GRANADA HILLS, Calif. – Technology is changing the world around us so shouldn’t our high schools change as well? Granada Hills Charter High School opened its new Devonshire campus on August 17, 2015, with a heavy focus on technology and innovative student learning. The iGranada Digital Arts & Sciences program at the Devonshire campus provides over 200 students in grades nine through twelve and their parents with a flexible choice in education by combining online classes with the support of classroom advisors and peer collaboration. At iGranada Digital Arts & Sciences, students learn to use the same digital tools as multimedia professionals while becoming certified in Java computer programming, HTML web programming, and Adobe Creative Suite for graphic design and video editing.

Students select from a full range of college-preparatory courses including the core disciplines of math, English, science, and social
science with diverse electives such as French, Mandarin, Spanish, marketing, computer science, and visual and performing arts. The curriculum is accessible online, allowing students to work both at home and at school. This innovative approach to high school learning teaches students to manage their own time which is an important skill for college and career.

“This is a new millennium with a new way of conducting business and technology is at the center. As high school educators, we are responsible for equipping our students to thrive in a digital world so that is why we started iGranada,” explains Jenny DaCosta, Administrative Director of Instruction.

Students receive frequent one-on-one assistance from their academic advisors and online instructors. Every student spends time in the “collaborative labs” where they are able to share their ideas and engage with their peers.

A ninth grade parent explains that the special blend of online and face-to-face collaboration allows his introverted son to feel comfortable participating and he doesn’t hesitate to ask questions in this new environment. “My son is a ‘techie’ so iGranada is a godsend for our family. This program is customized for his interests and he feels comfortable here,” says the father.

Even the interior layout and furniture at iGranada Digital Arts & Sciences was designed to help foster creativity and team work.

“We place the students in ‘pods’ instead of in rows like a traditional classroom,” describes DaCosta. “Students utilize technology in their presentations and solve problems as a group, much like the real world. Every classroom is equipped with high-definition touchscreens for large group presentations, instructor-led lessons, and interactive curricular opportunities.”

Small group collaboration is an important learning strategy at iGranada
Granada Hills Charter High School has over 60 clubs and 43 athletic teams available to all students. iGranada students on the Devonshire campus have access to these same organizations and activities, receive the same high level of support provided to all GHCHS students, and are able to earn a GHCHS diploma. The new campus is located at 17081 Devonshire Street in Northridge, formerly Pinecrest School, and is less than a mile walk to the main campus on Zelzah Avenue.

“Education should constantly change to serve students. A traditional classroom was designed so that some people succeed and others don't. Our new campus seeks to change that by allowing every student to work at their own pace and to receive help at any time,” says iGranada student Ruth Okonkwo, Class of 2018. “This is a new way of learning and it will take some getting used to but without change we cannot progress as a community or in the world.”

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About Granada Hills Charter High School: Granada Hills Charter High School, the largest charter school in the nation, is an independent public school in the San Fernando Valley. As a fiscally independent conversion charter school, Granada Hills Charter has a current student enrollment of approximately 4,600 and an annual student wait list of almost 3,000. The School’s student body is considered one of the most diverse, with more than 40 languages other than English spoken at home and over 60 nationalities represented. Over 2,300 students are eligible for the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program. As a 501c3 non-profit benefit corporation, the School’s Governing Board is the legal entity overseeing all school policy and its $50 million operating budget. In 2015, BusinessInsider.com and Niche recognized GHCHS as the #1 public high school in California and #10 public high school in the United States of America.