

Alameda Community Learning Center Dissemination Grant

The Alameda Community Learning Center (ACLC) is a 6th-12th-grade charter school of 200 learners, located on the campus of a low-performing high school in the City of Alameda. ACLC was started as a school-within-a-school nine years ago and became a dependent charter school four years ago.

Mission: ACLC is an educational laboratory that seeks to create a dynamic learning community by embodying the best practices of teaching and learning in a non-competitive manner that supports individuals to actively discover their own potential, recognize their own value and worth, and practice responsibility to the community.

ACLC is a school with **high standards** both for academic achievement and community citizenship. ACLC is based on the radical hypothesis that students would excel in a school that is run by teachers and students. We are the living proof that this hypothesis is correct. ACLC reflects the racial and socioeconomic diversity of the overall Alameda Community, but it far exceeds the performance of the other secondary schools. Our statewide API ranking is 10 as is our similar schools ranking. Between 75% and 90% of our parents are supportive or highly supportive of ACLC across a number of domains.

We have developed **innovative** governance structures that include students (learners), teachers (facilitators) and parents in highly functional legislative, judicial, and executive components. We are fiscally solvent and effective with limited resources. Our educational philosophy is constructivist where students use new, experiential learning opportunities to scaffold upon prior knowledge to build deeper understanding. We teach and learn in a common space, limiting use of separate classrooms or staff offices. We have extended operational hours and our staff is accessible to learners. Learners, parents and facilitators participate in the hiring and evaluation of all staff. In short, we walk the walk.

Dissemination: ACLC proposes to coherently organize – in our own manner that includes learners and parents – the materials, processes, and practices we have developed over the years, including curriculum, governance, management, and assessment strategies. We further propose to disseminate this knowledge and skill in an effective manner, utilizing statewide networks, local and regional connections, a high quality website, existing and uniquely developed conferences, and extensive on-site visits. We also propose to mount a coherent mentoring program – starting with three already identified schools in year one and at least three more schools or clusters in year two. We have targeted one API 1 school in our first group of mentees and will prioritize API 1 or 2 schools in the subsequent year.

Our entire learning community will be engaged in the dissemination and mentoring process, from the development of materials and best practice documentation to coaching other schools that wish to implement our inclusive governance and personnel management processes. We will contract with outside experts as needed to augment the internal capacity of our learning community of parents, learners and facilitators. We believe that we not only have a potent story to tell, we have the results to back our story. We will empower our entire learning community to use this opportunity to strengthen our collective learning experience and to contribute to the California educational community statewide.