



**California Department of Education  
2016 California Gold Ribbon Schools Program  
Elementary School Application: Part A**



37680236037956

County-District-School (CDS) Code – 14 digits

San Diego

County Name

Chula Vista Elementary School District

District Name

Feaster Charter

School Name *(If your school is selected for honors, this school name will be engraved on the award plaque.)*

670 Flower Street

Chula Vista

91910

Mailing Address

City

Zip Code

619-422-8397

x2999

619-422-4780

Area Code and Phone Number Ext.

Area Code and Fax Number

francisco.velasco@cvesd.org

Principal's E-mail Address



*I certify that I have reviewed the information contained in this application and, to the best of my knowledge, it is complete and accurate. I further certify that:*

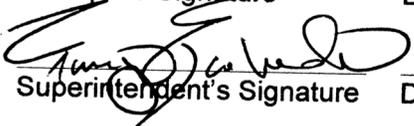
- *The Office for Civil Rights does not have any outstanding findings of civil rights statute violations by the school or district that may affect the school;*
- *There are no pending lawsuits by the Department of Justice against the district alleging that the school, or the district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clauses; and*
- *The school or district is addressing or has addressed any identified areas of noncompliance under federal or state laws and regulations.*

Francisco Velasco

Principal's Name

Francisco Escobedo

District Superintendent's Name

	11-4-15
Principal's Signature	Date
	11-4-15
Superintendent's Signature	Date

**School Information**

1. Current school enrollment: 1234
2. Which category best describes where your school is located?  
 Urban     Suburban     Rural
3. Does your school receive Title I funding?     Yes     No  
 If yes, indicate type of services:     School-wide     Targeted Assistance
4. What is your school calendar?  Traditional     Year-round     Modified
5. Is your school a charter school?  Yes     No
6. Number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Full-time Staff	Part-time Staff
Administrators	<u>3</u>	_____
Classroom teachers	<u>59</u>	_____
Counselors	<u>2</u>	_____
Credentialed librarians	<u>1</u>	_____
Nurses	<u>1</u>	_____
Psychologists	<u>1</u>	_____
Technology/media specialists or technicians	<u>1</u>	_____
Paraprofessionals	<u>18</u>	_____
Campus resource officers	<u>1</u>	_____
Other staff ( <i>specify</i> ) <u>Office Staff/Speech Pathologist</u>	<u>5</u>	_____
Total staff	<u>92</u>	_____

## Directions to Your School

If your school is selected as a statewide nominee, the site visit team members will need directions to your school.

San Diego

County

Chula Vista Elementary School District

District

Feaster Charter

School

670 Flower Street

Chula Vista

91910

Street Address

City

Zip Code

Francisco Velasco

619-422-8397

2999

Principal

Area Code and Phone Number Ext.

Lindberg Field (SAN) - 3225 N Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA, 92101

Name and Location of the Nearest Airport

5 South

Major Freeway Access

Provide detailed travel directions indicating the surface streets that lead to your school. Please do not submit directions or a map generated by an Internet Web site.

From North:

Take 5 south

Take the E Street exit

Keep left on E Street

Turn left onto E Street

Turn left onto Broadway

Turn left onto Flower Street

Feaster Charter is on the left hand side

From South:

Take 5 North

Take E Street exit

Turn right onto E Street

Turn left onto Broadway

Turn left onto Flower Street

Feaster Charter is on the left hand side

From East:

Take 54 West

Take 5 south

Take the E Street exit

Keep left on E Street

Turn left onto E Street

Turn left onto Broadway

Turn left onto Flower Street

Feaster Charter is on the left hand side

## School Overview

"Success isn't having trophies or toys. It isn't a medal or friends of your choice.

What is success? That's easy to see. It's trying to be the best you can be." (Inch and Miles by Coach John Wooden).

Upon walking onto Feaster's campus, it is clear that there is a focus on social emotional learning. With an emphasis on restorative justice and cooperation, vital skills for success are taught to students in transitional kinder up to eighth grade. Throughout the school, students learn to emulate specific character strengths that are introduced at the beginning of the year. They then work to apply what they have learned to their everyday lessons and collaborative project based learning assignments. At Feaster, 90% of the students are Latino or Hispanic, 3% are African American, 2% are Asian, and 5% are Caucasian. Feaster understands the importance of teaching students the necessary character strengths that will support them beyond their years in school.

### Character Strengths

When taught, I have a lot of power.

Without me, relationships tend to sour.

At Feaster Charter, I learn more than just academics.

Character strengths are becoming quite the epidemic.

Throughout Feaster Charter we use technology to enhance our students' education and foster a community of life long learners. Using a one-to-one model, students' academics are enhanced through the use of technology. Teachers are held accountable by both the administration and curriculum coaches to use the technology effectively, as described in our school adopted integration spectrum. In an area where technology is not readily available and 86% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch, it is important to keep students up to date on the most relevant technology. Without the one-to-one program, many students would not have the ability to conduct an effective web search, type with accuracy, or be tech literate in a tech-reliant society.

### Technology

The twenty-first century is great.

Learning to use technology well is my fate.

At Feaster Charter, I have my own device.

Making my education thrice as nice, I suppose that will suffice.

Additional enhancements that Feaster Charter brings to our students are the academies. Each student has the opportunity to be placed in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), VAPA (visual and performing arts), or STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) academy. Each academy in grades kindergarten through eighth grade works to teach the standards and curriculum designed for that grade level; yet, each academy places an academic emphasis on the concepts for which their academy stands for. In STEM, students' academic learning is infused with engineering and technology. In VAPA, their academic experience includes music, dramatizations, and art. Our STEAM academy, which is only offered to our kindergarten and middle school students, instills all of the components of STEM and VAPA into the everyday curriculum.

### Academies

At Feaster Charter, my education is optimized

In the VAPA academy, my curriculum is visualized and dramatized

In the STEM academy, I use technology and engineering, my work is digitized

In the STEAM academy, I learn using VAPA and STEM concepts, we revolutionize



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Elementary School Application: Part B



Feaster Charter

Model Program/Practice Summary

1. Name of Model Program/Practice:

Feaster Academies – STEM, VAPA, and STEAM

2. How long has this Model Program/Practice been in place?

- Less than 2 years, 2-4 years, 5-8 years, 8+ years

3. What is the Target Area? (Choose at least one area.)

Target Areas:

- Career Technical Education, Chronic Absenteeism and Dropout Prevention, Civic Education Awareness, Closing the Achievement Gap, Education Supports, Nutrition and Physical Activity/Education, Parent and Community Involvement, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Use of Technology, Visual and Performing Arts

4. What are the target populations? (Check all that apply.)

Race/Ethnicity Subgroups:

- American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Filipino, Hispanic or Latino

(Continued on next page)

- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander  
 White  
 Two or More Races

## Other Student Groups:

- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged  
 English Learners  
 Students with Disabilities  
 At-Risk Students (Academic, Social, Emotional, Behavioral, or Health)  
 Other (*specify*) Advanced Learners (GATE)

5. What strategies are used to implement the Model Program/Practice? (*Check all that apply.*)

## Strategies:

- School Climate  
 Small Learning Communities  
 Parent Involvement  
 Data-Driven Decision Making  
 Health Support  
 Social/Emotional/Behavioral Support  
 Professional Development  
 Other (*specify*) \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. How is your Model Program/Practice referenced in your district's LCAP? [Refer to the State Priorities listed in Education Code (ED) sections 52060 and 52066. Charter schools must address priorities in EC Section 5206(d).]

Note: When completing the Model Program/Practice Narrative, your response needs to provide clarifying explanation on **how your implementation** of the Model Program/Practice **at your school site is distinguished** from the district's model.

At Feaster Charter, we compiled our own LCAP, which highlights the specific goals of our school. The primary goal at Feaster, which is considered when making all decisions, is to assist teachers in accelerating achievement for all students while eliminating the achievement gap. Feaster is working to accomplish these goals by forming Feaster Academies - STEM, VAPA, and STEAM, which infuse NGSS and CCSS concepts during class, specials rotations, and electives. Through this model, students are exposed to high interest, rigorous instruction. The professional development opportunities provided to teachers all pertain to a specific academy or to Feaster's focus on encouraging positive behavior trends. In addition to these academic goals, Feaster's LCAP recognizes the importance of the community's involvement.

## **Model Program/Practice Narrative**

### **Model Program/Practice Name: Feaster Academies – STEM, VAPA, and STEAM**

#### 1. Description of the Model

Feaster Charter implemented the three academies in the Fall of 2013. We understand that by 2018 employment in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) related jobs are expected to grow by 17%, which amounts to an additional 8.5 million workers in the field. It is our goal to ensure that our students are prepared for those jobs, regardless our students' economic status or background. We will achieve our goal by creating a community and culture where parents, teachers, and community members are making decisions that benefit the social-emotional and academic standing of our students.

To achieve this goal, we designed a model that focuses on the components of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), VAPA (visual and performing arts), and STEAM instruction, social-emotional supports, and college and career outreach programs. The STEAM program infuses both STEM and VAPA into one academy; therefore, we offer this choice to kindergarten and middle school students. Students in kindergarten get the opportunity to see exactly what a STEM and VAPA education would look like; thereby giving them the necessary knowledge to make an informed decision about which academy they will spend their elementary school years in. Similarly, we also offer STEAM to our middle school students so that they can apply the expertise they have learned throughout their time at Feaster and expand their knowledge of both academies.

The most essential resources that were needed to make this model effective were already in place at Feaster. The year prior to implementing academies, the administration at Feaster spent time observing teachers and planning professional development seminars that would help further the staff's knowledge of STEM, VAPA, and STEAM. Through these professional development meetings, partnerships with Qualcomm and La Jolla Playhouse were formed; these partnerships provided expert speakers to conduct professional development meetings and share resources.

STEM, VAPA, STEAM and a focus on social emotional learning are important because we believe that our socio-disadvantaged students need to have a support system and the emotional endurance to compete in a 21st century STEAM related work environment.

### **We Use STEM/VAPA/STEAM Instruction To Create Applicable And Authentic Learning Experiences**

Our school's unique model allows us to infuse STEM, VAPA, or STEAM focused curricula into our daily instruction. Each classroom is categorized as part of the STEM, VAPA, or STEAM academy. Each classroom teacher infuses either STEM or VAPA components into their daily lessons. During all classes, students receive instruction based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), with the integration of STEM, VAPA, and STEAM related content. Since students all have one-to-one iPads, lessons are often delivered using technology. As outlined in our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), one of our goals is for all students to have access to CCSS aligned instructional materials and to quality CCSS based instruction. We believe that our focus on STEAM related instruction will benefit our students by making learning more applicable and authentic.

Our model also allows for students to receive 45 minutes of applicable instruction through a specialty class rotation. Trained specialty teachers, in one of the STEM or VAPA related fields, teach the classes. Students spend 45 minutes each week for six weeks with one teacher that specializes in dance, art, science, engineering, music, or athletics. During this time, students are encouraged to use design thinking to problem solve within their specialty class. By teaching students and exposing them to these various specialities, we are equipping our students with the necessary skills to compete in any future career.

In addition to applicable instruction, administrators and teachers work together to guarantee that all specialty classes are supplied with the necessary materials to ensure that instruction is also authentic. We have dedicated money within our annual budget to build several maker-labs for each specialty class. For example, our engineering maker-lab is equipped with arduinos, servos, a 3-D printer, and other materials to foster the creative design behind engineering. Our music class has a full set of instruments, music stands, and a full-time music teacher. Our dance studio is constructed with floor to ceiling mirrors, ballet bars, and costumes for Ballet Folklorico performances. We believe that we must provide students with these materials to create authentic learning experiences to spark interest in STEM, VAPA, and STEAM focused content areas. We also believe that our academy-focused model allows both our socio-economically disadvantaged students and our English Language Learners to have daily in-school experiences that may otherwise be reserved for selective summer camps or after school programs.

### **We Use Socio-Emotional Supports To Guide Our Students Through Rigorous Learning**

In addition to the STEM/VAPA/STEAM instructional focus of our school model, we also believe that students and families need to be taught the social-emotional and behavioral supports needed to achieve academic success. Our model focuses on studying two character strengths per quarter. Each quarter students, teachers, and administrators discuss the character strengths successful individuals practice when faced with adversity. To ensure that teachers and parents properly understand the importance of each character strength a teacher-led committee hosts professional developments (PDs) and provide instructional resources which teachers may then share with their students. Our biggest push this year is to help students understand “growth-mindset.” Growth-mindset is the ability to improve and develop your skills through hard work. Many of our students believe that they are either born smart or born lacking in a subject area. We are on a mission to dispel that notion. We want our students to believe that with hard work and perseverance; they can accomplish the most rigorous learning in any content area. To recognize our students’ efforts in exemplifying these character strengths, quarterly assemblies are held to recognize those who exemplify social-emotional strengths.

#### **2. Implementation & Monitoring of the Model**

Families and community members play an integral part of the implementation and monitoring of Feaster Charter School’s model. We know that parent stakeholders provide our school with insights into the expectations they have for our school, while community stakeholders provide Feaster with outside resources. We are currently in the process of trying to increase both parent and community participation as outlined in our LCAP because we recognize the importance of both of these stakeholders and the impact their influences have on Feaster’s school model.

To increase parent involvement, we have promoted our active parent teacher organization (PTO) throughout our school. PTO consists of parents, teachers, and

administrators whose purpose is to organize school events with a focus on increasing parent involvement. One way PTO plans to increase parent involvement this year is by hosting several Parent Nights in which parents learn about Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards from their child's teacher. Teachers will explain to families the changes in instruction as our school transitions to the new standards. Teachers will also teach parents the content students are learning during class and effective strategies parents can use to help their student through the transition. Because we see value in parents being active in their child's education, we have made it one of our top priorities to provide resources and opportunities for parents to be more involved in their child's education.

Increasing parent involvement is outlined within our LCAP. Our goal is to increase the number of parent participation by ten percent. We believe when parents know what is happening at their child's school, they can better support and assist with their child's education. To accommodate parents as best as we can, we offer free childcare, coffee, and a convenient time to maximize our parent outcome. We anticipate that these accommodations will increase the percentage of parent involvement and will benefit our model tremendously. In addition, this year, each classroom has designated a room parent. At the beginning of the year, the room parent was trained to work the lounge equipment. They also act as a school/community liaison by publicizing upcoming events and celebrations.

To ensure parents and students are receiving effective training on the Common Core Standards & Next Generation Science Standards, we host targeted professional development throughout the year. Each Thursday we release our students early, so that our teachers have the time to attend professional development in STEM/VAPA/STEAM content or writing and literacy content. We hire outside consultants from each content area to provide teachers and parents with up-to date information on effective teaching strategies. In addition to teaching our teachers and parents, we offer the same trainings to our instructional- support team. We include our instructional support staff, to ensure they offer the same strategies when they work with a small group of students.

Another avenue we use to engage stakeholders is by hosting a monthly meeting through a program called "Coffee Talks with the Principals." Coffee Talks with the Principals are intended to keep families and surrounding community members updated and involved with school events and news. This forum is a chance for stakeholders to ask question, share ideas, and receive school news. Lastly, we utilize technology and publish information about our model through our Facebook page as well as through our school website.

While we hold our partnership with parents in high regard, we also actively pursue partnerships with community members to provide resources and experiences to our students. Currently, we have several partnerships with local community agencies in an effort to create an authentic curriculum focused model. Two of those partnerships are with San Diego's technology company Qualcomm and San Diego's theater group La Jolla Playhouse. Throughout the year, teachers and students receive training specific to the content area within the partnership. When working with Qualcomm, the STEM and STEAM academies receive professional development on how to help students troubleshoot arduinos. Students are then invited to Qualcomm facilities and are taught by a real engineer how to code arduinos, servos, and LED lights. Students then continue their engineering education at Feaster's engineering lab. We have a similar model with La Jolla Playhouse who works with our VAPA academy. Teachers receive professional

development from actors; these actors then come into the classroom for three-days and teach students specific skills utilized in theater.

To monitor the effectiveness of our partnerships and programs we ask students and teachers to provide us with feedback on our model, which is specifically related to professional development and instruction. We have found that when students are engaged in authentic hands-on learning, they are more likely to recall the concepts being taught. While the level of understanding may vary, we can verify through projects and assessments that students are improving and growing from where they currently are in their educational standing. As explained in our LCAP, we are closely monitoring all students in order to work towards closing the achievement gap.

### 3. Results of the Model/Pupil Outcomes

We monitor, assess, and evaluate our model by setting SMARTER (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time Bound, Every Child) goals for each component within our model and evaluating our progresses after an allotted amount of time.

For example, the goal for our the STEM and STEAM academies is to have all of the classes show evidence of students engaging in the design thinking process by the end of the third quarter. This means administrators will assess how many STEM and STEAM teachers are providing students the time, instruction, and resources for students to engage in structured problem solving. Teachers will assess how students are problem solving by evaluating students' design-thinking and problem-solving skills using a rubric.

In the VAPA academy, teachers are working to incorporate mindful visualization strategies and theatrical tableaux that connect to connect cross-curricular standards within the Common Core. During classroom walk-throughs, administrators at Feaster would observe teachers working with students to act out tableaux and connect visualization strategies to Common Core Standards from at least two content areas. Teachers gather data based on how effectively the students are able to portray the taught concepts using theatrical talents and skills.

As part of our academies, we also work to teach students about health and nutrition. All too often an abundant focus on academics leaves out many important life long skills that students need to be exposed to. At Feaster, we have an extended day that lasts an extra forty-five minutes. This time is used to expose students to various electives with different classroom teachers. Students across all academies take this time to learn new concepts that support CCSS and NGSS concepts. In one of our VAPA electives, students learn more about health and nutrition as well as the positive effects of exercise and staying active. In one of our STEM electives, students learn about the core muscle groups, what nutrition muscles need to grow and how the human body uses different types of food. In a STEAM elective offered at Feaster, the students work to tend to a garden that will grow nutritious vegetables while learning about the plant cycle. By providing elementary and middle school students with the opportunity to educate themselves about health and nutrition, we are giving these children the knowledge necessary to live a healthy life.

Our implementation of specials, social-emotional learning, and the STEM/STEAM/VAPA academies' success is most prevalent when our 2014/2015 SBAC data is compared to similar schools within Chula Vista (see figures 1.3 and 1.4). According to this data, Feaster students are excelling in ELA as well as mathematics. For the 2015/2016 school year, we will continue to build upon those strategies that proved most effective as we put forth every effort to close our achievement gap.

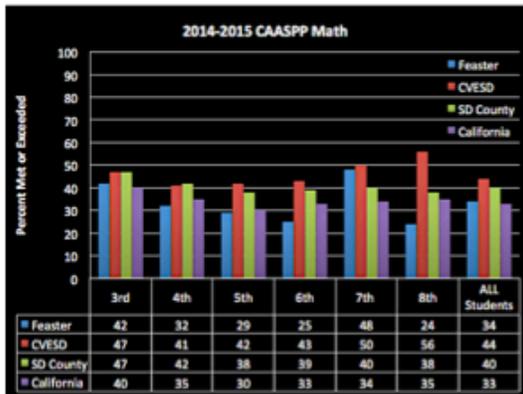


Figure 1.1

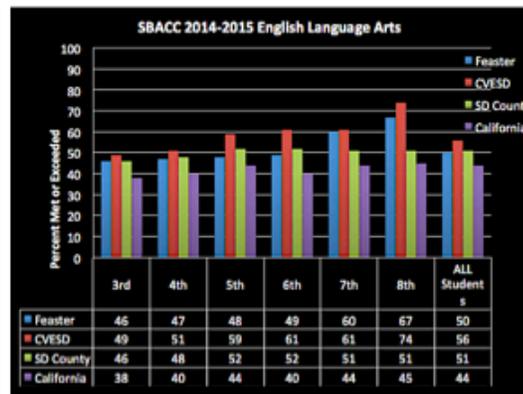


Figure 1.2

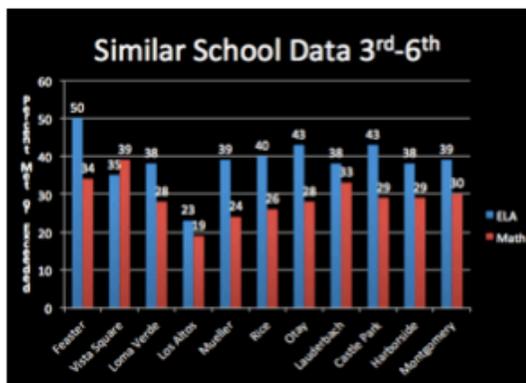


Figure 1.3

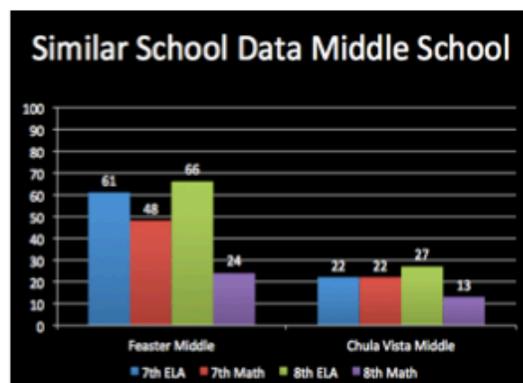


Figure 1.4

The results across all three of our academies supported the idea that students' critical thinking within the curricular concepts taught excelled beyond what it would have been without incorporating these STEM/STEAM/VAPA strategies. We believe that this evidence shows we are moving towards a more holistic structure of instruction at Feaster while working to accelerate achievement and close the achievement gap, as outlined in our LCAP. The student outcomes of academy specific instruction as part of our school model include heightened curiosity in areas that may have otherwise gone unnoticed and more rigorous instruction. Our students are excited and eager to come to school and learn, which is evident by our 98% attendance rate.

We believe that our approach to STEM/STEAM/VAPA education, social-emotional learning, and our focus on college and career will take some time to foster and it may be years before we see the true impacts our school model has on students. However, we are seeing growth and share a sense of urgency in continuing our program and adapting components as we see fit based on student, teacher, and parent feedback. Ultimately, we believe we have a strong unique model that positively impacts our specific student and community population.