



Austin Independent School District – South Magnet Planning Committee

Potential New South Magnet Program Proposal	
Theme	Civics and Law Magnet
Evidence of District Need	<p>At the 2016 SXSW Interactive Conference, President Barack Obama presented the following challenge in Austin, which can and should be seen not only as a challenge for entrepreneurs, but existing agencies and institutions to reflect and foster change.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“How can we start coming up with new platforms, new ideas, new approaches across disciplines and across skill sets to solve some of the big problems that we’re facing today. Because, I’ve said this before, ... the most important office in a democracy is the office of the citizen. And right now, with all the talent that’s out there, our government is not working and our politics isn’t working as well as it should -- the only way we’re going to solve that is make sure that we’re getting citizens involved in ways that we haven’t up until now.”¹</i></p> <p>Civic education and participation naturally lend to new ideas, problem solving, entrepreneurship, and leadership. The mission of a Civics and Law Magnet is to create a visionary school that will meet this challenge head-on.</p> <p>This magnet program could serve as a program continuity of the Humanities and Law Magnet for International Studies program at Fulmore Middle School.</p>
Description	<p>The Civics and Law Magnet is an interdisciplinary educational and community development program designed to support students on the path to higher education in civic service, law, and/or social studies. The program will incorporate civics and law/justice theme into all aspects of the curriculum and instruction and extend into out-of-classroom experiences. Students’ learning will include the examination and study of concepts like civic action, leadership, the relationship between law and social justice movements, and the roles students can play as forces for social change. A strong skill development will occur in literacy with a particular focus on writing, speaking and researching.</p> <p>This program will create a space for emerging and high-potential young leaders to engage with their community, brainstorm ideas, and participate in the problem solving of community challenges. . The school’s mission would not only seek to increase student engagement in the community, but also encourage organizations, businesses, and local and state agencies to engage in the creation and development of programming and work with some of the city's brightest youth. Through partnerships,</p>

¹ Full Transcript of President Obama’s SXSWi Keynote Speech: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/03/14/remarks-president-south-southwest-interactive>



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students will establish critical relationships and mentors to help define their individual paths to success. Additionally, students will have internship and extracurricular opportunities available through established district partnerships with local and state agencies, businesses and non-profits, and universities/institutions for higher education in Austin

A major goal of the program would include offering diverse advanced academic options to expand the reach and impact of existing Austin ISD advanced academic programming. This includes establishing a Spanish dual language program, facilitating dual and articulated college credit, and offering Career and Technical certification opportunities.

Students will supplement college preparatory curriculum and Accelerated Placement (AP) offerings with additional project-based and experiential learning opportunities. These experiences will expose students to different tracks as they build their core education. Students will ultimately select one track to explore through a culminating civic participation capstone project. Capstone projects are designed to encourage students to think critically, solve challenging problems, and develop skills such as communication, media literacy, and goal setting - skills that will help prepare them for college, modern careers, and adult life. In most cases, the projects are also interdisciplinary, as it requires students to apply skills or investigate issues across different subject areas. Capstone projects also tend to encourage student to connect their projects to community challenges and to integrate out-of-school learning experiences, including activities such as interviews, observations, or internships.² The District can elect to create a unique AISD-specific capstone program or utilize the accredited International Baccalaureate program.

Students will be encouraged to serve as mentors to others in the AISD community and participate in extracurricular activities such as Mock Trial and Mock UN.

Key Themes:

- Civil Discourse, Action, Communication and Debate
- Civic Participation
- Law and Justice
- Legislative Process
- Philanthropy and Volunteering
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Urban/City Planning and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

² <http://edglossary.org/capstone-project/>



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Enrollment Criteria	<p>Open to all students, targeting Title 1 and under-served communities in south Austin, and emerging and high-potential leaders from the community at-large.</p> <p><u>Application and Enrollment Priorities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment to equity and equal opportunity during the application and enrollment process. ● Establish an application/admission process that is fair and equitable. ● Allocate a certain percentage of admission to Title 1 students. ● Facilitate an interview process. ● In addition to work samples, allow for the submission of civic engagement activities, volunteering hours, and personal recommendations from non-profit organizations and community leaders. ● Considerations to allow Fulmore Humanities and Law students to continue their high school course work at the Civics and Legal Magnet Program.
Facility Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classroom Renovations; ● Conference Room; ● Mock Courtroom; and ● Multipurpose Room.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum/Program – Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, Dual Language, International Baccalaureate, Mock Trial, Mock UN; ● Facility Improvements (see above); ● Professional Development and Training – Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, International Baccalaureate; ● Software – Geographic Information Systems (GIS); ● Technology – 1:1 Student to Device Ratio; ● Technology – GIS equipment; and ● Transportation.
Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Middletown High School, Middletown, RI Capstone Program (the state of Rhode Island has a Capstone as a high school graduation requirement) - http://www.ri.net/middletown/mhs/graduation/capstone_manual.pdf ● Models to Inform Capstone Program Development - http://iisit.org/Vol10/IISITv10p081-093Buzetto0270.pdf ● The Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice - http://www.sljhs.org/ ● University of Chicago Civic Leadership Academy - http://civicengagement.uchicago.edu/education/civic-leadership-academy/civic-leadership-academy-curriculum/