

MODESTO CITY SCHOOLS

TO:	Dr. Sara Noguchi, Superintendent	Regular Meeting
SUBJECT:	2019-20 Annual Report, Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy	

BACKGROUND

Currently serving approximately 500 students in grades 6-12, Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy (frequently referred to as Vanguard or VCPA) is a direct-funded charter school in Modesto, California. It is a part of Aspire Public Schools, a charter management organization that operates 35 schools in California, 9 of which are secondary schools. In 2019, Modesto City Schools re-authorized Vanguard's charter for a 5-year term.

Vanguard exists to prepare young people, especially those from historically marginalized communities, to attain post-secondary degrees. Vanguard's "identity statements" reflect this driving purpose:

Our Mission

Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy is an inclusive community dedicated to the belief that all young people deserve an education that inspires excellence, nurtures resilience, sparks joy, and paves the way for collegiate, professional, and personal success.

Our Vision

Vanguard graduates are courageous, kind, independent thinkers who are prepared to get to and through college.

Our Core Values...	Beliefs...	& School-Wide Learner Outcomes
Belonging	People thrive when they feel welcomed, listened to, and appreciated.	<i>Builders of Belonging</i>
Equity	Every person deserves a high-quality education, delivered in a safe, responsive, bias-free environment.	<i>Champions for Equity</i>
Resilience	Resilience is a skill that can be learned and sustained through practice; it is the foundation for intellectual,	<i>Masters of</i>

	extra-curricular, and interpersonal success.	<i>Resilience</i>
Excellence	With practice and support, every student can achieve excellence in all domains of life.	<i>Strivers toward Excellence</i>
Joy	School should be engaging, inspiring, affirming, and rewarding for everybody.	<i>Cultivators of Joy</i>

A Time of Transition

A new principal and a new dean (aka “culture and climate specialist”) were named in June of 2018 and the school relocated from Empire, CA to its current facility the following August. As a result of this relocation, year-over-year enrollment increased by about 14% and approximately 22% of the student body was “new to Aspire” (i.e. not previously enrolled at Vanguard or at an Aspire feeder school) in the 18-19 school year. Enrollment increased again in 19-20 by approximately 25%, the largest year-over-year increase since the school’s inception. In 19-20, for the second year in a row, 22% of our students are “new to Aspire” and fully 40% of our students are experiencing their 1st or 2nd year with Aspire. Enrollment is expected to grow by 40-60 students in 2020-2021, and in each of the three years that follow until a maximum enrollment of 650-700 students is reached.

In addition to overall enrollment and student tenure, some of the most significant demographic shifts that have occurred since our campus relocation include:

- An increase in the percentage of students who identify as Hispanic or Latino, from 65% in 17-18 to 73% in 19-20
- An increase in the percentage of students who are English Learners, from 9% in 17-18 to 15% in 19-20
- An increase in the percentage of students whose parents did not graduate high school from 8% in 17-18 to 17% in 19-20

Vanguard's History

Vanguard was founded in 2009 as a “spin-off” of Aspire Summit Charter Academy in nearby Ceres, CA. Prior to Vanguard’s founding, SCA served grades K-8 and received numerous requests for high-school-level programming from parents who believed in the Aspire model and were disappointed that they could not stay with the program after their children completed the 8th grade.

Given the abundance of these requests, Aspire devised a plan to establish Vanguard as an entity serving grades 6-12 and to convert SCA into a K-5 school with expanded enrollment.

Several years of searching were required before Aspire Public Schools was able to identify a suitable facility to serve as Vanguard’s first home. Shortly before the 2009-2010 school year, Aspire signed a lease with the Empire Union School District to occupy its vacated Teel Middle School campus. Summit’s principal and a cadre of Summit teachers and staff members served as Vanguard’s founders. In its first year, Vanguard served 200 students in grades 6-9; it added grades 10-12 in the three successive years.

Ultimately, Vanguard remained at the Teel site for 9 years. During that time, Vanguard scores on the STAR test were among the highest in Stanislaus county. However, because of its location, enrollment was a perennial challenge, and it was therefore difficult to provide students from Vanguard’s two Aspire feeder schools--Summit and University Charter School-- with the TK-12 comprehensive experience that is a key component of the Aspire model.

During Vanguard’s final year at Teel, Aspire entered into a partnership with the Turner-Agassi Charter School Facilities Fund, which had purchased a property in West Modesto that was the home of the defunct Sportsmen of Stanislaus Club, an athletic and social organization founded in 1957. Under the agreement, Turner-Agassi renovated the SOS facility to accommodate both Vanguard and University Charter School, which exists as a separate school on the western portion of the property. Aspire was able to provide input on some aspects of the renovation.

Construction delays caused Vanguard to delay the start of the 18-19 school year by two weeks, and during the Fall 2018 semester, the entire school had to occupy just 50% of the classroom building while the other half was being completed.

This year, for the first time ever, Vanguard has housed its middle school grades and its high school grades in different parts of the facility. Although we very much maintain a desire to promote mentorship of younger students by older students, we have found that the time is right to increase the degree of differentiation between our 6-8 program and our 9-12 program, and the partitioning of our facility has been an important first step.

A basement portion beneath the Vanguard classroom building remains un-renovated. Aspire plans to complete the 5-classroom space (plus offices) in time for the 2021-2022 school year.

SUMMARY

Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy is making a positive difference in the lives of 500 students, and their families. Thanks to our dedicated stakeholders and our successful campus relocation, Vanguard is experiencing:

- Strong, sustainable enrollment trends that reflect broad community support
- Successful adoption or expansion of rigorous, standards-aligned curricula
- Expanding opportunities for student and family engagement
- Rising average daily attendance, for a second consecutive year
- Significant reductions in suspensions compared to this time last year

Vanguard received “orange” and “red” ratings on the 2019 California School Dashboard; accordingly, we have been identified as being eligible for Comprehensive School Improvement funds. We believe this is reflective, in large part, of the extraordinary number of students who had little to no prior experience with the Aspire program. Nevertheless, this is precisely the reality we hoped to encounter when we relocated, as we are driven by a desire to make a college preparatory experience accessible to more families. However, we recognize that success in the long term will require us to customize our program for our new context, and we have encouraged the expansion of stakeholder engagement mechanisms -- including our English Language Advisory Council, our School Site Council, our Black Student Union, and our Hispanic Youth Leadership Council-- to ensure that we are responding effectively and equitably to the needs of all of our stakeholders.

REPORT

Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy shall conduct an annual programmatic/performance review and present a programmatic/performance review report (“Report”) to the District (Attn: Director, State and Federal Programs) by March 1st each year. The Report shall include all information necessary to demonstrate that Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy is meeting the applicable accountability standards and legal requirements as defined by the State of California, the Charter, and this MOU, and operating in a legally compliant and fiscally responsible manner for the then current school year. The Report shall also include, among other things:

(a) A review of budget and financial status including discussion of any debt incurred by Aspire on behalf of Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy.

June 30, 2019 Audited Financial Statements	
Consolidating Statement of Financial Position	
Total Assets	\$ 11,255,245
Total Liabilities	\$ 11,209,700
Total Net Assets	\$ 45,545
Consolidating Statement of Activities	
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 4,849,165
Total Expenses	\$ 5,406,581
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ (557,416)
Increase in Restricted Net Assets	\$ 27,774
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$ 575,187
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 45,545

Aspire did not incur any debt on behalf of Vanguard College Prep Academy.

(b) A discussion of the educational program being delivered at Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy.

Several aspects of Vanguard's school program make it unique. The most salient of them are:

Small-Campus, Familial Culture | Since Vanguard's inception, students, families, and staff members have named the "family feel" as one of Vanguard's greatest assets. Adults know students and each other by name, and we work hard with practices such as "threshold" and "shout outs" to ensure that students feel seen and acknowledged as valued members of the community.

Strong Curricula | Vanguard has adopted robust, externally-vetted, standards-aligned curricula. These include Eureka Math (middle school), Core Plus (high school math), Expeditionary Learning (middle school ELA), and Engage NY (high school ELA). Vanguard is also an early-adopter NGSS school, and we have been piloting middle school science curriculum through a partnership with OpenSciEd.

Early College High School Model | The ECHS program has three core components:

1. **Rigorous Graduation Requirements:** Among other things, all high school students are required to complete the State of California A-G graduation requirement, unless otherwise indicated by an Individualized Education Plan or a 504 Plan. This helps to ensure that our students are eligible to apply to California's public universities.
2. **Robust Academic Counseling:** Vanguard has allocated resources to ensure that all high school students benefit from regular, differentiated academic counseling. Juniors and seniors receive intensive support with college selection, application, and matriculation as well as financial aid, DREAM Act paperwork, and scholarship applications.
3. **Dual Enrollment:** In order to ensure that they are psychologically and experientially prepared for the transition to post-secondary study, high school students are required to complete a minimum of three college courses, and Vanguard covers the costs related to this requirement. Vanguard hosts Modesto Junior College courses on campus, and students also travel to MJC to complete coursework, or do so online. Academic counselors support students throughout this experience.

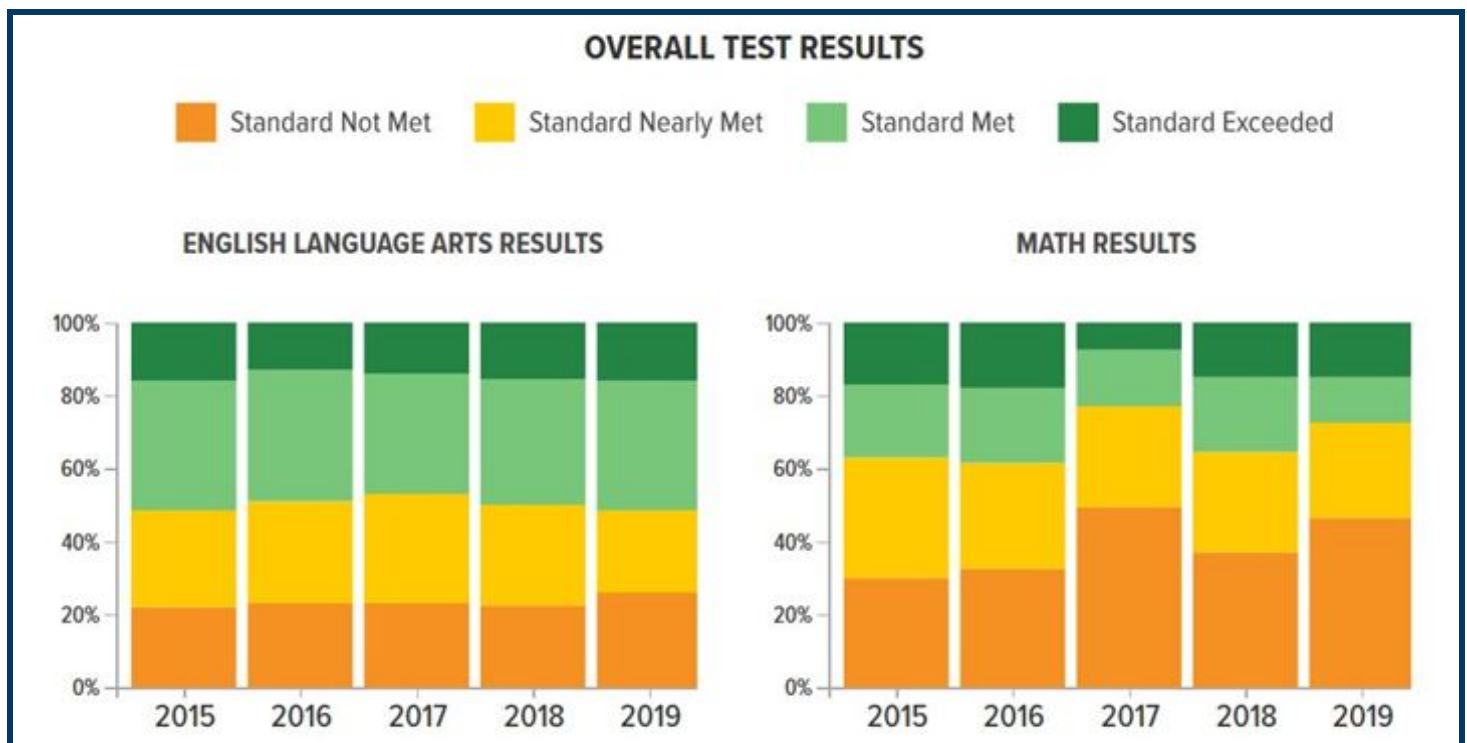
Advisory and Social-Emotional Learning | All students in grades 6-12 participate in an advisory class that focuses on academic readiness skills, SEL via our R.U.L.E.R. curriculum, the development of “college knowledge”, and career readiness. Our SEL curriculum is in the initial stages of a multi-year roll out, and in the coming years it will play an increasingly significant role in our program.

Full Inclusion for Students with Disabilities | Students with Disabilities spend the vast majority of their instructional time in classrooms with their grade-level peers. Education Specialists provide support to these students via co-teaching, push-in support, and brief pull-out sessions.

Restorative Justice Practices | Numerous “student support” staff members and teachers, have participated in International Institute for Restorative Justice training. Restorative practices are the default first step in responding to harm done in our community.

(c) An analysis of whether student performance is meeting the goals specified in the Charter using data displayed on a school-wide basis and disaggregated by major racial and ethnic categories, socio-economic status, English learner status, and/or disability.

The data visualizations below were generated by EdSource and reference Vanguard’s ELA and math achievement on CAASPP assessments.



School / District	English: Standard Met or Exceeded 2018	English: Standard Met or Exceeded 2019	English: Percentage Changed	Math: Standard Met or Exceeded 2018	Math: Standard Met or Exceeded 2019	Math: Percentage Changed
Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy Empire, Stanislaus County	49.78%	51.36%	+1.58%	35.37%	27.63%	-7.74%
Modesto City Elementary School District Stanislaus County	30.92%	30.78%	-0.14%	20.87%	22.06%	+1.19%
Modesto City High School District Stanislaus County	47.74%	50.79%	+3.05%	21.9%	24.36%	+2.46%
State of California	49.88%	50.87%	+0.99%	38.65%	39.73%	+1.08%

The data visualization below was generated by Aspire and shows a three year trend for student achievement, disaggregated by student sub-groups. Colors and “DFS” scores correspond to the California School Dashboard measurement mechanisms.

In general, student achievement in 2018-2019 compares favorably to achievement in 2016-2017, a year when Vanguard also experienced a surge in enrollment and in “new to Aspire” students, albeit smaller in both respects than what occurred in 18-19.

Notable exceptions to this trend include:

- SBAC ELA achievement of Students with Disabilities
- SBAC ELA and Math achievement of English Learners
- English Learner Reclassification Rate

Stakeholder groups, notably the ELAC, School Site Council, and school staff, have highlighted a need to strengthen services and supports for English Learners and Students With Disabilities, and to strengthen Tier 1 supports for all students. These priorities are reflected in Vanguard’s WASC accreditation self-study, our Site Action Plan, and our Local Control Accountability Plan.

School: Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy			
Priority Metric	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
4.a: SBAC ELA	All: 8.1 pts below	All: 4.6 pts below	All: 7.3 pts below
	AA: NA	AA: NA	AA: NA
	SWD: 111.2 pts below	SWD: 107.7 pts below	SWD: 138.8 pts below
	Latinx: 20.5 pts below	Latinx: 14.9 pts below	Latinx: 17.9 pts below
	EL: 28.5 pts below	EL: 16.8pts below	EL: 53.7 pts below
	FRL: 31.6 pts below	FRL: 19.9pts below	FRL: 23pts below

4.a: SBAC Math	All: 82.4pts below	All: 49.4 pts below	All: 65.4 pts below
	AA: NA	AA: NA	AA: NA
	SWD: 179.9 pts below	SWD: 172.3 pts below	SWD: 173.1 pts below
	Latinx: 96.4 pts below	Latinx: 59pts below	Latinx: 79 pts below
	EL: 86.5pts below	EL: 59.2pts below	EL: 107.4 pts below
	FRL: 108.5pts below	FRL: 66.4 pts below	FRL: 80.1 pts below
4.b: % of pupils who successfully completed A-G	NA	NA	75%
4.c: % of EL students making progress toward ELPAC proficiency	NA		28.20%
4.d: EL Reclassification Rate	46.20%	17%	28.10%
4.e: % of students who passed AP exam with score of 3 or higher	NA	NA	NA

(d) An overview of Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the numbers of students enrolled and the number on waiting lists.

The following is Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy's Enrollment Procedures:

The Charter School shall admit all pupils who reside in the State of California who wish to attend The Charter School subject to the provisions set forth below. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into The Charter School. The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. The Aspire application process is comprised of the following steps:

1. Completion of a Student Interest Form for each child who is interested in attending The Charter School
2. Lottery Procedure - Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period, which occurs in late January through the end of February of each year for enrollment in the following school year. Based on a 40 week school calendar, this is weeks 23- 26.

3. Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, The Charter School will hold a lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level(s). SchoolMint is the platform through which all Aspire Central Valley schools, including The Charter School, conduct their lotteries. The lottery takes place every year during week 28. Each lottery is public and takes place at the school. Families do not need to attend in order to secure a spot. Once the lottery is complete, the information is posted publicly and emailed to families. Open enrollment and lottery information is communicated through letters sent home, ParentSquare messages, and information on SchoolMint. SchoolMint is programmed with the below lottery parameters. SchoolMint first fills spots with preference #1 (Children of Aspire permanent employees). The remaining spots are then filled with preference #2 (Siblings of students currently enrolled in The Charter School). Once all these students have been seated, each subsequent preference is filed before moving to fill seats with the next preference.

The Charter School holds at least one parent information session and comprehensive information is available on school websites and in the Charter School office. Enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be as follows:

- All students currently enrolled in the School
- Children of Aspire permanent employees.
- Siblings of students currently enrolled in the Charter School
- All students who seek to continue their preparation and readiness for college who are currently enrolled in an Aspire Public School
- Children residing within the District
- All other students who reside in the state of California

4. The Central Valley Area Superintendent or designee will be in attendance at the lottery, which is open to the public. All names will be drawn randomly to determine the students who Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy Charter Renewal Petition (2019-2024) 102 of 145 are accepted and those who are on the waitlist. The order of names drawn will determine the order of names on the waitlist.

5. At the conclusion of the lottery, students who were accepted will be notified by the Charter School Business Manager phone, email, and mail within two days and asked to register within two weeks for the upcoming school year online or in person. All students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall also be contacted and told their number on the waitlist and then asked if they would like to stay on the waitlist for the upcoming year. This wait list will be posted in a public place in the school and will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. As openings become available, the Business Manager will offer enrollment to students in the order as listed on the waitlist through the online enrollment system. **In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year.**

6. Upon confirmation that a student has secured a spot at The Charter School, parents must submit a completed Registration Form usually within two weeks. Every effort will be made to contact the parents and ensure that the forms are submitted in a timely fashion. The Charter School's Business Manager will also help any parents who need assistance in completing the lottery and/or registration forms, and the school will keep written records of the lottery forms, procedures, accepted lists, and wait lists for a period of one year.

7. SchoolMint automatically transfers the online student applications to a random lottery which has been organized to follow the Charter School priorities (as listed above) to a numbered priority list and Wait List, all of which are printed and displayed in real time. Although the Charter School Business Manager organizes and oversees the lottery, The Central Valley Regional Operations Director and the Central Valley Special Projects Manager are responsible to see that the process is followed fairly, accurately, and in a timely manner from start to finish. Monthly Business Manager meetings address lottery procedures in detail starting in December, and full accounts of the process, procedures, and updates are reported to the Area Superintendent.

PLANNED APPLICATION, PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING, AND ADMISSION SCHEDULE The Charter School typically utilizes the following application, lottery, and admission schedule. The schedule below may be abbreviated to ensure all steps are followed within a shorter time frame.

December – January- Recruit students (via referrals, networking, and holding enrollment and option fairs). Collect Student Interest Forms.

January – March- Send re-enrollment forms to existing students to identify open seats. Lottery conducted (if necessary).

March – May- Waitlist letters distributed to applicants not selected in the lottery. Acceptance letters and registration packets distributed to parents and children who have been drawn in the lottery.

The following is Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy's data regarding the numbers of students enrolled and the number on waiting lists:

Currently Enrolled	Number of Students
Grade 6	118
Grade 7	91
Grade 8	97
Grade 9	56
Grade 10	63
Grade 11	45
Grade 12	28
Total	498

2019/20 Schoolmint Waitlist	Number of Students
Grade 6	4
Grade 7	15
Grade 8	51
Grade 9	3
Grade 10	17
Grade 11	14
Grade 12	7
Total	111

(e) Data regarding student discipline, expulsion and any disenrollment including the basis for any disenrollment.

Student data regarding student discipline and expulsion

Discipline Data	
Total Number of Students Suspended At Least One Time	12
Suspension Rate	2.3%
Total Number of Ed Code violations	19
Total Number of Suspension Days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of School 14 • In School 23 	37
Number of students Expelled	0

Student data regarding student disenrollment including the basis for any disenrollment

Basis for Disenrollment	Number of Students Disenrolled by Grade
1. Family Relocation (within CA)	7 - 6th
2. Family Relocation (out of CA)	8 - 7th
3. Home School/Private School	1 - 8th
	8 - 9th
	2 - 10th
	2 - 11th
	0 - 12th
	28 - TOTAL
4. Other	

(f) Analysis of the effectiveness of Aspire University Charter School's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of written, formal disputes and complaints.

Informal Concerns/Complaints	Formal Complaints
7	0

(g) Any updates on Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy's operations.

There are no changes to Aspire Vanguard College Preparatory Academy's school operations at this time..