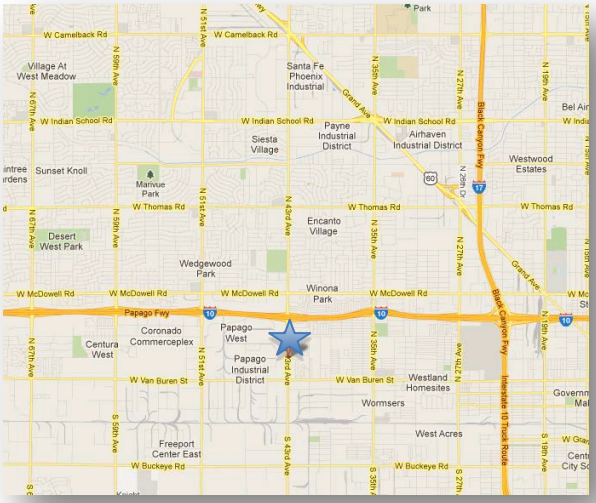
A.2 TARGET POPULATION

Southwest Leadership Academy's geographic area will include areas within approximately five miles surrounding our proposed school site (see 4301 West Fillmore Street located on the inset). The geographic area will include areas around West Van Buren Street to approximately West Camelback Road; and from North 67th Avenue to approximately North 19th Avenue. This area includes four middle schools and eleven high schools with enrollment of 905 and 16,169 students respectively, for a total of 17,074students (Arizona Department of Education, 2012).



Demographics

Situated within the West Phoenix Revitalization District, Southwest Leadership Academy's geographic area is characterized by community disadvantage and poverty, low levels of educational attainment and high corresponding dropout rate. The area also has a high crime rate (twice the average of the United States) and has lower performing schools and low AIMS pass rate.

In the three Census tracks in and around SLA, demographic research indicates a large percentage of the population is Latino (upward of 92%). In addition, there is a high percent of English language learners, with as many as 78% of youth aged 5 to 17 speaking Spanish at home (United States Department of Justice, 2000).

Student and Community Needs

While the city officials report that West Phoenix revitalization efforts yield capacity building, infrastructure investment and programming (WPRA Community Advisory Board, 2012), the communities surrounding Southwest Leadership Academy are still experiencing disadvantages with high rates and risk of continued foreclosure activity and abandonment.

Community Disadvantage & Poverty. Community disadvantage is also a characteristic of this neighborhood, and something that the Geographic Information System (GIS) SMART System calculates. Based on Census data, the Community Disadvantage Index factors include a high percentage of people living below the poverty line (up to 41% of children in poverty in SLA's targeted areas), unemployment, and a high percentage of female-headed families with children. In identified SLA neighborhoods, the Index ranges from a 7 to 9 – a score of 10 is the worst score a neighborhood could get.

Table 1: Community Disadvantage

GIS SMART Mapping Tract	% of 5-17 not enrolled in school	% of 18-24 with no HS degree	% of Children in Poverty	Community Disadvantage Index
Southwest Leadership Academy Tract 112506	3	41	17	7
Tract 112700 (1.5 miles from SLA)	7	68	41	9
Tract 110100 (2.5 miles from SLA)	7	67	37	8

United States Department of Justice (2000).

Educational Attainment. There several other factors that lead to community disadvantage. An analysis GIS SMART System data reveals that upward of two-thirds of the 18-24 year olds in these neighborhoods do not have a high school diploma (see Table 1). The low percentage of young adults with a high school diploma may have several root causes, but often begins with truancy.

Students who are chronically truant typically fall behind in grade level and drop out of school. This is supported by research, and borne out in our experience as educators. Students who are chronically truant are also at-risk for other behaviors such as alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and delinquency (Truancy Prevention.org).

We can also look at attendance rates to gauge a certain level of truancy. Arizona had the nation's lowest public school attendance rate (82.6%) for all grades in a 2003 according to a US Department of Education study, cited by Hargrove (2008). Hargrove also noted that Arizona has one of the most stringent definitions of truancy and that truancy rates are highest in public schools in the inner-city, and generally correlate with poverty – an issue that up to 41% of our targeted students live with daily.

Over1,000 high school students drop out of high school each year within the five miles surrounding Southwest Leadership Academy (see Table 2). Based on the demographics of this area, dropouts are more likely to be Latino. Sixty-four percent (64%) are economically disadvantaged (Arizona Department of Education, 2012). While these economically disadvantaged students experience poverty, they may also face homelessness or be in transition because of migration to/from the area.

The Arizona Department of Education has included several other categories as "dropout" through its SAIS Student Database coding system. Particularly, students who have withdrawn due to expulsion or long-term suspension are included in the dropout rate.

Table 2:High School Drop-Out Rate

High School	# Students Enrolled (2010/2011)	Total # of Dropouts	Rate (in %)	Number of Latinos	Number of Economically Disadvantaged
Alhambra High School	3030	98	2.2	38	53
Career Success – Main campus	881	224	25.4	148	83
Career Success – Woods Campus	229	62	20.7	45	82
Carl Hayden High School	2566	62	2.4	54	50
Franklin Police & Fire HS	283	No dropouts reported			
Maryvale High School	2879	33	1.2	25	25
Metro Tech High School	2966	No dropouts reported			
Mission Academy High School	826	233	28.2	210	60
RCB medical Arts Academy	867	329	38.0	215	288
South Ridge High School	470	No dropouts reported			
West Phoenix High School	1172	81	6.9	76	72
Total	**16,169**	**1,122**		**811**	**713**

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

In 2006, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation sponsored a surveyof school dropouts. Called *The Silent Academic*, this study found that while some students drop out because of significant academic challenges, most dropouts are students who could have, and believe they could have, succeeded in school. The study sheds light on a number of important questions that will be addressed by SLA teachers and staff.

Why do students drop out?

- 47% of dropouts said classes weren't interesting
- 43% missed too much school and couldn't catch up
- 38% said they had too much freedom and not enough rules
- 35% said they quit because they were failing
- 32% said they had to get a job and earn money.
- 88% had passing grades, and 70% said they could have graduated if they had tried.
- 69% were not motivated to work hard; 66% would have worked harder if more had been demanded of them.

The same study asked what might have prevented students from dropping out. The Gates Foundation reports that 75% of the dropouts wanted smaller class sizes with more individualized instruction. Small, intimate learning communities and personal attention that encourage learning are some of the previously cited SLA principles that are fundamental to the school's program of instruction and a method of addressing the real needs of this target population.

Crime Rates. The crime rate in these communities is nearly twice that of the national average. In just two zip codes of the targeted geographic area (85043 and 85035), nearly 3,300 violent crimes were committed in 2011 (AZCentral.com, 2012). The impact of crime on a community cannot be discounted. High crime rates impose real economic costs on local residents. In addition to the direct costs of crime (theft, damage, legal costs), businesses tend to leave high crime areas and property values decline.

With the North West Phoenix Parole Office for the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) located within 2.6 miles of our proposed school location, re-integrating paroled students into the school system is a community need. Our research shows that the ADJC houses approximately 400 male and female juvenile offenders in a secure care facility, between the ages of 12 and 18 years. On average, an additional 400 juveniles are in the ADJC's care through community corrections (parole).

ADJC estimates that of the 400 youth on parole, approximately 100 students need education within the community (Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, 2012). Southwest Leadership Academy will target these system-involved youth. SLA will work with the Parole, Probation and/or Social Worker to provide students and the family with options as they transition from the system-operated school to Southwest Leadership Academy's community-based school.

Performance of Other Schools – Performance and AIMS Scores

Deficits in student learning can occur early in a student's elementary and middle school career – and they can have long-lasting negative impact on future educational performance. Smith (2005) cites that nine year olds in low-income communities are already three grade levels behind their more affluent peers. Because Latino/Hispanic and other children of color are three times as likely to live in a low-income area (Teach for America, 2010), they are disproportionately impacted by this inequity. Arizona's Latinos struggle against barriers to educational achievement that keep them lagging well behind the state's White population in educational performance (Hart and Hager, 2012).

Middle Schools. There are four middle schools in the area approximately five miles from SLA. With the exception of one school (Alhambra Traditional School), these are all middle schools that have not met Adequate Yearly Progress and have not attained the classification of "excelling" or "highly performing" in 2011. Eighth graders will be leaving these schools to attend local high schools (including SLA), with potential academic deficits and gaps in learning, as evidenced by the low AIMS passing rate, particularly in writing, math and science.

Table 3: Middle Schools within SLA's Geographical Area

School	# Students Enrolled (2010/2011)	Reading % Passing	Writing % Passing	Math % Passing	Science % Passing	Met AYP
S. Sturgeon Middle School	61	**50**	**32**	**35**	**24**	Not Met
Isaac Middle School	615	65	**34**	52	51	Not Met
Liberty Traditional Charter	97	77	65	**47**	**49**	Not Met
Alhambra Traditional School	132	99	91	95	92	Met
Total	**905**					

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

High Schools. Of the 11 high schools in the area surrounding Southwest Leadership Academy, no schools are "excelling," only one is "highly performing," and two are considered "under performing" according to the 2011 information from the Arizona Department of Education.

A further analysis of the performance of these high schools reveals low AIMS pass rates in all subject areas –reading, writing, math and particularly science. These low pass rates were even found in schools that were reported as "performing."

Specifically, of these 11 high schools:

- 6 of 11 high schools had 50% or fewer of its students pass AIMS Reading
- 8 of 11 high schools had 50% or fewer of its students pass AIMS Writing
- 9 of 11 high schools had 50% or fewer of its students pass AIMS Math
- 11 of 11 high schools had 50% or fewer of its students pass AIMS Science

Details are illustrated in the four tables on the following pages:

Table 4: High School AIMS (Reading) Results within SLA's Geographic Area

School Name	Reading # Tested	Reading Mean Scale Score	Reading % Falls Far Below	Reading % Approaches	Reading % Meets	Reading % Exceeds	Reading % Passing
Alhambra High School	828	675	14	34	51	2	52
Career Success High School - Main Campus	119	654	18	55	28	0	**28**
Career Success Jr/Sr High School - Woods Campus	49	644	33	47	20	0	**20**
Carl Hayden High School	768	675	12	38	47	3	**50**
Franklin Police and Fire High School	85	709	1	9	86	4	89
Maryvale High School	779	684	6	34	57	3	60
Metro Tech High School	363	701	2	23	72	4	75
Mission Academy High School	157	654	19	50	31	0	**31**
RCB Medical Arts Academy	167	629	14	44	41	1	**42**
South Ridge High School	150	708	2	20	69	9	78
West Phoenix High School	203	659	18	45	36	0	**37**

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

Table 5: High School AIMS (Writing) Results within SLA's Geographic Area

School Name	Writing # Tested	Writing Mean Scale Score	Writing % Falls Far Below	Writing % Approaches	Writing % Meets	Writing % Exceeds	Writing % Passing
Alhambra High School	808	459	25	39	36	0	**36**
Career Success High School - Main Campus	110	445	27	55	17	0	**17**
Career Success Jr/Sr High School - Woods Campus	43	433	49	37	14	0	**14**
Carl Hayden High School	757	465	18	44	36	1	**37**
Franklin Police and Fire High School	87	502	1	18	79	1	80
Maryvale High School	766	471	14	44	41	1	**42**
Metro Tech High School	352	490	6	35	58	1	59
Mission Academy High School	147	446	34	47	19	0	**19**
RCB Medical Arts Academy	115	447	35	48	17	0	**17**
South Ridge High School	143	501	6	23	69	2	71
West Phoenix High School	190	451	28	49	23	0	**23**

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

Table 6: High School AIMS (Math) Results within SLA's Geographic Area

School Name	Math # Tested	Math Mean Scale Score	Math % Falls Far Below	Math % Approaches	Math % Meets	Math % Exceeds	Math % Passing
Alhambra High School	966	474	48	17	29	5	**34**
Career Success High School - Main Campus	190	449	84	11	5	0	**5**
Career Success Jr/Sr High School - Woods Campus	59	454	71	15	14	0	**14**
Carl Hayden High School	906	477	46	20	26	8	**34**
Franklin Police and Fire High School	95	494	33	17	39	12	51
Maryvale High School	941	480	42	21	31	7	**38**
Metro Tech High School	410	497	24	18	43	15	58
Mission Academy High School	237	453	75	16	8	1	**9**
RCB Medical Arts Academy	211	448	71	18	9	1	**10**
South Ridge High School	162	486	31	20	40	9	**49**
West Phoenix High School	306	456	71	16	12	1	**13**

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

Table 7: High School AIMS (Science) Results within SLA's Geographic Area

School Name	Science # Tested	Science Mean Scale Score	Science % Falls Far Below	Science % Approaches	Science % Meets	Science % Exceeds	Science % Passing
Alhambra High School	699	467	55	20	18	8	**26**
Career Success High School - Main Campus	71	415	97	1	1	0	**1**
Career Success Jr/Sr High School - Woods Campus	32	420	88	9	3	0	**3**
Carl Hayden High School	519	466	53	18	19	10	**30**
Franklin Police and Fire High School	75	482	49	17	27	7	**33**
Maryvale High School	636	470	52	17	21	10	**31**
Metro Tech High School	379	493	32	22	27	19	**46**
Mission Academy High School	65	424	88	8	5	0	**5**
RCB Medical Arts Academy	80	443	79	14	6	1	**8**
South Ridge High School	128	486	43	14	26	17	**43**
West Phoenix High School	83	426	90	5	4	1	**5**

Arizona Department of Education, 2012

Among the nation's students living in poverty about half will not graduate from high school and those who do graduate will perform at the 8th grade level in reading and math. Only one in ten students from low-income communities will graduate from college (Teach for America, 2010).

While these statistics are daunting, and while the challenges to our targeted students are real, we will not allow economic challenges and barriers to impede student success and limit their life prospects. Every youth has strengths and every student is a capable learner and capable of positive contributions to his or her community. This is our unwavering commitment to our students and to the community.

How SLA will Meet Student and Community Needs (Program of Instruction)

Southwest Leadership Academy has conducted a thorough investigation of the geographic area and the target population. From this, we will target students who are disadvantaged and at-risk of failure due to academic, social or economic factors; students who have dropped out or have been expelled from nearby schools, and students transitioning from the juvenile justice system and need extra support and structure to be successful in an academic setting. SLA will use the follow components of our Program of Instruction to address the needs of its student population, while

fulfilling its mission providing rigorous academic and social skills instruction that will lead to student success in school, within their lives, and within the community.

Table 8: Meeting Targeted Needs

Targeted Needs	Program of Instruction Components and other Strategies
Poverty - *Up to 41% of children are in poverty*	*Program of Instruction*: Behavioral support including summer mentoring, Service Learning, Career Exploration class, Parent Engagement, Personal Education Plan Aligned with ECAP, Professional Learning Community and staff development *Other Strategies:* Bus passes to assist in transportation to/from school, School Lunch/Breakfast program
Dropout Rates - *Approximately 965 high school students drop out each year in the area*	*Program of Instruction*: Credit Recovery, RtI, Relationship-Based Culture enhanced through Advisement and Exploratory Hour, Rigorous curriculum, Behavior Support with feedback, Career Exploration, Small intimate learning community, Summer Mentoring, Friday Learning Lab/Exploratory Hour, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Orientation Program, Parent Engagement (Active Parenting), ECAP and Personal Education Plan with student-created academic goals
Truancy - *High state-wide truancy rates are exaggerated in areas of poverty*	*Program of Instruction*: Phone call home every day by Administration/Advisement, Behavioral Support with feedback, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Orientation Program, Parent Engagement (Active Parenting) *Other Strategies:* Weekly schedule with later start time, Bus Passes, Breakfast Program,
Achievement Gaps - *Low AIMS pass rates*	*Program of Instruction*: Rigorous Curriculum, RtI, Targeted intervention for math and reading (*Read 180* and *Catch Up Math*), Credit Recovery, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Qualified Special Education teacher, Research-Based instructional practices, Student assistance in morning, after school tutoring and Friday Learning Lab, Assessment programs (MAP and AZELLA) including Quarterly Assessments, Formative Assessments and detailed feedback, ECAP and Personal Education Plan with student-created academic goals, Time scheduled for Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
Language - *High percentage (up to 78%) of Spanish-speaking population*	*Program of Instruction*: Rigorous Curriculum, SIOP and ELD instructional program, AZELLA, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Bilingual staff, Parent Engagement, Research-Based instructional practices, Staff Training and Professional Development, Assessment programs (MAP and AZELLA) including Quarterly Assessments, Formative Assessments and detailed feedback
High-Risk Behavior - *High truancy and crime rate, number of system-involved youth transitioning to neighborhood schools*	*Program of Instruction*: Behavioral Support with feedback from Behavioral Mentors, Risk Assessments (including PACT), Cognitive-Based curriculum (Aggression Replacement Training), PBIS, Staff Training and Professional Development, collaboration with Parole/Probation/Social Worker, ECAP and Personal Education Plan with student-created behavioral goals

Class Size and Teacher/Student Ratio

At SLA, students will not fall through the cracks; there will be no cracks for them to fall through. Students and their families will find a welcoming school culture that considers their needs, values their input, maintains a high level of respect, and provides relevant and rigorous academic experiences.

School wide, SLA's student-to-teacher ratio will be 25 to 1. Advisement period, as discussed previously, will have a student-to-staff ratio of 14 to1.

Addressing Needs of Target Population. Smaller class sizes and individualized instruction, as reported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, were some of the factors that may keep students from dropping out. But size alone will not automatically lead to the success of SLA. What SLA is proposing is the formation of a relationship-based culture encompassing small learning communities. Such communities foster positive learning environments where Teachers and Behavioral Mentors alike role model pro-social behavior and expectations that promote academic achievement and success. Behavioral Mentors will work alongside Teachers in the classrooms to help with homework, assist with instruction, and provide one-on-one tutoring of students in addition to giving students behavioral support in the classroom.

Advisement classes will maintain a 14 to 1 student to instructor ratio, as these classes will be taught by Teachers, Behavioral Mentors, and select Administrators. During Advisement, instructors will teach students social-emotional skills through Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and they will guide students through community service projects. Instructors will be encouraged to develop a personal relationship with each student in the Advisement class, to know what each student likes to do after school, to become aware of each student's goals, and to provide encouragement when a student faces challenges – whether those challenges are academic or personal. When a student is absent, the front office will make a call to parents to notify them of the absence, and the Advisement instructor will call the student to show that someone cares. An example of what the Advisement instructor might say includes: "We missed you today. Are you OK? Well, I hope you will be at school tomorrow when we start the mural project. We will need your artistic abilities."

To enhance instructional support, SLA will create a flexible master schedule that is responsive to students' academic goals. Rite of Passage, the CMO, has extensive experience in altering class sizes to meet student learning needs as they arise during the school year. One high level math class may have only five students, while a required Earth Science class may have 25. When classes are larger, a Behavioral Mentor will assist the teacher and students within the classroom. SLA understands the importance of adapting class sizes to meet learning needs and to ensure that teachers can deliver interventions or curricular extensions effectively.

To further promote responsiveness to student learning needs, SLA has planned school-wide systems and organizational capacity that enable teachers to identify struggling students and to collaborate in order to solve learning problems immediately. RtI and PLC initiatives ensure that Teachers and Administrators have time for continuously reviewing assessment data and for collaborating in order to solve any learning problems. Through these professional problem-solving processes, Teachers can plan differentiated instruction, share new instructional strategies and research individualized prescriptive interventions for use within the classroom. The ELA teacher may share helpful graphic organizers with the social studies teacher and coach the teacher on assisting individual students in writing. The special education teacher may provide

the science teacher with accommodations to use with students who have difficulty reading the science texts and may schedule time to work with particular special education students on certain assignments. The Instructional Leader may highlight SIOP strategies that all teachers should be using to help English Language Learners acquire academic language for reading and writing activities and discuss those students who need more intensive instructional support. The staff may identify individual students who should attend Friday Learning Lab for one-on-one tutoring and possibly move to Tier 2 in RtI. They may also discuss cross-curricular extensions and academic projects for a youth who is gifted in written language. RtI and PLC serve as effective accountability systems that enable teachers to bring their expertise to problems at hand, whether those learning needs involve the student body as whole or are experienced by individual students.

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