

Family of Schools

LMU|LA
Loyola Marymount
University

LMU FoS News

On July 8, the LAUSD Board of Education voted 6-1 in favor of an agreement with LMU on the Family of Schools partnership. We are excited to move forward in this partnership. See the letter to the right for more information about next steps.

News Update

Mr. Stephen Rochelle has stepped into a new position, Director of Learning and Leadership, with the iDivision in which he will be responsible for the schools in the LMU FoS as they use this year to plan and transition to a local decision-making model.

Please join us in congratulating Mr. Rochelle on this appointment. We are lucky to have his energy and leadership from the iDesign Schools side of things for this exciting time.

Governance Planning

Samantha Brown has joined the LMU FoS team this summer as an Education Pioneers Fellow. The Education Pioneers Fellowship Program connects high-achieving graduate students in business, education, law

Update from Dr. Shane Martin, Dean Loyola Marymount University School of Education

July 28, 2008

I am writing to update you on the current status of the Loyola Marymount University (LMU) Family of Schools. It has been a privilege to work in partnership with the incredibly committed Family of Schools stakeholders. After more than a year full of dialogue and movement forward, I invite everyone to reflect on the progress we have made together while forging a pathway forward.

When we first began this journey together, we did so with a collective commitment to the idea that those closest to the students should be tasked with the responsibility for making decisions about budget, staffing, operations and instruction. By recognizing that each community has unique needs, this model of local decision-making frees schools from many of the mandates and decrees of the district, while still promoting the needs of all students. The votes for local decision making and accountability were clarion calls to engage and support teachers, school staff, parents, community members and students in self-governance.

In light of this, the LMU Family of Schools is focusing its efforts this summer and in the year ahead on facilitating and guiding our partner schools as they make the transition to local decision-making and accountability.

We are thrilled to report that the LAUSD voted on an agreement to accept LMU as a Network Partner in the iDesign Schools Division (formerly iDivision) with the five local public schools that voted into iDesign this past year. Those five schools are: Westchester High School, Orville Wright Middle School (both community and magnet schools), Cowan, Kentwood and Westport Heights Elementary schools.

This agreement is a one-year initial term with LMU to begin working in partnership with school communities on reform efforts. The agreement will focus on planning and transition in the first phase of a multi-phased initiative, emphasizing three specific areas – instruction, professional development and external partnerships. During this year, LMU will work with teachers, parents, community members and other stakeholders to transition into local decision-making models and develop the human capital necessary for further phases of the work.

Another exciting development within the LMU Family of Schools is the establishment of a new role within the iDesign Division for a Director of Learning and Leadership. This role, filled by Stephen Rochelle (former principal of Orville

and public policy with opportunities to work with partner organizations in the field of education reform. You can read more about Education Pioneers at: www.educationpioneers.org.

Samantha is a graduate student in public policy at UCLA School of Public Affairs, with a concentration in education policy. Prior to graduate school, Samantha helped start a high school for students with disabilities in New York City, where she taught for two years. She received a B.A. in Politics and Spanish from Pomona College.

This summer, Samantha is working with LMU FoS Transition Teams in the area of governance. She is researching best practices in school governance, as well as the legal, contractual and organizational considerations for implementation within LMU FoS schools. The goal is to assist Transition Teams develop governance proposals as schools transition towards local school-based decision making. Accordingly, she will be connecting with many members of Transition Teams over the next few weeks in order to gather information, provide support and coordinate efforts across schools.

iDivision Changes

The new name for the iDivision is the iDesign Schools Division. [Click here for more information about the iDesign Schools.](#)

The iDesign Schools Division, formerly led by Kathi Littmann, is now being led by Omar Del

Wright Middle School), will serve as a facilitator and partner with LMU and the partner schools as they make the transition to local governance. Schools in the partnership will no longer report to the Local District, but will be guided by Stephen as they move into this new model of self-governance. We are thrilled to be working with Stephen in this capacity.

iDesign Division will also work with us to meet with respective stakeholders at Loyola Village Elementary School and Paseo Del Rey Elementary School during this coming school year to talk about options for joining the iDesign Schools Division.

LMU has worked with Westchester High School, Orville Wright Middle School, and Cowan, Kentwood, and Westport Heights Elementary schools to establish stakeholder research teams (Autonomy Exploratory Committees) and to identify members of Transition Teams (who serve to support the school in key action steps and decisions in the interim prior to an agreed-upon governance structure). These Transition Teams, with support from LMU and the iDesign Division, have begun to change practices around critical areas like hiring for school staff and the establishment of accountability measures (such as school performance assessments, etc).

In addition to the work already begun at each school, there are several key next steps ahead for each partner school.

Immediate Needs at Partner Schools

Staffing Needs: Some partner schools have multiple vacancies in teaching positions, administrators and in other school staff roles. These schools are redesigning processes for how hiring decisions are being made.

Critical Interim Priorities: Transition Teams will also focus on pressing needs at the partner schools during the summer. This includes enhanced professional development, schedule changes and expanded intervention or enrichment opportunities for students in the coming year.

Budget Priorities: Transition Teams also will be working with the iDesign Division to understand and disseminate information about each schools budget and will work with LMU and the iDesign Division as the schools transition to a per-pupil-funding model. This will involve training and outreach for a broad group of stakeholders.

Governance:

Governance Structure Development: Each Transition Team will begin to identify options for effective governance structures during the summer.

Governance Establishment: This fall, this research on effective governance options will be discussed with stakeholders throughout the school community for input and discussion. Once a model is approved, these governance bodies will be constituted.

Leadership/Governance Training: When the governance structure is determined, LMU will train representatives from the governance teams in an intensive leadership certificate program that will equip each team with skills in school vision-setting, data-based decision making and strategic planning.

Professional Development:

Cueto. [For more information about Omar, click here.](#)

School Site Instructional Plans and Priorities: LMU will work with each partner school to identify critical instructional priorities and to identify resources from the university, the district and beyond to address these needs.

LMU Programming: In addition to this instructional support, the enclosed list of programs details additional professional development resources that LMU will be developing specifically for partner schools.

External Partnerships:

Resource Development: LMU will continue to seek external resources and funding to address the needs of the Family of Schools.

We are already engaged in a very productive summer as our works continues and the community, teachers, staff and parents begin their important work. Together, we are a great team that will make a difference.

Sincerely,

Shane P. Martin
Dean, School of Education
Loyola Marymount University

Transitioning to Local Decision Making

All five LMU/iDivision partner schools have formed Transition Teams. Because each school has different needs and different stakeholders, the teams look accordingly unique. Each team is required however to include a broad base of parents, teachers, community members and other stakeholders.

The Transition Teams already have had some great discussions about the challenges of redesigning a school and critical tasks that need to be completed before the end of the year. If you would like to attend a Transition Team meeting, please contact your school principal or for more information, contact Amy Orringer at amy.orringer@lausd.net

Role of the Transition Teams

The role of the Transition Team is two-fold. They exist both to help the principal and school staff complete necessary tasks (like hiring for staff positions) and to plan for the coming year. Again, each school has its own unique issues to look at and resolve, but broadly, the Transition Teams have created subcommittees to explore governance, human resources, budget, curriculum and instruction, safety and operations, parent and community engagement, and overall school vision. These topics are not limited – school teams are completely free to add subcommittee topics. Each Transition Team will strive to make their meetings and processes as open as possible to allow for as much community input as possible.

Transitioning to Local Decision Making

One key function of the Transition Teams involves researching and proposing a model (or multiple options) for governance structures at their school. This can include ways to support existing structures to prepare them for additional governance responsibilities. LMU is helping to lead this effort by providing research assistance and expert advice on possible ways to structure new models or to bolster existing governance models.

See the article on the left for more information about Samantha Brown, who is already working with Transition Teams in this work.

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