

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Pamela Ann Marton

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Fairburn Avenue Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1403 Fairburn Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Los Angeles CA 90024-6014  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Los Angeles County

Telephone (310) 470-1344

Fax (310) 470-3981

Web site/URL https://www.fairburnschool.org

E-mail pmarton@lausd.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Mr. Austin Beutner

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail austin.beutner@lausd.net

District Name Los Angeles Unified School District Tel. (213) 241-7000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Ms. Monica Garcia

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 499 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 145 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 117 High schools
  - 8 K-12 schools

769 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
  - Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
- Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	8	16	24
K	46	43	89
1	37	37	74
2	40	35	75
3	33	28	61
4	27	31	58
5	38	29	67
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	229	219	448

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 24 % Asian
  - 3 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 57 % White
  - 7 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 15%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	49
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	68
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	455
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 15 %  
66 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
ARABIC, ARMENIAN, CANTONESE, CROATIAN, CZECH, DUTCH, ENGLISH, FARSI, GERMAN, HEBREW, JAPANESE, KOREAN, MANDARIN, POLISH, RUSSIAN, SPANISH, TELUGU, URDU

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 18 %  
Total number students who qualify: 81

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
26 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |                                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>8</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 25:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Fairburn is committed to developing the character and full academic potential of all students through enriched and rigorous instruction, fostering a lifelong love of learning.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Fairburn Avenue Elementary School (Fairburn) has the proud history of being one of the finest public schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Established in 1926, Fairburn is a high-performing neighborhood school located in West Los Angeles. It provides rigorous, enriching, and creative learning opportunities to 460 students in grades TK-5. Owing to our location in a culturally diverse state and our proximity to University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the many visiting faculty, scholars, and graduate students it attracts from around the world, Fairburn's student population is truly international. In 2018-19, its English language learners spoke 18 languages and hailed from over 40 countries. Fairburn is racially diverse, comprising 57% White, 24% Asian, 8% Hispanic and 2% Black students, and economically diverse, with 18% free and reduced-lunch students. Fairburn's unique demographic and linguistic diversity provide opportunities for its students to learn firsthand about different cultures and countries.

Fairburn is consistently a top-performing school within LAUSD, ranking better than 98% of elementary schools in California; it was eighth among 561 ranked elementary schools on the Smarter Balance Assessment. The 2018 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results show students perform at the highest levels in both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, with greater than 86% demonstrating proficiency or higher in both academic areas. Fairburn scored at the highest level of Blue on the new California School Dashboard. There is no achievement gap between Asian, Black, Hispanic and White students. 83% to 100% of students in each group meet or exceed standards on ELA and 75% to 100% meet or exceed in math.

Fairburn's large international population, which turns over every one to two years, is our greatest academic challenge. We have responded by adopting student-centered curricular programs and strategies ensuring every child, regardless of skill level, linguistic proficiency, or special identification receives foundational skills and challenging and appropriate instruction. Fairburn utilizes various teaching modalities and strategies to provide differentiated instruction to meet or exceed grade level standards.

Fairburn has also developed or adopted signature programs to meet each child's full potential emotionally, physically, and socially. In response to recent research attributing social and emotional benefits and enhanced academic performance to exercise, we adopted Fairburn in Motion, a nationally recognized morning exercise program recently featured on CBS news, and weekly psychomotor exercise sessions featuring a series of warm-ups and activities.

Social/emotional learning is also supported by the introduction of Restorative Justice circles and a "focus traits" program, which encourages the development of character-building personality traits such as "cooperative," "open-minded," and "reflective."

Our comprehensive technology curriculum starts in TK and provides students with the tools to approach 21st-century digital tasks with confidence and ease. By the end of fifth grade, all students have been introduced to coding, worked with the Python programming language, recorded academic podcasts, created websites, produced and edited PSAs, and created 3D models.

To promote the joy of reading, the popular Read-a-thon is held every February and features three "Turn Off TV" Tuesdays, where teachers, parents and staff make surprise visits to students' homes to "catch" them reading. This event includes a weeklong book fair, culminating in a schoolwide celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday.

Our instrumental music program offers students in grades 1-5 a chance to learn an instrument and culminates in a full orchestra performance each spring.

The Principal and a part-time Targeted Student Population Coordinator employ a collaborative leadership style supporting both staff and parent involvement in every aspect of school functioning. Innovative and collegial staff work together across grade levels, and in school-wide teams and inquiry groups to constantly improve pedagogical practice and promote the social and emotional development of the student body. In

order to provide staff an opportunity to plan, learn and reflect on current practices, we have restructured the week to include an additional hour of meeting time, thereby doubling the amount provided for in the LAUSD schedule.

The motto of the Fairburn Avenue Boosters (FAB), our parent support group—“Everyone gives because everyone benefits,”—is borne out in our stats: 98% of our families support the school financially, parents actively volunteer in classrooms and at events, and a strong sense of community and mission is shared by everyone. Families are actively involved in many schoolwide programs, including our International Feast (which gives families a chance to share aspects of their cultural heritage) and periodic school beautification days. Wallpapered on the fences surrounding the school are colorful banners displaying community and family support, and an abundance of school spirit.

Fairburn is dedicated to inspiring lifelong learners in a responsible and enthusiastic environment created through partnerships with students, families, and the community. We’re proud to uphold a rigorous and challenging learning environment rich in cultural diversity, celebrated in achievement, and filled with possibility—a school where all learn and achieve success.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Fairburn’s English language arts (ELA) curriculum is meaning-centered and literature-based, with a strong emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills. Our program follows LAUSD’s Benchmark Advance Literacy Program, with differentiation and modification as appropriate, notably through small group instruction to meet individual needs. Teachers in each grade level collaborate to design instruction ensuring students meet or exceed Common Core state standards.

Fairburn’s primary grades (TK-2) deploy the Early Literacy Academy model, a data-driven, targeted instructional program using multi-level flexible teaching designed to accelerate student achievement in Foundational Reading Skills and Common Core state standards. Common Core standards are reinforced through the use of classroom libraries, presentations, and group discussions. Strong formal phonics instruction is supplemented with phonemic awareness and phonics programs using the Heggerty Program and 95% Group Phonics Chip Kits. Utilizing these programs assists our TK students with school readiness and to be successful at our high academic level school.

In upper grades (3-5), instruction centers on texts from a variety of genres, with an emphasis on narrative non-fiction. Daily writing assignments develop students’ fluency and ability to write on a range of topics and for differing purposes and audiences. As an elective, fourth and fifth grade students produce the Fairburn Phoenix News, and are responsible for all writing and production aspects of the weekly video program. Fifth graders also participate in UCLA’s Writer’s Den to publish a bound collection of poetry and short stories.

Student groupings are continually monitored through analysis of CAASPP (state) and district-mandated assessments, as well as teacher-prepared assessments. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and Text Reading Comprehension (TRC) assessments, administered three times a year, provide teachers with an evaluation and prescription for targeted instruction. Grade-level articulation of skills and competencies are reinforced through teacher dialogue across grade levels.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

Fairburn’s mathematics program builds a deep conceptual knowledge of mathematics and mathematical reasoning, interweaving and reinforcing concepts and skills from all strands (number, logic, geometry, measurement, algebra, statistics, and probability). Instructional practices aim to balance conceptual understanding with procedural fluency through whole-group and small-group activities in tandem with rigorous independent work. This approach is used to provide all students (TK-5) with the skills necessary to be successful.

Problem solving is the central component of our mathematics program. Students are expected to demonstrate problem-solving skills through various strategies, with teachers facilitating hands-on, concrete experiences through the use of manipulatives and open-ended activities encouraging students to investigate concepts, work cooperatively, and solve “real life” math problems. Students develop mathematical skills through content learning, while process learning and higher-level thinking skills are honed as students explore mathematical concepts which gradually increase in difficulty, abstraction, and complexity. This sequential process of learning is supported through the use of various instructional materials including MyMath and Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI).

A student-centered approach to teaching math, CGI starts with what students already know and builds on their natural number sense and intuitive approaches to problem solving. Teachers encourage student questions and engage their reasoning skills with the goal of uncovering and expanding every student’s mathematical understanding, with differentiation as an essential element of Fairburn’s program.

Underachieving students increase math aptitude through our Math Masters program and individualized math tutoring. High-performing students are given more complex and challenging work. Seventy fourth and fifth grade students excel in the national Math Olympiad competition each year.

Due to the sequential nature of mathematical learning, we emphasize articulation in math and assess student progress often. Assessments focus on grade-level standards and benchmarks in each of the mathematical strands. Analysis of student performance on comprehensive assessments aligned to our curriculum at the end of each unit, CAASPP interim assessments, and periodic assessments by teachers, help us hone in on areas in need of improvement.

### **1c. Science:**

Fairburn's use of the Lawrence Hall of Science Full Option Science System (FOSS) embraces hands-on experiences emphasizing the scientific process through inquiry-based and collaborative learning. Students predict, hypothesize, observe, measure, analyze, report findings, and draw conclusions. Themes are used to connect concepts in all science strands (physical, life, earth, space and engineering) and into all academic areas.

To further enhance our inquiry-based approach, the program integrates technology and engineering activities in a variety of ways. Technology is used to gather data and to engage with the content through the use of applications taking students on virtual journey through the solar system, the circulatory system, and the layers of the earth's crust. Students in all grades are introduced to engineering standards through a program featuring student-designed investigations teaching critical scientific and engineering concepts and cultivating the ability to think both analytically and creatively. To supplement LAUSD's chosen science program, each grade level participates in field trips enhancing the discovery done in class and providing a focused experience in the strand of science being studied.

SEP

In 2017-18, Fairburn added an upper-grade Robotics team with 15 students participating in a weekly lab to develop projects for a competition with neighboring schools. In spring each year, fifth grade students mount a science fair, inviting all grade levels to observe and learn directly about a variety of topics and encouraging applied learning and the adventure of scientific discovery.

SEP

Student assessments are teacher-created and aligned with the California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS) that integrate disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts to foster students' understanding of science in the natural world. Our benchmarks are revisited yearly to keep pace with requirements of the California Science Test (CAST), which is administered to fifth graders in order to measure student knowledge of all scientific concepts in life, earth, physical, space, and engineering sciences.

### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Fairburn provides a rich Social Studies curriculum centered on personal experience, historical understanding, civic pride, and geographic knowledge. Teachers create learning environments that approach subjects through multiple cultural and historical perspectives and compel students to think like historians. Students read charts and graphs, study primary source documents, construct timelines, create maps, and analyze historical trends and current events. Hands-on activities, simulations, role-play, and oral presentations are employed to enhance and reinforce the curriculum.

Students from all ethnic groups, including our many English language learners, are provided with frequent opportunities to share their native heritage, culture, and customs, thereby enriching the curriculum with a multicultural dimension. Teachers provide equal access to the curriculum for all students through a variety of customized strategies such as cooperative learning, Stanford History Education Project activities, use of Google Translate, realia, and virtual field trips to learn about customs from other countries and cultures.

Beginning in kindergarten, students learn about their family, neighborhood and school community. This continues through grades 1-3, when the concepts of community and city are studied in greater depth. In

grades 3-4, the focus expands to learning about California: Native Californians, missions, the influence of the Spanish and the Gold Rush. In grade 5, students delve into U.S. history: the westward expansion, explorers, the Constitution, the formation of the Union, and the Civil War. Through the Stanford History Project, upper-grade students learn about history as a discipline with a deep dive into the study of primary source documents, biographies, literature, and texts. Student projects and collaborative presentations in the spring of fifth grade prompt them to apply and synthesize everything they've learned. Throughout, teachers facilitate the exploration of values critical to understanding the democratic process.

Teachers assess knowledge acquisition on each topic and activity, including performances and oral presentations, in addition to informal observations of students' group work.

**1e. For secondary schools:**

**1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Fairburn believes a well-rounded and comprehensive arts program is essential in developing lifelong learners. Students who express themselves in multiple modalities become more self-confident, happier, and more excited about learning. Our teachers collaborate with Districts Arts Specialists and receive extensive training to ensure the arts program extends and enhances what is being taught at each grade level. For instance, fourth grade culminates in a performance that synthesizes and reifies their curricula in Social Studies and ELA; and in fourth and fifth grade, students portray historical characters for Rancho and Colonial Days as a demonstration for the younger grades.

Students in all grades participate in weekly visual arts lessons aligned with the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards. Lessons are geared toward facilitating the development of perceptual skills and vocabulary, teaching students how to analyze visual elements and principles of design and to communicate and express themselves through the creation of artworks. Throughout the year, students share their output through school-wide art displays.

Music is also integral to our program. Through the exploration of various musical genres, students learn to hear, read, annotate, analyze, and evaluate music. They practice voice and instruments and learn about the historical contributions of composers and cultures, culminating in a school-wide performance of world music. Students in grades TK-1 receive ten weeks of instruction in vocal music, while grades 4-5 learn to play the recorder. Over 150 students also participate in weekly after-school instrumental music classes provided by the Children's Music Workshop, culminating with an orchestra performance each spring.

Fairburn has made dance and physical education an integral part of our day through our Fairburn in Motion program. Beginning 8 years ago, the daily, school-wide fitness, nutrition, health, and wellness program is held at the start of each school day, integrating cardio-respiratory workouts, muscular conditioning, and flexibility exercises. Our ballet-trained teacher incorporates the Common Core dance standards and leads exercises three times a week. Our full-time Coach, in coordination with our teachers, instructs each classroom once a week in a wide range of sports and activities to promote physical fitness and sportsmanship. We also have a weekly, grade-level psychomotor program designed to build agility, coordination, gross/fine motor skills, social skills and confidence. Students begin with a short warm-up and then rotate through different activities, all of which have rules; it is up to the students to manage the games themselves. The program was also designed to support Common Core state standards in physical education and health for grades K-12, in alignment with National Physical Education Content Standards and National Health Education Content Standards.

Technology is fully integrated in classroom instruction to engage our technology-savvy learners. Seventy-NBRS 2019

inch interactive touchscreen displays incorporating the latest technology were recently added to every classroom. Our comprehensive technology curriculum, aligned with California Common Core standards, starts in TK and provides students with the tools to approach 21st-century digital tasks with confidence and ease. Every child visits our computer lab weekly for lessons tailored to their skill set, ranging from familiarizing students with computers and how they function (the mouse, key-finding, word processing) in grades TK-1, to delving further into programming languages, internet research techniques, and digital presentation strategies in grades 2-5. They create podcasts and websites to complement classwork, produce and edit PSA videos, program graphical Python projects and create models for 3D printing.

In addition to the formal technology curriculum in the computer lab, students in grades 3-5 have 1:1 use of Chromebooks and instructional resources. In conjunction with class projects, they learn how to gather information from digital sources, take notes, sort evidence, and produce visual displays to enhance certain facts or details. They conduct research projects requiring note-taking; paraphrasing information; combining audio, video, and text in movie presentations; and annotating documents.

Social/emotional learning at Fairburn is supported by the introduction of Restorative Justice circles and a “focus traits” program, which encourages the development of character-building personality traits such as “cooperative,” “open-minded,” and “reflective.” These “focus traits” are discussed each week at Monday morning assemblies.

Fairburn proudly holds a Career Day each year where parents and community members present to all students, sharing their professional duties and the academic and life skills needed to be successful in their profession. This opens up the career possibilities students are able to consider in their futures.

### **3. Special Populations:**

Fairburn’s goal is to provide high-quality education to every student based on each child’s abilities and needs using a “whole child” approach. We devote attention and resources to all students at all levels of academic proficiency, including English Learners (ELs), students with disabilities (SWDs), students in foster care, students who experience socio-economic disadvantages, and gifted/talented learners. Our teachers ensure every child, regardless of special identification, receives challenging and appropriate instruction utilizing flexible grouping strategies, tiered assignments, various learning modalities, multicultural materials, sheltered English techniques and paraprofessional support.

Fairburn follows the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework, which incorporates three levels of instruction. All students receive Tier 1 instruction, selected students receive moderate support through Tier 2 instruction, and Tier 3 is reserved for the few students requiring the highest level of support. All students may receive any of the 3 tiers of support needed at any given time and in any area of need. Ongoing formative assessment practices help teachers provide the instructional tier most appropriate for each student and each skill or content area. Tier 3 students receive pull-out and/or small group instruction to attain academic, behavioral, and social success.

Fairburn has approximately 70 identified ELs speaking 18 different languages; roughly three-quarters of these students attend the school for only one or two years. Fairburn follows LAUSD’s Master Plan program by offering Structured English Immersion instruction, and every teacher has extensive training in working with English-learners. Small group instruction is provided through daily English Language Development (ELD) sessions. ELD is also integrated within all core instruction areas until the student meets reclassification requirements. Fairburn’s EL students usually reclassify within 18 months due to pull-out and afterschool language support intervention in addition to support received in class. ELs are challenged to work early on academic skills through small group instruction and cooperative learning. ELs are exposed to and supported in learning the same curricula as all other students.

Students identified with special needs or disabilities (SWDs) are served by our special education staff: a full-time Resource Specialist Teacher, part-time teachers for speech and language, adapted P.E., occupational and physical therapy, and a psychologist. These professionals collaborate with classroom teachers and parents to ensure each program is individualized to address the needs of the child. Even with all these services and personnel, every child with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is mainstreamed

into a regular education classroom and is provided a challenging curriculum. The goal of the special education team is to assist students in reaching grade-level benchmarks.

For students with traits of giftedness, we began a Gifted Primary Screening Program in kindergarten and first grade. Beginning in second grade, all students are screened for the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program using the OLSAT high achievement test. As a School for Advanced Studies demonstration site, Fairburn clusters students who are high-achieving or identified as gifted in groups of 5 or more. Teachers with a gifted cluster must submit a plan for differentiating instruction and must attend 16 hours of continuing education in teaching identified gifted learners each school year. Fairburn has as many or more identified gifted students than most of the gifted magnet schools in LAUSD.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Fairburn’s school culture is caring, inclusive and friendly. As parents and children enter the campus each morning, they are greeted by smiling, enthusiastic administrators, office staff members, yard supervisors, teachers and teacher aides. Then, the entire Fairburn school community gathers on the playground with an assembly led by the Student Council and Principal. After five minutes of motivation and discussion, Fairburn in Motion begins. The morning routine has a festive flavor—the dance music blares, kids chat with their friends as they dance and exercise, and many parents stay to socialize in the Parent Patio area. Fairburn mornings are all about focus, fitness, community, and fun, and they help each student begin the day’s instruction with a smile.

Fairburn students learn empathy and how to take responsibility for themselves and each other through multiple strategies taught at school and home. On the playground, Fairburn staff offer a variety of methods for conflict resolution (e.g., the problem-solving process, the peace path). In order to create an inclusive culture, we deploy Buddy Bench peer assistance. Any student who feels lonely or has no one to play with can sit on a colorful bench and will soon be surrounded by eager playmates ready to help that child have a fun recess. Fostering strong, healthy peer relations and mutual respect are our highest priorities, resulting in students learning to appreciate their similarities as well as their differences.

Our “focus traits” program encourages the development of character-building qualities. These are introduced and discussed during Fairburn in Motion each morning and then modeled and reinforced throughout the day as students interact with teachers, administrators, and staff. This assists Fairburn students in their social and emotional growth, and peer relations in and out of the classroom.

Fairburn’s administration, parents and students demonstrate their appreciation and support for our teachers in numerous ways. The school administration fosters a warm, collegial environment where teachers’ ideas, opinions and concerns are solicited regularly, and they are actively involved in decision-making. Administration also takes time to handwrite notes of appreciation and encouragement throughout the year. Parents at Fairburn take pride in supporting the school and acknowledging the effort and dedication of the teachers and staff by planning and funding special “appreciation” activities throughout the year (meals, carwashes, gift cards), volunteering in the classrooms, and raising funds to provide field trips, teacher assistants, and supplemental materials for the classrooms.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family and community engagement are a core strand of Fairburn’s DNA. The school has three leadership committees comprising administrative staff, teachers and parents: School Site Council, Leadership Council, and English Learner Advisory Committee. These decision-making bodies are responsible for identifying and implementing curriculum and instructional practices; establishing a budget for the use of school improvement funds; managing equipment and textbook purchases; and addressing the specific needs of the school’s English learners. At the beginning of each year, parents are encouraged to join a committee and all parents are invited to attend monthly meetings to provide feedback. These committees provide crucial bilateral engagement, giving parents the opportunity to make recommendations and staff the opportunity to encourage parents in their role in affecting educational outcomes.

Fairburn is also fortunate to have an active PTO, the Fairburn Avenue Boosters (FAB), which raises funds to provide educational support and organizes activities to foster social engagement and community involvement. In 2018-19, over 300 parents volunteered as room parents, classroom helpers, field trip chaperones, and to plan and implement enrichment and fundraising activities. Parents are also included on the school’s Staff Selection Committee, which is responsible for interviewing prospective new hires for open teaching and staff positions.

Communication is key to the school’s success. The principal holds monthly, interactive “Coffees with the

Principal” that typically draw over 100 parents. Through the school website, a weekly newsletter, and ConnectEd (an automated email and voice recording service), school staff share updates and address needs and concerns of families. Prior to admittance to Fairburn, prospective parents are given several opportunities to attend a pre-enrollment orientation to tour the school, observe students, and ask questions of staff and parents.

Fairburn offers a Career Day each year featuring parents and community members talking about their professions, during which students are exposed to a variety of professions, from writer and architect to electrician and entrepreneur. Family and community involvement are also nurtured through school events and activities, including Back to School Night, Fall International Feast, Art Night, Community Clean-up Days, and the Shoe Drive.

Our proximity to a number of local universities provides valuable opportunities for teacher training and staff support. Through a 2014-18 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, in partnership with Loyola Marymount University, Fairburn teachers participated in a summer Arts Camp focused on integrating Los Angeles culture and art resources in the school’s curriculum to extend learning. Fairburn benefits from a partnership with the UCLA School of Education to host teacher aides who log training hours while supporting the work of Fairburn’s veteran teachers.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Professional development of all staff members is an integral part of our school program; it is thoughtfully planned and supported with adequate time and resources. The Instructional Leadership Team (the ILT, which comprises the Principal and a teacher leader from each grade level) develops a yearly, school-wide staff development plan designed to address the needs of all stakeholders, drawing from year-end staff evaluations, parent satisfaction surveys, and student achievement results. In 2018, a subcommittee was formed to conduct a needs assessment that would delineate a multi-year path for our professional growth. The committee reviewed the latest standardized test results and student and parent satisfaction surveys and submitted recommendations for in-service training in CGI Math, art, gifted education, social sciences, early literacy, multicultural education, and character development. The plan is implemented and monitored by the ILT. Through this plan Fairburn was able to move up from Green to Blue on the new California School Dashboard.

Time is the key to providing effective professional development that results in long-lasting changes. Fairburn restructured its school week to provide regular weekly time for professional dialogue and development. Tuesday afternoon Common Planning Time is used for monthly staff development, bimonthly grade-level planning, participation in study groups, and meetings. Monthly staff development concentrates on Standards Based Instruction. All staff participate in professional development activities planned by the ILT as delineated above. Ongoing opportunities are available to all staff for continued professional development in learning new instructional methodologies, including LAUSD-sponsored conferences in gifted education, Early Literacy Academies, and Cognitively Guided Instruction in math. New teachers work with more experienced mentors to improve curriculum and instructional strategies.

In 2018, Fairburn sent a cadre of teachers and the Principal to Restorative Justice training, and they in turn trained the entire staff to implement Community Circles in all Fairburn classrooms, which has resulted in healthier peer-to-peer communication and a heightened sense of openness. The summer Arts Camp (mentioned in the prior section) gave teachers materials and strategies for integrating local resources into their arts and culture curricula.

Fairburn teachers collaborate frequently to provide support and learn from each other’s expertise. If you drop by around 4:30 p.m., you will notice that the parking lot’s still full. However, after knocking on a few doors you might think “Where is everybody?” Chances are several of the teachers are clustered in one room sharing ideas and formulating strategies for the next day’s lessons.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Fairburn's leadership is represented by a TEAM (Teachers, Employees, Administrators, and Members of the community (including parents and students)). The TEAM works cooperatively and individually with their various constituents to inspire our collective vision and make it a reality. When the Principal joined Fairburn three years ago, there were three distinct decision-making structures that vied for power, which prevented a clear articulation of decision-making authority, goals, and a path to achieve them. To remedy this, the TEAM has worked to identify roles and responsibilities for each group on campus, which has resulted in clear and transparent decision-making authority.

The TEAM noted teacher collaboration and planning were taking place outside of the school day and were often dependent on teacher's individual schedules. Recognizing planning should be a priority, the TEAM created time during the school day (while students attend psychomotor sessions) for dedicated weekly grade-level planning. In addition, 15 more afternoons of collaborative planning time was incorporated, by extending the school day by 4 minutes daily, allowing teachers time to collaborate, review student work, and plan for instruction, thus multiplying the benefit to students.

Fairburn's Principal is supportive, trusting, enthusiastic, and has decades of experience engaging with teachers and school communities. She motivates and encourages leadership in others, gaining input and suggestions throughout the day as she interacts with parents, staff, and students. Her leadership style is to enlist everyone at Fairburn to help all students develop strong character traits and the ability to achieve their academic potential. In order to make ongoing improvements to Fairburn's program of instruction, student achievement data is disaggregated and analyzed by the TEAM to determine areas of strength and those needing more attention. No important decision is ever made by one person; there is always a dialogue and democratic process involving the TEAM. This new direction of leadership has provided a more collaborative and stress-free environment for all, resulting in a more dedicated staff and student success.

The dialogue extends to parents via monthly "Coffee with the Principal" meetings, which are open to all parents and provide an opportunity to ask questions, address concerns, and formulate plans to align various budgets with achievement goals and school improvement needs. Recently, our foreign parents voiced the need for additional aid for students learning English as a second language, resulting in a recommendation to the School Site Council for the majority of discretionary funds to be used to support student achievement of the English Learner sub-group with after school intervention classes, directly aligned with our mission. The school's collaborative decision-making culture is reflected as well in the work of our students, who are involved in decision-making through an active Student Council with representatives from grades 3-5.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Building a student’s sense of identity and confidence in their ability to learn, overcome challenges, and influence the world around them is paramount, and far more significant than anything else we teach them. To do this Fairburn, has incorporated Growth Mindset teaching, as outlined by Carol Dweck, which pushes students to approach challenges in a way that makes them understand that struggle—and sometimes even failure—are part of the learning process. In so doing, they have become more self-aware, more reflective, and have increased confidence in their ability to problem-solve and overcome obstacles.

For the past two years Fairburn teachers have actively integrated this approach in all areas of their classwork. When a student is presented with a challenge, they are encouraged to embrace it, to show determination and creativity in addressing it, and to understand that “mistakes are proof you’re trying.” They learn firsthand that intelligence and skill are not necessarily innate but can be nurtured and developed. By learning that struggle is part of achievement and necessary for growth, they become more confident and willing to set higher goals and take on more daunting challenges without fear of failure.

Our teachers are open about the challenges they face in their personal and professional lives and share these experiences, modeling how they accepted and learned from them. They also discuss the obstacles many historical figures overcame (e.g. Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln) on their path to success. Students are also encouraged to use this approach when they work on individual and group projects. These projects are then shared with their peers at our Art Night, Science Fairs, and a “Living Museum” presentation of people who have left an impact on our world. They learn how to give constructive criticism and show support for their peers as they struggle and persist.

We have seen firsthand how the adoption of this approach motivates our students and fosters a love of learning. It has also had a significant impact on academic performance. Fairburn’s SBAC scores in ELA from 2015 to 2018 show that our students moved from 77% to 86% proficient and advanced. During this same period, students increased from 64% to 87% proficient and advanced in math. These rigorous assessments require perseverance and productive struggle. The impact of this approach is further reflected in our promotion from Green to Blue on the California Dashboard. The success of our school is due to many factors but we are convinced that Growth Mindset teachings will have profound and long-lasting effects on students, teachers, and administrators alike.