



THE NEW AMERICAN ACADEMY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE PROBLEM

Within America's fifty largest cities, 47 percent of students do not graduate high school¹. With regards to college or career readiness the data is even more alarming, with cities like New York finding that only 21 percent of their 2010 high school class graduated ready for college or a career². This failure is by design. Engineered for an industrial age, our educational system was devised to prepare millions of workers for America's factories, not creative thinkers for its colleges. Despite countless and expensive attempts at educational reform there has been little progress system wide. This model cannot be reformed. It must be transformed.

OUR SOLUTION

The best way to effectively combat the education crisis is through implementing a systemic solution that will transform the fundamental structures of schooling. The New American Academy is engineered to be a learning organization that empowers all members of its community. Unlike previous efforts at school reform, which have often failed due to a lack of organizational capacity, the New American Academy is designed to continually improve and develop.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The New American Academy is a collaboration of three partners: the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), and the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). This unique partnership with the DOE and the UFT allows for unprecedented innovation and cooperation between labor and management. Such an opportunity for widespread change must be seized.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Teacher quality is the single greatest determinant of student success. By professionalizing the teaching corps and creating a learning community of mentorship, reflection, and growth, teachers will develop at an unprecedented rate. The daily focus

¹ Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, April 2009

² New York State Board of Regents, June 2011

on adult empowerment and development will directly lead to high-quality instruction and student achievement.

The wave of pedagogical improvements produced by each New American Academy team will cascade, generating interest in the model and providing the impetus for further scale. As the TNAA umbrella expands, the ongoing innovation and teacher-development within each team will revitalize our educational system and lead to widespread educational transformation.

MISSION

The New American Academy inspires learners and empowers leaders to make this a better world.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

The New American Academy's advisory team includes high-ranking members from the NYCDOE and the UFT; representing real partnership and dialogue between the two organizations. Our team also includes leaders in business, philanthropy, and education who provide a diverse array of perspectives as TNAA works to expand and scale.

SCHOOL MODEL

The New American Academy model is based upon two fundamental tenets: collaboration and empowerment. Teachers work in collaborative teams and students learn and explore in small, differentiated groups. Through four-person teaching teams, mastery-based career ladder, and six year looping cycles, each classroom is driven to become a center of educational innovation. Supported by daily ninety-minute meetings and weekly reflection sessions, teachers have the time to continually analyze and improve their practice.

MEASURING RESULTS

The first New American Academy classrooms are being carefully and regularly studied and tested to ensure that students are being prepared for academic and social success. Standardized test results from the first year of classes were promising, and are projected to improve even further as each class loops. In addition to ongoing in-house evaluation, the HGSE will be performing a long-term longitudinal study on the Academy's classrooms and teachers.

GROWTH STRATEGY

The New American Academy hopes to scale in New York City and beyond. As a public school with the support of both labor and management, The New American Academy is better positioned to succeed and grow than a private or charter school. Interest has

already been expressed, both nationally and internationally, in collaborating to replicate the TNAA model.

RISKS

As with any new business proposal, the New American Academy's plan will be confronted with a variety of challenges, including: preliminary implementation of the program, teacher selection, changes in the economic environment and partnership relations. However, each of these risks has been carefully considered and already the model has been adapted to minimize them as much as possible.

FINANCIAL PLAN

Expansion on a large scale is only possible with a financially viable plan. The New American Academy's school budget operates within the standard NYCDOE per-student allocation. With regards to model development and scale, TNAA relies on private support. For a project of this magnitude, these costs are small. For our first year, we raised over \$100,000. For our second and third year, we seek to raise a total of \$500,000.