

June 2, 2025

Tiffany DeGraffenreid  
Manager, Office of Charter Schools  
San Diego Unified School District  
4100 Normal Street, Annex 15  
San Diego, CA 92103

RE: Response to Letter of Concern and Notice to Cure – English Language Development (ELD) Program and English/German Dual Language Immersion Program

Dear Ms. DeGraffenreid:

This letter serves as Albert Einstein Academies' (AEA) formal response to the May 12, 2025 notice from the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) outlining concerns regarding the implementation of AEA's English Language Development (ELD) program and English/German Dual Language Immersion Program as described in the current AEA charter. AEA is actively addressing each area of concern with urgency and systemwide alignment. What follows is a detailed overview of the structural, instructional, and compliance-focused measures AEA is implementing to ensure full adherence with state law, charter mandates, and the educational needs of all students.

### **Item 1: Designated English Language Development Instruction**

To fully implement daily designated ELD instruction at the AEA Charter Elementary School (AEACES) and AEA Charter Middle School (AEACMS), the respective site Principals (with support from and accountable to me as Superintendent) will ensure the following is implemented by the start of the 2025-2026 school year:

#### **a. Master Schedule with Daily Designated ELD Instruction for All ELL Students**

**AEACES:**

The AEACES staff is currently working on a new master schedule that incorporates a daily dedicated grade-level time block, allowing all ELL students to receive designated ELD instruction; this will be reflected in all classroom schedules. This time block is one of the key pieces of a project to create a new master schedule to accommodate designated ELD, a restructured German language program, improve scheduling efficiency for delivering service

minutes to students with disabilities, and continuing to provide opportunities for students to participate in “Specials” classes such as art, music, physical education, and library.

This new master schedule will be completed and fully implemented by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

**AEACMS:**

A new master schedule was implemented at AEACMS at the start of the current 2024-2025 school year in order to expand the school’s course offerings, including two new ELD courses. Over half of the ELL student population currently participates in a 72-minute designated ELD course, which occurs every other day (e.g., “A” day), focused on developing English proficiency using state standards. On the opposite day (e.g., “B” day), ELL students attend an English support course designed to provide designated ELD instruction for ELL students. This provides daily designated ELD instruction for ELL students participating in these courses across all four proficiency levels.

The AEACMS staff is currently adjusting the master schedule to expand these course offerings to provide daily designated ELD instruction for all ELL students. This will be completed and fully implemented by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

**b. Proficiency-Aligned and Differentiated Instruction**

Both AEA school sites will provide proficiency-aligned and differentiated instruction based on a student’s ELPAC level during the daily designated ELD instruction time. This is being developed in conjunction with the master schedule and will be fully implemented by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

Instruction will be provided by a credentialed classroom teacher, Education Specialist, and/or Literacy/ELD Specialist based on the setting, IEP requirements (as applicable), and proficiency level of the ELL students. All staff providing designated ELD instruction are credentialed with an appropriate authorization.

The AEA leadership team has positioned ELD-related professional development as a central theme for the 2025-2026 staff professional development calendar. This professional development will support credentialed staff in their understanding of ELPAC performance levels and domain-aligned scaffolds, aligning instruction to ELD standards, student needs, academic vocabulary and discourse, culturally responsive pedagogy, and using data to inform placement and flexible grouping. The Ellevation Platform is currently being evaluated as the ELD program management software to support progress monitoring and reclassification, enabling staff to plan instruction collaboratively and efficiently with real-time ELL data.

**c. ELD Standards Focused Curriculum**

In partnership with the San Diego County Office of Education’s (SDCOE) Multilingual Education Global Achievement Team (MEGA), AEA is currently evaluating state-aligned,

research-based curricula focused on ELD standards for all credentialed staff providing ELD instruction at both campuses.

The following curricula are being evaluated by academic leadership staff:

- Benchmark Advance
- National Geographic Reach for Reading
- Amplify CKLA and Language Studio
- Kate Kinsella's English 3D
- E.L. Achieve

Evaluation and selection will be completed by July 2025, with implementation completed by the start of the 2025-2026 school year. AEA will update the SDUSD Office of Charter Schools once a curriculum is selected and purchased.

The plan outlined above will bring the AEA program into compliance with California regulations and fulfill the commitments made in the AEA charter with respect to supporting English Language Learners. The AEA leadership team will update the EL Master Plan to include the items above and shift towards a working manual format that reflects the comprehensive ELD program operating at both AEA sites. The updated EL Master Plan will be submitted to the AEA Board of Trustees for approval during the fall semester of the 2025-2026 school year. AEA is fully committed to delivering a high-quality ELD program that meets the needs of all ELL students.

## **Item 2: English/German Dual Language Immersion Program**

The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) below outlines AEA's strategy to fully implement a new German language instruction model for Kindergarten through fifth grade. This process began several years ago with a German program focus group that met five times during the 2023-24 academic year. The focus group increased its meeting frequency in the current 2024-2025 academic year and has made significant progress in building the new model.

The CAP addresses the fundamental reality that the 50/50 English/German dual immersion model, as currently described in the AEA charter document and LCAP, is not consistently aligned in Kindergarten through fifth grade and has not been for several years. The CAP details the transition to a German language instructional program that meets the current and future needs of all AEACES students by focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

During the first semester of the 2025-2026 academic year AEA will submit a proposed charter revision to the AEA Board of Trustees and subsequently for consideration by the SDUSD Board of Education. These proposed revisions will reflect current and future operational realities and strategic goals.

**Corrective Action Matrix (CAP):**

Root Causes	Corrective Action(s)	Deadline	Status
Staffing German teachers due to limited qualified candidates to fill teacher requirements for a 50/50 dual immersion model.	<p>A German program focus group was formed in the 2023-2024 school year, tasked with evaluating and considering alternative sustainable models to continue providing German language instruction and culture in grades K-5.</p> <p>A new model was identified in Fall 2024 that continues to provide German with a focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This model reduces the number of credentialed German teachers needed to fully implement.</p> <p>The new model was thoroughly evaluated and supported by the AEA leadership team in December 2024. The model was also evaluated by the entire AEACES staff in January 2025, with 82.5% supporting the change through a staff survey.</p>	February 2025	Completed
Changing student demographics, including increased socio-emotional needs, English Language Learners, and ELD program time requirements.	<p>The new model must allow equity for all students, value the IB philosophy and the benefits of multilingualism, and honor German as one of the foundational pillars of the AEA charter through instruction that targets German language skills.</p> <p>The German program focus group is working to ensure the model meets those goals by analyzing community feedback, soliciting community expertise, creating a new master schedule to support this change and additional instructional needs (e.g., ELD, SPED service minutes, Specials Classes), adopting grade-level curriculum, and establishing program benchmarks.</p>	August 2025	In Progress
Public-facing communication and marketing reflect an outdated program.	AEA is currently systematically reviewing all public-facing communication platforms and marketing campaigns (e.g., website, social media channels, announcements, print materials, etc.) to reflect the changes to the AEACES German language program.	August 2025	In Progress

The AEA LCAP is not aligned with the current implementation of the German language instruction program.	Revise the 2025-26 LCAP Federal Addendum to reflect the new sustainable model for German language instruction that benefits all AEA students.	June 2025	In Progress
The AEA charter is not aligned with the current implementation of the German language instruction program.	<p>Draft charter material revision language was presented to the AEA Board of Trustees for initial review in May 2025, based on the new model.</p> <p>The material revision will be submitted for approval to the AEA Board of Trustees in the Fall of 2025. If approved, the revisions will be subsequently submitted to the SDUSD Office of Charter Schools for review and final consideration by the SDUSD Board of Education.</p> <p>This allows the German program focus group to continue building the structures necessary to fully implement the new program by the start of the 2025-2026 school year and to continue evaluating feedback and resources from the AEA community that may inform the material revision.</p>	Fall 2025	In Progress

We appreciate the support of the SDUSD Office of Charter Schools and look forward to continued partnership as we implement these improvements with fidelity.

Sincerely,



David V. Sciarretta, Ed. D.  
Superintendent