



Aspire East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy – School Profile 2011-12

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CEEB Code: 054257
Thomas Madson, Principal
Elisa Romero, Head College Counselor

Mission and History

Aspire East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy is an open-enrollment college preparatory charter school dedicated to preparing all students for acceptance and success at the four-year college or university of their choice. Our mission is to equip our students with the academic skills, behaviors, habits, and qualities of character necessary to successfully complete college so that they have the opportunity to earn a family-sustaining income and make a positive impact on their community. In doing so, we intend to change the expectations and the opportunity equation for young people in East Palo Alto and communities like ours.

Founded in 2006, Aspire East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy (“EPAPA”) is a public charter school that originally grew from Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School (“EPACS”), a highly successful K-8 charter school established by parents in 1997. Based on their concerns about their students’ prospects at area comprehensive high schools, 8th grade parents at EPACS asked us to expand to provide their students with a rigorous college preparatory secondary program. EPAPA’s charter is held by the Sequoia Union High School District. EPAPA is part of **Aspire Public Schools**, the highest-performing school system serving primarily low-income students in California. Aspire currently provides College for Certain education to over 12,000 students in the state.

Our Community

- The disparity between East Palo Alto, CA and the surrounding communities is striking.
- Median family income: East Palo Alto \$48,717; Palo Alto (next door) \$156,308
 - Approximately 10% of EPA residents have a bachelors degree (over 75% in Palo Alto)
 - **East Palo Alto’s high school drop-out rate is estimated to be over 70%**

Although they help contextualize our students’ lives, these facts and figures do not dictate their future. On the contrary, we believe our students can and will achieve college success regardless of the immense obstacles they encounter every day; it is their drive and personal strength that defines them, not the adversity they have faced.

Graduation Requirements

In order to earn a diploma from Aspire East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy, students must:

1. pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).
2. earn a GPA of 2.0 or above.
3. successfully complete Exhibitions each year.
4. earn 230 high school credits (University of California ‘a-g’ requirements as a baseline) and 15 college credits.
5. **earn admission to a four-year college or university.**

Credit Requirements

A – History / Social Science	30 credits
B – English	40 credits
C – Mathematics	30 credits
D – Laboratory Science	30 credits
E – Language Other Than English	20 credits
F – Visual and Performing Arts	10 credits
G – College Preparatory Elective	10 credits
Advisory	40 credits

School Population

- **Total enrollment:** 305 student (grades 7-12); 26 seniors
- **Ethnic Background:** 86% Latino(a), 11% African American, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% White/Other
- **97%** of our students participate in the federal free/reduced lunch program
- **90%** of our students speak English as a second language
- **97%** of our students are first-generation college students

Family Involvement

Family support is vital to the success of our students. EPAPA require families to contribute 40 Effort Units (hours) each academic year. Family Effort Units are earned for community involvement (parent meetings, conferences) as well as support of academic and college preparedness. In partnership with the Center for Educational Partnerships at UC Berkeley we are developing a Family and College Resource Center, which is designed to empower all of our stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to build a college-going culture.

Ranking and Grading

Because of the size of our school, we do not rank our students. GPAs are calculated as follows:

	unweighted	weighted
A / A+	4.0	5.0
A-	3.7	4.7
B+	3.3	4.3
B	3.0	4.0
B-	2.7	3.7
C+	2.3	3.3
C	2.0	3.0
C-	1.7	2.7
below C-	0.0	0.0

Weighted GPA is computed by adding one point to each A, B, or C earned in a community college or AP class. These courses are noted with a “CC” or “AP” on the transcript. All community college courses are offered by Cañada College in Redwood City, CA unless otherwise noted.

Academic Program and Course of Study

Our academic program and course of study are designed to prepare our students for the rigors of college. Academic course offerings are certified as college prep/University of California 'a-g' classes.

Early College High School – Community College Courses

The small size of our staff can limit the variety of coursework and electives we offer. In order to provide our students with greater breadth of course offerings, the most rigorous curriculum possible, and – importantly – exposure to the college experience, we enroll all of our students in community college courses as high school students. Most courses are taught by college professors at EPAPA. However, seniors who have completed their requirements take classes at the local community college campus. Community college partners are noted below.

Course Offerings for Class of 2012

English

- English 1
- English 2
- English 3
- English 4

History / Social Science

- Economics
- US Government
- US History
- World History

Mathematics

- Algebra 2
- Geometry
- Math Analysis / Trigonometry (Pre-Calculus)
- Calculus

Laboratory Science

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

Visual and Performing Arts

- Art 1
- Art Portfolio

Foreign Language

- Spanish 1
- Spanish 2

Advisory / College Readiness

- Academic Literacy
- Advisory
- Senior Seminar

Community College Courses (Cañada College)

- ASTR 100 Introduction to Astronomy
- ART 204 Drawing 1
- CBOT 430/431 Computer Applications I/II
- CIS 118/119 Intro to Object-Oriented Programming
- COMM 110 Public Speaking
- DRAM 140 Introduction to Theatre
- ECE 201 Early Childhood Development
- GEOG 110 Cultural Geography
- HSCI 100 General Health Sciences
- MUS 210 History of Popular Music and Rock
- OCEN 100 Oceanography
- PSYC 106 Psychology of Discrimination
- PLSCI 103 World Politics/International Relations
- SPAN 150/152 Spanish for Heritage Speakers I/II
- SPCH 120 Interpersonal Communications

Accreditations and Affiliations

Aspire East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. EPAPA is a member of the College Board and the Western and National Associations of College Admissions Counselors.

Contact Information

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- **Elisa Romero**, Head College and Academic Counselor
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Aspire Public Schools College Acceptances

EPAPA acceptances are listed in bold.
Schools to which our graduates have matriculated are in italics.

Academy of Art University
Alabama State University
American University
Arizona State University
Bethune-Cookman College
Boston College
Brigham Young University - Idaho
California Lutheran University
California Polytechnic – San Luis Obispo
California State University
Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico, Dominguez Hills, East Bay, Fresno, Fullerton, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Sonoma, Stanislaus
City College of New York (CCNY)
Chaminade University
Clark Atlanta University
Columbia University
Concord University
Cornell University
Dominican University
Eastern Oregon University
Fisk University
Florida Institute of Technology
Goucher University
Grambling State University
Hamilton College
Hampton University
Hawaii Pacific University
Hofstra University
Hollins University
Holy Names University
Howard University
Idaho State University
Indiana State University
Johnson and Wales University
Lewis and Clark College
Liberty University – VA
Lincoln College
Linfield College
Loyola Marymount University
Menlo College
Mills College
Mount Saint Mary's College
Morris College
National Hispanic University
New Mexico State University
Norfolk State University
Northern Arizona University
Notre Dame De Namur University
Occidental College
Oregon State University
Pace University
Paine College
Pitzer College
Prescott College
Regis University
Saint John's University (New York)
Saint Mary's College
Santa Clara University
Southern University – New Orleans
Spelman College
Stillman College
Suffolk University
Syracuse University
Tuskegee University
University of Arizona
University of California
Berkeley, **Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, San Diego**
University of Hawai'i – Manoa
University of Idaho
University of Illinois – Urbana
University of Memphis
University of Nebraska
University of Nevada – Las Vegas
University of Oklahoma
University of the Pacific
University of Puget Sound
University of Pennsylvania
University of Redlands
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco
Vanguard University
Wellesley College
Wheelock College
Willamette University
Woodbury College
Xavier University of Louisiana
Yale University