



GRIFFIN
TECHNOLOGY ACADEMIES

**MISSION, VISION,
IDENTITY, AND OUR
PATHWAY FORWARD**

GTA 180°

GTA BOARD APPROVED
JUNE 5, 2022



MISSION, VISION, IDENTITY, AND OUR PATHWAY FORWARD

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ABOUT GTA 180°



One of the concerns Griffin Technology Academy stakeholders have expressed is a lack of identity and organizational mission that would bring together all of its four schools and their programs.

Another concern is that the board needs an updated structure and updated policies for board service.

A third concern is to answer the many justified complaints in VCUSD's Notices of Violation.

The GTA 180° plan aims to provide a road map to answer all three of these concerns.



From the Acting Superintendent

Thank you for taking the time to review Griffin Technology Academies' plan for the future. The GTA 180° plan highlights the numerous remedies already taken as well as measures we are currently taking to guarantee transparency, accountability, and a strong academic program.

For the past three months, our administrative team has worked tirelessly with the Vallejo City Unified School District as well as experts in various fields to remedy the numerous errors made by previous GTA administrations. We have also spoken with our families and staff, and appreciate those who have taken the time to help us improve our schools.

The GTA 180° plan will provide VCUSD and the entire GTA school community with the confidence that our schools are moving in a positive direction for our students. As Acting Superintendent, it's my responsibility to keep the promise we made with our families and staff – ensuring a safe, supportive, engaging, and challenging learning environment.


 NICK DRIVER

GTA'S DEFINING BELIEFS:

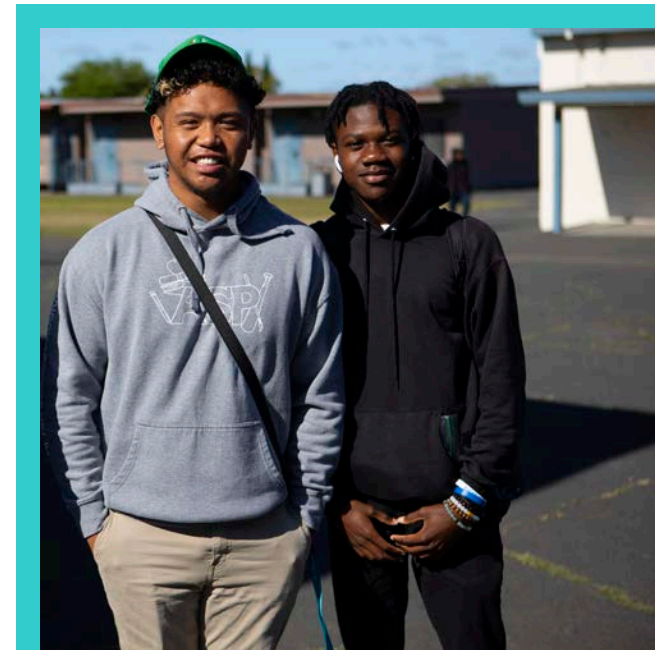
- All students can learn and thrive.
- Equitable growth means that all students regardless of race and class will achieve their potential.
- Technology skills enhance student success using today's tools that will help them tomorrow.
- Student achievement requires strong partnerships with parents.
- All GTA staff members are critical partners in accelerating student learning.
- We embrace and model continuous improvement individually and as a community.

GTA'S INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS WILL:

- Align with California's content state standards and frameworks.
- Include a focus on the use of technology for learning and creating.
- Contain rigorous content to drive achievement and college eligibility.
- Incorporate community service and off-campus experiences to enhance on-campus learning.

GTA'S LCAP STRATEGIC GOALS:

- Guarantee a safe, nurturing learning environment for all students where they are provided with the necessary tools/supports for academic and personal success.
- Ensure all students demonstrate annual progress in English/language arts as evidenced by local and state measures.
- Make sure that all students demonstrate annual progress in mathematics and science as evidenced by local and state measures.
- Ensure our English learner population makes annual progress in their acquisition of English language in order to prepare them for college and career, and maintain their first language to remain competitive in the global economy.
- Provide a robust system of engagement activities and educational opportunities for our educational partners to nurture parent voice and input in decision-making, as well as support of the school's mission and vision to support student success.
- Guarantee that all students are provided with a rigorous high school curriculum that prepares them for the college and career of their choice, and remain resilient in the face of life's challenges.



GTA MISSION

The mission of Griffin Technology Academies is to prepare students in Vallejo to be ready for college, career, and life through diverse, innovative instructional programs that focus relentlessly on student academic achievement and social and emotional well-being.



GTA VISION

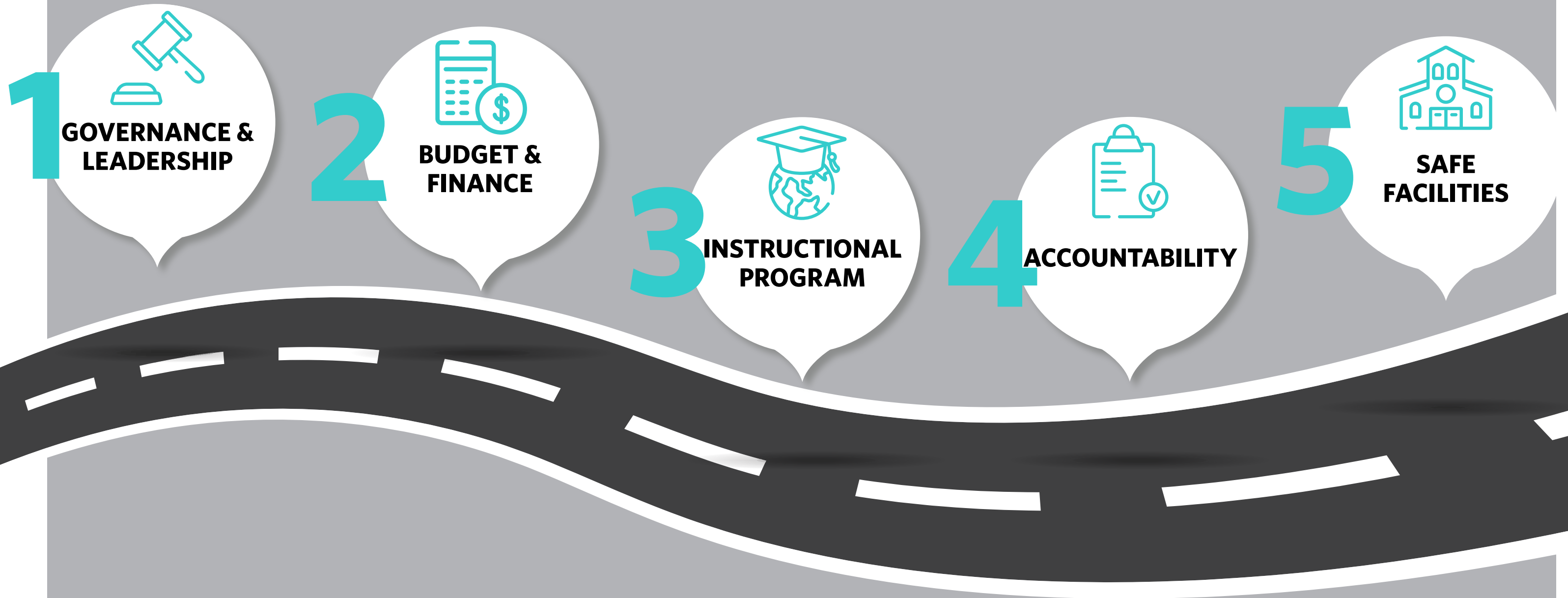
Griffin Technology Academies' graduates will have the self-confidence, academic knowledge, problem-solving & technology skills to experience success in life and to contribute locally and globally.



GTA IDENTITY

Achieving equitable growth and success with Vallejo creativity.

OUR PATHWAY FORWARD



GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

Reconstitution of the Griffin Technology Academies Board with transparent policies and procedures.

- Effective June 15th, four members of the GTA Board will have resigned, including Lynne Vaughan, Debbie Lamb, and Jim Shorter.
- GTA has recruited and will continue to recruit, new board members, including parents, community members, and those experienced in running and leading organizations. We elected one new board member at our May 24th meeting, and plan on electing another at our June 28th meeting.
- The GTA Board is amending its current bylaws to clarify board responsibilities, as well as a limit of four 3-year terms. The bylaws will also prohibit former members from rejoining until they have been off the board for at least three years.



▶ ADDITIONAL STEPS



Retained a leading board advisor with the California School Boards Association to support, guide, and help the GTA board establish best practices.



Orientation and governance training will be provided to all remaining and new board members before the first day of SY 2022-2023, with an emphasis on board roles and responsibilities, the Brown Act, and all laws that apply to charter schools.



Retained a leading charter school financial advisor to conduct fiscal oversight training quarterly starting in SY 2022-2023.



The Chair of the GTA Board, with its Superintendent, proposes to meet with the VCUSD Superintendent and interested VCUSD Trustees quarterly to provide regular reports of student performance, academic progress, and the school's fiscal health. GTA Superintendent and/or students will present updates at VCUSD's meetings during public comment.



At its April board meeting, GTA approved and started a new limited liability company that it directly controls. GTA Facilities LLC replaces the non-profit Friends of MIT as GTA's vehicle for leasing facilities to be eligible for SB 740 facilities funding. Friends of MIT had the appearance of a conflict of interest.



GTA and its subsidiary GTA Facilities LLC will only apply for SB740 funding for leases that are paying off the actual mortgage or rent costs.



The Friends of MIT Board has moved to dissolve the non-profit, and a final dissolution notice will be approved by the California Secretary of State in the next few weeks.

BUDGET & FINANCE

GTA's finances and fund balances are extremely strong due to prudent decisions by the board and management. GTA is solvent, liquid, and able to deliver our education program to the students of Vallejo.

- GTA's internal controls issue partly stemmed from the previous administration's reliance on quickly-packed paper files, due to abrupt facility changes. As stated above, the GTA administration has corrected these issues and GTA is eager to show outside auditors and VCUSD.



▶ ADDITIONAL STEPS



Internal controls deficiencies have been corrected. Confirmation of those corrections will come in the FY22 audit.



GTA proposes to invite an auditor of VCUSD's choice to review internal controls and perform "interim testing" during the summer to accelerate this timeline.



Implemented more rigorous digital filing, retention and workflow policies and procedures to correct and avoid a repeat of this risk going forward.



GTA identified systemic implementation issues with both our accounting software, AptaFund, and our payroll software, Paycom. These issues have all now been addressed.



Implemented Asana workflow software to track users and create an audit trail between systems.



GTA plans to produce a clean audit in October or November, the earliest date possible. It cannot be done earlier due to school fiscal cycles (unaudited financials due 9/15, then a 6-8 week audit period).



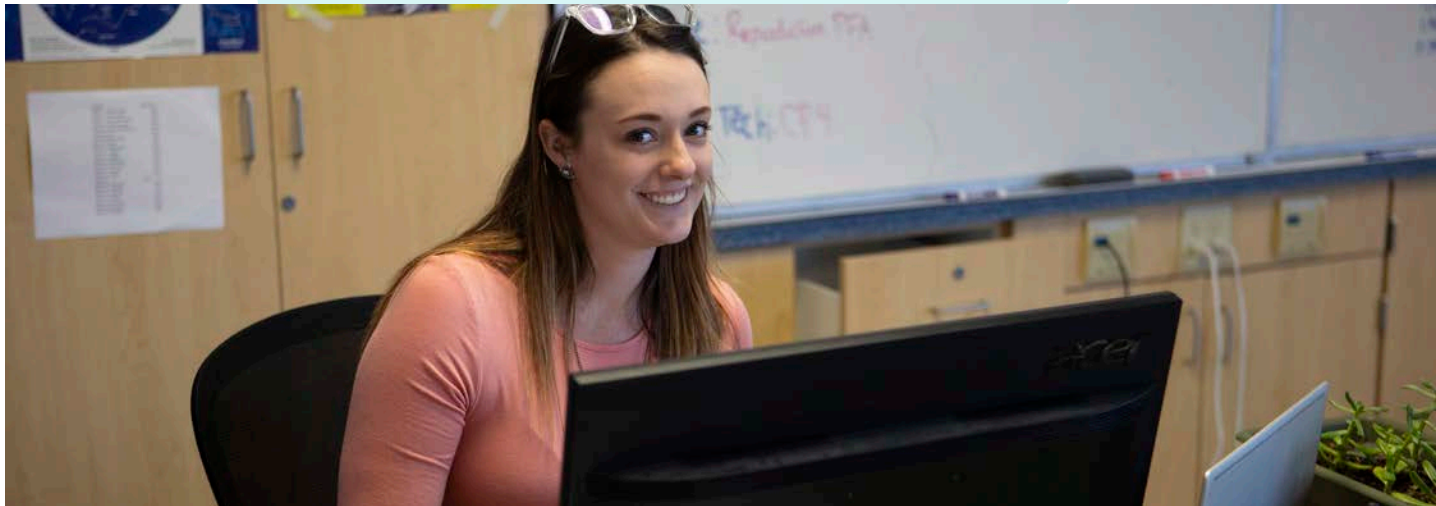
In addition to board training on fiscal matters, GTA is training staff on its new fiscal policies.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

In the 2022-2023 school year, GTA will begin a process to audit the core instructional program at each school in the following areas:

- Alignment with its charter and fidelity to the described model.
- The integrity of its implementation.
- Adequacy of resources to support the program (ie. textbooks, technology, etc.)
- Adequacy of professional development for teachers to implement the school model.

To support the schools' academic program and address student social-emotional needs, GTA is increasing staff specifically to support student learning: special education paraeducators, instructional aides, ELA/ELD/Math support teachers, counselors, academic interventionists, academic advisors, and before/after-school recreation leads.



▶ GTA IS WORKING TO EXPAND ITS SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS TO INCLUDE:



**DUAL
ENROLLMENT**



**SUPPORT WITH
ELD/ELA/
MATH**



**COMPUTER
SCIENCE**



**CTE
PATHWAYS**



**COLLEGE
EXPOSURE/
CREDIT RECOVERY**



**EXTENDED
DAY**

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT RESULTS & BOARD/MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE

- GTA has created a new position of Chief Accountability Officer (CAO) who will serve as a member of the Superintendent’s Cabinet.
- Students’ interim assessment reports on student progress in each LCAP goal area will be provided to the GTA Board and the public.
- Bi-annual benchmarks for student achievement in reading and math will be established by grade level at each school site.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will be established at each grade level for teachers to discuss student academic/social-emotional progress and to monitor progress towards these benchmarks.

READ MORE ABOUT THE NEW GTA CAO POSITION...



GTA CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER WILL:

- Monitor formative and summative assessment data, ensure compliance with State and Federal programs, and manage a continuous feedback loop empowering and supporting our teachers and staff with real-time information and support for student academic and socioemotional needs.
- Ensure that the GTA Board is acting in compliance with all laws and procedures, and is not engaging in management responsibilities.
- Responsible for setting up systems to ensure the proper sharing of data across the organization.
- Manage and prepare all reports required by the memorandum of understanding (“MOU”) with the chartering authority as well as other charter-related reporting.
- Oversee the implementation of categorical and grant-funded programs for compliance and reporting purposes; prepares and distributes county, State, and Federal compliance reports.
- Manage all State and Federal reporting related to the instruction, curricula, and student data.
- Facilitate planning and reporting processes related to the development of school-wide instructional strategies for school-wide, county, State, and WASC reporting.
- Oversee the development and publication of the School Accountability Report Card.
- Maintain files and reports for all categorical reporting.
- Recommend policies and procedures related to reporting and compliance requirements.
- Remain abreast of local, state, and federal mandates and developments impacting school data reporting.
- Ensure that CALPADS reporting and attendance reporting are submitted following State requirements.
- Create, maintain and manage a master calendar of all compliance deadlines in conjunction with school leaders as they relate to District, County, State, and Federal regulations, and ensure compliance with the same.
- Remain abreast of Charter School and CDE regulations regarding school operations, annual notifications, student records management, attendance reporting, Uniform Complaint procedures, school health and safety, and other required student policies, and ensure compliance with the same.
- Ensure school compliance with school facilities maintenance and health and safety protocols, including internal facilities condition reviews and audits, the efficiency and effectiveness in which facilities work tickets are resolved, and escalating facilities issues to the Superintendent and Board as applicable.
- Track and maintain records related to GTA’s progress on facilities improvement and development projects.
- Ensure school compliance with COVID-19 related protocols, including quarantine, cleaning protocols, and coordination with plant staff to ensure the functioning of sinks and availability of soap, paper products, hand sanitizer, and personal protective equipment.
- Ensure that independent study is provided in compliance with school policy and all legal requirements under law and regulation, including but not limited to ensuring that master agreements are created for each student as required under law, that required signatures are timely collected, and that independent study for English learners and special education students complies with all particular requirements applicable to them.
- Ensure that Board meetings are conducted in compliance with all Brown Act requirements by ensuring completion of the Brown Act checklist for each meeting, including that closed session items are agendaized correctly; that GTA liaises with legal counsel on issues related to Brown Act compliance and for the review of agendas; and that meetings are accessible to the public and those open session meetings are recorded.
- Ensure that oversight requests and communications from the chartering authority are responded to in a timely, accurate, and complete manner.
- Review and ensure that schoolwide communications to families are accurate.
- Support the GTA Board of Directors by providing reports on all of the foregoing areas of accountability and supporting the Board’s development through the identification of potential goals and areas of focus for the Board.
- Support the GTA Board of Directors, in coordination with the Superintendent, to ensure proper execution of their governance functions under GTA’s charters and the Board’s bylaws and effective relationships between the Board and employees.

SAFE FACILITIES

The GTA administration has taken the following actions to address the facilities issues on the 2 Positive Place campus:

- Staff and students were immediately sent home when the investigation following mold testing uncovered the extensive nature of the problem.
- The General Contractor was directed to repair all rooms that will be occupied, both inside and out.
- New leadership to support the momentum of this project has been hired.
- GTA negotiated interim housing with VCUSD at Corcoran and Beverly Hills campuses.
- GTA has provided weekly communications with updates regarding our progress to its families, the District, our staff, and the community.

GTA HAS, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, BEEN PLANNING AND ACQUIRING FUNDING FOR TWO, NEW PERMANENT CAMPUSES:



SEE OUR PROGRESS:



MIT Academy received preliminary apportionment awards of \$49 million from the State of California to renovate its existing campus and construct new facilities at 2 Positive Place and the Omega site. Plans for the state-of-the-art campus have been completed, submitted to DSA, and are under review.



Griffin Academy has a long-term lease with VCUSD. A multi-phased plan to add capacity to the site is being developed, including interim housing and a permanent two-story building to replace portable classrooms and improve the site.



Thank You, Vallejo!

In 1999, Griffin Technology Academies opened its first charter school, Mare Island Technology Academy. MIT Academy has given thousands of local underserved high school students the opportunity to graduate, not only with a plan to go to college, but with an associates degree.

Together with the support of the Vallejo community, GTA opened three additional charter schools - MIT Academy Middle School, Griffin Academy High School, and Griffin Academy Middle School.

Through it all, the community of Vallejo has supported GTA, our schools, and most of all, our amazing students! We may have had some challenges, but through sheer grit and determination, the GTA Griffins will rise again.

Thank you, Vallejo for your concerns, your passion, and your continued support. Vallejo is a proud city, diverse, hardworking, rich in California history, and steeped in “Vallejoan” spirit.

GTA loves our community and we are working hard to make Vallejo proud of us again. Here’s to another twenty years of GTA educating the children of Vallejo!





GRIFFIN TECHNOLOGY ACADEMIES

2 POSITIVE PLACE
VALLEJO, CA 94589
PHONE (707) 552-6482

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
GRIFFINTECHNOLOGYACADEMIES.ORG

