



ELOP (Expanded Learning Opportunities Program) Plan

Charter Management Organization Name: Environmental Charter Schools (ECS)

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School sites operating the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P):

1. Environmental Charter Middle - Gardena
2. Environmental Charter Middle - Inglewood

Program Plan Overview

The Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) provides funding for afterschool and summer school enrichment programs for transitional kindergarten through sixth grade. “Expanded learning” means before-school, after-school, summer, or intersession learning programs that focus on developing the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs and interests of pupils through hands-on, engaging learning experiences. It is the intent of the Legislature that expanded learning programs are pupil-centered, results-driven, include community partners, and complement, but do not replicate, learning activities in the regular school day and school year.

For the school sites listed, this program plan describes program activities that support the whole child, and students’ Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and development.

1—Safe and Supportive Environment

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to experience a safe and a supportive environment. Include if the program will be offered on the school site or off campus. If not on site, describe where in the community it will be and how students will be supported to get there.

The mission of Environmental Charter Schools is to reimagine public education in low income communities of color to prepare conscious, critical thinkers who are equipped to graduate from college and create a more equitable and sustainable world. After returning from distance learning, navigating the impacts of the pandemic and responding to local and national attention around school safety, it is our priority to ensure a safe and supportive school environment for all students.

As we pivoted and reallocated time and resources to support our families, it became evident that what bridges our school community and builds our strong school culture is the efficacy of our holistic approach to learning and wellness for all students. In marshaling resources to support and triage to a spectrum of support, ECS understood with clarity our role as not only an educational institution, but a community hub in which our families can access information and referrals to community services.



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ECS schools provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports the developmental, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students. ECS ensures staff and students have safe access to designated areas on campus, such as classrooms and multi-purpose rooms. Schools work closely with and maintain regular communication with the Charter Management Organization (Home Office) and local law enforcement to ensure facilities are safe and safety/emergency protocols are followed. Emergency drills are coordinated throughout the school year on a regular basis. All staff are trained in safety, mandated reporting, and campus security. All after school programs are located on the designated after school site.

ELOP programming will be offered on both the school site and off-campus. In the 2021-2022 school year, we recruited a full-time Social Worker for each school site to provide additional support to our students and families. Our school Social workers serve as vital links between home, school, and community. They provide direct and indirect services to students, families, and school staff, teachers and administrators to promote and support students' academic and social successes and guidance on trauma-informed care and support for all students..

For off-campus programming, we will partner with Outward Bound Adventures, an outdoor education provider offering youth meaningful experiences in nature alongside qualified mentors, as well as Camp Bob Waldorf, an outdoor experience provider whose activities and experiences are grounded in four important values – community, Inclusion, Identity, and respect. Camp Bob Waldorf is nestled on 112 acres in the Verdugo Hills of Glendale, just 15 miles from Downtown Los Angeles. It is accredited by the American Camping Association (which verifies their compliance with over 300 nationally recognized standards for operation). ECS will send approximately 15-20% of the students at each campus to Camp Bob Waldorf for 10 days of overnight sleepaway camp.

2—Active and Engaged Learning

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to experience active and engaged learning that either supports or supplements, but does not duplicate, the instructional day.

All ELOP programs are data-driven and specifically developed using surveys and needs assessments that include information from student, parent and teacher input. The after school program delivers four program components every day at each program location. The four components are generally scheduled as listed below.

- I. Homework Support & Academic Enrichment
 - o Program leaders actively assist youth with homework and provide additional support in core academic areas
 - o After-School Site Coordinators work with school site leaders to support students through smaller group study and individualized support, as needed.
 - o After-School club coordinators will consult with Teachers and instructional teams to ensure that each study group has the necessary enrichment materials to focus on areas of need
- II. Fitness
 - o Youth participate in after-school opportunities for movement activity, including team sports and physical activity.



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- o The physical fitness programming is supportive and inclusive so all children and youth have a positive fitness experience.
 - o All young people are engaged in moderate to vigorous activities during this time, with minimal time spent standing around or waiting to participate.
 - o The Site Coordinator may structure the fitness activity period to the specific needs of their program. All children, however, participate unless there is documentation of a medical condition prohibiting physical activity.
- III. Snack or Supper
- o After-School providers work with ECS Food Services partners to provide daily, nutritious snacks/supper. This ensures that the snack/supper meets all of the nutritional requirements set out in federal and state regulations.
 - o The Site Coordinator is responsible for accurate record keeping and documenting procedures, per the Food Services partner and state requirements.
- IV. Enrichment
- o All students participate in a daily enrichment activity
 - o Enrichment activities change throughout the year and do not remain static to keep young people's interest.
 - o ECS has developed an extensive activity library that Club Leaders can access to assist them in the design of their six-week "cycle plans".
 - o Enrichment activities are determined with input from youth, parents, school and/or community.

Environmental Charter Schools believe that learning is active. In our after-school programs, learning and memory recollection of new knowledge is made stronger through different experiences. Those can include hearing, touching, seeing and doing.

Program activities are hands-on and project-based, and our program design and activities reflect active, meaningful and engaging learning methods that promote collaboration and expand student horizons through main learning pathways: Arts & Media, Dual Language & Culture Enrichment, Egalitarian Sports, Health & Wellness, STEM, and Youth Leadership.

3—Skill Building

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to experience skill Building.

.At each school site, ECS devotes significant effort to identifying the most engaging and beneficial enrichment activities with input from students, parents, teachers and collaborative partners. Enrichment activities are developmentally appropriate and motivate youth as active learners. Enrichment activities engage participants in activities that build skills aligned with English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and STEM standards. Summer school programming will focus on supporting students' social emotional needs, while striving to mitigate learning loss as a result of the pandemic and distance learning.

Ongoing collaboration and alignment with provider programs are regularly assessed through after-school surveys. Meetings occur on a regular basis through the year to ensure alignment of academic enrichments and educational enrichment activities to relevant standards in English/



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language arts, math, science and social science. In addition, program staff ensures support of student completion of homework.

After-School providers work with school personnel and leadership, such as the teachers, academic coaches and Title 1 staff to ensure that the content contained within all enrichment clubs does indeed align with the school's goals as indicated in the single plan for student achievement.

Outdoor education and field-trips provide challenging outdoor rope courses, archery, swimming, and many team-building activities that help develop individual sense of self and collective teamwork amongst our students. For incoming 6th graders, they are given opportunities to push their own limits and create a new experience for themselves.

4—Youth Voice and Leadership

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to engage in youth voice and leadership.

At ECS, students are empowered to be the core decision makers and leaders of enrichment programs; clubs are created by the students for the students. ECS works with after-school providers to ensure that programs focus on guiding and empowering young leaders with a belief that youth should shape the world they will inherit. Youth are given multiple opportunities to choose from a wide-range of program offerings. Middle school-aged youth are given the opportunity to provide input and feedback that drives the program development and improvement, including program schedule, program offerings, rules, agreements, field trips and special events.

Every summer, just a few weeks before school begins, ECS hosts Summer Bridge sessions to help incoming 6th grade students prepare for success at ECS middle schools. Teachers and high school students, serving as mentors, host a week-long orientation experience for incoming 6th graders to support their transition to middle school. New 6th grade students at ECMS-Gardena and ECMS-Inglewood enjoy a week of learning the ins and outs of life at ECMS.

Each year, more than 100 new students are greeted by their Environmental Charter High School mentors who led them in special ECMS classes such as Green Ambassadors, Games and Movement, English and Transition to Middle School. Students became acquainted with their peers, teachers and the ECMS community culture. Students wrap up their week with a beach clean-up hosted by Heal the Bay. Parents, teachers and mentors join them for a family-style potluck. Starting a new school with new classmates can be daunting, and Summer Bridge is aimed at creating a welcoming experience during which students are immersed in the collaborative culture of ECS. Students have the opportunity to connect with mentors who walk alongside them throughout the school year and parents are given the opportunity to get to know the ECS staff who will be leading their students' journey through a rewarding, rigorous, college-prep education. Summer Bridge is meant to support the transition for new 6th graders but also model and orient students towards ECS values, which center students' voices and decision-making.

5—Healthy Choices and Behaviors

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to engage in healthy choices and behaviors. Describe how students will be served nutritious meals and/or



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snacks during the ELO-P hours of programming.

ELOP will have embedded healthy practices that result in positive changes in our student 's physical fitness, eating habits and allows them to become healthier, and that results in an excitement to learn. Outdoor education is an important component and consists of trips promoting environmental awareness, interpersonal skills, group cohesion through team-building activities, landscape explorations, wilderness expeditions and fun. In doing so, students deepen their relationship with the land through hands-on explorations and adventures, practice wilderness survival and ancestral skills, track wildlife and expand their understanding of our trail systems, experience tide pooling and ID tiny marine marvels, get to know local plant friends by name and their incredible uses and join others in imaginative play and nature based games.

Just steps from the busiest freeways, our campuses are alive with fruits and vegetables, a living stream, chickens, school-wide composting, and solar-powered greenhouses. Campus solutions to current challenges offer students and teachers real-world examples. Our school gardens enable students to learn about food source and plant care as they tend to the garden and learn more about the flora and fauna as an extension of their learnings in the school day. ECS school wellness plan encourages the use of reusable (non-disposable) water bottles and students build rainwater barrels to catch rain water which is then used in their gardens.

Nutrition education is a natural part of sports and fitness. Through partnerships with GrowingGreat and the GrowingGreat Chefs program, as well as our student meals vendor Revolution Foods, students learn about the importance of a healthy diet and how to make healthier food choices within the context of their local community. Sports Clubs are supplemented with tournaments, scrimmages, and ceremonies to highlight members' achievements. For many participants, these events are unique opportunities to participate in team sports and collaboration.

ECS also works with school meal providers to provide daily, nutritious snacks/supper. This ensures that the snack/supper meets all of the nutritional requirements set out in federal and state regulations.

Sample menu (snacks/supper):

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Strawberry Multi-Grain Bar	Goldfish Pretzels	BBQ Poptillas	Educational Snacks	Goldfish Cheddars
Turkey & Cheese Torta Sandwich w/ Baby Carrots & Apple	Chicken Salad Sandwich w/ Baby Carrots & Orange	Egg Salad Sandwich w/ Baby Carrots & Apple	Mexican Chicken Salad w/ Romaine Lettuce & Poptillas & Orange	Wowbutter & Jelly Sandwich w/ Paradise Punch & Apple

6—Diversity, Access, and Equity

Describe how the program is designed to address cultural and linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for all students to experience diversity, access, and equity.

Describe how the ELO-P will provide access and opportunity for students with



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disabilities.

ECS recognizes the importance of addressing the cultural and linguistic diversity of the communities it serves. All students are welcomed to participate in ELOP programs, no matter the barrier. As much as possible, ECS hires ELOP staff from within the community to ensure participants see themselves in the mentors that are leading the programs. All ELOP staff participate in on-going DEI professional development and students are consistently given opportunities to share their diverse experiences and backgrounds.

All outreach materials to students, parents, and the community are in languages that reflect the neighborhood served. Communication with families is disseminated using culturally and linguistically appropriate communication channels including Talking Points, website, social media, and email communication. Programs at ECMS reflect the rich heritage of the community. Students are encouraged to bring their diverse backgrounds and talents to the program so they all may be celebrated.

All students are welcomed into our program. Our program staff and the school will work together to make sure any accommodations a child or youth may need is made available.

Our programs create an environment in which student's experience values that embrace diversity and equity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, income level, national origin, physical ability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression.

Students with Exceptionalities, English learners (ELs), and other students who have potential barriers are welcomed and encouraged to enroll in After-School programs where they can participate in a variety of enrichment programs to define their passions and expand their knowledge.

English Language Learners: Given the levels of enrollment of English Language Learners (ESL) at ECS and considering the impact of their language development on their overall academic success, the program incorporates enrichment activities designed to enhance the language development of students as well as integrate the arts, technology and fitness.

7—Quality Staff

Describe how the program will provide opportunities for students to engage with quality Staff.

ECS has developed a comprehensive staff recruitment strategy, which include community partners, higher-education partners, a full-time HR Recruiter, online recruitment and community job fairs. Recruitment strategies are continuously improving and being refined. The following strategies have been implemented to recruit staff:

- o The human resource recruiter works with school administrators to identify community leaders and other individuals with specific talent in any enrichment area, such as sports, arts, leadership, math, science and literacy.
- o ECS utilizes online and print resources for job posting with specific language regarding enrichment area and locality.
- o ECS identifies job and community fairs to recruit program staff.
- o In partnership with local colleges and universities, ECS recruits program staff.



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ECS partners with ASCIP to deliver CPR & First Aid certification to all staff in addition to quarterly workshop training sessions by after-school providers by specialty area for improved content in the after-school club. These areas are:

1. Arts and Media
2. Language
3. Sports
4. Health and Wellness
5. STEM
6. Youth Leadership

8—Clear Vision, Mission, and Purpose

Describe the program's clear vision, mission, and purpose.

Our mission is to reimagine public education in low-income communities of color to prepare conscious, critical thinkers who are equipped to graduate from college and create a more equitable and sustainable world. It is also critical that ECS' values are foundational in ELOP program design and implementation:

JUSTICE - We examine bias, racism and prejudice. We deliver culturally-responsive curricula. We succeed when students' race and class cease to predict their level of achievement. (footnote Noguera).

COMMUNITY - We care. We collaborate. We respect the rights and voices of our stakeholders.

CURIOSITY - We question. We explore. We innovate.

SUSTAINABILITY - We think globally and act locally. We adapt. We encourage systems thinking to create a sustainable future.

LEADERSHIP - We listen. We think critically. We advocate. We shift public discourse. We are our own superheroes.

In formulating the goals and objectives for ECS' ELOP, ECS reviews data from published California Academic Performance Index scores, and the Strategic Priorities Benchmark Chart which confirms the need for comprehensive after school programming offered at no-cost to all students. ECS and ECMS is organized to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders in the development and periodic refinement of the vision, mission and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's).

Data Collection: ECMS leadership collects feedback from students, parents and teachers/staff in the yearly administration of the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). ECS' California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) provides a wide range of data that allows us to evaluate how our stakeholders feel about their role in the development of goals and core statements. CHKS data is regularly reviewed to assess where ECS' mission, vision, and LCAP goals might require further revision. The process is recursive, inclusive, and data-driven. We believe that including a wide swath of individuals in such conversations leads to a deep and personal commitment to our organization's mission.

The ECS Data Manager provides easy to read reports to help navigate stakeholder input using Schoolzilla, an online data visualization tool. This data helps us understand key elements of our vision, mission, and SLOs in which stakeholder groups do not feel included. It allows us to understand



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where our program is not fulfilling the mission in the eyes of stakeholders. And, we can easily see change over time.

Goals and Outcomes

All programs are designed to support the following outcomes:

1. Maintain or increase school attendance
2. Increase youth leadership and social skills
3. Maintain or improve academic performance

9—Collaborative Partnerships

Describe the program's collaborative partnerships. Local educational agencies are encouraged to collaborate with non-LEA entities to administer and implement ELO-P Programs.

The School Site Coordinators and leads for Summer Bridge, ESY and after-school enrichment programming are responsible for ongoing stewardship of the site-specific partnerships and collaborations (stakeholders include participants, parents, school-day staff, and interested community members). This includes the following:

- o Each program coordinator schedules regular check-in meetings with the School's Principal and other school personnel such as the math and literacy coaches, teachers and food service staff.
- o Parents and community members have the opportunity to participate in meaningful volunteer opportunities throughout the year.
- o Parents participate in a formal annual focus group to give feedback on ELOP
- o Strategic and collaborative partnerships are developed by site leads to provide meaningful and impactful programming or resources to enhance the after-school program.

Collaborative after school partners include:

Collaborative Partner	Contribution to programs
Revolution Foods	Student meals provider
Gardena-Carson Family YMCA	STEM program support
Camp Bob Waldorf	Access to green space for programs
Outward Bound Adventures (OBA)	Access to green space for programs
Boys & Girls Club of the Los Angeles Harbor	After-school enrichment program support
Woodcraft Rangers	After-school enrichment program



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10—Continuous Quality Improvement

Describe the program’s Continuous Quality Improvement plan.

At ECS, we believe that we need to critically examine our practices with an eye to continual growth, modeling the lifelong learning and critical thinking that will empower our students to be quality stewards of their communities and our world.¹ The ELOP program leads are responsible for a continuous improvement process to assess program quality, create an action plan to refine strategies or goals and improve program quality. This ongoing assessment is conducted within the following milieu:

1. School staff (Title I, Principals, Vice Principals and Teachers) meetings and interviews
2. Yearly Parent Focus Groups and surveys
3. Student surveys
4. Program staff surveys and reports
5. Community Partners

Programs continuously monitor their progress in implementing the plan and will reassess the needs of the program at regular occasions and begin the process again.

11—Program Management

Describe the plan for program management.

Environmental Charter Schools utilizes a common management and governance structure to leverage resources and expertise across each of our campuses. All our schools are governed by Environmental Charter Schools, a California non-profit corporation, led by a highly qualified Board of Directors that includes a diverse array of community leaders. In accordance with California’s Brown Act, all Board meetings are open public meetings, with notice provided in advance to the public and agendas published on the schools’ websites. The Board meets bimonthly, with an annual retreat. Additionally, the current leadership team has extensive experience in organizational development and growth.

ECS has a successful track record managing government grants from all levels. All programs are closely monitored to ensure that funds are expended within the time allowed under the contracts. The Director of Finance, Director of Compliance & Operations and CEO review the monthly/quarterly billings and compare the actual amount spent to date to budgeted amounts. The Director of Finance will, at year-end, prepare the year-end closeout reports at which time a comparison of actual to budget expenditure analysis is completed.

Fiscal Accounting

Environmental Charter Schools has never had a school closed, a charter revoked, or a charter not renewed. ESC conducts an independent audit each year. To date, with more than 20 years of audits, ECS has received clean audits year after year; there have been no significant issues in the area of fiscal responsibility found. There also have not been any significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance or significant issues with respect to student safety.

Participant Registration

¹ From ECS Equity and Diversity Committee Charter



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A complete registration packet is due, prior to students attending the program. The registration packet consists of the following:

1. Scan-Ready Registration form
2. Medical Release form
3. Liability/ Indemnity Release form

All students who are enrolled in the ELOP program must have a completed full enrollment form on file before they may attend the program. Parents must complete and sign the registration forms prior to their child's attendance in ELOP programs.