

**Dear Leadership High School and City Arts & Technology High School Communities,**

We are writing to announce that on Tuesday, October 26, the SFUSD Board of Education unanimously approved the merger of Leadership High School (LHS) and City Arts and Technology (CAT), clearing the way for us to begin the process of building a new, united community, preparing for the upcoming school year, and ensuring that everyone has what they need throughout the transition.

We are writing both to celebrate this good news and to share key information with you including: (1) **background** about the process that has brought us to today and (2) **what’s next**, including how you can be involved. We are also including links to FAQs at the end of this letter.

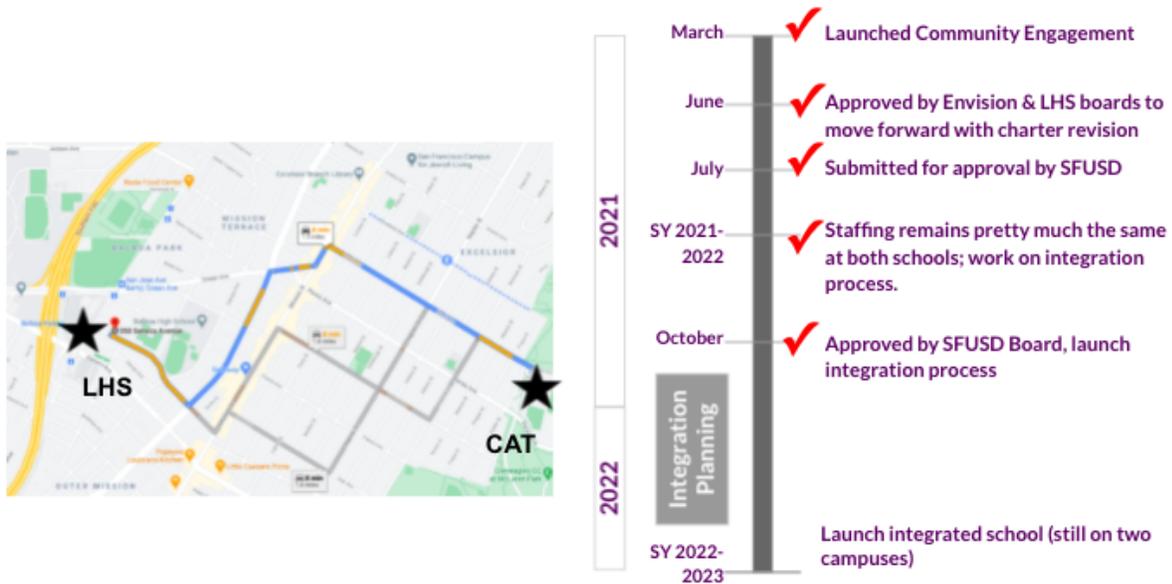
**Background:**

We began exploring the idea of joining forces in early 2021. Our first step was to engage our community, guided by the following principles:

- Keep students and families at the center.
- Be clear in our language, our actions, and our decision-making process.
- Be transparent and honest, especially in communicating the realities of both schools.
- Find a balance between celebration and loss: Attend to the emotions of our community.
- Be clear about our current best thinking while staying open to community input.

In the Spring of 2021, the leadership at CAT/Envision and LHS engaged staff and families through meetings, office hours, and newsletters and shared the following timeline:

**LHS-CAT MERGER TIMELINE**



After our respective boards approved us to move forward, we submitted to SFUSD the material revision to CAT’s charter to merge with in July 2022. The four specific changes approved on October 26 are:

1. Changing the name of the school from City Arts & Technology High School to a new name that honors both schools. The working name right now is City Arts & Leadership High School, but the new school community will go through a process to select an official new name in the future.
2. Increasing enrollment so that every current CAT and LHS student has a spot at the merged school.

3. Allowing the school to be on two campuses for the school years 2022-23 and 2023-24; and then on one campus where LHS is currently housed, beginning in school year 2024-25.
4. Combining what is best from both schools to better serve San Francisco students and families.

Now it is time to launch our integration planning process!

**What's Next?** Both of our schools are already fiercely committed to students and equity, and to providing a rigorous, college-preparatory education. Our job now is to bring our two communities together—to form an even stronger one that has the capacity to reach even more students and families. We have a lot of work to do in the coming months, and we are ready to roll up our sleeves and work collaboratively to ensure a strong and effective process.

We have established Integration Working Groups to address the wide range of academic, operations, enrollment, and communications processes that need to be well-aligned for a smooth transition. We are also fully committed to being transparent with our community, and will provide monthly updates to keep everyone informed about progress.

**How can you be involved?** Your voices are valued and welcomed! We encourage you to join the conversation and the work by:

- Participating in relationship building opportunities with the two schools;
- Participating in the design/integration process which will begin next semester;
- Participating in focus groups and office hours so you have the most up to date information;
- Reaching out to your principal with any questions or concerns.
- [Please complete this form](#) to share how you'd like to be involved!

As the principals of LHS and CAT, we are both excited by what this change means for our students: a stronger school that can more effectively prepare students for success in college and career. We are fully confident that together we can not only give students the learning experiences they deserve, but also that we can do it in a way that honors the adults in our community: the families, teachers, administrators, and staff who make the work possible.

Below are links to FAQ documents for you to explore; we will continue to add to these documents throughout the year.

- [FAQs for Staff](#)
- [FAQs for Families](#)

We look forward to the conversations and collective work to come!

Phillip Chardon  
CAT Principal

Shakirat Taylor  
LHS Principal

#### PERSPECTIVES

*From Jaelyn Salangsang, Junior at City Arts & Technology High School:*

"I believe that combining my school with LHS will help build a stronger community between both schools. It won't be easy at the beginning but I believe with time a strong bond will be made with both schools."

*From Michelle Torres, English Teacher at City Arts & Tech High School and president of Envision United:*

"We have many strengths at CAT, for example our instructional leadership is grounded in an anti-racist and pro-Black vision, but the thought of joining with another strong school like Leadership, makes me so excited for the San Francisco Community. By bringing both schools together, we will be creating a stronger educational experience for our students."

*From Corinne Benson, Director of Administration at Leadership High School:*

"For LHS, joining forces with CAT and becoming part of the Envision Education Network will result in a stronger, better resourced school that can offer students more courses and more enrichment opportunities, while still retaining the benefits of a small school community."