Students today need to learn how to be adaptable and reflective, employing critical thinking skills and creativity in a variety of contexts. Our schools must also be adaptable and reflective, flexibly meeting the needs of each and every one of our students.

Nicole Tempel Assisi, Founder

**The Vision:** Imagine a school that is flexible enough to meet the needs of every student it serves. Imagine a school that adapts to the needs and strengths and passions of those students. Imagine a school where students learn by tinkering, getting their hands on real live objects to create a solution to a real live problem. Imagine a school with “Just Right Instruction” where each student learns what he or she needs when he or she needs it.

Thrive Public Schools’ founders didn’t want to only imagine this school; they decided to build it. Thrive is a K-8 charter school in San Diego that prepares students to be community-minded, college-prepared, and career-inspired.

**The Academic Model:** Thrive is designed to serve a population of students that has increasingly become disengaged from traditional school models. Thrive balances tech-infused learning with hands-on, minds-on engagement to cultivate excitement, motivation, and passion in students whose needs have not been met in more traditional settings. Thrive expands the concept of school beyond core academics to encompass social-emotional intelligence and “real world” understanding.

The blended learning model at Thrive integrates technology throughout a curriculum built upon project-based learning, targeted instruction, and tinkering. Students progress at their own pace, receiving targeted support and instruction as needed to ensure they master content before moving on. A personalized learning plan for each student tracks goals, modalities, and growth. Students have multiple opportunities to develop and demonstrate depth and complexity as they apply learning in different contexts.

Through **project-based learning**, students learn subject-matter content in cross-disciplinary teacher-created projects where they use technology to research, design, invent, film, edit, record, experiment, build, create, and present. Teachers personalize learning and foster students’ active ownership over their learning through interactive digital learning programs that provide instant data for teachers and real-time feedback for students and parents.

Creative and inquisitive thinking is cultivated by exploratory learning in tinkering, robotics, visual and performing arts, engineering, and community-based experiences. And families are supported to become a source of family-facilitated learning through engaging, fun learning opportunities rich in technology, rather than “homework.”

**Social-emotional learning** is interwoven throughout the school’s model, emphasizing students’ self-actualization through high standards for student behavior, applied learning, student choice, and continuous feedback. This involves solid decision-making, self-regulation, self-reflection, and learning from struggles, trial, and error.

**The Organizational Model:** To create deeper relationships with teachers and their peers and to increase personalization, students are grouped in mixed age clusters after Kindergarten, and “loop” with the same teacher-teams for two years.

Teachers participate in ongoing data reviews to make certain that all
students are achieving academically. They review data collaboratively to plan necessary lessons, interventions, and instructional strategies to help each and every student succeed. Additionally, teachers set up and support student-led conferences, where students present their data and goals to their families.

Thrive’s leaders recognize that the innovative school model presents challenges for teachers and that’s why they provide teachers almost 300 hours annually for collaborative planning, data review, and professional development. Teacher PD is experiential, collaborative, sustained, and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem solving.

With Illuminate, Thrive is creating an “Are Students Thriving” Dashboard that integrates data from multiple digital learning programs. Eventually, the dashboard system will allow Thrive’s educators to identify quickly where extra supports are needed, assign coaching, help drive instructional decision-making, and provide a portal for parents and students. This is still a work in progress.

**The Operator:** Thrive Public Schools is a new charter management organization, founded to create a blueprint for change in public education. Building upon prior experiences at three highly successful charter organizations, High Tech High, Camino Nuevo and Da Vinci Schools, Thrive’s leaders know that their model can be sustained on California’s public revenues, which are among the lowest in the nation. They envision Thrive as a network of schools that demonstrates a cost-effective model of public education that can readily be replicated in other communities.

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**BY THE NUMBERS:**

- Year 1 public revenue per pupil: $9,846
- Year 1 expenses per pupil: $9,715
- Year 4 revenue per pupil: $9,361
- Year 4 expenses per pupil: $8,749
- Years to sustainability: 2

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**A DAY IN THE LIFE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00-8:50</td>
<td>Family Facilitated Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:45</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:55</td>
<td>ELA Rotation</td>
<td>ELA Rotation</td>
<td>Flex Time (ELA or Math)</td>
<td>ELA Rotation</td>
<td>ELA Rotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:55-11:10</td>
<td>Math Rotation</td>
<td>Math Rotation</td>
<td>Math Rotation</td>
<td>Math Rotation</td>
<td>Math Rotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:10-12:10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15-1:00</td>
<td>Lunch/Recess</td>
<td>Lunch/Recess</td>
<td>Lunch 12:20 Dismissal 12:40</td>
<td>Lunch/Recess</td>
<td>Lunch/Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:00</td>
<td>Project Based Learning Science</td>
<td>Project Based Learning Science</td>
<td>Teacher Professional Development and Planning</td>
<td>Project Based Learning Science</td>
<td>Project Based Learning Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10-3:05</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3:05-3:15</td>
<td>Afternoon Meeting</td>
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<td>Afternoon Meeting</td>
<td>Afternoon Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15-4:15</td>
<td>Family Facilitated Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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Contact: Nicole Tempel Assisi, nassisi@thriveps.org

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