## Overview of School Model

### Description of school type, accreditation and affiliation model

The Maria Sanchez Expeditionary Learning Academy (MSEL) will be a PreK-5 Expeditionary Learning School. Students will engage in in-depth learning through “learning expeditions” which are interdisciplinary, project-based units of study that require students to engage in research, use the community in authentic ways and communicate what they have learned through a culminating presentation of their final product to outside audiences (i.e. parents, experts, community members). Through this approach to teaching and learning, students will develop critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration skills. Expeditionary Learning enables students to be active learners: they take charge, question, make decisions, think critically and become in-depth learners.

MSEL is planned as a pathway to the McDonough Expeditionary Learning School (MELS). Upon successful completion of Grade 5 students will transition into MELS in Grade 6.

Major characteristics of the Expeditionary Learning (EL) instructional model include:
- Student empowerment to pursue content knowledge on their own
- Student demonstration of knowledge through multiple presentation modes
- Student connections to community and field experts
- Integration of literacy
- An integrated curriculum
- Infusion of technology
- High academic achievement through real world projects within an active, engaging and rigorous curriculum
- Workshop Model instruction
- A construct that builds on students’ existing understanding

The essential elements of an EL environment include:
- Climate of collaboration and reflection (carefully structured student groups)
- Modeling the process of inquiry
- Scaffolding through learning connections
- Collaboration between student and student, student and teacher, student and expert
- Conferencing with students at each major component of the EL process
- Access to resources

### Theme/Content Focus

EL is built on ten design principles that reflect the educational values and beliefs of Outward Bound. These principles also reflect the design’s connection to related thinking about teaching, learning and the culture of schools.

- The Primacy of Self-Discovery
  *I am here to discover what I can do.*
- The Having of Wonderful Ideas
  *I have wonderful ideas.*
- The Responsibility for Learning
  *I am responsible for my learning, and I help others learn.*
- Empathy and Caring
  *I care for others and others care for me.*
- Success and Failure
  *Success is sweet, but we can learn from our mistakes.*
- Collaboration and Competition
  *We work together as friends; I compete with myself.*
- Diversity and Inclusion
  *Our differences make us stronger.*
- The Natural World
  *Nature is our teacher.*
- Solitude and Reflection
  *I need time to be with myself.*
- Service and Compassion
  *We do helpful and kind things for others.*
Students in EL schools spend much of their time engaged in learning expeditions: in-depth studies of rich topics or themes such as water quality, civil rights movement, immigration and alternative forms of energy. EL is an approach to teaching and learning that seeks to change school culture by bringing the curriculum to life through active engagement. This approach motivates students to delve deeper, work harder, be creative and achieve more than they thought they could. Expeditions are designed to help students meet state standards and must fit within district and state curriculum frameworks. Teachers formulate guiding questions for expeditions that stimulate student inquiry and debate. Each learning expedition includes challenging projects, literature that relates to the theme or topic, fieldwork, adventure and service. Learning expeditions culminate in exhibits, performances, publications and other exemplary products for audiences beyond the classroom. Through this, learning is extended outside of the academic setting and can be “exported” into real life scenarios and experiences.

Other examples of topics that have been developed in EL units include:

- Water Study
- Immigration
- Theatre, Dance and the Arts
- History of Hartford/Connecticut
- Alternative Energy
- Farm Life
- Fitness and Wellness
- Geological Guide to Landforms
- U.S. Government
- Toys, Toys, Toys
- Green Technology

EL, as a successful model for student learning:

- Requires flexible student grouping, teacher teams and access to resources that support high quality teaching and learning
- Energizes students to be motivated and engaged through high-level tasks and active roles in the classroom
- Uses case studies and projects to connect students to real-world audiences and experiences that foster a deeper understanding of content as well as empathy toward others
- Sets clear expectations and ensures respect, responsibility, teamwork, contribution and commitment to high quality work
- Builds a school culture where students feel safe, respected and inspired to be their best selves
- Trusts students with important academic challenges and responsibilities and prepares them to be leaders
- Develops the critical thinking and problem solving skills needed to be life-long learners

School Partners
During the design and planning phase for the development of EL units, community organizations, businesses and higher education institutions will collaborate as partners to support student engagement in community building, project-based community service and other project-based expeditions. Partners with MSELA will include:

- Mi Casa Community Center
- University of St. Joseph
- Project Oceanology
- Virginias House of Hope Music Conservatory
- Connecticut Whalers
- Junior Achievement
- Hartford Childhood Alliance
- Hands on Hartford
- Universalist Congregational Church of West Hartford
- Hispanic Health Council
- PANA Program
- ING
- Connecticut Children’s Medical Center
**Research Basis**

EL meets the eleven criteria of the federal Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program for comprehensive school reform. In “Comprehensive School Reform and Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis”, researchers from the University of Wisconsin, John Hopkins University, and the University of North Carolina looked at twenty-nine Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) models including EL. The study looked at the research base, design characteristics and student achievement results for each of the models. The report’s conclusions were, among others, that “the overall effects of CSR are statistically significant and appear to be greater than the effects of other interventions that have been designed to serve similar purposes and student and school populations”. The report characterized EL’s research base as showing “highly promising evidence of effectiveness”. Only three of the twenty-nine other CSR models received higher ratings.

In a recent study by the UMASS Donahue Institute (September 2010) of EL schools in Rochester, NY, researchers compared the academic achievement performance of EL elementary and middle school students in Rochester, NY to a matched comparison of students in English Language Arts and Math and for both years of middle school English Language Arts. Researchers found that EL school students had substantial and statistically significant achievement advantages.

A national study conducted by Mountain Measurement, Inc. in August 2010 highlights the relationship between EL participation and academic growth. In a study of more than 11,000 students in 8 states, students attending schools with strong fidelity to the model experienced significantly greater test score gains than non-EL students on math, reading, and language usage tests. Impact on student achievement is even greater for subgroups that have a history of low performance: minority students, economically disadvantaged and students requiring special education services.

A study conducted by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) determined that EL schools influence school climate and student motivation. According to the report, the EL model increased teachers’ beliefs in their ability to teach students of different ability levels, conduct assessments, and use parents and outside experts in the classroom, as well as confidence in themselves as teachers and learners. Additionally, the AED found that rates of retention, suspensions and other incidences of disciplinary problems to be “unusually low” in EL schools.

Manzanita SEED Elementary School in Oakland, CA received the 2010 National Title 1 Distinguished School Award for a 106 point increase on the California Academic Performance Index going from 736 points to 842 points and rising above the statewide goal of 800.

**Model Site**

World of Inquiry School in Rochester, NY (K-8)

World of Inquiry School students, most of whom qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, are the top-performing elementary school students in the Rochester City School District, outperforming their peers in some of New York State’s wealthiest districts. Since partnering with EL in 2002, this once struggling school has made steady progress to the top of the district and is now expanding to become a K-12 school. The faculty is committed to the EL model, and there is an intense focus on literacy and the use of data. This school has become an exemplar within the EL network.

World of Inquiry is the most sought after elementary school in the Rochester City School District. Awards include

- USDE National Blue Ribbon School Award (2010)
- New York State High Performing/Gap Closing School Award (2006-2007)
- Fordham University National School Change Award (2007)

**School Mission and Vision**
**Mission**
The Maria Sanchez ELA school mission from its opening in 1992 has been to create a positive community of lifelong learners: staff, students and parents coming together to support teaching, personal and creative work while studying in two languages. We welcome the Expeditionary Learning Academy mission as we continue to foster each child’s unique potential and spirit of adventure. This community nurtures the personal, social and academic achievement of each student through rigorous interdisciplinary learning experiences that will develop students to be leaders in the 21st century.

**Vision**
“We are crew, not passengers.” The accountability for educational and character development will be a collaborative endeavor including students, staff, families and community as active participants. As an Expeditionary Learning school, we will seek to foster robust student learning by providing rigorous, engaging, in-depth learning experiences that spark curiosity, support innovation and cultivate an understanding that we must move from “what we know” to “how we come to know”. This will result in high academic achievement, a sense of social responsibility and a love of learning. We strive to nurture the perseverance, imagination, self-discipline and leadership qualities of our students.

**Student Body**

**Grade Configuration and School Size**
The Maria Sanchez ELA will include 500 students in grades PreK-5.

Classrooms:
- 2 Pre K
- 4 K (one bilingual)
- 4 1st (one bilingual)
- 4 2nd (one bilingual)
- 4 3rd (one bilingual)
- 4 4th (one bilingual)
- 3 5th with support from Bilingual Resource Teacher

**Governance Structure**

**School Governance Council**
A School Governance Council has already been established at Maria Sanchez Colon school, according to State policy. Membership on this council includes community agency representatives, parents and teachers. Ideally an EL industry partner and higher education partner will be recruited. The Council’s primary role, as per State guidelines, will be to provide guidance in the accomplishment of the school’s stated vision, monitoring of the School Accountability Plan and annual approval of the school budget.

**School Leadership**
A school level leadership team will work with the members of the School Governance Council. The leadership team, led by the principal of the school, will assure that staff is trained in the EL model. This will include building on the strengths and talents of the staff and professional development for creating and sustaining expertise in the EL model. The leadership team will ensure shared leadership of the school and build a collective sense of accountability. In addition to the principal, the EL leadership team may include:
- Unified Arts representatives
- An EL Coordinator responsible for coordinating professional development and teacher support, assisting teachers in curriculum mapping and the development of the EL units in conjunction with the Literacy Coach.
- The Literacy Coach
- Support Staff
- Grade Level representation

**Parent Leadership Development**
As valued partners in education parents will be active participants in EL education. They will be expected to attend and participate in PTO meetings and other activities and serve as PTO leaders and/or members. In addition, all parents will have opportunities to participate in all expeditionary learning events, student led presentations of individual portfolios, EL Exhibits/Celebrations of Learning, fundraising opportunities, and various extended day options. Parents will also attend workshops and other opportunities to become familiar with the EL model. Our Spanish speaking parents will receive translation services and materials in both languages.
**Student Leadership**

Students will participate in leadership roles to include:

- **“Pioneers”** - Teacher recommended positions in which “Pioneers” work closely with the EL Coordinator to plan and prepare for culminating “showcases”. The Coordinator will work with each grade level “Pioneer” to prepare for a presentation night or for a PTO meeting to introduce the grade level EL units in order to create interest and excitement within the school community about the upcoming and ongoing studies.
- **“Ambassadors”** - 5th grade students who are elected by the student body. “Ambassadors” will represent the student body on the School Governance Council as well as act as school representatives during school and district activities.

**Curriculum and Instruction**

**Pedagogical Approach and Classroom Design**

Instructional practices emphasize student inquiry, critical thinking and craftsmanship. Students engage in original research and create high-quality academic products to share with outside audiences. Learning expeditions - deep interdisciplinary investigations of rich academic topics - bring together teachers from different disciplines to enrich the work of individual teachers in elementary classrooms. Students spend most of the day working on purposeful, rigorous learning expeditions that involve intellectual, service and kinesthetic dimensions within integrated disciplines.

It will be required that expeditions be designed to help students meet state standards and must fit within state and district curriculum frameworks. Teachers will formulate guiding questions for expeditions that stimulate student inquiry and debate. Each learning expedition will include challenging projects, literature that relates to the theme or topic, fieldwork, adventure and service. Learning expeditions will culminate in exhibits, performances, publications and other demanding products for audiences beyond the classroom.

Learning is social. Learning expeditions lend themselves to students working and learning collaboratively. Teachers will use active pedagogy to help students become active and collaborative learners: to make connections, to find patterns, to see events from different perspectives, to experiment, to go beyond the information given, and to develop empathy and compassion for events, people, and subjects. Teachers model this pedagogy, confer with students, facilitate productive group work, and stimulate students to think. Among the practices used in EL schools are literature circles, cooperative learning groups, close observation strategies as well as student and teacher developed rubrics for projects.

The purpose of EL is to deepen the engagement of students by making learning come alive. In the EL classroom students are actively engaged in inquiry work, where they are reading, talking, questioning, analyzing and creating projects. This can be done in large groups, small groups and independently toward the goal of demonstrating their learning based on self-selected compelling questions and topics. The pedagogy provides a structure through which students can demonstrate mastery of a subject by creating and presenting a research-based project that is driven by interest in a topic related to the expedition and allows them to work within the same parameters as real researchers.

Characteristics of the effective EL classroom include:

- Investigation of important ideas and questions
- Intensive cross-curricular research
- An inquiry process
- Differentiation according to student needs and interests
- Student independent production and presentation rather than teacher delivery of information
- Use of creative thinking, critical thinking and information skills to investigate, draw conclusions about and create content
- Real world application
- Infusion of technology

In summary, EL shifts teaching and learning from a set of known facts to a process modeled on how the experts in the field think and work.

**Curriculum Design**

Learning expeditions are the core of the curriculum design. Expeditions are a form of curriculum design (PreK-12) in which students and teachers pursue long term intellectual investigations built around compelling topics and culminate in significant projects and performances. These investigations take students into the world and bring the world into the classroom. Often they provide students with opportunities to serve the wider community. Learning expeditions are marked by equal attention to goals of academic content and performance, character development and community. Opportunities for ongoing assessment are woven through the expeditions, pushing students to higher levels of achievement.

Entry points in planning expeditions include:
EL requires the careful planning of projects prior to implementation to clarify student learning goals, final products, timeline and instructional activities. An effective planning process:

- Establishes content and skill goals
- Formats for final projects or products
- Plans the scope of the learning expedition
- Designs the learning expedition and timeline
- Assesses the design of the learning expeditions

An EL design must meet these criteria:

- Meets State and District Standards
- Engages Students
- Encourages Higher-Level Thinking
- Differentiates Instruction
- Allows All Students to Succeed
- Integrates Resources and Technology
- Integrates Teaching and Reinforcement of Literacy, Inquiry, Technology and Basic Skills
- Uses Clear, Precise Assessments and Rubrics

An example of an EL unit for Grade 1 is found in the attached Appendix: Farms and Food.

**Core Literacy Program**

The core literacy program will be a balanced literacy approach using the workshop model. In preparation for middle school, students will use challenging and authentic text materials. A detailed curriculum, aligned with standards and intended outcomes, and integrated with learning expedition projects will provide the literacy scope and sequence. Students will read both fiction and non-fiction with an emphasis on non-fiction text during the development of the expeditionary project.

Literacy is a major focus across the curriculum in EL schools. Comprehension strategies are taught to convey the idea that the point of reading is to make meaning out of what is read. EL teachers teach reading within learning expeditions so that meaning, context and motivation drive the learning of critical literacy skills; in turn, the explicit teaching of reading skills helps students master expedition content and make thinking transparent.

**Core Math Program**

The core math program will emphasize hands-on and inquiry based learning. It will be aligned with the Connecticut Mathematics Curriculum Framework and the standards for the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics. The math curriculum will be research-based, standards driven and integrated into expeditionary learning project objectives. It will emphasize the building of mathematical concepts and skills as well as integrate technological learning sources.

**Core Science Program**

The core science program will include a strong literacy component as well as regular opportunities for discovery and inquiry through experimentation and projects aligned with learning expeditions. All students will receive instruction that is aligned with the learning goals and standards outlined in Connecticut’s Science Framework. Learning will be hands-on and project-based.

**Core Social Studies Program**

The social studies curriculum will align with all state and district frameworks. It will include a strong literacy component and will be taught within an inquiry and project-based framework aligned with learning expedition protocols.

**Arts Program**

The Arts program will include dance, music, theatre and visual arts through a partnership with Hartford Performs. Well structured lesson plans will ensure that instruction is aligned to the CT arts standards and will be delivered by arts educators and community partners.
Reinforcing the expeditionary principles of discovery and social activity, the arts program will embody the following components:

- Meaningful art, dance, music and/or theatre projects that are in line with expeditions supporting the understanding of content while teaching arts standards that are infused into interdisciplinary expeditions
- Instructional practices in art, dance, music and/or theatre will:
  1. promote character development
  2. utilize practices for community building including rituals and traditions
  3. facilitate risk-taking
  4. ignite a passion for learning
  5. promote physical and emotional safety
  6. require respect and courtesy
- Professionals (classroom teachers/arts educators/community arts providers) will work together to share expertise and support each other in improving practice

**Physical Education Program**

The Physical Education program at MSELA will continue to be aligned with all state and district standards and will support expeditions, assisting in student problem solving, overcoming perceived limits, producing a sense of exhilaration and accomplishment and involving interdisciplinary activities.

Supporting the expeditionary process, PE instruction will include units in lifetime sports, Project Adventure, and ropes course activities that enhance, sustain, and promote:

- Learning by doing
- Life skills
- Reflection and debriefing
- Accepting responsibility
- Importance of team work
- Understanding the roles within a successful team

**English Language Learner Support Approach and Bilingual Education Program at Maria Sanchez -ELA**

English Language Learners (ELLs) students will be provided with equal access to and full participation in school curriculum and activities. Maria Sanchez – ELA will continue offering a full Bilingual Program to new arrivals in grades K-5, delivering instruction in both languages as students become proficient in English and are mainstreamed into the classes mainstream program. Students will continue to receive support from the ESL teachers and the Bilingual Resource Teacher. The level of English used for instruction, both verbal and written is modified as needed to facilitate ELL students’ acquisition of English. Students will be guided to construct meaning by scaffolding the instruction starting at the instructional level of each student with individualized and small group support provided by identified support staff. The students will have the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of concepts and skills through different modalities such as:

- Hands on activities
- Group tasks or projects
- Performance-based assessments
- Literature circles

**Intervention Program (2+ years behind; 1 year behind; 5-minutes behind)**

MSELA will continue to utilize their established Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) model in order to meet the needs of all learners. Students will continue to be identified in need of additional support based on specific criteria as determined by student performance on various forms of assessment including: classroom based assessments, diagnostic assessments, and standardized test scores. Data on student progress will be regularly reviewed and analyzed by data teams and/or within the Academic Review/SAT/Student Success process.

As part of the Response to Intervention model, the Student Success Team (SST), a school-based team whose purpose is to provide additional Tier I and/or Tier II strategies and support for students who are experiencing difficulties that are preventing them from benefiting from general education, because they are either performing below or above expectations.

**Special Education**

(See Support Services)

**Time Support**

Learning expeditions allow for student-centered, differentiated and individualized learning to maximize student learning potential. Learning expeditions allow each student to work at his or her own pace where higher performing students serve as same-age role
models.

**Instructional Technology**
Technology will be infused into all learning expedition activities. It will support both learning and teaching. It will also function as a discrete discipline with specific technology goals established for each grade level. Technology will support the EL model in offering students access to current and developing information, tools for visualizing and modeling, data collection and analysis and for the communication of ideas. Technology will also be used in the multi-media culminating project/product presentations.

**Homework Expectations**
Homework will support and extend classroom learning and provide opportunities for independent research, reading and writing attendant to the expeditionary learning experience.

### Learning Outcomes and Assessment Design

#### Learning Outcomes
Learning outcomes clearly outline where you want your students to be at the close of the learning expedition and what you want your students:
- To know (content)
- To be able to do (performance)
- To be like (disposition)
- To evidence from in-depth inquiry
  - View of issues and problems from varied perspectives
  - Evaluation for bias (evidence of beliefs)
  - Prior knowledge connections
  - Connections to the real world
  - Investigation of relationships

#### Assessment Design
Opportunities for on-going assessment are woven throughout the expedition daily in the classroom and in the field, challenging students to higher levels of achievement. There is a clear focus on assessment and understanding which fosters a continuous process of reflection, critique and revision among students and teachers. A constant is: “How am I doing?”

An EL assessment design will include the following:
- Formative assessments based on work products that students complete as the project progresses
- A summative assessment that includes a culminating appraisal of students’ final project or product
- Process orientated and content orientated outcomes
- Multiple indicators for performance for different kinds of students (opportunities for success for all students)

**Culminating Project/Product Presentation (aligned with the required Senior Capstone in Secondary Schools)**
The culmination of an EL unit is a curriculum-related project, product or performance that gives students a chance to knit together what they have learned and to display their learning to an outside audience. Such culminating exhibitions call upon students to demonstrate the most important ideas, knowledge and performance.

**Performance Benchmarks**
Students will create a print and/or electronic portfolio to document their learning process. All drafts of work will be maintained in the portfolio and aligned with rubrics. Students will be required to present their portfolios to peers, parents, staff and other audiences in order to discuss and share learning goals and outcomes, overall progress in learning and raise efficacy in the areas of self-confidence and public speaking.

### Teacher Capacity

**Theme-Specific Certification Requirements**
All MSELA teachers will participate in training that:
- Establishes a solid base of understanding of the Expeditionary Learning Model
- Develops expertise in the development of learning expeditions and a project-based curriculum
- Extends learning beyond textbooks to the world around them

(June 2013)
Training and Professional Development Program
It is proposed that MSELA will partner with EL Schools, a well-established and comprehensive school reform and school development model for elementary, middle and high schools. Expeditionary Learning has been recognized as one of the country’s most effective Professional Development programs. Its core practices for sustained professional development and training include:

- Effective instructional and assessment practices used school wide
- Teaching reading and writing across the disciplines
- Formative assessment
- Teaching inquiry-based math, science and social studies
- Learning through the arts
- Building a respectful and orderly school structure
- Planning learning expeditions that are project-based and designed around guiding questions about compelling topics that incorporate fieldwork and local expertise to produce products of high quality student work

Teaming/Collaborative Planning Expectations
Teachers will collaborate with colleagues and community partners to ensure that support for the successful completion of projects extends throughout the school. Successful collaboration will include the planning for:

- Modeling the process of inquiry
- Scaffolding that offers a balance between continuous support and independence-flexible classroom structures for supportive guidance
- Conferring to guide students to think about their project plan, progress, ideas, etc.
- Access to necessary resources
- Integration of technology

Student Schedule

Length of School Day
MSELA’s schedule is an early school day, from 7:45 AM to 2:45PM. Schedules within the EL day schedule will provide longer and more flexible blocks of time for project-based learning, fieldwork, service and community-building activities.

Co-Curriculum Programming
MSELA will be committed to providing a meaningful co-curricular program of activities provided in an after-school program in partnership with community agencies.

Summer School/Extended Year
Summer school and extended year opportunities will be planned and will provide for orientation and support to students and their families for a successful experience in EL.

Partnerships

Role of Partners: Advisory/Curriculum/Embedded Activities
EL schools involve family members, business and community members, higher education and other organization members in providing expertise for learning expeditions. Each expedition is designed to connect student learning to real world experiences. It is the expectation that MSELA will continue to develop high-quality support from outside partners for the planning, implementing and evaluating of learning expeditions. These partners will support and provide access to resources that support high quality teaching and learning, opportunities for fieldwork, service activities, and community-building activities.

Higher Education Partners
Higher education partners (to be identified) will provide support for:

- Finding opportunities to develop project-based units
- Offering opportunities to keep heightened awareness among students regarding college opportunities and experiences
- The planning of learning expeditions

Community Partners
Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA), a partnership between Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, Hartford Hospital, Trinity College, Boys and Girls Club, Hartford Public Library, Charter Oak Cultural Center and the Hispanic Health Council work cooperatively with the community to develop leadership and improve the economic, physical and social characteristics of Hartford neighborhoods. These resources will partner with MSELA to support the development of the Expeditionary Learning model. These partners will:
- Support the expansion of community and business partners
- Collaborate in the planning and development of EL units

Other partners might include:
- Mi Casa Community Center
- University of St. Joseph
- Project Oceanology
- Virginias House of Hope
- Connecticut Whalers
- Junior Achievement
- Hartford Childhood Alliance
- Hands on Hartford
- Universalist Congregational Church of West Hartford
- Hispanic Health Council
- PANA Program
- ING
- Connecticut Children’s Medical Center

Middle School/College Readiness

Plan of Study and Transition Planning
In order to establish a bridge between elementary and middle school, MSELA will:
- Create university and college partnerships for mentoring, fostering a college-going culture and preparing students to be able to succeed in middle school and beyond
- Work collaboratively to implement an EL curriculum that is aligned with the expected Grade 6-8 competencies
- Work collaboratively with McDonough Expeditionary Learning School (MELS) to plan and execute culminating presentations

Middle School/College Visits and College Advising
Prior to completion of Grade 5, each student will complete a site visit to MELS and college campuses.

Career Exploration
The EL model allows students to become familiar with multiple career-related experiences and areas of interest. Through the completion of learning expedition projects and products, students will experience the resources of local businesses, museums, theaters, newspapers, hospitals, government agencies, community organizations, colleges and universities.

School Culture & Climate

School Compact
The community of MSELA will review the existing compact between school staff, students, and parents that defines each individual’s responsibility toward developing the personal, social and academic achievement of each student.

One of the foundational mottos for EL is “We are crew, not passengers.” In adhering to this motto, we will strive to instill a sense of responsibility, participation and cooperation among individuals, the student body, the school community and the greater Hartford community. This motto represents our commitment to inclusion and action in the service to self and others.

The new revised compact will outline each participant’s responsibility to EL’s ten design principles.

School Uniforms
The required school uniform consists of a collared shirt with the MSELA logo and dark blue pants, and/ or knee-length skirt/jumper for girls. During the winter months, a dark blue cardigan or sweater vest may be worn over the collared shirt. Once a student enters the building, all jackets, hats, hoodies, sweatshirts or other non-uniform compliant clothing must be removed. The school colors are blue pants/skirts and yellow shirts/blouses.
Advisories/Crews
Students and school staff will be organized into “crews” which provide an opportunity for checking in with students about classroom responsibilities and expectations. The role of the adult in a “crew” is to encourage, motivate and challenge students towards the achievement of their personal, academic and social development.

“Crews” are instrumental in building the culture of the school, its climate and shared values. The culture of an EL school is characterized by:

- A atmosphere of physical and emotional safety
- A strong sense of adventure
- An ethic of service and responsibility
- A commitment to high quality work
- A strong adult/student relationship
- A rigorous expectation for behavior and achievement
- A high expectation for moral character development

The culture of an EL school is intentional; it promotes best efforts, high expectations, respect for diversity and teamwork.

Parental Role

In Academics
Parents are expected to:
- Attend orientation on the EL Model
- Monitor assignment completion
- Attend workshops, meetings and conferences to become informed about their child’s academic achievement
- Track student progress through PowerSchool, either at home or at school
- Participate on leadership councils and other decision-making teams
- Participate in the creation of and commitment to the school compact

In School Culture/Climate
Parents are expected to:
- Comply with expected roles and responsibilities as outlined in the School Compact
- Participate in learning expeditions
- Participate on school teams to develop a strong culture among the adults that is a model for students
- Participate in classroom activities

Support Services

Special Education Program
A comprehensive support services structure will be developed by the school administrator, school staff and appropriate BOE administration.

A variety of services may be provided as mandated and as appropriate to each student’s academic success. These may include:
- Co-teaching or push-in inclusion model
- Lesson differentiation
- Support strategies to keep students meaningfully engaged in learning expeditions
- Testing accommodations
- Development and implementation of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and behavior plans

Systematized collaboration among special education and general education teachers will provide:
- Data analysis and Progress Monitoring
- Lesson modifications
- Planning and setting of learning objectives for learning expeditions

Academics
Academic support services may include, but will not be limited to:
- A Student Success Team process utilizing an SRBI (Scientifically Research-based Intervention ) approach
- Reading intervention programs with part time certified tutors
- ELL/ESL/Bilingual services
• Tutoring (during the school day) with part time tutors, after school tutors and volunteers from nearby colleges, community organizations and private companies.
• Grade level and data team meetings
• Response to Intervention (Tier I, II, III)

**Behavior**
A school wide behavior plan will be developed which will include:
• Social-emotional, behavioral support programs and classroom management programs (i.e., Responsive Classroom, Nurtured Heart, Positive Behavior Intervention Support).
• Input from parental community
• Strong emphasis on character development
• In House Suspension Para to support discipline referrals.
• Staff training in Nurtured Heart discipline and school climate program.

**Family Support**
The Family Support Service Provider, in partnership with teachers and staff, will serve as the point person to facilitate efforts to provide families with needed services. Services may include:
• A Student Success Team process to assist families with a variety of issues
• Establishing, promoting and maintaining a Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)
• Parent workshops to familiarize parents and the community with the Expeditionary Learning Model
• Workshops to inform and familiarize parents with PowerSchool and encourage access to information online via PowerSchool Parent Portal Access

**Support Staff**
In order to facilitate efforts to provide students and families with needed services within the educational setting and the community, it is proposed that the support staff at the school include:
• School Social Worker
• School Clinician
• Family Resource (FRA)
• ESL Staff
• Part Time certified tutors
• Special Education Staff (four teachers, Speech & Language teacher)
• Full service clinic, full time RN, with dental, visual and mental/social services.
• Full time security officer
• Principal and Dean of Students

**Application Process**

**School Zone**
This school is located in Transportation Zone 3. Students may apply through the Hartford Public Schools choice process. Parent information can be found in English and Spanish at [http://www.hartfordschools.org/about-your-choice/](http://www.hartfordschools.org/about-your-choice/).