ACHIEVEMENT DATA**
- 4. PSSG WALK-THOUGH DOCUMENT**
- 5. TEACHER, STUDENT, PARENT COMMITMENT COMPACTS**
- 6. PARENT LETTER ON INNOVATION**
- 7. PRINCIPAL WALK-THROUGH – FLIPPEN GROUP**
- 8. WAIVERS**
- 9. SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR**
- 10. RECRUITMENT BROCHURE**
- 11. BUDGET**
- 12. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT – ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, ADVISORY COUNCIL**
- 13. LETTERS OF SUPPORT – STAFF, STUDENTS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY**
- 14. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (IDEA) , SECTION 504 AND ADA**
- 15. RESOLUTION APPROVING PITT’S INNOVATION PLAN**

## ATTACHMENT 1. REFERENCES

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