

ALLIANCE COLLEGE-READY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ALICE M. BAXTER COLLEGE-READY HIGH SCHOOL

PICKING UP THE PACE: PERSONALIZED ALLIANCE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

“To better prepare our students to persist in college, we need to develop a new school model that offers students significantly more choice, independence, and ownership in their learning.”

JUDY BURTON, FOUNDING CEO, ALLIANCE COLLEGE-READY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

KEY FEATURES:

- ✓ New School
- ✓ Flex and À La Carte Blended Model
- ✓ Competency-Based Learning
- ✓ Early College and Dual Enrollment
- ✓ College Readiness and Success

AT A GLANCE:

Start Date: Fall 2014

Grades Served: 9-12

Location: San Pedro, CA

Operator: Alliance College-Ready Public Schools

Operator Type: Charter

Setting: Urban

Students at Start: 100

Students at Capacity: 600

MODEL TOOLBOX:

Learning Management System:

Google Applications, EdModo

Student Information System:

PowerSchool

Gradebook: PowerSchool, Pinnacle

Digital Content Providers: Pearson

Common Core Suite of Courses, Achieve 3000, APEX, Blendspace, MyAccess Writing, Newsela, Revolution K-12, TellMeMore, Young Scholars, UC Scout, Wordly Wise, Class Dojo

Hardware: Macbook Air, iPads

The Vision: Schools in the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools charter network outperform neighboring schools on California's Academic Performance Index. Over 90% of Alliance students graduate high school—again exceeding local and state averages—and nearly all graduates are accepted into college.

But Alliance has found that the college completion rate of its alumni is not as strong—the current 28% five-year college completion rate is far from its goal of 75% graduating in six years. The charter organization has identified three challenges—insufficient academic rigor in high school, lack of self-direction and time management skills, and financial pressures—that are affecting Alliance graduates' persistence.

To more effectively prepare students to persist in college, Alliance created a new school model that offers students significantly more choice, independence, and ownership in their learning as well as up to a year of college credits, reducing the financial burden of college.

The Academic Model: The Personalized Alliance College Experience (PACE) model, launched at the charter's new Baxter High School, integrates blended learning, early college high school, and competency-based progression with a curriculum comprised of a blended core, college readiness, and college courses.

Blended Core: Within flex blended learning classrooms, students work at their own pace in high school and Advanced Placement courses to build core content knowledge grounded in

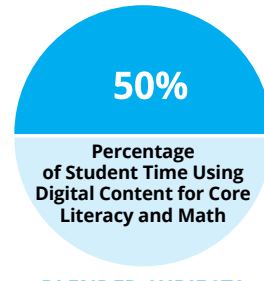
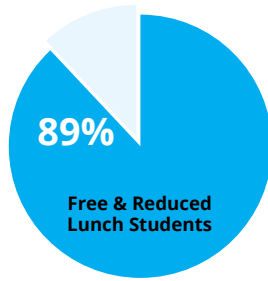
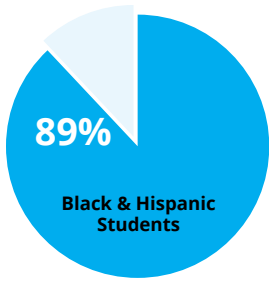
Common Core and state standards. Students work independently with adaptive digital content or in small groups with their teacher and move to the next unit once they demonstrate mastery.

College Readiness: During Advisory and Forum sessions, students focus on Capstone projects, core coursework, or remediation needs to develop 21st century skills, like creativity, communication, and problem-solving. Students own their time and choose their task, team, and technique for making progress using an online sign-up and calendaring system. Advisory teachers meet with each student every week or two to review goals.

College Courses: Baxter High School students earn up to 30 transferable credits toward an associate's degree. In the self-paced academic model, students may start taking online and/or in-person college courses from local college and university partners as soon as they pass the college's placement test.

Passing a placement test is a significant barrier to college-level learning, so students are given explicit test preparation and first take the placement test in ninth grade. The test acts as a diagnostic so teachers and students know which skill gaps to focus on. Students who do not pass the test are provided with individual coaching, peer and online tutoring, or support from college counselors. The school expects all students will be ready for college course enrollment by eleventh grade.

As they acquire credits, students



BLENDING SUBJECTS:
All

BY THE NUMBERS:

Year 1 public revenue per pupil: \$12,434
 Year 1 expenses per pupil: \$18,985
 Year 4 revenue per pupil: \$10,377
 Year 4 expenses per pupil: \$9,171
 Years to sustainability: 2

make significant progress toward a degree, affordably.

The Organizational Model: The PACE model employs more dynamic roles for educators.

High school teachers provide personalized and higher-order learning opportunities one-on-one or in small groups. Paraprofessional teaching assistants provide classroom management support, help students with digital content, and support students during Forum. Baxter High School is working to develop relationships with local colleges and universities so that college classes are taught by college faculty on the high school campus.

College courses can be expensive for a school budget (\$9,000 per course from Los Angeles Harbor College, for example), so Alliance extended its offerings with online college courses from the Young Scholars program (\$3.50 per student per course) and UC Scout (free) to increase sustainable course options. And because the college courses provide both high school and college credit, the addition of college faculty reduces the number of full-time Alliance teachers needed.

The Operator: Founded in 2004, Alliance is the largest charter organization in Los Angeles with 26 middle and high schools serving more than 11,000 low-income students. The or-

ganization aims to prove it is possible to educate students at high levels across an entire system of schools. It has a track record and experience of scaling high-quality college prep curriculum and a previous blended learning model to schools in its network, and intends to do the same with the PACE model as it demonstrates effectiveness.

PACE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

College Readiness Experience Blended Core High School Classes College Coursework (online or in person)

9 TH & 10 TH GRADES		11 TH & 12 TH GRADES	
A Day	B Day	A Day	B Day
Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
ELA	Math	Psychology	Student Course Choice (e.g. history)
Forum	Forum	Student Course Choice (e.g. science)	English 101
Spanish	Physical Education	Political Science	Student Course Choice (e.g. math)
Science	History	Forum	Forum

Students move from blended core high school classes to college readiness experiences to college coursework. During Advisory every morning, students set goals for the upcoming day, week, month, or semester. The daily calendar involves 90-minute blocks on an alternating day schedule that mirrors a college course schedule. Students can move from high school to college coursework whenever they pass the college placement test.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://www.baxterhigh.org/>
 Operator URL: <http://www.laalliance.org/> | Contact: Judy Burton, rjburton@laalliance.org

FORUM STATIONS

