

Support TAM's Future: The K-12 Aviation and Aerospace Academy

Groundwork for the K-12 Aviation and Aerospace Academy (the Academy) already has begun:

- The Compton Unified School District's Office of Career and Technical Education has agreed to establish an Introduction to Aviation course elective at the high school level as early as Spring 2015, and they will recruit elementary and middle school partners for curriculum to be introduced in Fall 2015.
- Two community colleges – Orange Coast College and Cypress College – both offer accredited aviation curriculum, and their representatives have expressed a strong interest in the Academy and in establishing dual enrollment accreditation for high school coursework. (The dual enrollment model is valued for its capacity both to reduce the costs of higher education and to improve learning during high school years.)
- TAM has agreed to serve as the key Academy liaison, recruiting "Industry Presenters" who will be welcomed into classrooms to inspire interest and strengthen instructional activities. Presenters will introduce leading-edge thinking and workplace skills.
- Because the curriculum will use the inspiration of flight to excite students in hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) learning during the school day, it is anticipated that many of those students will want to extend that knowledge after the school bell rings. TAM will serve as the "learning laboratory" for after-school activities.

What's next?

The partners will seek state accreditation for introductory aviation and aerospace coursework that is developed at TAM and adapted ultimately for multiple grades. Concurrently, TAM will support Compton Unified in securing articulation agreements, and clear roles and responsibilities for all partners will be articulated.

Sustainability will be programmed into the Academy model. Compton Unified anticipates using Career Technical Education (CTE) funds to bring students to TAM to participate in "learning laboratory" activities, and with state certification of coursework, CTE funds also could support TAM's operating costs for coordination.

But **students cannot wait** for these logistics to be finalized. TAM needs funds **now** to support a full-time Academy Program Coordinator and to offset costs of those program components managed by TAM. The two-year budget to launch the Academy is \$180,000.

Planned as a replicable model, the Academy **fills a gap**. Currently, California Partnership Academies, which are overseen by the California Department of Education and which integrate academic and career technical education, are limited to high schools and do not include an aviation and aerospace program.

*Help students fly into their futures;
support Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum.*