At e³, students apply their creativity, innovation, and passion to make deep and systemic change within their lives, their local community, and the global environment.

Dr. Helen Griffith, Executive Director, e³ Civic High

The Vision: A 2010 study by the Center for Education Policy and Law found that more than half of the 5,000 public high school students that live in downtown San Diego leave the area to attend high school, indicating a community need for more high-performing school options in the downtown area.

e³ Civic High embraces its urban setting and unique location in the state-of-the-art San Diego Public Library and maximizes its relationship with the downtown community to provide students with powerful learning experiences focused on preparing them for success in college, career, and civic life. In addition, e³ Civic High engages, educates, and empowers students, teachers, and parents creating a community of passionate, lifelong learners who value excellence, community partnerships, social commitment, and individual success. The school embodies civic engagement and civic partnerships in its structure, design, and goals for learning.

The Academic Model: e³ is designed around the four “P’s:” people, pedagogy, programs, and places.

People: The academic model is student-centered via self-paced, mastery-based learning. Teachers work with students to create a personalized learning plan. Students have a voice in not only how they manage and create learning, but also in key decisions for the school around instruction, culture, and overall design.

Pedagogy: Students learn through a mixture of self-paced online instruction, teacher or student-led small-group instruction, direct instruction, and problem-based and project-based work. Hands-on project-based learning is a key instructional strategy and is enabled by technology, from the 1:1 laptop or tablet to the selection of digital content. Through the Advisory program, students loop with the same adult throughout their high school experience. As Advisory facilitators, teachers serve as counselors and guides who focus on life skills and successful learning habits.

Programs: With an unwavering focus on preparation for college and career, e³ offers career exploration courses, job shadowing, internships, early college coursework via San Diego City College, and career and technical courses in bio-medical engineering.

Places: The library is not only the home for e³, it is a co-educator. Students are expected to take full advantage of the learning environment and its resources: more than 1.2 million resources in its collection, city librarians as instructors for research, auditorium and special events penthouse, a Teen and Homework Center, art gallery, reading room, City Television, and IDEA lab. In addition,
the downtown community is a home for e³ and co-educator for e³ students. Real-world experiences include internships in downtown businesses and service-learning within the local community.

The Organizational Model: Because e³ was designed with intentional co-location in a 21st century library in a downtown city center, the learning space is a key element of the model. Flexible furnishings and room configurations of the learning spaces support a variety of teaching and learning strategies. They are utilized to encourage students to take ownership of their learning and to learn through active, hands-on, project-based experiences. A research study is tracking how the learning spaces were designed for use.

The model emphasizes cost-efficiency by maximizing human capital, space, and facilities. In-kind contributions from shared use with partners that have a shared mission help to diffuse some of the model’s higher costs.

The Operator: The governing board supporting e³ Civic High reflects an extensive community commitment and set of municipal partnerships. The school leverages these partnerships to offer a range of services including a pre-paid facilities lease, college-level coursework, college tutors, summer bridge opportunities, community-based internships, professional development for faculty, and research assistance from librarians. e³ intends to serve as a model for co-location with any entity that embraces a shared mission, whether it is a health care facility, museum, corporate headquarters, or college.

BLENDED SUBJECTS:
Mathematics, Humanities, Digital Media, Bio-Medical Engineering, Physics, Mandarin, Spanish

THE LEARNING SPACE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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BY THE NUMBERS:
Year 1 public revenue per pupil: $8,286
Year 1 expenses per pupil: $10,381
Year 4 revenue per pupil: $8,515
Year 4 expenses per pupil: $8,436
Years to sustainability: 3