

Valdez Innovation School Proposal

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Valdez School
Application for Innovation Status
April 7, 2010

This application is to designate Valdez School as an Innovation School beginning the school year 2010-2011.

Application Planning and Development Committee Members:

Administrators: Peter Sherman, Deb Brennan

Teachers: Jennifer Anderson-Ehrlich, Karyna Johnson, Rachael Pinick, Katie Shively, Maureen Traylor, Grant Van Pelt

Parents: Jill Darlington, Ivon Gutierrez

Community Member: Marco Nunez

1. VALDEZ MISSION, VISION, GOALS, AND BELIEF STATEMENTS

- A. MISSION** The mission of Valdez School is to serve families from diverse socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds. Valdez students will graduate with linguistic, academic, and social skills so as to be successful and contributing, bilingual members of our diverse society and economy.
- B. VISION** By the summer of 2013, Valdez will serve all students in ECE through fifth grade in a rigorous dual-language program. Student learning will be evident through a number of data-driven indicators. During the 2012-2013 school year, staff will assess and evaluate whether sufficient parent and staff support exists for a dual-language middle school program. If so, Valdez will develop and implement a dual-language middle school program to open in the fall of 2013.
- C. GOALS** We aim to prepare each and every Valdez student to graduate having achieved the grade level academic performance standards necessary to be competitive and successful students in any secondary school and to attend college. Valdez students in our dual-language program will become bilingual and bi-literate in English and Spanish, enhancing their communication and cultural understanding in order to be successful and contributing members of a diverse society. We will increase academic achievement across all academic areas as measured by a variety of assessment tools. Our students' academic growth will be documented through Colorado state reports, the District School Performance Framework, and other school-generated data reports. Our collective, unwavering commitment is that all staff members are highly qualified, caring, compassionate, and dedicated to excellence. We understand that in order to provide a quality education, we must align the efforts of the people who work at our school with those of our families.

As an innovation school, Valdez will exercise additional and appropriate freedom to control its educational program, budget, staff, time and incentives to ensure that Valdez becomes one of the premier schools in Northwest Denver and serves as a model of successful educational reform for schools across the country.

D. **BELIEF STATEMENTS** – The following are belief statements that guide our work at Valdez. Not all staff will share each belief, but they will serve to drive and provoke our thinking, learning, and practice. Collective beliefs may change over time; however it is important that we deepen our habits of critical thinking and reflection about our practice and what is effective for our students. We commit to developing and sustaining a school culture where we review our beliefs and practices on a regular basis.

i. Academic Model

- We believe that high expectations and standards of performance by staff and family members will push students to work harder, learn more, and demonstrate understanding.
- We believe that a dual-language model offers all students a more-rigorous and challenging academic environment and that it will lead to increased academic success for all students.
- We believe that all students should become bilingual and bi-literate in order to enhance their understanding of the world and to be able to express themselves in multiple cultural contexts.
- We believe that students should be immersed in language-rich environments in order to acquire oral and text-based literacy skills.
- We believe that students should have ongoing, rigorous, and socially-engaging opportunities for oral language development on a daily basis.
- We believe that all students should learn to speak, read, and write in English and Spanish.
- We believe that all students should learn to read and write first in their native or dominant language with second language literacy following quickly.
- We believe that a dual-language model is the best way for native Spanish speakers to achieve academic proficiency, thereby closing the achievement gap. In addition, we believe that a dual-language model honors and promotes the language, culture, and self-worth of our Spanish-speaking students and families.
- We believe that a dual-language model is the best way for native English speakers to acquire Spanish. We believe that being bilingual and bi-literate is an invaluable asset to our students and will open them to a multitude of enhanced academic, cultural, and economic opportunities.
- We believe that through our dual-language model, we will increase our families' engagement in our school and their children's education.
- We believe that the Montessori philosophy provides a developmentally appropriate, individually differentiated educational experience for 3-6 year olds and gives them the best start possible for success in school.
- We believe that skills and knowledge learned in one language transfer to the other language.

- We believe in balanced literacy instruction. The focus is on communicating or gaining meaning in tasks that are authentic, real reading and writing. Skills that are needed to do that better, such as phonics or grammar, are taught explicitly and applied to the authentic work.
- We believe in ongoing assessment *FOR* learning (Stiggins, 2005): assessment that will inform our instruction. Therefore, whenever possible, we use assessments that have students complete an authentic task, relate their performance to a standard, assess what they can do at their current level, and give results that inform our next teaching. (Examples of these include DRA2/EDL2 and rubrics in different subject areas).
- We believe in teaching to each student's Zone of Proximal Development through Gradual Release of Responsibility and scaffolding.

ii. Staff

- We believe that all staff must be highly qualified, skilled, caring, and compassionate.
- We believe that all staff must be dedicated and committed to excellence for all students.
- We believe that creating a culture of trust is essential.
- We believe that common learning agreements nurture a professional learning community.
- We believe that collaboration among staff is imperative.
- We believe that relevant and robust professional development is necessary for on-going improvement and for the professional engagement of our staff.
- We believe that multi-age classrooms and "platooning" encourage teachers to teach to their strengths and support articulation from one grade level to the next.
- We believe in shared and distributed leadership so as to challenge and engage all staff.
- We believe that bilingual staff, whenever possible, helps us to meet our students' and families' needs in both languages.

iii. Student Goals

- We believe that setting challenging academic and language goals for ALL students is important.
- We believe that multiple, diverse learning opportunities (exhibitions, demonstrations, and integrated-projects) provide students with mechanisms to attain and demonstrate their growth and proficiency of academic and language goals.
- We believe that goals must be explicit and public to all stakeholders.
- We believe that academic and language goals must be collaboratively developed and monitored by students, family members, and teachers.
- We believe that on-going, relevant, specific, and timely feedback is critical.

Positive School Culture

- We believe that an intentional, positive school culture is crucial to our success.
- We believe that relationships must be built and cultivated among and between all community members.

- We believe that all members of the school community must be invested in the school-wide culture.
- We believe student code of conduct must reflect life-long, enduring character attributes and be consistently upheld.
- We believe in setting rituals, routines, traditions, and celebrations that represent and enforce our values.
- We believe explicit school-wide behavior expectations must be equitable, consistent, and fair.
- We believe that reinforcing positive behaviors helps to discourage inappropriate behavior.
- We believe that every student must accept responsibility for their learning, actions, and their consequences.
- We believe that to discipline students is to empower students to take ownership of their choices and consequences.
- We believe the culture and diversity of each and all individuals must be honored.

Family and Community Partnerships

- We believe that family and community members must be active partners in supporting student academic and behavioral success.
- We believe that parents are students' first and life-long teachers.
- We believe that strategic and varied family and community involvement in student learning and school-life is significant.
- We believe we must actively promote connections between the two language groups and cultures of our parents.
- We believe utilizing the strengths of our parents to promote the school's goals is essential through volunteering in the classroom, on committees, and more.
- We believe that community service, outreach, and connections are powerful tools for extending student learning.
- We believe that networking with community agencies to provide support to the whole child is important.

Learning Environment

- We believe in a safe, secure, structured learning environment.
- We believe that our learning environment and facility must inspire creativity, inquiry, independence, imagination, language acquisition, and critical thinking.
- We believe that our learning environment and facility must foster healthy habits through daily access to natural light, fresh air, appropriate outdoor space, and ample opportunities to engage with other people.
- We believe that our facility must be welcoming, aesthetically beautiful, and representational of our academic program.
- We believe that the school must be clean and sanitary.

2. INNOVATIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

A. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Valdez will offer a viable ECE-5 **standards-based** academic program that will be achieved with integrity and commitment to the mission, vision, and belief statements. The education plan is aligned with both the Denver Plan and the Colorado State Standards. The education plan is composed of the following areas:

- i. Standards-based curricula
- ii. Dual-language program
- iii. Montessori model
- iv. Backwards lesson design
- v. Ongoing assessment and data to lead Instruction
- vi. Technology
- vii. Differentiation and enrichment
- viii. Response to intervention
- ix. Student Promotion and Accountability

Even though the components are separated below, in practice the components are interwoven. The educational plan is a general overview that functions much like a map. The educational components will help us to our destination, achieving academic results through curricula and instructional consistency, but by no means describes the intricate details. In addition, included in each of the following educational components are current barriers or hurdles that inhibit or limit our ability to maximize our educational program.

Many of the curricula and practices originate from the DPS central curriculum department and we are grateful to have these resources. The two following points are essential to our application for innovation:

- First, as teachers, we believe our role and valuable time will more effectively impact student achievement if spent carefully analyzing data and planning instruction to directly meet student needs, than writing curricula. So we will use the district curricula and practices as a starting point. Occasionally, recommendations may be made by the district to implement a program, use an assessment or modify the scope and sequence of curricular content in a way that does not match our beliefs, educational program or meet the needs of our students. Therefore, Valdez must have the liberty to make curricular and instructional decisions that are in alignment with our educational plan and state standards, responsive to student needs (time to scaffold and provide depth), effective in our dual-language model, and allow us to provide rigorous, appropriate grade level instruction. In the event that Valdez is seeking to significantly alter the DPS core curriculum or assessment systems, we will work with the Chief Academic Officer's Department in accordance with the established process for approving alternative texts or assessments.

- Second, although many of our curricula and practices are encouraged in the district, one thing that makes our efforts innovative is that they are coming from the teachers, faculty, and principal providing the investment and focus necessary to dramatically improve student achievement. Our process in writing this application has come over time and all ideas herein emerged from our teaching staff and parents.

i. STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULA

At Valdez, we will teach the **big ideas** from the following standards-based, district-endorsed curricula:

Literacy: DPS Elementary Literacy Program (Readers and Writers Workshop).

Mathematics: Everyday Math

ECE/K utilizes the above curriculum within their Montessori environment and philosophy, in the afternoons.

Teaching in integrated themes is central to our dual-language model. Themes create consistency and high interest for students while also serving as a vehicle to support the acquisition of students' first and second languages. The themes will be integrated into literacy and math when appropriate.

Themes originate from the science (Tracks) and social studies (Social Studies Alive! and Foundations of Democracy) content standards and topics and integrate language goals.

English and Spanish language development will be central to everyday instruction. We will teach language forms and functions through the scope and sequence from Avenues and other resources. Oral language is integrated through all content areas to enhance language development, deepen content understanding, and foster the learning community.

Consistency- We strive to align our curricular units, assessments and effective instructional strategies at each grade level and vertically across grade levels in order to create a learning experience for students which is explicit, paced, and progressive. We believe that by articulating important standards and then assessing and analyzing student results, we will better serve all of our students and ensure that no student goes un-served.

Student engagement- we believe students should be actively engaged in and enjoy learning. This will be achieved through various strategies integrated below and will be discussed specifically later in the application.

Multi-Age and Looping – We will continue with our practices in ECE/K where students remain with their pair of teachers in a multi-age class for three years (ages 3-5/6). We will begin looping cycles in first and second grades and third and fourth grades. Teams of teachers will alternate between teaching first and second grade each year, resulting in working with the same group of students for two years. Teams of teachers will alternate between teaching third and fourth grade each year, resulting in working with the same group of students for two years. Fifth grade teachers will remain at the fifth grade, working with students for one year, unless a dual-language middle school program develops. In this case, we may continue the looping model in fifth and sixth grades.

Literacy

Valdez teachers will need the flexibility to compact, pace, extend, adjust, and deviate from the District defined Literacy pacing and planning documents to meet student needs. To be truly data driven, we must be able to respond to the student needs and honor that data driven decisions (time and intensity variables) may supersede fidelity to the pacing and planning District programs. For instance, fifth graders who are 2 to 3 years behind in grade level reading would benefit from both a literacy intervention program that will directly address their gaps in an intensive manner in addition to grade level literacy content. This might require additional time being taken from other content areas.

In line with our dual-language program, there will be a strong focus on oral language development as a precursor to text-based literacy. All students will receive literacy instruction in their first language. Literacy instruction in second language will start immediately for transferable skills and as soon as students are ready for non-transferable skills. The daily 1st-5th literacy block will consist of a reading workshop, writing workshop, and a skills block. Each block will utilize a workshop format composed of whole-group instruction through mini-lessons; small-group guided reading practice; independent work with student choice; and peer collaboration (such as buddy reading and literature circles). The five components of literacy (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) will be integrated throughout instruction with individual instruction as needed. The focus will be on communicating or gaining meaning in tasks that are authentic, and steeped in real reading and writing. Skills that are needed to do that better, such as phonics or grammar, will be taught explicitly and applied to the authentic work. Each portion of the literacy block will contain rituals and routines, artifacts, and best practice strategies. At the end of each unit, opportunities to celebrate and share student products will occur.

In reading, consistent understandings and practices were developed in 1st-5th grade in 2009-10 through Core Matters- including stations and independent reading, Guided Reading, developmental stages of reading, differences between one level and the next in leveled books, and charts with visuals created with students in whole group instruction that later support independent work. In writing, writing prompts for each unit are administered, scored, and included in student writing portfolios. Teachers are asking for more consistency in the writing curriculum, so that will become a high priority for our professional development in 2010-2011.

Mathematics

Valdez teachers will need the flexibility to compact, pace, extend, adjust, and deviate from District-mandated curricula based on student needs. To be truly data driven, we must be able to respond to the student needs and honor that data driven decisions may supersede fidelity to the District core curriculum. This may require adding supplemental mathematics curricula to Everyday Mathematics. If at some point in the future, Valdez determines that significant supplemental mathematics curricula is needed to best meet the needs of our students, we will pursue this with the district pursuant to the established processes and procedures for requesting approval of non-district adopted curricula.

The standards-based mathematics curriculum will be rigorous and balanced. The curriculum will emphasize conceptual understanding, while building mastery of basic skills. A rich hands-on, problem-

solving approach will be implemented with all mathematics standards including number sense, geometry, algebra, measurement, data and probability, and computation. Everyday Mathematics will be the curriculum used for K to 5th graders.

Oral Language Development

Innovation status will allow teachers the flexibility to pace, condense, or extend lessons to allow for the time needed and depth achieved with this rigorous level of academic talk.

Oral language is and will become more integrated into all content areas every day. Research clearly shows that receptivity to and expression of oral language occurs in the first stages of language acquisition. Oral language support and expression is therefore an essential component in a dual-language model. We scaffold and expect students to learn oral language skills in the social realm as well as the academic realm of speech and vocabulary. Speaking about academic content allows processing of the learning and deepens students' understanding and ownership of the content. Teachers strategically create a learning community so that all students feel supported in speaking, through morning meeting and other strategies. Teachers model the social skills of good communication, such as speaking loudly enough and looking at the others, as well as correct grammar and academic forms and vocabulary. Teachers provide multiple opportunities for students to talk about content. They ask questions and frame responses that provide differentiated opportunities to respond, based on the students' current language and content abilities. Students enjoy the opportunity to learn through talking and take responsibility to talk about the objective using the articulated communication skills.

Thematic instruction

Innovative status will allow us to continue and develop our **thematic instructional model** that engages students by making connections across content areas and languages.

Planning and teaching **thematic units** is central to our dual-language model. Themes originate from the **Science** and **Social Studies** curricular topics and overlay with our literacy units and genres. Themes will be authentic and engaging and include essential understandings and questions. Teachers plan thematic units that last 6-8 weeks and that are project-based so as to engage and involve students in their first and second languages. Teachers use the Backwards Design method for developing thematic units. Each theme includes specific language objectives (vocabulary, phrases, sentence structures...) for both English and Spanish. The themes will be integrated into Literacy and Math when appropriate.

Science

Innovation status will allow us to adapt and supplement the Social Studies and Science curricula in order to plan and implement engaging project-based thematic curricular units. If at some point in the future, Valdez determines that a different Social Studies or Science curricula are needed to best meet the needs of our students, we will pursue this with the district pursuant to the established processes and procedures for requesting approval of non-district adopted curricula.

Science will be taught and incorporated into literacy instruction through our thematic units. An inquiry-based search for knowledge, understanding, and application of the standards will be the heart of the Science curriculum. Authentic tasks will include scientific thinking, scientific tools and technologies, and communication. The three standards of earth, life, and physical science will be explored from ECE to 5th grade with a constructivist, hands-on approach. In addition, the achievement of scientific literacy will be an over-arching goal. Students will pose questions derived from everyday experiences and discover the answers to the questions. Students will also predict and explain natural phenomena, identify national and local scientific issues, and understand scientific content material. Each year the first through fifth grade students will explore three Track units in physical, earth, life, and/or application unit.

Social Studies

Social studies will be taught and incorporated into literacy instruction through our thematic units. The social studies standards include: history, geography, economics, and civics, which are studied throughout the Kindergarten to Fifth grade. Social studies activities will be comprised of problem-solving and authentic tasks that are relevant to learners, such that, the content will make strong connections to the student's world, be representative of multiple and multi-cultural perspectives, and contain cultural competency elements. Social studies exploration will enable students to talk openly about culture, celebrate diversity, and establish their own cultural competency, essential elements of our dual language model.

Arts and Physical Education

Innovation status will allow us to supplement our program with enriching activities in: fine arts, drama, music, and other disciplines. We will be able to better leverage resources and partnerships to provide enriching experiences for our students.

All K-5 Valdez students will participate in P.E./Dance and Music on a rotating daily basis. All of the specials will be standards-based and offer hands-on opportunities for students to extend their core content knowledge. We will supplement our arts curricula through several opportunities: participation in the Cleworth Architectural Legacy (CAL) program; contracts with hip-hop instructors; participation in the Denver Shakespeare Festival; participation in grant opportunities for exterior mural painting; contracts with graffiti artists; and supplemental fine arts classes. Valdez maintains a staffed library/computer lab so that students have access to state of the art technology and media resources.

ii. DUAL-LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Innovation status will allow us to continue our **dual-language model** that ensures proficiency in academic content while all students become bilingual and bi-literate. Our dual-language model requires us to have flexibility in curricula, instructional strategies, assessments, and operational variables.

The goal of our dual-language model is for **all** Valdez students to acquire oral and text-based language skills so as to become bilingual and bi-literate in **both** English and Spanish. In our dual-language program, each student spends a pre-determined amount of his/her day immersed in an English environment and immersed in a Spanish environment. We achieve this through staffing each grade level with one English-speaking teacher and one Spanish-speaking teacher. Students move between the two language environments each day both in linguistically homogeneous and heterogeneous peer groups.

We manage our enrollment for a balance of about 50% native Spanish speakers and about 50% native English speakers. In ECE/K, 1st, and most of 2nd grade, students spend about 60% of each day in their native language environment, and about 40% of each day in their second language environment. By third grade and through fifth grade, students will receive half of their day in each language. We differentiate for each student by fine-tuning this language allocation schedule to meet each student's academic and linguistic needs.

Students are supported in their learning through instruction that supports language acquisition through research-based strategies, such as:

- Mirrored classroom environments
- Content instruction with similar language forms and functions in both languages
- Explicit content and language objectives
- Oral language development opportunities
- Shared, independent, and guided reading
- Thematic curricular instruction
- Preview, View, and Review with concepts and vocabulary
- Sheltering strategies including: identifying and front-loading specific, targeted vocabulary, realia, visuals, gestures, modeling, total physical response storytelling (TPRS and TPR), questions/responses leveled to different language levels
- "Thinking Maps"

Students are exposed to most concepts in their first language first, then, with an understanding of the concept, they expand on the same concept in their second language. Concepts and ideas are built upon one another in both languages - students do not receive repeated lessons.

We use a variety of assessment tools in order to monitor and analyze student progress.

- We use end-of-theme content and oral language assessments.
- We use a beginning and end-of-year oral language assessment (currently IPT).
- We identify the language acquisition stage of each student: Preproduction, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Fluency, and Advanced Fluency (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) to tailor our instruction to the students' needs.

We are working to align our instructional strategies, thematic units, assessments, and literacy genres so that we can ensure that second language learning builds on previous learning. We deliberately

allocate funds each year (and draw from School Innovation Grant funds, 2007-2012) in order to provide appropriate and abundant resources in English and Spanish that align with our curricula.

Our dual-language program will remain responsive to changing demographics of our population and to new research in the field of dual-language education.

iii. MONTESSORI MODEL IN ECE AND KINDERGARTEN

Innovation status will allow us to continue our **Montessori program** and to continue the necessary adjustments to curricula, instruction, and assessment that are already in place to ensure a smooth transition from a Montessori to a non-Montessori environment.

The Montessori model serves our ECE/Kindergarten students. These classrooms are multi-age, serving students ages three through six in ECE and kindergarten. Our program for three and four year olds is half-day in the morning for three hours. Four year olds may extend their day and attend in the afternoon if teachers and parents agree they are developmentally ready according to our articulated criteria. Kindergartener students stay all day. The Montessori philosophy on education is based on three key elements: the child, the prepared environment and the adult.

The Montessori philosophy promotes student independence and values each child as the center of his/her learning. We maintain a balance of allowing students independence and choice in their learning while encouraging them towards meeting standards.

The prepared environment consists of five main areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language and Sciences. The environment is designed to urge the children to be independent and incorporate movement into their learning. The materials in each area are neatly organized on shelves moving from left to right, top to bottom from easiest to most difficult. The children are free to choose developmentally appropriate hands-on works which match their abilities and interests during the Montessori work block.

The role of a Montessori teacher is to connect the children to the materials and to gradually remove his/her self from the children's learning. The teacher and paraprofessionals facilitate each child's learning by individually delivering instruction, making it highly differentiated, and continually recording careful observations of the students' progress. Accurate and ongoing recording of progress is what directs the teacher to give specific lessons that are interesting and challenging. Each ECE/K teacher must be or become certified from an accredited Montessori training center.

We support students in the transition from the ECE/K Montessori program into the non-Montessori first through fifth grade program, in the following ways:

- Consistency through the dual-language model
- Thematic curricular units
- Particular instructional strategies across grade levels
- Balancing student choice and direction from teachers

- Continuation of assessment tools and practices

iv. BACKWARDS LESSON DESIGN

Backwards lesson design will be one tool, in addition to aligned assessments and data tracking, that will ensure that curriculum and instruction are truly responsive to student needs and ensure that each student is on target to obtain grade-level standard expectations in all content areas. With innovation status, teachers will truly have the liberty to craft lessons that will get their students to grade-level and beyond.

In grade level teams, teachers will create backward lesson design units for reading, writing, math and the social studies/science themes based on a year-long plan. Teachers will focus on the following in planning lessons and units:

- What will students know and be able to do at the end of the unit? What are the essential learnings? What does proficiency look like?
- What are our identified “Power Standards” for each grade level?
- How can we incorporate real-world experiences (field trips or outside resources)?

v. ONGOING ASSESSMENT AND DATA

With innovation status, the school leadership team along with the assessment team, will have the liberty to create assessment tools, and use the resulting data to positively impact student learning. Innovation will allow the flexibility of time to create a year-long assessment plan. An essential assessment unique to our dual language program is ongoing second language assessment that checks for mastery of concepts as well as the students' progression of oral language. If at any point in the future, Valdez determines that there is a need to create or select a formal assessment tool, we will work collaboratively with the Research and Assessment Department in that process as appropriate.

We have taken great strides with collecting and using progress monitoring data in reading, writing, and math in the last two years. Still, our assessment plan is a key next step to raise student achievement. Assessments and performance criteria will be defined through backwards lesson design in reading, writing, math, and the themes (including science and/or social studies and second language). The plan for progress monitoring data will be defined with teachers and include: scoring work together; regular and consistent sharing of student progress data with students; school-wide displays of movement toward proficiency in power standards; and public displays of student work. We hope to make our bodies of evidence more personal, similar to a portfolio.

Other data will also be used including results of CSAP, ongoing progress monitoring (AIMS web, conferences, notes from small-group instruction, checklists...), and other formal and informal teacher observations. Data is a common link for our school plan, instructional content areas, interventions, and focused classroom instruction. Data will be accessible and tracked in a way that is public and comprehensible for students, teachers, parents and community. The data will be timely and specific so

as to be useful to drive classroom instruction. Based on assessment, we will implement research-based instructional strategies to create learning opportunities for all learners (teachers and students).

We will continue to follow the following assessment matrix:

<i>Subject Area</i>	<i>Assessment Tool</i>	<i>Grade Levels</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Oral language	IPT (Spanish and English) CELA (English)	ECE-3 rd K-3 rd	Fall and spring
Reading skills	DRA2 word analysis AIMS	K-5 th	As needed
Reading comprehension	DRA2 (English) EDL2 (Spanish)	K-5 th	Fall and spring for all Winter as needed
Reading interventions	AIMS	K-5 th	As needed
Writing	School-developed writing rubric	K-5 th	At least once per writing unit
Mathematics	Teacher-generated math assessment	K	Per unit
	Everyday math pre/post and unit assessments	1 st -5 th	Per unit
Mathematics interventions	Navigator and ORIGO screening tools	1 st -5 th	As needed
Science and Social Studies	Teacher-generated assessments per thematic unit	K-5 th	Per unit
Reading, Writing, Math, Science	CSAP (or other state-mandated test)	3 rd -5 th	February and March

We will utilize student assessment data in order to establish student academic goals, determine differentiated instruction, groupings, and early interventions. Based on the pre-assessment and/or data from the student’s previous academic year, each student will set goals for every six weeks and the year, in partnership with their teachers. Academic goals will be based on grade level expectations as identified in the standards and progress indicators. Teachers will use formal and informal assessment to track student achievement and attainment of the goals. Class data will be displayed (student numbers may be used to protect individual identities) in and outside of the classroom to create a community of learners and to make the data public. We value involving students in monitoring their own progress through setting goals and appropriate strategies, through developing student portfolios, and through holding student led-conferences.

vi. TECHNOLOGY

The goal will be to integrate 21st century technology skills for students, teachers, and staff so that students acquire authentic technology skills that are beneficial for life skills beyond school. Technology

will not be taught in isolation; rather the focus will be on the integration of technology into the core curriculum standards. Technology will be accessible both in the classroom and lab settings. The use of technology for authentic tasks will enable students to be engaged in learning, use higher-order thinking skills, problem-solve, and retrieve current information. Teachers will infuse lessons with effective use of technology, while continuing to pursue professional development that will enrich their practice.

Currently, many of our classrooms contain: Promethean Board, document camera/LCD projector, student computers, printer, clicker system, and digital cameras. Our primary computer lab in our library includes a full set of desk top computers, a laptop cart, and a printer. The lab is available throughout each day and before school for students. We will continue to purchase technology so as to build interactive white board technology for each classroom and to replace classroom student computers.

vii. DIFFERENTIATION AND ENRICHMENT

Differentiating for students' needs and learning styles is important in any school. It is essential in our dual-language program since students enter with highly varied background knowledge and are learning content in two languages. Our teachers are already focused on this and we hope to improve our common understandings and practices with professional development, including training in Gifted and Talented strategies to be applied with all students beyond the GT label/qualification. Teachers differentiate for students above, on, and below grade level through varying content, pacing and expected outcomes. We further differentiate through: varying instructional grouping; planning activities, projects, and field trips; fine-tuning our assessment tools; and requiring students to demonstrate their learning in multiple modalities.

Further Enrichment

We currently contract with Summer Scholars to provide after-school programming for 1st-5th grade students. We hope to enhance our after-school offerings to include sports, baile folklórico, art, etc. Parent volunteers will be instrumental in developing these offerings further.

Additional

We hope to continue to support or to begin supporting the following positions:

- Assistant principal or administrative assistant
- Spanish-speaking special education teacher
- Six full-time ECE/K teachers
- Library/Tech support/teacher
- Reading Recovery (RR) and *Descubriendo la Lectura* (DLL) teachers
- Drama and/or fine arts teachers
- Additional funding for teacher planning time

viii. RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

RTI will be uniquely implemented to meet the needs of our dual-language environment. This process will begin each year with benchmark scoring using AIMS web probes in both reading and writing, and

will include math in 2011-2012. These benchmark scores will be combined with spring DRA2 scores (from the prior year), district benchmarks, and CSAP (where appropriate), to create flexible groups for interventions on multiple tiers. Students will be assessed in the language necessary to effectively guide instruction. An "intervention block" will be carved out of the daily schedule each morning in order to provide daily opportunity for interventions across levels of need (including advanced students), but will focus on native language supports. During these intervention blocks, students will migrate to the appropriate classrooms according to their needs identified by the data. Weekly progress monitoring data will be collected on all students in intervention groups, which will then be used three times per year to guide data team decisions, such as regrouping of students, or changes to intensity, frequency, or duration. Students, who receive interventions but fail to show adequate progress, will be referred to the Student Intervention Team (SIT) for further problem-solving. Students will be tracked using an internal database, integrating data sources and information within our building and considering the language of instruction.

Interventions in Spanish and English will be researched, developed, and implemented for all grade levels. We will continue to utilize the following literacy interventions as needed:

- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) – emergent reading skills
- *Descubriendo la Lectura* (DLL) and Reading Recovery (RR) – intensive one-on-one reading work
- Leveled Literacy Interventions (LLI) – intensive small-group reading work
- Sound Partners
- Voyagers and *Viajeros*
- Ticket to Read (computer-based)
- Spellography
- Six-minute solutions

We will utilize the following mathematics interventions as needed:

- Origo Math
- ALEKS math – (computer based)
- Mathematics Navigator

Frequency, intensity and duration of all of these programs will be adjusted based on need and recommendations of the SIT. Finally, with additional scheduling flexibility, before and/or after school intervention blocks can be provided for "double doses" of literacy and/or math interventions.

ix. STUDENT PROMOTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Student accountability also increases engagement and we will explore some accountability practices:

- A retention policy in the K-5 that ensures that each student demonstrates proficiency of grade level standards before continuing to the next grade level
- A homework policy that is consistent and holds students and parents accountable
- An attendance policy that holds students and parents accountable to students regular attendance
- A grading policy that is clear, standards-based, and aligned with our curricula, and
- A parent engagement contract that sets clear and lofty goals and expectations for supporting our students at home.

B. SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

Innovation status will allow us to design and implement a master schedule, a teacher work schedule, and an annual calendar that will best serve our students, families and teachers. We believe that teachers need individual and collaborative planning and reflection time in order to be most effective. We will work collaboratively with our families to determine the best schedule and calendar to meet the needs of our students.

Valdez will develop a master schedule that includes: the dual-language model; a platoon model in non-dual-language grades; a morning meeting time; an intervention support block; a specials block; a literacy block; a math/science block; and a teacher planning time to incorporate sufficient time for grade level, vertical team planning, and data team planning. In order to implement our rigorous plan for interventions - the entire school will do interventions at the same time. Every available extra body (specials teachers, paraprofessionals, administration) will help implement literacy and math interventions for students who do not meet the proficiency levels for a specific grade. Adjustments will be made as necessary throughout the school year to ensure that all students receive support and challenge in their daily curricula. Teachers may also be required to cover times during the day to ensure sufficient supervision of students throughout the day.

In developing a teacher work schedule, we recognize that teachers need more planning time, decision-making abilities, and time for reflection. The Teaching and Learning Committee will be charged with collaboratively developing and approving a weekly schedule for teachers and staff that includes time for: instruction and assessment; individual planning; collaborative planning; professional development activities – both structured and unstructured; data analysis; business meetings; and other activities. All efforts will be made to differentiate professional development to meet the unique and individual needs of each teacher. All efforts will be made to maximize efficiency, input, and efficacy of meetings. Regular communication (verbal, paper and electronic) is expected to decrease the need for meetings. All efforts will be made to create a work environment that is: sustainable, effective, collaborative, focused on student learning and professional development, compatible to other personal demands and obligations, and sociable. We also recognize that teaching is very challenging and demanding work and that it often requires extra time, energy, and dedication. The guiding principles in developing a teacher work schedule will include:

- Promoting a 40 hour work week as the standard, while recognizing that there may be occasions where teachers may be asked to work additional hours or voluntarily assume additional duties
- Promoting professional development and opportunities for collaboration
- Promoting opportunities for teachers to analyze data and adequate planning time for teachers to adjust instructional strategies as needed

We believe that our staff and parents are best suited to develop and determine our annual calendar. As such, we require the freedom to plan our own professional development days (e.g. Late Start Days, etc.) and use the district assigned days in a way that most benefits our students. We will work with our

families to set an annual calendar that is manageable, cohesive and that serves our students. We will adjust the non-ECE and early-release days so as to consolidate them to create more cohesive blocks of time for teacher planning and to create more-manageable non-attendance days for parents. The annual calendar will be approved each spring by the CSC.

C. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

i. Participatory Leadership

All faculty members at Valdez will work as instructional leaders to share decision-making responsibilities in order to provide professional leadership, expertise, and the hands-on-experience needed to ensure high student growth and achievement. All decisions will be based on the needs of the students. We share a commitment to involve and consider appropriate stakeholders in our decision-making processes and agree to be transparent about how different types of decisions will be made. Depending on the type of decision to be made, we will use a continuum of methods, ranging from: full staff/stakeholder consensus, to faculty vote, to committee decision, to individual decision-making with input, to individual decision-making. Making decisions in schools can be challenging, time-consuming, and stressful. We commit to seeking a balance of garnering input while making decisions in an efficient and time-conscious manner. Teachers will be involved in decisions that directly affect them and we will gather input in a variety of ways. Whereas we share a commitment to participatory leadership, especially in regards to curricula, instruction, assessment, professional development, and teacher planning time, final decisions will be made by the principal with input from stakeholders. Finally, we commit to including parent and community leaders in decision-making relevant to their interests.

ii. Principal Leadership

The principal of Valdez will report to the superintendent or to the instructional superintendent, as appointed. The principal's responsibilities are to the Valdez students, faculty, and families. The principal will serve as the primary instructional leader. In order to be a true instructional leader, the principal, with the advice of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), must be able to make full use of time, money and resources to meet the requirements of this Plan. The principal will work in close collaboration with the CSC, the TLC, and the leadership team in order to implement the mission, vision, and goals of the school. The evaluation of the principal will be conducted annually by the CSC with input garnered from all staff. In the event of principal turnover, the Valdez staff will work with DPS staff and shall have equitable and representative decision-making power in selecting a replacement principal and will make every effort to secure a principal who understands the nature of the innovation status and who will honor the provisions within this application. The school may also create and implement an induction plan for hiring and training a new principal to ensure a successful transition.

iii. Collaborative School Committee (CSC)

Valdez will form and maintain a CSC each year consisting of: principal, four teachers (elected by peers), one paraprofessional (elected by peers), up to four parent representatives, and up to two community representatives. The members of the CSC shall serve two year terms. The responsibilities of the CSC will include:

- Set, approve and maintain oversight of the school's budget on an annual basis
- Create and approve a School Improvement Plan (SIP) including academic goals and priorities, based on qualitative and quantitative data and input
- Analyze progress towards SIP goals
- Consider community concerns and direct staff to address concerns accordingly
- Determine the addition, reduction or change in positions as needed and allowable by the budget
- Approve annual calendar

iv. Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC)

Valdez will form and maintain a TLC each year consisting of: principal (or principal's designee), staff appointed at the principal's discretion (up to three people), and at least three additional teachers (elected by peers). In addition, the TLC may include a DCTA representative (elected by peers), if such representative wishes to serve. The responsibilities of the TLC will include:

- Oversee and design professional development activities, including: assess PD needs of staff, schedule PD through year, and gather feedback about PD.
- Oversee, design, and plan for differentiated instructional support for all teachers
- Build and approve daily and weekly schedule
- Build and propose annual master calendar (to be approved by CSC)
- Establish work schedules and responsibilities for staff, including: scheduling of before, lunch, and after-school duty, planning periods, etc...
- Gather input and communicate decisions to entire staff in a timely manner
- Make informed decisions based on student needs
- The TLC will make decisions by vote. The principal will decide in the case of a tie vote.

v. Leadership Team (LT)

The principal will form a core group of leaders in the building to make decisions on a daily and weekly basis. This team shall meet weekly. The responsibilities of the LT will include:

- Manage and schedule professional development calendar according to direction of TLC
- Prioritize initiatives, opportunities, and logistics, so as to buffer the demands on the teachers
- Monitor student progress systems and data
- Monitor and adjust interventions and schedules

vi. Personnel Committee

Each year, the school will form a personnel committee consisting of, but not limited to: principal (or principal's designee); at least three (3) teachers (elected by peers); other staff representatives (as needed); and at least one (1) parent representative. The personnel committee may also include the assistant principal, administrative assistant, and/or co-teachers of the position for which candidates are being considered. The personnel committee will act as the selection group for hiring of all staff, as time and schedule allow. If hiring decisions need to be made outside of the school calendar or during times when personnel committee members are not available, the principal shall retain the right to offer employment independently. Whereas the personnel committee shall strive to make hiring decisions by consensus, the principal shall retain the right to make final hiring decisions.

D. STAFFING, EVALUATION, AND COMPENSATION

To meet the needs of our students, improve student achievement, and fully implement our educational program, Valdez requires the flexibility to select and hire individuals that further our mission, vision, and academic goals. Furthermore, we need the flexibility to evaluate, support and compensate staff in alignment with our educational program. Toward that end, we are requesting waivers to the appropriate district, state and DCTA policies as to allow us to:

- Hire staff in real time – as and when needed
- Hire staff outside of the DPS hiring cycle
- Waive direct placements of teachers, unless we put teachers into the unassigned pool
- Create non-traditional job descriptions, including the ability to add roles to any job description
- Create and/or revise the district’s teacher evaluation system
- Create our own remediation system for teacher performance
- Create our own staff dismissal processes
- Contract staff to teach specialized courses without the requirement of licensing (but within the requirements of “highly-qualified” criteria)
- Establish our own compensation rates and systems and/or to use district pay scales and rates
- Reserve the right to adjust extra-duty pay rates
- Reserve right to create extra bonuses and/or incentives

See Implementation Plan for details on articulating and developing these changes (Attachment K).

We are committed to seeking and hiring candidates: who understand the nuances of working within a culturally-diverse community; who understand the challenges and best practices in supporting students in acquiring two languages; and who are bilingual. We do not currently have the flexibility to hire part-time individuals who have appropriate background and experience in a given area on a part-time or temporary basis. In specialty areas, we could hire an expert through a third-party contract, or hire someone who is highly qualified but who may not be licensed. Valdez will ensure that all teachers who are hired will be highly qualified. Any staff would be required to pass appropriate background checks through the district.

In addition, we are subject to a district direct placement process that does not allow us to ensure that every staff member is reflective of our mission and can best meet the needs of our students. Furthermore, under the current staffing cycle, we must hire under a given time frame. With innovation status, we could access the open market, recruit, and make early offers as soon as we know a vacancy is available. We could control the type and amount of student service providers that are allocated to our school. We could also consider having non-certified staff assist with duty and substitute coverage.

New teachers hired to Valdez from outside the District will not be subject to the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990, § 22-63-101, *et seq.*, C.R.S. and will not have any employment rights within the School District. These teachers will be considered “at-will” employees.

New teachers hired to Valdez from within the District with probationary or non-probationary status will operate under the guidelines of the Valdez Innovation Plan while employed at Valdez by signing the Teacher Offer Letter (draft in Attachment D). These teachers will not be subject to the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990, § 22-63-101, *et seq.*, C.R.S. and will not have any employment rights within the School District, while at Valdez. These teachers will be considered “at-will” employees, while at Valdez. If these teachers return to a position at a different DPS school, and they are in good standing, they will resume their position with the district at their previous status (from when they began at Valdez).

Current teachers employed at Valdez who are of probationary status at the time of approval will continue to advance towards non-probationary status using current district criteria, if in good standing. **Current teachers employed at Valdez who are of non-probationary status** at the time of approval will remain as a non-probationary teacher within the district, provided they are in good standing.

Valdez will retain the flexibility to administer a teacher evaluation system that is in alignment with our mission, vision, values and educational program. Valdez intends to use the district’s evaluation process as a foundation and may adapt or adopt an alternative evaluation system. Such changes would need to be developed by the TLC and approved by the CSC and a vote of 75% of the teaching staff.

If a complaint is received against a teacher, the Principal will follow the procedures outlined in the district’s Basic Fairness and Due Process procedures. If it is determined that a teacher has committed an offense that warrants corrective action, the Principal will follow the procedures outlined in the district’s Basic Fairness and Due Process procedures.

For more information about the impact of Innovation status on probationary/non-probationary teachers, see Attachment L.

i. PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

The evaluation, remediation, and non-renewal process would be different for different teachers as follows:

For teachers hired to Valdez **before** Innovation teacher vote:

Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every year. If the principal has concerns of the teacher’s performance, the principal shall provide detailed feedback to the teacher. The teacher will be provided a reasonable amount of time, no less than four (4) weeks, to show improvement. Teacher may be non-renewed if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

Non-Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every three years. The principal will have full discretion to initiate a formal evaluation for any Valdez teacher at any point in the school year. The principal will have the option of initiating a remediation plan for improvement as outlined in Article 10 and in state statute (TECDA).

For teachers hired to Valdez **after** Innovation teacher vote:

Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every year. Teachers will sign an employment offer letter indicating acceptance of conditions of this Innovation plan. These teachers will be considered “at-will” employees while employed at Valdez. If the principal has concerns of the teacher’s performance, the principal shall provide detailed feedback to the teacher. The teacher will be provided a reasonable amount of time, no less than four (4) weeks, to show improvement. Teacher may be non-renewed if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

Non-Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every year. Teachers will sign an employment offer letter indicating acceptance of conditions of this Innovation plan. These teachers will be considered “at-will” employees while employed at Valdez. If the principal has concerns of the teacher’s performance, the principal shall provide detailed feedback to the teacher. The teacher will be provided a reasonable amount of time, no less than four (4) weeks, to show improvement. Teacher may be non-renewed if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

If a teacher is dismissed mid-year, a severance package may be negotiated with the school.

ii. COMPENSATION FOR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND OTHER SCHOOL BUILDING PERSONNEL, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

Performance pay plans and compensation for teachers, principals, and other school building personnel will continue to match those offered through the district to all other similar employees. If in the future, Valdez staff determined to change any performance pay or compensation for any employee groups, we would work collaboratively district staff to create systems and guidelines. The Valdez principal will have the discretion to offer incentives, stipends, or signing bonuses for existing or potential staff. Any criteria for additional pay would need to be approved by the CSC prior to an offer for such payment.

E. ENROLLMENT

By being an Innovative school, the school leadership team will work with the District school of choice office to establish and maintain an enrollment target, a registration system, and an enrollment process appropriate to the Valdez program. Valdez seeks to enroll a balance of native English-speakers, native Spanish-speakers, and bilingual students, in order to foster linguistic diversity and to maintain peer language models. It has already been determined that Valdez will enroll students through the magnet/choice process for all dual-language grades. The school TLC might also pursue open enrollment windows in order to manage the appropriate number of students in the program.

Enrollment priorities will be determined through the district’s choice system – through one lottery for English-speaking students and a separate lottery for Spanish-speaking students - according to the following priorities:

1. Current Valdez student
2. Sibling of current Valdez student

3. Children of Valdez staff members
4. Residents of immediate neighborhood to Valdez (defined by neighborhood attendance area for Valdez)
5. Residents of northwest Denver
6. Residents of Denver Public Schools boundary
7. Non-residents of Denver Public Schools boundary

In order to implement a rich and effective dual-language program, it is critical to carefully manage the language environment for all students. The language environment includes the language input - the language used in speaking to students formally (instruction) and informally (business and social interactions). The language environment also includes the expectations for language output - (in what language do students speak or write?). Linguistic intentionality is critical for both adult-to-student and student-to-student interactions. As necessary for this model, Valdez will recruit and enroll students so as to meet and maintain an overall balance of native English and native Spanish-speaking students. We currently manage our annual choice lottery so as to meet this goal. The linguistic balance may vary by grade level and with the reality that many students come from bilingual backgrounds.

Valdez will develop and maintain an ongoing plan to manage attrition. Since students are immersed in academic activities in their second language at an increasing rate each year, it becomes very difficult for students to enter a dual-language program after second or third grade. This is especially true for monolingual English-speaking students. Spanish-speaking students tend to have an easier time transitioning into a dual-language program after third grade as they tend to have some foundational skills in English. As a result, enrollment attrition is a challenge. Ongoing education events for current families will help inform the importance of staying enrolled at Valdez and decrease mobility rates. We recognize the need to adjust our enrollment strategy as the demographics of our neighborhood and students change.

Recruitment strategies will include:

- A series of open houses in the fall and winter will inform parents of our program and application procedures.
- Parent information events will educate current and prospective parents about our program.
- Marketing materials to be distributed to targeted groups.
- Messaging to be communicated to targeted groups.
- Advertisement of parenting events offered through the school (detailed in Parent Engagement section).
- Admission at later grades- because language acquisition takes time, we may be unable to admit students at later grades unless they are determined to have the necessary academic skills in both languages.

F. SCHOOL CULTURE AND PBS

Innovation status will allow us to tailor our professional development to the unique needs of our population. We foresee needing a much greater level of breadth and depth to our PBS implementation

and training than typical schools. In addition, Innovation status will be necessary to implement some of the systems that require flexible scheduling.

We consider a cohesive, positive and intentional school culture to be a vital part of our comprehensive plan to create a thriving and enriching dual-language program. Indeed, being a dual-language school requires unique sensitivities to not only language differences, but to cultural differences as well. As a way to unite Valdez families, staff and community members along our commonalities, our intentional culture comprises several components.

Positive Behavior Supports- Current research has demonstrated that the most effective strategy for positively fostering pro-social behaviors and character development in students is to explicitly teach, model, and recognize these characteristics. Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) provides a framework for providing precisely such instruction. Unique to our school is the need to have this system align well with all of our families, both linguistically and culturally. Our acronym for positive behavior expectations meets this requirement, as it is easily translated into both languages, is equally culturally relevant, and is equally accessible by all.

Our behavior/ pro-social expectations begin with the acronym that summarizes them:

POWER	PODER
Perseverance	Perseverancia
Optimism	Optimismo
Wise decisions	Decisiones inteligentes
Excellence	Excelencia
Respect	Respeto

While each of the traits symbolized by this acronym is critical to success in and of themselves, it is the broader interpretation and meaning of “POWER” and “PODER” and how they relate to success in society that truly sets our approach apart from others’. We envision our purpose as an educational institution as nothing short of one that empowers our students to affect the most positive trajectory in their lives. Although we firmly believe that “knowledge is POWER,” we also recognize that functional adults are not educated academically alone. Our PBS system has been designed to foster not only academic success, but also social and adaptive skills in the following ways.

Systems

Teaching - Specific behaviors in each of the five areas (P.O.W.E.R./ P.O.D.E.R.) are taught at the beginning of each academic year, and again after the winter break. This is done through the use of POWER matrices that list what each of the traits of POWER looks like across several environments, including individual classrooms. Monthly assemblies are also used to teach and model POWER traits on a school-wide level.

Re-teaching - Problem behavior areas, or individual students with recurring behavior problems, will be targeted for re-teaching and rehearsal. We will focus on skill acquisition over punishment and retribution.

Recognition - A host of recognition systems will continue to be implemented on both the individual and classroom levels:

- Individual students are given “POWER paws” (Valdez’ mascot is the panther) for demonstrating one or more of the POWER traits. Recipients enter their names into a weekly drawing to have their names announced on our weekly, “POWER announcement” (PA system). Selected students are given a “POWER bracelet” (silicon bracelets embossed with our acronym).
- Individual students are selected monthly from each classroom to serve as the “POWER Ambassador” for showing consistently exemplary behaviors. POWER Ambassadors are displayed in the hallway, are recognized at monthly POWER Assemblies, and fulfill special responsibilities and privileges at the classroom level.
- Students who have perfect monthly attendance are awarded a special “Perfect Attendance Paw,” which allows them to receive a specific prize.
- Individual classrooms have many opportunities to participate in and be recognized by the broader school community. One such opportunity is for them to volunteer to host one of our monthly assemblies, which focus on one of the POWER traits.
- Different symbolic “trophies” are given periodically to the classrooms showing the most POWER in one of several environments (e.g., cafeteria or music) on a rotating basis.
- We hold monthly attendance contests, which are designed to encourage better school attendance. Perfect, daily classroom attendance is charted on a public poster, and the winning classroom is awarded a pizza party at the end of the month.
- Classrooms with the best clothing uniform compliance (all students in a classroom dressed in uniform) win a kickball game against the Valdez staff members. In the case of a tie, those with the most “POWER Paws” awarded are declared the winners.
- Parent support and participation are critical to our efforts - we will further develop systems designed to recognize our parents. One such example is the use of “Parent POWER” postcards. These are sent home periodically, thanking individual parents for the vital efforts in areas like: attendance, homework, and school uniforms. We also have created and distributed refrigerator magnets to families as a way to provide daily, visual reminders of our POWER traits.
- We have not only developed a school uniform policy, which we believe increases consistency and camaraderie, but we also have school t-shirts. Permissible as uniform attire on Fridays, the school t-shirt has our POWER acronym and mascot proudly displayed in school colors. Each student wearing their POWER shirts on Fridays get a custom, Valdez pencil.

Discipline - Professional development in discipline practices will include universal, targeted and intensive interventions. School-wide supports, rituals, and routines will serve as the primary behavior curriculum, while classroom and individually-based interventions will serve as more-intensive level supports. Environments that prove to be particularly problematic (as evidenced by data, see “data” below), will be targeted for skill rehearsal and modeling as appropriate. Individual students who have difficulty demonstrating POWER expectations in specific environments will be given the opportunity to learn and display model behaviors. “POWER Outages”, modeled after the “refocus” concepts, are designed to give students the opportunity to reflect on their behaviors and consequences, including brainstorming alternative behaviors. These “minor” infractions will be tracked using an online database (see “data” and “SWIS” below). Students fill out four sections of the POWER Outage: 1) What was the behavior problem? 2) What part of POWER was lost/ forgotten? 3) How did it impact others? 4) What is your plan? On the playground, misbehaviors that would normally result in a POWER Outage

are instead assigned to the "Observation Deck." While on the Observation Deck, students are required to observe their peers engaged in cooperative play, looking for at least three examples of POWER/PODER being exhibited on the playground. The students observing will then award observed students with a POWER Paw and will state what specific behaviors they demonstrated. The observer will then be allowed to rejoin the play after debriefing with an adult.

Office referrals are given for major behavior infractions (contraband, stealing, blatant disrespect, AWOL, etc.), and result in immediate administrative attention. They may also be given for repeated minor infractions that are not remedied through POWER Outages or parent contact. Office referrals will be counted as "major" infractions in the school-wide database. Students who have repeated referrals and/or habitually disruptive behaviors will have specific behavior plans created to support them. These could include, but are not limited to: behavior contracts, communication logs (home-school), enhanced monitoring systems, and parent contact. Flexible school day scheduling may also allow for the use of after school academy, which is designed to be used as make-up time for work missed during the day due to behavior issues. Because we believe in restoring the respectful and collaborative nature of all relationships in our school, major behavior infractions will invariably include a restorative justice component to them. This basic approach includes: 1) defining the infraction, 2) exploring who was hurt (emotionally, physically, financially, etc.) by this infraction, and 3) implementing a means of repairing the damage done. By departing from pejorative models that include punishment and penance and instead focusing on restoration of mutually respectful relationships, our students will gain better empathy and life skills.

Practices

Faculty hiring and training - Because PBS requires a high degree of alignment between staff, it is critical that new personnel are both well-trained in Valdez' plan, as well as in fundamental philosophical agreement with it's premises. This not only makes our hiring needs unique, but also requires a wider array of professional development activities tailored to meet these needs.

Classroom supports - Basic classroom structures will need to be consistent across the building in order to strengthen PBS systems, including a comprehensive discipline intervention ladder. Staff will also be trained in various methodologies for increasing classroom participation and motivating students to monitor their own behavior, including: morning meetings, visual behavioral monitoring system (stoplight), and reward contingencies.

Guest Teachers - Folders for "guest teachers" will be created that not only outline the basic tenets of the PBS systems, but will also include extra motivators for students who make good behavioral choices while their teacher is out (special "Paws" (tickets)). We intend to build a solid pool of guest teachers by inviting those who have a good experience to return. We will generate a list of guest teachers that have shown a record of aligning well with our philosophy.

New students - Newly-enrolled students will be able to quickly join our Valdez family through the use of "passports" developed for the purpose of acquainting students with peers and other important individuals in the school. Completed "passports" will signify that new students have been appropriately welcomed and have been given some of the most basic information.

Peer mentors - Older students will be encouraged to develop their leadership skills and investment in the Valdez community by volunteering to mentor younger students in such activities as reading, science fair projects, and music.

Visuals - Our school will continue to take advantage of multiple opportunities for visual cueing and reinforcement of POWER/ PODER. Our expectations will be reinforced through various visuals such as: rugs, wall murals, t-shirts, pencils, banners, and displays.

Data

Database - Valdez will continue to develop its disciplinary referral tracking practices. Based off-site, the School Wide Information System (SWIS) will allow all teachers to access school-wide data, as well as information specific to their students. Data will yield such information as time, location, motivation, and problem behavior. This data will guide PD and staff-wide problem-solving discussions.

Data-driven decisions - The PBS approach requires us to systematically look at data across settings in order to make adjustments to our systems and practices accordingly. Data analysis will take place at school-wide professional development meetings, as well as during grade-level teams, data teams (where applicable) and Student Intervention Team (SIT) meetings. Data collected will not only guide decision-making, but will also serve as an indicator of success/ failure of a particular intervention.

G. PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Innovation status will allow us to continue developing our parent and community support as well as to leverage our efforts in order to garner additional resources for our school.

We believe that family and community engagement is essential to the overall well being of our educational environment. We strive to empower our families and community members to become active supporters of our school vision. We value our school partners and our families and are adding new ways for both to have buy-in at Valdez School at every opportunity. We pledge that language will not be a barrier for us, but rather a bridge for us to carry our strengths from side to side.

Valdez is creating a relational culture and bringing parents and community members in by offering both English and Spanish classes. We are empowering our native Spanish-speakers to learn the business language in the United States, but more than that, we are empowering our native English-speaking parents to delve into the beautiful sounds and culture of their Spanish-speaking counterparts. In this way, we can break down barriers by building communication POWER. We've scheduled "intercambio" or "exchange" classes to promote cross-cultural and community enrichment. We are also working to coordinate cultural enrichment at the school site. Cultural plays and regular workshops will make learning about other cultures fun and beneficial for parents as well as students. Valdez is intent on creating a relational culture where community members, teachers, students, and parents work together toward the best interests of *all* of our students.

We intend to revise our Parent Contract which will state the obligations of the parent to: become involved in their student's academic and behavioral progress, know and understand what academic level their student is on, and take advantage of opportunities at Valdez to improve their student's school experience. The contract will make it possible to hold intervention meetings with parents whose students have RTI plans and to better serve the needs of every student in the school. The individual work plan for support could be tracked and monitored throughout the year and in between

years during parent/teacher conferences. We also want to include optional pieces such as: immigration training, University Orientations (what does it take to get my child on a college path?), and Workplace Rights. This will create a variety of ways for teachers and parents to connect and grow the adult relationships essential for student progress. We believe that family members do want to support their students and their school, and we will endeavor to give them all the tools necessary to do so. We want parents involved in ECE parent groups, parenting classes, ESL classes, Spanish classes, Volunteer opportunities, Leadership team, School events, PTO, Parent teacher conferences, and classrooms.

We will continue to develop strong communication through our Valdez monthly classroom newsletters, conferences, POWER post-cards home, family nights, and website. We currently survey our families to help our progress assessment and to create needed adjustments in the school, and we will continue to do in order to foster an environment supportive of our students and their families. We need the parents to support us as we support their children. We will create a family/community liaison to provide structural and institutional support and to maintain the above relational culture. The family/community liaison will serve on committees in the school (CSC) and participate in parent organizations (PTO, Padres y Jóvenes Unidos) to keep the lines of communication open and flowing easily.

The family/community liaison will also coordinate parent sessions that will enrich parents' understanding of school preparedness and acquisition of student goals, as well as increase parents' academic skills. The family/community liaison will also be the bridge between the community members/organizations and school. He/she will ensure ongoing communication, develop a mentor and volunteer program, market the school, and be a public relations representative.

We are going to grow our current community relationships to support us in: volunteering, in-kind donations, and facility improvements. We have already begun this process by cultivating relationships with Steel Images, American Family Insurance, KaBOOM!, Padres y Jóvenes Unidos, the Denver Foundation, the I Have a Dream Foundation, and Summer Scholars. These groups have provided: an aesthetically pleasing entry, student backpacks, a safer and more learning conducive playground, links between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents, enrichment opportunities, and after school programs. We are working on creating more relationships by reaching out to HUNI (Highlands United Neighborhood Inc.) and other local community programs. We want our community partners to feel welcome and become a part of our Valdez extended learning community. We will continue to build our partnerships with local organizations and neighborhood associations. We feel strongly that these community relationships have helped us serve the needs of the students at Valdez and have cultivated a symbiotic bond between the community and the students at Valdez school. Students can also derive benefit by reciprocating the gifts through community service.

For Valdez School, it is essential to build these quality parent and community relationships, not only for volunteer hours and donations they may bring into the school, but also to present our students with options for the future. Our students will see the non-teacher adults in the building as role models. These outside role models have an ability to build self-esteem, ignite imagination, and reward student achievements and efforts, in a way that teachers do not. We depend on these community assets to bring in skills and expertise to further enrich the Valdez experience. We will support our community

assets and family members in working together to develop and monitor student academic, language, and behavioral goals. We have created a marketing committee, which will include community assets and parents as well as students, teachers, and administrators to shine a positive light on Valdez to our neighbors through media coverage for the school. We will continue to reach out to bring our community back to full circle. The community will help us raise thriving students to grow and eventually enter back into the community as successful and educated adults.

H. FACILITY

Valdez School has been located on its present site since the 1970's when the current facility replaced the historic Ashland School building. Valdez School is sandwiched between the historically-preserved North High School campus to the west and the Emerson St. School to the east. The site represents many opportunities for Valdez School and for northwest Denver. Campus location and facility condition are vitally important in order to: provide effective learning environments for students; attract and retain families; ensure healthy and hospitable work environments for faculty; and celebrate the positive roles that schools can and should play in surrounding communities.

As a result of years of evidence, multiple assessments, input from parents and staff, and the analysis of District staff and Valdez School facility committee, there is overwhelming evidence showing that the current Valdez facility is inadequate in meeting its intended purposes. The report included in Attachment J details the findings and recommendations about our facility.

The Valdez School facility committee recognizes that this is a long-term goal and is committed to working with the district to assess the feasibility of the proposed recommendations including identifying potential funding sources and developing appropriate timelines. In the meantime, while the proposed facility changes would enhance Valdez's education plan, the implementation of the proposed innovations contained in this plan is not dependent upon the proposed changes to the facility.

3. LISTING OF PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS AFFECTED BY INNOVATION

1. Research-based educational program the school would implement. The program to which Valdez is committed is summarized in section A and includes: Standards-based curricula; Dual language program; Montessori- ECE/K; Backwards lesson design; Ongoing Assessment and Data to lead Instruction; Technology; Differentiation and Enrichment; Response to Intervention; and Policies Related to Student Promotion and Accountability.
2. Length of School Day and School Year. See Attachments B & C.
3. Student Promotion and Graduation Policies. Valdez is currently in the process of defining a promotion process that outlines expectations that must be met to proceed to next grade level. See Implementation Plan for development plan and timeline.

4. Assessment Plan. The Valdez School Improvement Plan (SIP) provides an analysis of CSAP scores and other data. It also defines achievement targets and refers to progress monitoring assessment plans.
5. Proposed Budget. See Attachment H for the 2010-2011 budget.
6. Enrollment Policy-See section H.
7. Personnel policies including hiring, evaluation, remediation, and dismissal – See section D.

4. IMPROVEMENTS IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE VALDEZ EXPECTS TO ACHIEVE IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIONS

Our goals include steady growth in academic achievement and growth in all content areas. Specific goals are as follows:

- Valdez will increase CSAP growth and status so as to achieve an overall “exceeding” rating as measured by the District School Performance Framework (SPF) by fall 2012. The SPF rating will increase each year prior to 2012 so as to steadily show growth.
- At least 80% of English-speaking students in grades K-2nd will score at or above grade level in reading comprehension as measured by the DRA2 in the spring of each year.
- At least 80% of Spanish-speaking students in grades K-2nd will score at or above grade level in reading comprehension as measured by the EDL2 in the spring of each year.
- At least 80% of English and Spanish-speaking students in grade 3 will score at or above proficiency in reading as measured by the CSAP in February of 2011.
- At least 50% of all students in grade 3 will score at or above grade level in reading comprehension in their second language as measured by the EDL2 or DRA2 in the spring of 2011.
- We will also establish oral language goals as measured by the IPT and CELA tests.
- We will monitor student progress in all grades in writing as measured by writing rubrics.

We have seen and expect to continue to see this growth in our dual-language students (currently ECE-2nd). We have made many efforts to implement the Response to Intervention strategies for all students and expect that these will yield positive results with our students in grades 3-7.

5. BUDGET AUTONOMIES, COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES

Valdez is seeking budgetary autonomy and flexibility over its resources in order to fully implement the proposed educational program and meet the needs of our students. The requested flexibilities include: the flexibility to budget on actual salaries vs. average salaries (when to our benefit); and the flexibility to purchase administrative services, such as transportation, food services, facility management, maintenance, student services and substitute teachers, from Denver Public Schools or other providers, based on a pricelist that will be provided by DPS to the Principal or designee.

An estimate of the cost savings and increased efficiencies that the school expects to see as a result of the innovation plan, if any.

While the primary goal of the Innovation Plan is to improve student achievement, the underlying mechanism that drives this mission is streamlined, focused planning and efficient use of human and financial resources:

- A. Using actual budgeting vs. traditional. Enable the principal and the CSC to “budget from actuals.” Valdez employs a relatively young faculty; so on the whole, the school’s personnel budget is larger than the actual wages paid out. That so-called “extra” money is what the CSC will apportion as stipends.
- B. Not spending extensive resources on recruiting, interviewing, and hiring. With a positive work environment at Valdez and greater long-term investment by staff members, we anticipate that the proposed innovations will continue to reduce staff turnover. A reduced staff turnover will reduce costs associated with recruiting and hiring staff.
- C. Not overspending on general services. Another advantage of autonomy is allowing site-based decisions for transportation, food services, facility management, maintenance, student services, professional development and substitute teachers. The principal and CSC will be incentivized to select the best value services for the school in order to make the most of the budget. The district will provide Valdez with costs associated with services so that the school may determine the most-effective way to spend these funds.

6. ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, COMMUNITY, AND COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUPPORT

On April 12, 2010, the teachers employed at Valdez School voted 28 to 6 in favor of designating Valdez as an Innovation School. The Principal is in full support of Valdez’s request to become an Innovation School. The Collaborative School Committee (CSC) voted on April 13, 2010 in support of Innovation status.

7. OTHER STAFF, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Community letters of support for Valdez’s innovation proposal were submitted by the CSC, the Valdez Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and Padres y Jovenes Unidos (See Attachment L a., L b., L c.).

8. REVIEW, REVISION, RENEWAL OF INNOVATION STATUS

The Innovation Plan, once adopted, is considered for renewal every three years per the Colorado Innovation Schools Act. At that time, the Valdez staff can alter, revise, or rescind their innovation plan or status with the consent of a majority of the teachers and a majority of the administrators employed at and a majority of the school accountability committee (CSC). This is articulated in full in Section 22-32.5-110, District of innovation – review of innovation schools and innovation school zones.

9. LISTING OF STATUTORY, REGULATORY AND DISTRICT POLICY REQUIREMENTS THAT NEED TO BE WAIVED

A. STATUTORY SECTIONS TO BE WAIVED

- Section 22-9-106, C.R.S., local board duties concerning performance evaluations for licensed personnel;
- Section 22-32-109(1)(f), C.R.S., local board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay;
- Section 22-32-109(1)(g), C.R.S., handling of moneys
- Section 22-32-109(1)(n), C.R.S., schedule and calendar
- Section 22-32-109(II)(A), C.R.S., actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and contact (B) school calendar
- Section 22-32-109(t), C.R.S., determine educational program and prescribe textbooks
- Section 22-32-109(aa), C.R.S., adopt content standards and plan for implementation of content standards
- Section 22-32-109(jj), C.R.S., identify areas in which the principals(s) require training or development
- Section 22-32-110(1)(h), C.R.S. local board powers concerning employment termination of school personnel;
- Section 22-63-201, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Employment-license required – exception;
- Section 22-63-202, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: contracts in writing – duration – damage provision;
- Section 22-63-203, C.R.S. Teach Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Probationary teachers – renewal and nonrenewal of employment contract;
- Section 22-63-206, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Transfer of teachers – compensation;
- Section 22-63-301, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Grounds for dismissal;
- Section 22-63-301, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Procedures for dismissal of teachers and judicial review;
- Section 22-63-401, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule;
- Section 22-63-402, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: License, authorization of residency required in order to pay teachers; and
- Section 22-63-403, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Payment of salaries Valdez will have a system of due process for new teachers who are not covered by the DCTA, Section 22-32-201, *et seq.*, C.R.S. (see section D above) and may have stronger compensation and incentive pay system for all staff members (see section D above),with full input and involvement of the Leadership Team, composed mainly of teaching staff and administrators. Valdez will utilize the District’s evaluation procedures until, or, if it so chooses, to develop its own evaluation procedures that will be more specifically geared to the programs at Valdez The details with regard to the school calendar, school day, choice of curriculum and textbooks have all been specified in this Plan and in the detailed attachments.

B. REGULATORY SECTIONS TO BE WAIVED

Valdez is requesting a waiver of all CDE regulations related to the statutory provisions specified in subsection 1 above.

C. DISTRICT POLICIES TO BE WAIVED

The District and the Principal have agreed that all District policies that impede the implementation of this Innovation School Plan will be waived. See section 10 for a full list of the District policies to be waived.

10. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT PROVISIONS TO BE WAIVED

See Attachments for a full list of the DCTA articles to be waived. Licensed employees have the choice to become members of DCTA; the District will continue to deduct dues, assessments, and other contributions toward a union program or fund, from paychecks of all licensed employees who have given written authorization as specified in the DPS/DCTA Agreement. The District will continue to transfer all such deducted funds to the DCTA in accordance with the DPS/DCTA Agreement.

Analysis of Board Policy Waivers Called for by the Valdez Innovation Plan
Part One: Board Policies Waived

DPS Policy Reference	Title	Replacement Policy or Practice
DF	Revenue from Non Tax Sources (Sponsorship of District/School Programs, Events & Activities)	School may collect revenue directly from sponsorships subject to district oversight through routine reporting to the Office of Budget
DF-R	Revenue from Non Tax Sources Procedures for School-Based Sponsorships (Sponsorship of District/School Programs, Events & Activities)	
GCB	Professional Staff Contracts & Compensation	School will use an employment offer letter in alignment with its Innovation Plan. School will pay teachers using DPS/DCTA Agreement, including the ProComp, as a minimum for teaching staff. The School will adopt a consistent policy for staff not covered by an existing DPS classification. Conforms to statutory considerations.
GCF	Professional Staff Hiring	School will develop and implement its own staff hiring policies and timeline.
GCID	Professional Staff Training, Workshops and Conferences	School will develop and implement its own professional development plan aligned with the Innovation Plan.
GDD	Support Staff Vacations and Holidays	School will develop its own procedures for granting staff vacations and holidays.
GDJ	Support Staff Assignments and Transfers	School will develop process for staff assignment and transfer within the school and, in collaboration with the District’s Department of Human Resources, develop a method for current employees to apply for district
GDJ-R	Support Staff Assignments and Transfers (Facility	

	Managers)	assignments for which they are qualified.
GDK	Support Staff Schedules and Calendars	School will develop its own schedules and calendars for employees.
GDO	Evaluation of Support Staff	School will develop its own procedures for evaluating the performance of support staff .
GDQD-R	Procedures for Dismissal of Full-time Classified Employees	School will develop its own procedures to dismiss full-time classified staff.
IC/ICA	School Year/School Calendar	School will develop a school calendar that meets or exceeds district and state minimums.
IE	Organization of Instruction	The school will be responsible for developing a unified program of instruction that is aligned with state and district standards.
IGA	Curriculum Development	School will have authority to choose the DPS curriculum or other curriculum as they wish and will implement curricular expectations set forth in the Innovation Plan subject to oversight through the SPF.
IGD	Curriculum Adoption	School will adopt changes curricular expectations set forth in the Innovation Plan subject to oversight through the SPF and will have the authority to change their curriculum as needed in order to better meet student needs and improve academic learning.
IIA	Instructional Materials (Textbooks or their Equivalent Learning Materials)	School will adopt policy for selecting instructional materials in alignment with Innovation Plan subject to oversight through the SPF.
IIA-R	Instructional Materials (Textbooks or their Equivalent Learning Materials) Procedures	

IJJ	Instructional Materials (textbooks) Selection or Adoption	
IJJ-R	Instructional Materials (textbooks) Selection or Adoption Procedures	
IKB	Homework	School will develop and implement a homework policy in alignment with its Innovation Plan subject to oversight through the SPF.
IKE-R	Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students Elementary or Middle School Procedures	School will develop and implement homework exceeding the districts in alignment with its Innovation Plan subject to oversight through district staff and the SPF.

Part Two: DPS/DCTA Agreement Provisions Waived

Agreement Articles Waived	Description	Replacement Policy or Practice
Definitions (Article 1-2)	Definition of teacher	Waive provision, permitting broader definition of teacher in alignment with the Valdez Innovation Plan.
Grievance (Article 7)	Establishes dispute resolution procedures.	<p>Valdez will develop a dispute resolution process that permits association representation of faculty members and appeal to the Superintendent’s designee.</p> <p>Disputes between faculty members and the district may be brought directly to the Superintendent’s designee. The faculty member is entitled to representation by the Association.</p>
Committees (Articles 5, 8, 13, 29)	Development Committee (5-4-1), Professional Standards Committee (Article 8) and Personnel Committee (13-8).	Waive all of these various provisions and combine their functions into a single Teaching and Learning Committee. The Valdez School Teaching and Learning Committee will fulfill the functions.
Professional Standards (Article 8)	Sets teacher calendar, work year, work week, work day, class size and load (see below).	Waive Article 8 in favor of calendar, work year, work week, work day, class size and load established in alignment with the Innovation Plan by the school by the TLC. See attachments for details.
Teacher Evaluation (Article 10)	Describes the evaluation process for teachers	School will adhere to all procedural timelines and district developed standards, but will, if necessary, develop sub-standards aligned with the Innovation Plan and modify district forms appropriately.
Assignments, Schedules and Transfer	Describes district and school procedures for	<p>The school will adhere to the guiding principles set forth in Article 13-1, and 13-8-6.</p> <p>School will conduct maintain a personnel committee and</p>

Agreement Articles Waived	Description	Replacement Policy or Practice
(Article 13)	transfer and reassignment of teachers.	<p>conduct interviews following the procedures set forth in Article 13.</p> <p>Otherwise, waive Article 13 to permit “real-time hiring of teachers” – i.e. post positions and hire as vacancies become known.</p> <p>Hiring processes will be conducted by directly by Valdez with assistance from the Human Resources Department and the Office of School Reform and Innovation.</p> <p>Valdez will not receive direct placement of teachers unless Valdez makes a reduction in building staff resulting in a teacher placed in the unassigned teacher pool.</p>
Summer school teaching positions (Article 14)	Restricts hiring process and moves decision-making for hiring teachers off site. (14-1-1-1, 14-1-1-2, 14-1-1-3)	Consistent with waving Article 13, waive 14-1-1-1, 14-1-1-2, and 14-1-1-3. Hire teachers for summer programs consistent with the mission and values of the Innovation Plan.
Reduction in Force (RIF) (Article 20)	Procedures for conducting reduction in force	Waive Article 20 so the district can’t RIF School staff members. Reductions in teaching staff will be made based on performance, and with the understanding that reduction of non-probationary staff due to program change or decline in enrollment into the unassigned teacher pool will make the school eligible for receiving direct placement teachers.
Job Sharing and Half-Time (Article 25)	Procedures for arranging job-sharing assignments.	Job sharing and half-time employment should be handled on site in alignment with Innovation Plan.
Extra Duty Compensation	Sets rates for extra duty	In Article 32: nothing should prohibit the school from offering additional compensation.

Agreement Articles Waived	Description	Replacement Policy or Practice
(Article 32.)	compensation.	In lieu of hourly compensation, School should be able offer stipends for projects, essentially giving teachers same rights as independent contractors, so long as the teacher and the school agree on the rate for the project.

Statutory Considerations Called for by the Valdez Innovation Plan

State Statute	Description	Action Called for by Innovation Plan	Replacement Policy or Practice
Section 22-9-106	local board duties concerning performance evaluations for licensed personnel	<p>The school will fulfill the requirements of state law when conducting teacher evaluations.</p> <p>The school will have the authority to designate personnel who do not have administrative licenses to conduct teacher evaluations.</p>	<p>School will use district evaluation procedures, which comply with state law, but adapt the sub-standards so they are in alignment with the instructional program at the school.</p> <p>School will permit instructional leaders without administrative licenses to evaluate teachers.</p>
Section 22-32-109(1)(f)	local board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay	Delegate authority to the school to select staff and set rates of pay (interacts with 22-63-201 & Section 22-63-206)	School will select teaching staff directly and set rates of pay based on school policy. Valdez will meet or exceed the rates of pay set in the DPS/DCTA Agreement, including ProComp.
Section 22-32-109(1)(g)	handling of moneys	Delegate authority to the school to manage its receipt of money	School will manage its receipt of money according to district procedure and subject to direct district in the form of an annual audit, and quarterly trial balances to the Office of Budget
Section 22-32-109(1)(n)	schedule and calendar	Delegate authority to the school to establish schedule and calendar	School will exceed statutory minimums for calendar, hours of teacher pupil contact and schedule, subject to district oversight based on the School Performance Framework. School will have authority to establish its own calendar, including
Section 22-32-109(II)(A)	actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and contact		

State Statute	Description	Action Called for by Innovation Plan	Replacement Policy or Practice
Section 22-32-109(II)(B)	school calendar		professional development days, days off or late starts/early releases that may differ from district.
Section 22-32-109(t)	determine educational program and prescribe textbooks	Delegate authority to the school to establish an educational program and textbooks, and require the school to align its instructional program to state and local standards	School educational program is set in the Innovation Plan. School will be able to adapt its curriculum and instructional program as needed while remaining in alignment with state and local standards, subject to district oversight based on the School Performance Framework.
Section 22-32-109(aa)	adopt content standards and plan for implementation of content standards		
Section 22-32-109(cc)	adopt dress code for employees	Delegate authority to the school to establish a dress code for employees	School will establish dress code for employees through school policy.
Section 22-32-109(jj)	identify areas in which the principals(s) require training or development	Delegate authority to the school to direct professional training and development for principals	School will direct its principal development program, subject to district oversight based on School Performance Framework
Section 22-32-110(1)(h), C.R.S.	local board powers concerning employment termination of school personnel;	Delegates to the school the ability to discharge employees; the school will have be responsible for complying with statutory due process expectations when applicable.	School has the authority to prosecute tenure dismissal cases on its own; may seek the support of the Legal Department when prosecuting tenure dismissal cases.

State Statute	Description	Action Called for by Innovation Plan	Replacement Policy or Practice
Section 22-63-201	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Employment-license required – exception	The school will comply with federal law and regulation on Highly Qualified Teacher. The board delegates to the school the duty to identify employees as administrators.	School will verify to the district the qualifications of teachers for the purpose of complying with federal law and the schools will face the same sanctions for non-compliance as other district schools.
Section 22-63-202	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: contracts in writing – duration – damage provision;	Delegates the authority to the school to issue its own employment offers; the school will utilize an employment offer letter outlining the conditions of employment (see Attachment D).	School will utilize an employment offer letter to comply with terms of Innovation Plan.
Section 22-63-203, C.R.S.	Teach Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Probationary teachers – renewal and nonrenewal of employment contract;	Delegates the authority to the school to terminate probationary employees.	School will dismiss probationary teachers in accordance with statute when applicable.
Section 22-63-206, C.R.S	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Transfer of teachers – compensation;	Waives the chief administrative officer the ability to transfer teachers within, into or out of the school; empowers the principal to make all transfers within the school.	District will no longer make direct placement of teachers to the school, or direct placement within schools.
Section 22-63-	Teacher Employment,	Delegates to the school the authority to dismiss its current	School will comply with state law when recommending

State Statute	Description	Action Called for by Innovation Plan	Replacement Policy or Practice
301	Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Grounds for dismissal;	tenured teachers according to the statute, and is waived in the case of any newly hired teachers. Interacts with Section 22-32-109(1)(f).	dismissal of tenured teachers, when applicable under the Innovation Plan.
Section 22-63-302	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Procedures for dismissal of teachers and judicial review;	Delegates to the school the authority to follow statutory procedure with its current tenured teachers according to the statute, and is waived in the case of any newly hired teachers.	School will comply with state law in the case of teachers hired before Innovation status is approved. After approval of Innovation status, school will hire teachers under the employment conditions outlined in the Innovation plan.
Section 22-63-401	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule;	The board delegates to the school the authority to set its own compensation system; the school proposes that it may need to pay people above, or adjunct faculty who will be compensated on a different pay scale.	School will adopt a consistent policy compensate teachers using the DPS/DCTA Agreement and ProComp as the minimum expectation for teacher compensation. The School will adopt a consistent policy for staff not covered by an existing DPS classification.
Section 22-63-402	Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: License, authorization of residency required in order to pay teachers	Waives the provision that requires teachers to hold licenses in order to be paid.	School will adopt a policy and procedure to ensure that background checks are completed for all personnel and that fair compensation is provided to instructional staff.
Section	Teacher	Delegates to the school the	School will adopt a policy for fair

State Statute	Description	Action Called for by Innovation Plan	Replacement Policy or Practice
22-63-403	Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Payment of salaries	authority to pay their pro rata share of their compensation up to the point that they are dismissed.	compensation of staff upon dismissal.

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ATTACHMENTS

- A. Master Schedule (pending)
- B. Work Schedule
- C. Annual Calendar
- D. Draft Teacher Offer Letter
- E. Basic Fairness and Due Process Procedures
- F. Parent-Student Compact
- G. School Improvement Goals
- H. 2010-2011 School Budget
- I. Faculty Composition
- J. Facility Analysis and Needs Report
- K. Implementation Timeline
- L a. Evidence of Support- CSC
- L b. Evidence of Support- PTO
- L c. Evidence of Support- Parents