

PHILADELPHIA MUSIC AND DANCE CHARTER SCHOOL

APPLICATION

As of November 15, 2014

to

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

and



PHILADELPHIA MUSIC AND DANCE CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Philadelphia Music and Dance Charter School Charter School is an exciting blended learning and performing arts school for students in grades K-12th. The School aims to be located in West Philadelphia near the University of Pennsylvania in the former West Philadelphia High School building.

This model school, based on groundbreaking blended learning work in California and elsewhere, and with no similar schools in Philadelphia, will be located in the West Philadelphia zip code area of 19139, one of the School District's priority target neighborhoods where it "would most benefit Philadelphia's students... based on local school quality, the lack of charter options, district utilization rates, and poverty rates."

Mission

The mission of the School is to create a safe, caring and high performing school community for a diverse student body where their individual needs are recognized and supported by a highly qualified staff and a rigorous academic program enhanced by technology and a robust performing arts program. This school will serve the diverse and low income students of West Philadelphia and nearby areas, inspiring them with training and practice in the performing arts, and providing them with state of the art technology and data to prepare them for post-secondary success in college or the performing arts.

Vision and Educational Philosophy

The School's Board of Trustees believes that all students should have access to exceptional curriculum and tools that enable them to maximize their success in life, regardless of geographic, financial, or demographic circumstances. Our vision is to create a high-performing and innovative school that will foster graduates capable of exemplary levels of artistic expression and student achievement, as well as to prepare students for any post-secondary opportunity they wish to pursue.

This school is an innovative redesign of public education. It will integrate the best of traditional schools with cutting edge, technologically-based curriculum and instantaneous data collection that allows for individualized learning – data that is readily available to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. The model is innovative and set in a research base that creates a strong probability of success. Paired with the accomplished dance and music experts, the Board believes that this creates an environment where a diverse student body can thrive.

Innovative Instructional Model and Academic Plan

Our blended school design, with its small groups, self-pacing and personalization, is particularly well-suited to meeting the needs of very diverse students and creating a *positive learning environment* where all students are supported. Unlike the large classes in most schools, despite the best efforts of dedicated and caring teachers, the students in this blended school will get the help they need when they need it.

In this model, students learn their core concepts using a world-class digital and physical curriculum while

highly qualified, Pennsylvania state certified teachers:

- (1) provide direct instruction in small and changing breakout groups based on data from assessments embedded in the curriculum,
- (2) manage the personalized student learning process, ensuring that students achieve mastery of learning objectives,
- (3) mentor students throughout the learning experience providing inspiration, guidance, and support focused on individual student needs,
- (4) monitor student progress through interactive lessons and regular assessments as they work actively to advance each student's learning, and
- (5) deliver whole group standards-based instruction via an interactive whiteboard.

Each of these delivery methods is carefully utilized to best support the developmental needs of the students as well as their individual academic needs.

This School will use innovative blended learning designs not currently available in elementary, middle and high schools in the targeted community. This model includes technology-enhanced classrooms (using the respected K12 digital curriculum and other state of the art programs) plus flexible pacing, mastery-based assessments, and small group interactions.

As indicated in more detail in the full charter application, the School's elementary school model has had impressive results in urban areas similar to the demographics of West Philadelphia. For example, the model was used with great success for several years at the William H. Hunter Elementary School, a Philadelphia district school. Similarly, Draper Elementary, in the District of Columbia, had great success, with 100% of the 5th graders achieving proficiency on the DCAS science tests.

The School's middle and high school model is based in part on a highly successful blended program being implemented in Silicon Valley and San Francisco, California. Again, this model utilizes a powerful partnership between technology and teachers to provide students with the best of traditional classroom instruction (including small group instruction by highly qualified teachers) *and* the best of digital curriculum (including the ability for students to study at an individualized pace).

Operational & Financial Capacity

The School's founding coalition and Board have a vision and enthusiasm for building an excellent school in West Philadelphia, and is well positioned to provide the necessary oversight and support for the successful implementation of the charter school's mission. Led by the Dean of University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education and outstanding community and business leaders, including the Director of Black Male Engagement in the Mayor's Office, the Board and its advisors have all of the requisite talents and experience to govern the school, including expertise in education, the arts, technology, finance, facilities, charters, government relations, compliance and legal matters.

When the charter is granted, LR School Management is proposed to be the network's Education Service

Provider, supporting the daily operations of the School as well as providing the School's curriculum. LR School Management is a wholly owned subsidiary of a sister company to Pansophic Learning. Pansophic Learning has extensive expertise in instruction, professional development, blended learning, charter schools and all aspects of school operations, among other things.

Finally, the School will be combining the team's technological and instructional prowess with a powerful partnership with the nationally acclaimed US Performing Arts organization. This organization provides award-winning arts programs for K-12 students at programs located at universities across the country, and, with a budding partnership with the University of Pennsylvania's School of Education, this charter school can serve as a model of arts and technological innovation for neighboring schools. There are no school-wide arts programs nearby, and there are no blended schools combined with the arts like the proposed school anywhere in the country.

Target Community

The School aims to serve the diverse and low income students of West Philadelphia and University City in or near the zip code of 19139. The school district has identified this area as a priority target neighborhood that needs quality educational options such as this school.

Nearby schools include a number of currently low performing elementary and middle schools, as well as the large comprehensive West Philadelphia High School and Promise Academy. This proposed model school will complement the existing array of schools in the area by offering a distinctive digitally-based curriculum that provides a personalized academic experience along with an unusual and inspiring national performing arts partner to create a combination not existing in the area. If interested, the local schools could easily adapt and use a similar model to strengthen the academic components of their schools. Staff at Pansophic Learning have a strong track record of turning around low performing public schools.

As explained in more detail in the charter, the School plans to locate in the former West Philadelphia High School at 4700 Walnut Street in West Philadelphia, replete with an auditorium, cafeteria, a large gym, and many classrooms. This building and location will enable a high quality Kindergarten through 12th grade blended and arts-based school.

The School plans to start year 1 with grades Kindergarten through third grade, sixth grade and 9th grade, and add grades to each of these areas each year until the school serves all the grades from Kindergarten through 12th grade. As indicated in the charter materials below, the School envisions recruiting approximately 50 students for each elementary grade served and approximately 100 students for the initial middle school and high school grades.

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Academic Program section of the application should provide an overview of key instructional methods and assessment strategies, and explain the research base that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

1. Educational Philosophy

- a. *Explain the school's educational philosophy and articulate the proposed instructional techniques, describing the pedagogy that will be used to support the school's mission.*

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With a powerful partnership with the nationally acclaimed US Performing Arts organization, which provides award-winning arts programs for K-12 students at programs located at universities across the country, and a budding partnership with the University of Pennsylvania's School of Education, this school can serve as a model of innovation for neighboring schools. There are no school-wide arts programs nearby and there are no blended schools like this model in Philadelphia.

Vision and Educational Philosophy

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research base that creates a strong probability of success. Paired with the accomplished dance and music experts, the Board believes that this creates an environment where a diverse student body can thrive.

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In this model, students learn their core concepts using a world-class digital and physical curriculum while highly qualified, Pennsylvania (PA) state certified teachers: (1) provide direct instruction in small and changing breakout groups based on data from assessments embedded in the curriculum, (2) manage the personalized student learning process, ensuring that students achieve mastery of learning objectives, (3) mentor students throughout the learning experience providing inspiration, guidance, and support focused on individual student needs, (4) monitor student progress through interactive lessons and regular assessments as they work actively to advance each student's learning and (5) deliver whole group standards-based instruction via an interactive whiteboard. Each of these delivery methods is carefully utilized to best support the developmental needs of the students as well as their individual academic needs.

This School will use innovative blended learning designs not currently available in elementary, middle and high schools in the targeted community. This model includes technology-enhanced classrooms (using the respected K12 digital curriculum and other state of the art programs) plus flexible pacing, mastery-based assessments, and small group interactions.

As indicated in more detail in charts below, the School's elementary school model has had impressive results in urban areas similar to the demographics of West Philadelphia. For example, the model was used with great success for several years at the William H. Hunter Elementary School, a Philadelphia district school. Similarly, Draper Elementary, in the District of Columbia, had great success, with 100% of the 5th graders achieving proficiency on the DCAS science tests.

The School's middle and high school model is based in part on a highly successful blended program being implemented in Silicon Valley and San Francisco, California.¹ Again, this model utilizes a powerful partnership between technology and teachers to provide students with the best of traditional classroom instruction (including small group instruction by highly qualified teachers) *and* the best of digital curriculum (including the ability for students to study at an individualized pace).

¹ For the 2012-2013 school year, SF Flex's API went up by 86 points from a Base API of 648 to a Growth API of 734 - the largest gain of any San Francisco public school for the year. Silicon Valley Flex reported an API of 789, earning positive reviews in an October 2013 Ed Week article.

Research

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) reviewed an extensive body of research to identify high-quality, evidence-based studies that document student learning outcomes associated with an education in and through music. The results show conclusively that music education equips students with the foundational abilities to learn, to achieve in other core academic subjects, and to develop the capacities, skills and knowledge essential for lifelong success.

One key finding from the studies was that music education prepares the brain for achievement. Complex math processes are more accessible to students who have studied music because the same parts of the brain used in processing math are strengthened through practice in music. For example, students who take music in middle school score significantly higher on algebra assessments in ninth grade than their non-music counterparts, as their brains are already accustomed to performing the processes used in complex math. (*Helmrich, B. H. (2010). Window of Opportunity? Adolescence, Music, and Algebra. Journal of Adolescent Research, 25(4), 557-577.*)

The study also found that music education increases average SAT scores. An analysis of 10 years of SAT data revealed that students who took four years of arts courses in high school earned the highest scores on both the verbal and math SAT, but overall, students taking any arts courses scored significantly higher than students who took no arts courses. Of these students, those who took music courses earned the highest math and second highest verbal SAT scores (*College Board. (2010). 2010 College-bound Seniors Total Group Profile Report. New York.*)

2. Curriculum & Educational Plan

a. Curriculum Map and Summary:

Describe the academic program of the school, providing an overview of curriculum objectives and content in each subject area for each grade, as well as a description of how the curriculum aligns with Chapter 4 of the Public School Code. Please provide supporting curriculum documents for each subject and grade level in an attachment.

The School will use a blended learning innovative model not currently available in elementary schools in its targeted communities. This model includes technology-enhanced classrooms (using the respected K12 digital curriculum and other state of the art programs) plus flexible pacing, mastery-based assessments, and small group interactions.

Students learn core concepts using interactive digital curriculum at the school facility while highly qualified, Pennsylvania certified teachers: (1) manage the student learning process ensuring that students achieve mastery of learning objectives; (2) provide targeted instruction, interventions, and support focused on individual student needs; and (3) monitor student progress through interactive lessons and assessments; (4) monitor student progress through interactive lessons and daily assessments; and (5) deliver direct whole-group instruction.

Elementary and Middle School Model

A well designed, thoughtful instructional model is imperative to reach the school's goals. The basis of our K-8 instructional model are:

1. Standards-based curriculum that has a solid research base;
2. Well planned segmentation of the academic time for each subject so that individual needs are met, while also working on grade level content;
3. Regular analysis of the achievement data to inform student grouping and monitor progress;
4. Individualized academic coaching by the Teaching and Learning Coach (TLC) to develop highly effective classroom and special education teachers; and
5. Physical space design that supports flexible groups and the use of technology.

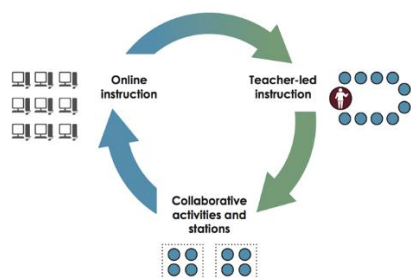
For example, a 3rd grade student's learning profile may reveal that they have mastered all of the state standards in Math at the Kindergarten and 1st grade level, but they have gaps at the 2nd grade level. For one 45 minute Math block per day, that student would join their grade level peers who have similar learning needs. Through small group instruction with the teacher, along with additional instruction and practice through software such as Education City or Dreambox, student gaps are quickly remediated and the percent of standards mastered at the 2nd grade level increases dramatically. Assessments are given frequently to determine mastery and to indicate that the student is ready to move on.

During the second 45 minute Math block during the day, this same 3rd grade student will work with his homeroom class to receive direct instruction on 3rd grade standards. Teachers will use whole group, small group and technology-supported individualized instruction to support student mastery of their grade level standards.

Both of these scenarios will utilize the station rotation model, as articulated below.

1) **Rotation model** — A program in which within a given course or subject (e.g., math), students rotate between learning modalities, at least one of which is digital learning. Other modalities might include activities such as small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and-paper assignments.

a) **Station Rotation** (also referred to as Classroom Rotation or In-Class Rotation) — A Rotation-model implementation in which within a given course or subject (e.g., math), students rotate *on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion* among classroom-based learning modalities. The rotation includes at least one station for digital learning. Other stations might include activities such as small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and-paper assignments. <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning-model-definitions/>



The daily schedule allows for increased academic time, while also allowing time for performing arts. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of modern dance and music classes designed to provide exposure. As they develop an interest, they can pursue this specifically as they enter high school but auditioning for the pre-professional level of courses, or continuing in a track that allows the novice to progress as well.

High School Model

The instructional day is divided into periods where a single class is covered within the period. In some cases students will take a class where the teacher is delivering whole group instruction and differentiating based on the needs of the students. In other cases students may be taking a course online supported by a Pennsylvania state certified teacher. These courses typically are ones that are not offered as part of the school's course catalog, such as a specialized Foreign Language or an advanced math class. In addition, students have daily classes in their chosen music or dance track customized to the level at which they are pursuing those classes. The pre-professional track requires an audition for admission. We believe that this two track performing arts offering allows students to stay with the school to graduation even if they choose not pursue the performing arts as their post-secondary option.

Instructional strategies of the teachers include but are not limited to:

Direct Instruction for Core Content: Highly qualified, PA certified Teachers will deliver core content in Math, English, History, and Science for specific periods of the day. Direct instruction supports mastery of state standards and is focused on specific strategies or skills to work effectively through their coursework. Teachers will carefully review and analyze data from assessments as well as course progress data on a weekly basis to ensure the instruction being delivered best meets student's needs.

Remediation and Enrichment: Students will also receive enrichment or remediation working in small groups or 1:1 with core content area Teachers throughout the week. Highly qualified, PA certified Teachers will review assessment results and course progress data on a weekly basis to identify gaps or areas that need to be enriched to support the distinctive needs of each individual learner.

Curriculum

An extensive Course Catalog for Grades Kindergarten through 12th grade and a detailed description of how the curriculum aligns with Chapter 4 of the Public School code are attached as Attachment 1.

The School will primarily utilize the K12 curriculum and Learning Management System to deliver its educational program. The K12 curriculum is a standards- and research-based, content-rich compendium of courses that meets or exceeds the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards. The School chose the K12 curriculum because of the following **Guiding Principles of Design, Development and Delivery**, which the Board believes are keys to high academic performance;

- **Employ Technology in an Effective and Appropriate Way for Learning.** Employ technology only where it is appropriate and can enhance the learning process.
- **Base Learning Objectives on Rich Content and “Big Ideas.”** “Big ideas” are the key, subconscious frameworks that serve as the foundation to a student’s future understanding of a subject matter. These “big ideas” organize and provide the master objectives of every course that was developed. Rich, engaging content was developed that best communicates these concepts to students to promote mastery of the topics.
- **Apply “Tried and True” Educational Approaches for Instruction.** “True” methodologies are based on cognitive research regarding the way in which individuals learn.
- **Assess Every Objective to Ensure Mastery.** To facilitate effective assessment, the curriculum establishes clear objectives for each lesson. Throughout a course, each student’s progress is assessed and evaluated by a teacher at a point when each objective is expected to be mastered, providing direction for appropriate pacing, reinforcing learning, and promoting mastery of a topic before a student moves to the next lesson or course.

Each K¹² course includes online lessons, worksheets, and teacher guides as well as traditional material such as books, science equipment, art supplies, CDs, and other hands-on materials and manipulatives.

Elementary and Middle School Curriculum

MATH

Building upon the success of a long-established program, K¹² Math balances mastery of fundamental skills with critical thinking and problem-solving. K¹² Math emphasizes an active, multi-sensory approach to ensure that students understand the concrete realities that underlie mathematical concepts. Regular practice and review ensures mastery of basic skills. Online games and animations motivate students and help illustrate concepts, while challenge problems help develop critical thinking skills. From helping younger students make the link between the concrete and the abstract to introducing older students to Algebra, K¹² Math provides a thorough mathematic grounding.

SCIENCE

K¹² is unique in offering real science for young students. The program balances hands-on experience with systematic study of scientific terms and concepts. Students perform many experiments to help them understand scientific principles, and receive guided instruction in important scientific concepts. Exploring life, earth, and physical sciences in each grade, K¹² science nurtures curiosity, analytical skills, and an appreciation of how the world is shaped by ongoing scientific and technological advances. Students learn about the human body, plants and animals, rocks and minerals, stars, matter, motion, electricity, magnetism, and much more. Through hands-on experiments, the program helps students develop skills of observation and analysis, and learn how scientists understand our world.

LANGUAGE ARTS/ENGLISH

Open Court Reading is a complete elementary basal reading program for Grades K-6. It maintains strong instruction in the areas of decoding (learning how to read), comprehension (understanding what you read), inquiry and investigation (learning how to apply what you have read), and writing (how to communicate with others in print). There are also applications for teaching spelling, vocabulary, grammar, usage, and mechanics, penmanship, and listening, speaking, and viewing.

Open Court Reading is designed such that no assumptions are made about students' prior knowledge, each skill is systematically and explicitly taught in a logical progression, to enable understanding and mastery. Part 1 of each unit, Preparing to Read, focuses on the foundations, including: phonemic awareness, sounds and letters, phonics, fluency, and word knowledge. Reading and Responding makes up Part 2, which emphasizes reading for understanding with: literature, comprehension, inquiry and investigation, and practical reading applications. Part 3, Language Arts, focuses on communication skills such as: spelling, vocabulary; writing process strategies; writer's craft; and English language conventions such as: grammar, speaking, and mechanics; listening, speaking, and viewing; penmanship; and basic computer skills.

Students in seventh and eighth grade will use K¹²'s Language Arts course. K¹² Language Arts/English helps students develop important reading and writing skills, while also inspiring a love of literature. Combining Phonics, Literature, Language Skills, and Spelling lessons, the Language Arts/English program emphasizes classic works, teaches writing as a process, and prepares students for standardized tests in the areas of language skills and reading comprehension. Students develop literary analysis and comprehension skills by reading novels and nonfiction work.

HISTORY

With integrated topics in Geography and Civics, K¹² History opens young minds and imaginations to far-off lands, distant times, and diverse cultures. K¹² emphasizes the story in History—a story that includes not only great men and women but also everyday people. The kindergarten History program takes students on a world tour of the seven continents, and provides an overview of American History through a series of biographies of famous Americans. The History program in grades 1–4 tells the story of civilization from the Stone Age to the Space Age, while students in grades 5 and up explore major themes and topics in greater depth through survey courses in American and World History.

ART

Following the timelines in the History lessons, K¹² Art lessons introduce students to great works of art from different cultures and eras, while engaging them in creative activity—painting, drawing, sculpting,

and weaving using materials such as oil pastels, crayons, molding clay, plaster, and yarn etc. Students are introduced to the elements of art—line, shape, color—and identify different types of artworks such as portrait, landscape, and still life as they learn about important paintings, sculpture, and architecture. They study the works of famous artists, from Rembrandt to Warhol, and learn about different artistic movements such as Impressionism and Cubism. Students also create their own works of art similar to they have learned about, such as mobiles, collages, and stained glass.

MUSIC

The School plans to form partnerships with local music schools and performing arts entities. It is through these contacts that we will contract to have courses written in music that allow all students to learn how to play the piano and read music. We believe it will provide a solid basis for their future music studies.

DANCE

The School will contract with the US Performing Arts company as well as various professional performing arts institutions in the community to develop a dance curriculum that provides exposure to a wide variety of modern dance styles. All students will participate in this course as a way to help them identify their performing arts focus as they reach 9th grade.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The only online language-learning program designed specifically for kids, K¹² World Language courses help students read, write, speak, and listen for meaning in five languages (Spanish, French, German, Latin, and Chinese). Combining a variety of games, simple narratives, and regular writing and speaking challenges, the World Language program highlights common vocabulary terms and phrases, introducing younger students to a wide range of grammar patterns, while helping older students master numerous grammar principles. Courses prepare students to generate language incorporating the vocabulary and patterns they have learned. Courses thoroughly meet all national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and follows state guidelines in covering level-appropriate standards in communication, cultures, linguistic and cultural comparisons, cross-curricular connections, and engaging with target-language speaking communities.

High School Curriculum

The School will be able to offer more than 150 K¹² high school courses designed to help students earn their high school diploma and find their own path to post-high school success—whether that’s in college or in the workforce. K¹² offers Math, English, Science, and History courses in multiple levels—Credit Recovery, Core, Comprehensive, Honors, and Advanced Placement to meet the needs of diverse learners. They may also choose from a variety of electives, including Anthropology, Web design, Entrepreneurship, and Green Design & Technology. By using the K12 high school curriculum, the School will enable students to harness the power of individualized learning by choosing from the following six levels of Math, English, Science, and History courses:

- **K12 Credit Recovery Courses** allow students to gain credit for courses they have previously taken and not completed successfully. These courses include diagnostic unit tests that assess students’ understanding of fundamental content and direct them to review or move ahead accordingly. Fresh, engaging content delivered with new approaches helps students grasp concepts they missed the first time. Designed to provide flexibility in delivering teacher support, these courses include computer-

graded assignments and assessments with the option to augment with teacher-graded assignments and assessments, as appropriate.

- **K12 Core Courses** are similar to the standard courses offered by many other programs. They meet all academic requirements for each course area both for graduation as well as for potential admission into a wide range of colleges.
- **K12 Comprehensive Courses** are designed for students entering with a strong foundational knowledge and aptitude in the subject area being covered, as well as solid study skills.
- **K12 Honors Courses** hold students to a greater degree of accountability, and demand even greater independence and self-discipline than their Comprehensive counterparts.
- **The K12 Advanced Placement (AP®) Courses** are college-level courses that follow curriculum specified by the College Board and are designed to prepare students for success on AP exams, providing students the opportunity to earn credit at most of the nation's colleges and universities. K12 currently offers 19 Advanced Placement courses that have been approved by the College Board. These courses were officially approved through the AP Audit process in the summer months of 2011. K12 AP courses are college level courses that follow curriculum specified by the College Board.

b. Rationale for Proposed Curriculum:

Describe how and why the curriculum was selected and how it is aligned to the school's mission.

Present evidence that the proposed educational program is research-based and has been or will be rigorous, engaging and effective for the anticipated student population.

Explain why the proposed curriculum is likely to succeed with at-risk students, including students with special education needs, English Language Learner (ELL) students, homeless students, and students who are struggling and/or below grade level.

The School chose the K12 Curriculum because of its extensive awards, research base, and alignment with our mission and vision.

Key criteria were developed that guided the curriculum selection. Included were questions such as:

- Is the content of the course aligned to the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards?
- Can the course be delivered via technology in order to meet individual student needs?
- Does the course provide data on how a student is progressing towards mastery?
- Does the curriculum allow highly qualified teachers to utilize research-based instructional practices designed to increase student achievement?
- Does the curriculum provide support for students with special education needs?
- Does the curriculum provide support for English Language Learners?

After a review of available curriculum vendors and based on the advice of RL School Management, the School believes the K12 curriculum meets the above criteria. Based on decades of education research, K12 has won numerous awards in recognition of their web-based curriculum, innovative program, and leadership in the field of online and blended learning including:

- Winner, 2012 Association of Educational Publishers (AEP) Distinguished Achievement Award in the Whole Curriculum Program category for Mathematics. Fundamentals of Geometry and Algebra program (online and offline)
- Finalist, 2012 EdTech Digest Digital Textbook Award for World History: Our Human Story
- Finalist, 2012 Association of Educational Publishers (AEP) Distinguished Achievement Award in the Reading and Language Arts category for Kindergarten Language Arts program (online and offline)
- Finalist, 2011 The Software Information Industry Association, CODiE™ Awards
 - Best Mathematics Instructional Solution: Math+
 - Best Public Virtual School Solution for Students to K12 Inc.
- Winner, 2010 United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) 21st Century Best Practices Award to K12 Inc.

Research Base for the Instructional Model

The use of differentiated instruction and the extensive use of assessment data for effective interventions and support are the cornerstone of the instructional model. These effective school elements are informed and guided by extensive research, including Dufour, R., Eaker, R. & Dufour, R., On Common Ground (2005). The Dufours have popularized the creation of Professional Learning

Communities that collect and use data to drive instruction. The model's use of K12's technology-enriched curriculum and curriculum from other providers, with valid and reliable embedded assessments, enables teachers to have immediate data informing what they will teach. These data points inform daily grouping strategies and signal the need for more intensive interventions. While a traditional school model makes it very difficult to target the needs of specific students, the instructional model enables a teacher to do this constantly by its design.

In addition, a generalized research base supports flexible school models that enable personalization and individualized learning plans, particularly for urban and low income students' success. See, e.g., Goodlad, J., *A Place Called School* (1984); Marzano, R.J., *Classroom Instruction that Works* (2001); *Breaking Ranks II* (2004); Ouchi, W.G., *Making Schools Work* (2003); Sizer, T., *Horace's Compromise* (1985). These books and others document how an effective school model should foster personalized attention and close relationships with students. Flexible groupings driven by whole group, small group and individualized instruction allow teachers to provide the right content, at the right time, for each student in their class.

Research Base for the K12 Curriculum

K12's digital courses are based on extensive e-learning research. For example, K12's courses are based on the research summarized by Clark and Mayer in "E-Learning and the Science of Instruction" (2011), among many others, who delineate effective online learning practices.

In addition, the K12 English *adaptive* MARK¹² remedial reading program is supported by extensive reading research, including, among others: Adams, Marilyn Jager, *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print*. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press. (1990); Adams, Marilyn Jager, Barbara Foorman, Ingvar Lundberg, and Terri Beeler, *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing (1998); National Reading Panel. *Teaching Children To Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction*, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). As a result, K12 uses a balance of both phonetics and whole reading techniques to teach reading, among other strategies, to ensure that all students read adequately to succeed in school.

K12's math curriculum is also based on cognitive science research, particularly in the areas of how children learn math, the nature of mathematical knowledge, and the most powerful digital and offline instructional strategies. A partial list of the research base includes: "Teaching thinking and problem solving," *American Psychologist* 41(10): 1078–1089 (1986); Bransford, J.D. and Stein, B.S., *The IDEAL Problem solver* (1984); Geary, David C., *Comprehension instruction: Research-based best practices*. New York, Guilford Press (2004).

Curriculum and Gifted Students

Explain why the proposed curriculum is likely to succeed with gifted students and those who need accelerated learning opportunities. Describe how students will be identified and how services will be provided.

This model makes it easy to meet the needs of students who are above grade level in reading and/or mathematics, because students in this School can pace themselves and actively participate in any level coursework based on their individual learning needs, regardless of how many other students want that course.

Advanced students who progress through the curriculum at an accelerated pace are also challenged with additional enrichment activities and projects that enhance the curriculum and allow for additional peer interaction and collaboration.

With the instruction model fully embracing the principles of Universal Design for Learning, the general education environment fully supports all learners including advanced learners and develops opportunities within the instructional setting that provides an equal opportunity for all students. The model's classroom particularly allows for a customized approach to learning where goals, assessments, materials and methods can be adjusted based on student needs.

c. Specialized Instruction & Student Needs:

Explain in detail how the curriculum/educational program of the proposed school will be differentiated to meet the needs of all enrolled students, including students with special needs and disabilities, English Language Learner (ELL) students, homeless students, economically disadvantaged students, gifted students, and students who are not performing at grade level. Provide details such as course scope and sequence and available student supports, including technology supports, dedicated personnel and special programming.

i. How will the school identify at-risk students?

Student-centric learning is a cornerstone of the instructional model and involves the identification of at-risk students, among other things. Student performance data will be frequently analyzed in order to tailor student learning and instruction around the specific needs of each student. Some students may be identified as ones who should participate in the school's Response to Intervention (RtI) process.

Implementation of an *RtI Process* greatly increases the likelihood of improved student achievement by (1) identifying struggling students at the earliest grade levels; and (2) providing them with additional instructional time and intensity during the school day. It also provides more advanced curriculum and additional instructional time and intensity to those who are proficient and need extended learning. With *RtI*, students are monitored often to ensure they are progressing, and when they are not, they receive additional learning opportunities.

In addition to the more formalized RtI Process, Teachers will provide students with targeted interventions or remediation throughout the year. Teachers or coaches will identify a weakness or academic deficiency and then plan a lesson or activity that can re-teach the skill using a different method than what was introduced in the online curriculum. Teachers will administer interventions, testing whether that intervention was successful, and tracking progress of student mastery and intervention effectiveness.

ii. How will the school serve and support special education and ELL students inside and outside of the classroom?

An explanation of systems and staff that ensure compliance with relevant federal and state legislation is necessary, but not sufficient, to satisfy this portion of the application. Include a detailed description of the programs that will support these students.

The School welcomes the opportunity to serve diverse students and students with disabilities. The founders believe strongly that all students have strengths and weaknesses that must be recognized and accommodated in order to reach their full potential as a contributing member of society. Based on the

spectrum of needs of special education students within the district as well as our proposed partner's experience serving special needs students, the School will provide special education services across all disability categories.

Identifying Students with Special Education Needs: Child Find

The School is committed to locating, identifying, evaluating and serving all students suspected of having a disability. The School's enrollment application, a conference call with a placement counselor, and conferences with a general education teacher all provide an initial child find query (CFQ) for the parent and/or student to indicate a student with special education needs. A review of previous school records by the Special Education staff will be undertaken upon receipt of such records to identify any students enrolling who have previously been identified as a student with a disability. In addition, the general education Teachers will be provided professional development prior to and during the school year on their child find responsibilities, including possible indicators of special needs related to achievement and behaviors. Posting and public notification concerning the process for screening and the availability of special services and programs of instruction for students with disabilities will be on the School's website. Additionally, this information will be provided to newly enrolled families within their enrollment packet as well as via electronic and/or US postal service mail.

A Response to Instruction/Intervention (*RtI*) team is also fully implemented at the School. The *RtI* framework consists of three levels or tiers that are fluid and overlapping. The tiers provide various levels of support to students in terms of duration and intensiveness. The more instructional support needed the higher up on the model the student moves. Teachers using *RtI* utilize research-based instructional practices, targeted interventions, and curricular enhancements to support students in accomplishing their individual learning goals and include innovative scheduling and resource allocations. Fluidity and flexibility within and between the instructional tiers are critical to students' receiving the supports they need. Every student is given an opportunity to meet or exceed proficiency standards by Teachers utilizing data in an effective and collaborative decision-making process, which results in differentiating instructional practices for all learners. If a student has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time and has been provided with appropriate instruction, a request for an educational evaluation may be initiated. Students are determined eligible for special education through a multidisciplinary evaluation coordinated by a school psychologist.

Following receipt of an application for enrollment or the identification of a student with a disability, The School will determine whether the student has been identified as a child with disabilities eligible for special education and related services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq. ("IDEA") or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), and / or the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). If so, the school will obtain a copy of the student's individualized education plan ("IEP") or Section 504 plan or develop a compliant IEP or 504. A properly constituted IEP or Section 504 team (including the school's Special Education Director, 504 Coordinator, and other designees) will convene to determine what services will be provided to the student and what forms of assistive technology are necessary to support the student's access to web based curricula, if necessary.

- The School will ensure students with special needs received a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) while providing a full continuum of placement and services. Appropriate placement options and special services will be determined by the IEP team, using student data and performance. As part of the School's Individual Educational Program (IEP)

meeting, the IEP team will consider the student’s individual strengths, potential and needs and where the most appropriate special education services will be delivered. Following IDEA and Chapter 711, The School will ensure each individual student with special needs’ educational placement is determined by the student’s IEP team. The IEP team will “begin placement discussions with a consideration of the regular education classroom and the supplementary aids and services that are needed to enable a student with a disability to benefit from educational services.”² The School believes that all students should be educated in the LRE and only when supplementary services and aids are not successful in the regular classroom, due to the nature of the student’s disability should the student’s education (or portion of) be in a different setting than their non-disabled peers. The IEP Team will determine whether a more specialized setting is necessary for the delivery of FAPE.

iii. Estimated Disability Types per 500 Applicants

The table below shows the approximate number of students with certain common types of special needs per 500 students city-wide.

Type of Disability	Estimated students per 500 applicants
Autism	7
Emotional Disturbance	7
Hearing Impairment including Deafness	1
Intellectual Disability	7
Other Health Impairment	9
Specific Learning Disability	41
Speech or Language Impairment	13

Programs and Services for Students Who Need Additional Support

How will the school respond to a student who requires programs or services not specifically included in the design of the charter school’s education program?

Accommodations

In addition to the team approach to serving students with disabilities, there may be necessary accommodations that will ensure that students achieve Pennsylvania Performance Standards. The following table provides examples of accommodations which are instructional and assessment enhancements.

2BEC 22 Pa. Code § 14.102 (a) (2) (xxiv): Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and Educational Placement for Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

Instructional Enhancements	Assessment Enhancements
<p>Use interactive groupings of students in structured and purposeful settings.</p> <p>Draw on student background and knowledge.</p> <p>Teach skills explicitly as appropriate and ensure opportunities for students to apply and practice skills in a meaningful context.</p> <p>Use graphic organizers to model organization skills and to engage students in the process.</p> <p>Use manipulatives and connect learning experiences to real life.</p> <p>Minimize interruptions and distractions during time-on-task.</p> <p>Check often for understanding among students.</p> <p>Teach students' organizational and study skills.</p> <p>Ensure access to resources in the languages, reading levels, and interests of the students.</p>	<p>Use multiple forms of assessment such as performance-based assessments.</p> <p>Create appropriate test settings; use magnification of print or sound; use color-coding to focus attention where appropriate; allow for frequent breaks; use calculators and dictionaries; and minimize distractions and interruptions.</p> <p>Remind students to use self-monitoring strategies and clarify directions.</p> <p>Ensure that language and academic skills are assessed appropriately.</p> <p>Take dictation for students; allow for tape and/or video recordings.</p> <p>Use multiple measures of assessment to assess language and academic skills of two language learners.</p> <p>Include samples of second language learners' work as anchors when developing rubrics and other scoring devices.</p>

The School will also provide necessary accommodations to aid Special Education students. All materials meet the requirements of the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS).

Support for Different Learners and High Incidence Special Education Students

Given the prevalence of various disabilities throughout the city, describe the school's plan for serving the different types of learners that may enroll, including high incidence Special Education students.

The very design of the School lends itself to support for different learners and high incidence special education students since the model is predicated on self-pacing and differentiated curriculum and teacher support for every student.

iv. **Monitoring of IEP and ELL Students**

How will the school monitor the success of IEP and ELL students, including monitoring progress, exiting students from the services, and providing ongoing monitoring of students who exit special education and ELL services?

The School will monitor the performance of ELL and IEP students in a variety of ways by:

- Monitoring academic performance data on a weekly basis
- Small group instruction to validate mastery of standards
- Regular meetings between teachers and staff dedicated to serving ELL and IEP students

English Language Learners

During the enrollment process all families will answer a series of online questions as a first effort for Child Find including the Home Language Survey (HLS) questions. Any positive responses will be routed to the ELL point of contact for further investigation. These same questions will be verbally posed again to the parent/legal guardian by a placement counselor. Additionally, school records will be requested from the sending district and will be reviewed for ELL indicators.

Those students with positive responses to any of the HLS questions will be referred to the ELL point of contact who will then talk with the family to determine if services were previously received, current language needs of student, review prior school records, including any previous ELL evaluations, program plans, etc. that could help the school determine next steps needed in the assessment and placement of the student. If deemed appropriate, based on positive responses to the HLS questions, steps will be taken to screen and then assess the student to determine eligibility status and develop an appropriate Individual Learning Plan. These students will be monitored on a weekly basis.

With the ability to place students at their appropriate instructional level using a multi-sensory, mastery based curriculum, and with close coordination of the teachers in monitoring the student performance, as well as the usage of assistive technology when necessary, support from a remedial reading program and a supplemental ELL program - students with ELL needs will thrive.

v. **Teaching Methods and Program for Differentiated Instruction**

Explain the teaching methods and/or personnel and budgetary decisions that will ensure differentiated instruction for all students. Describe any technology that will be used to facilitate personalized learning.

The blended school model is specifically designed to provide real-time, immediate and targeted intervention to address student non-mastery of specific skills. Students receive remediation in a variety of methods and settings within the school model.

- Remediation (RTI Process)
- Targeted Interventions
- Use of supplemental learning resources and materials
- Increased frequency of assessments
- Re-teaching
- Individualized Academic Goals
- Project-Based Learning Opportunities

There will be many different practices used by the School's teachers and support personnel. Standard to the model are these core instructional strategies: **Teach, Assess, Reteach, and Monitor.**

Teach

Direct teaching is an integral component of the instructional model. Direct Instruction takes place in several formats, whether it is facilitated in breakout groups or remediation, which can take place in small groups or one-on-one sessions.

Teachers will be expected to follow a set of guiding instructional strategies when working with students within any of these settings. Effective Teachers plan and deliver direct instructional lessons that include the following elements: Warm Up → Pre Assessment → Mini Lesson → Practice (Individual or Group) → Post Assessment → Follow Up (Remediation or Enrichment)

- Warm-Up Activity- Engages students immediately and can be used as a creative way to introduce the topic of the lesson or possibly as a pre assessment.
- Pre Assessment- A short assessment that engages prior knowledge (if any) and allows Teachers to find out what students know so they can target any deficiencies.
- Mini Lesson- A lesson is taught on a specific skill to students based who have failed to master a particular standard. This may require Teachers to differentiate the lesson to engage different learners at various levels. Teachers should use pre assessment results to drive the instruction.
- Practice- Give students an opportunity to work individually or in small groups to practice or demonstrate what they have learned. Teachers may need to give more or less time for practice depending on the outcomes during this time. Independent practice time is important because it allows students to have time to process and formulate their own understanding of the new material.
- Post Assessment- Find out what students have learned as a result of the lesson by giving them a formal or informal assessment to determine if they have mastered the skill as a result of participating in the teacher-led lesson.
- Follow-Up- Plan a time to work with the students who did not demonstrate mastery and need further remediation. Give students an assignment or something that they can work on independently later that will reinforce the concepts covered in the lesson and continue to engage them in practice so the skill is not lost.

vi. Support for At-Risk Students Including Homeless, Low-Income and Low Performing Students

Describe the school's system of support for at-risk students, with a particular emphasis on planned supports for students who are homeless, economically disadvantaged, or performing far below grade level. The support and interventions described above also apply to other at risk students such as the homeless, economically disadvantaged or students performing below grade level.

Staff at LR School Management have had success implementing this model previously in partnership with several other charter school boards and public school districts, including Philadelphia. The summary results of a few of these partnerships are captured below, and we believe is representative of the outcomes the School will achieve. Probably the most on point example of the success of the model is its success when it was implemented *in Philadelphia* for a period of time by staff who now work at RL School Management. The results indicated in the chart below are impressive, and the program was discontinued unrelated to the school or the model's performance and the implementation.

Hunter School Case Study

William H. Hunter School - School District of Philadelphia



About Hunter School

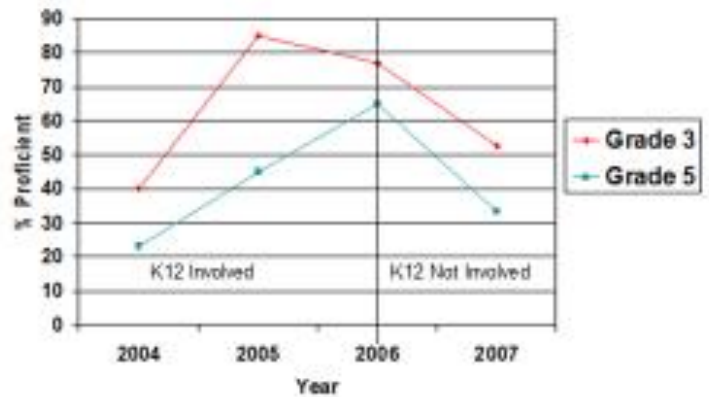
- Located in Norris Square neighborhood
- 600 students in grades K-8
- 95% qualify for free/reduced lunches
- 25% study English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Numerous bilingual classrooms

K12 Scope of Work

In 2004, K12 became the sole provider of math, science, art, and history in a traditional brick and mortar classroom. K12 provided a full-time trainer for support.

Results

After just one full year of using K12, the Hunter School achieved impressive gains on the Pennsylvania PSSA state math exams (see chart).



Note: In 2006 there was a change in district leadership and existing vendor contracts were not renewed.

Similarly, the model had great success with urban, low income students in the District of Columbia.

Draper Elementary Case Study

Draper Elementary School – District of Columbia Public Schools



About Draper Elementary School

- Located in the Anacostia neighborhood of Southeast DC
- Approximately 125 students in grades PK-6
- 100% qualify for free/reduced lunches
- 20% of the students tested receive Special Education services

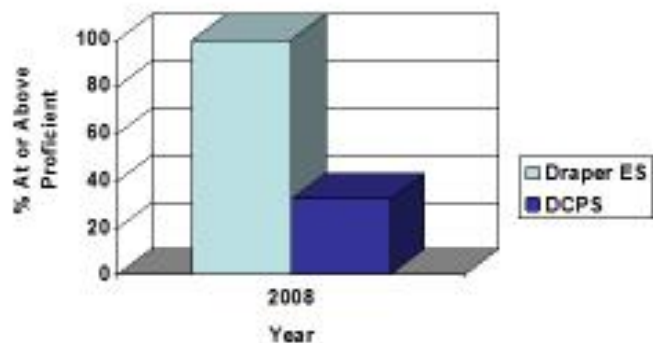
K12 Scope of Work

In February 2008, K12 became the sole provider of science. In September 2008 K12 Math was implemented as a supplement to their existing Math curriculum. K12 provided a trainer for on-site support

Results

After just 3 months of using K12 Science, Draper Elementary achieved impressive results on the DC CAS 5th grade Science test.

Results of the DC-CAS Fifth Grade Science Test



Note: Draper Elementary was one of many schools closed at the end of 2008 due to declining enrollment in the district's public schools.

As shown in the charts above regarding previous implementation in Philadelphia and D.C., the model works well for all students, particularly those traditionally underserved in the usual school model.

d. Promotion and Graduation:

Explain the school's policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next and how these requirements will be communicated to parents and students.

i. Exit Standards for Graduating Students

Exit standards should clearly set forth what students will know and be able to do when they exit the last grade served by the school.

Elementary School Promotion

Elementary students' promotion to the next grade is based on mastery of grade level standards, while also being sensitive to their individual needs. In order to progress to the next grade level, students must earn a "c" or better in their respective Math and Reading classes. In addition, they must demonstrate proficiency or better on the Scantron Performance Series. In the event a student does not reach these two benchmarks, a school team can be assembled to make a recommendation. Recommendations may include progression to the next grade; progression to the next grade with support; or retention, although this will be used sparingly, as research has proven this strategy to be ineffective for students.

Elementary School Grading Scale:

A = 90% - 100%, B = 80% - 89%, C = 70% - 79%, D = 60% -69%, F = below 60 %

The grading scale will be used for students in grades 3-5. Prior to that age, students will receive a standards-based report card that indicates their proficiency level on standards as well as key developmental milestones such as organizational skills and behavior. Each student's report card will include a narrative in each core subject area (Math, Language Arts, History, Science, Art, and Physical Education) of the student's progress in both academic and non-academic development. These narratives will draw upon evaluations of work samples, standardized test scores, individualized instruction sessions, and student group projects. Also included will be results of all standardized test scores including those mandated by the State of Pennsylvania. Parents will be trained to understand how to read the results of all standardized test scores.

Middle School Promotion

The School starts with the expectation that most of its students who regularly attend school will be promoted to the next grade level by the end of the school year. Grade-level promotion is not based solely on percentage, numbers of lessons completed, or test scores. Rather, grade-level promotion is based on a more comprehensive view that includes satisfactory progress in skill development, acceptable attendance, prior school experience, and achievement on lesson assessments. As would be the case in a traditional classroom, students at the School will exhibit a significant range of achievement in a certain grade and most students in this range will move to the next grade.

The middle school grading scale is the same as the elementary school grade scale above.

All students must pass 3 out of the 4 core courses (Math, English, History and Science) with a letter grade of D or better in order to be promoted to the next grade level in the fall. All promotion decisions are made at the conclusion of the school year. Students who enroll after the start of school or have special needs will work with their teacher to determine appropriate progress expectations for the school year.

Each student's report card will include a narrative in each core subject area (Math, Language Arts, History, Science, Art, and Physical Education) of the student's progress in both academic and non-academic development. These narratives will draw upon evaluations of work samples, standardized test scores, individualized instruction sessions, and student group projects. Also included will be results of all standardized test scores including those mandated by the State of Pennsylvania. Parents will be trained to understand how to read the results of all standardized test scores.

High School Promotion

Graded activities in the high school-level courses are assigned points. A student's final grade will reflect the actual points earned compared to the total points possible. Teachers will use these points to assign letter grades according to their grading policies. Students and learning coaches can access the current grades for all courses by viewing their accounts in the school information system at any time during the semester.

Grades will be determined based on how students perform on teacher graded activities within each course. Graded activities may include, but are not limited to online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets; quizzes; exams; threaded discussions; essays, research papers, and other writing assignments; and presentations.

Assignments will be teacher-graded or computer-graded, depending on the assignment. During the course, students can view their grades in the Student Progress Report. Teachers, administrators and parents also have access to student grade information.

The grading scale is as follows: A = 93% - 100%, B = 85% - 92%, C = 77% - 84%, D = 69% -76%, F = below 69 %

ii. Meeting Postsecondary Opportunities

If the school will have a high school, explain how graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).

Graduation requirements, subject to further review and revision, match the entrance requirements of the country's most rigorous colleges. For example, the School requires:

- Four years of English
- Three years of Math
- Three years of Science
- Two years of History/Social Science
- Two years of World Language, and
- Two years of visual or performing arts

iii. Course Credit Requirements

Describe the minimum course credit requirements and how they will be distributed across subjects and across grades. How many credits will be required to be promoted from one grade to the next? (School District of Philadelphia requires a minimum of 23.5 credit hours, which schools have the autonomy to distribute across subjects to earn a Diploma).

All students will be placed in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade using the credit scale below. Students who transfer into the School will be placed into the appropriate grade level after a careful review of the student's transcript from the sending school district.

Credit Scale

0-6 Credits – 9th Grade

7-12 Credits – 10th Grade

13-1816.99 Credits – 11th Grade

19- 24 Credits – 12th Grade

Subject to further review and revision, this includes:

4 credits of English	3 Credits of Math
3 Credits of Science	3 Credits of History/Social Studies
3 Credits of Performing Arts	2 Credits of World Languages
2 Credits of Physical Education	4 Credits of Electives

This will meet the 23.5 credits needed to graduate in Philadelphia district schools.

e. Student Retention (High Schools):

Explain what systems the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting the proposed high school graduation criteria within four years.

- i. *Describe in detail how students who enter the school with missing credits will be able to make up credits in a timely manner.*

The School's blended design, Response to Intervention (RtI) system described above and the truancy program described below works effectively to prevent at-risk students from dropping out or not meeting the graduation criteria.

Due to the nature of the self-paced curriculum and mastery-based assessments, as well as digital curriculum options, students entering the school with missing credits can make up credits in a timely manner, much more than in a traditional school model. For example, in most schools the first semester of full year courses are only offered first semester so a student has to wait a year to make it up if he or she fails. In a blended school like this one, the digital curriculum is always available so a teacher can offer a so-called first semester again during a second semester, and vice versa. This model enable the school to offer what students with a credit deficit need.

3. School Culture and Climate

a. Learning Environment:

Describe the culture of the proposed school and explain how this culture will promote a positive learning environment and reinforce students' intellectual and social development.

- i. *Describe your plan to create a positive, student-centered learning environment.*

The cornerstone of the School's educational program is student-centered learning. This holds true in the academic program as well as the performing arts program. We are committed to providing an individualized and differentiated learning experience that maximizes the learning potential of each student. When students' academic programs provide the right level of challenge, they persist through difficult parts of the course and derive a feeling of success, which is key to a positive environment.

The underlying tenets of school culture that will enable the educational program to be successful include:

- Setting high academic and behavioral expectations for all students and staff;
- Communicating the fact that student success is the result of hard work, shared commitment, open and honest communication, and personal and shared responsibility;
- Leveraging the power of instant academic data that a blended model enables with students, parents and teachers, informing instructional and planning decisions;
- Balancing the need for individualized instruction with the need to create a school culture built upon shared experiences; and
- Experiencing the joy, exhilaration and hard of work of the performing arts.

b. Extracurricular Activities

Describe the plan for providing extracurricular activities to students of the proposed school. What types of activities will be provided? Does the applicant plan to have students participating in District-run extracurricular activities, or will the proposed charter school run activities of its own?

The School’s students will be well rounded scholars with both a strong academic foundation and a lively engagement with the performing arts. Located in the former West Philadelphia High School with gymnasiums and other arts rooms, the School will provide robust opportunities for students to participate in sports (intramural and district athletics), as well as drama, art, music, and STEM related clubs. Many clubs will be facilitated by teachers, parents, community members and local organizations, including the US Performing Arts organization, a nationally renowned organization that partners with universities to expand the arts to K-12 students.

The School plans to offer a school council, a community service club, and additional clubs depending on student interest (e.g. Newspaper, Debate, Chess, Robotics, Model United Nations, etc.).

We will determine initial student interests and ideas for additional clubs by a survey distributed as part of orientation activities. It is typical for new schools to wait for student interest before making a final decision on what extracurricular programs the school plans to offer. Establishing a sense of school community is a high priority, and student choice regarding extracurricular activities is one way to build a strong culture.

Pursuant to Section 1719-A, the School will work with the sponsoring district to ensure eligible students have access to participation in appropriate district sports and extracurricular activities.

c. Meeting Student Needs:

i. Programs to Address Social Emotional Learning

Describe the school’s programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health.

The School’s instructional design was created to address the mental, emotional, and social development and health that is not addressed by traditional one-size-fits-all classrooms. By addressing students’ academic needs on an individual level, teachers and administrators spend more time with each student. It is often through these interactions that teachers monitor the mental, emotional and social development of students, and take the necessary steps to provide for them. One of the programs that all students participate in is the Advisory Program, designed to address students’ social emotional needs.

Advisory

A primary goal of the School is to ensure that each student is prepared for college and postsecondary success and that he or she develops and hones character traits that build self-efficacy. These goals are best achieved via implementation of a clearly defined Advisory Program, which can play a critical role in a school’s overall academic and student support services plan.

The benefits of implementing school-wide advisory programs are well documented. Advisory programs can lead to a more personalized learning environment where all students receive support and guidance

and are well known by at least one staff member throughout their elementary, middle and high school years. Additionally, the Advisory Program provides a structure and a set of practices for monitoring and supporting students' complete academic plan.

Advisory Background and Objectives

The program draws heavily on the research-based West Virginia Student Advisement Model which has been adapted for use in our School. This model is complete with implementation tools, curriculum maps, standards-based lesson plans, and activity worksheets.

The Advisory Program is designed specifically to enhance academic, career/college, and personal-social development for all the students. It is understood that students may bring varying levels of "entering behaviors" or skills necessary for academic, post-secondary and character development success. The Advisory Program is designed to mitigate and/or build upon such gaps with each lesson focusing on skill development that leads to student success in one of the following areas of focus:

1. **Academic Skills** – This area includes lessons that build students' capacity to excel academically. Skills range from time-management and organizational skills, to goal setting and test-taking skills, but include many more important academic areas.
2. **College and Career Readiness** – This advisory component prepares students for the realities and rigor of college and career expectations. Sample lessons for younger students allow them to explore different careers and the education they need to attain for that career. As students grow, the program becomes focused on college-ready activities such as understanding transcripts and scheduling, college entrance requirements, student-led career awareness, how to complete college applications, appropriate work-place behaviors, etc.
3. **Character Development** - Most character development programs have focused primarily on core ethical values or "moral traits" such as fairness, care, honesty, etc. While these traits remain important in student development, research has revealed another set of values known as "performance traits" that not only build character, but have also been proven to help produce high academic achievement in young people. Performance character is built on "willing values" such as grit, self-determination, etc. The Advisory Program character lessons focus on both moral and performance traits.

Each of the above areas of focus is heavily addressed in each grade level. Many concepts are re-visited or spiraled at each grade level with a different degree of focus or intensity appropriate for each academic and developmental stage. To ensure that the Advisory program is understood and implemented as intended, training will be provided to school staff both prior to and throughout the school year.

ii. Identification of Students With Additional Mental or Emotional Needs

Describe the school's plan to identify students who may be in need of these services.

There may also be students who have additional mental or emotional needs. Aided by a close-knit community that collaborates and easily accessible performance data that can quickly indicate an emotional, behavioral or situational change for a student, the School's nurse and counselor will endeavor to identify and support students in crisis.

Depending on the students' need, this support could entail a behavior management plan, counseling sessions to talk through their situation, or access to a specialist that can support a more intensive need. We are hopeful that the performing arts allow students to express themselves and provide an inclusive place for them to learn and perform.

iii. **Staffing Model for Supporting Mental, Emotional and Social Support**

Explain the staffing model that will provide students with mental, emotional, and social support and demonstrate that the number of staff members will be sufficient to meet student needs.

The School will have a counselor and a full time nurse to monitor and provide support for students with additional mental, emotional and social support needs. Special education staff will also be sought who have specialties or experiences working with students who have emotional, social and mental challenges. They will serve as resources to the general education staff as they work to support students in their classrooms. In addition, the extensive Advisory program, explained in detail above, is designed to make each student feel connected with at least one adult in the school if not more.

4. **Academic Data & Goals**

a. **Goals and Metrics:**

Provide the school's academic goals and metrics for the years of the charter term. Goals must be clear and quantifiable, and must demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. How will these metrics be used to monitor progress and impact corrective actions?

i. **Academic Performance Goals**

List or attach the annual academic performance goals for the proposed charter school. Goals should align with or exceed city-wide expectations on the PSSA and Keystone assessments.

The Academic Performance Goals are attached as Attachment 2. They are aligned with the city-wide expectations on the PSSA and Keystone assessments.

ii. **Other Formative and Summative Measures of Academic Success**

Identify any other measures or assessments (both formative and summative) the school will use to measure academic success.

Formative and summative assessment is essential to our academic model. We believe that assessment should be frequent, authentic, and its results immediately actionable. Due to the developmental stage of students within the K– 12 range, several assessment systems will be used to assess students against the relevant state standards.

Teachers will have access to a variety of **Formal Summative Assessments** that are outside of the curriculum, including:

- **Scantron Performance Series**- A web-based, adaptive test, which quickly pinpoints the proficiency level of each student. Students in grades 2-12 will be required to take the Scantron Performance Series test in both Reading and Math three times a year. Assessment questions will begin one grade level below their age appropriate grade and the response will determine the next question a student is given. The assessment adjusts item difficulty based on the students' answer. Since the assessment is adaptive, each student will receive a unique

assessment and the number of items may vary. The information from the assessments is valuable to parents, teachers, and students, because it provides a report illustrating each student's strengths and weaknesses against the state standards, a National Percentile Ranking, and illustrates academic growth for a school year.

Teachers will have access to a variety of **Formal Formative Assessments** that are outside of the curriculum, including:

- *The mCLASS:Math program* is an integrated screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment system that helps determine children's understanding of mathematical skills and concepts in kindergarten and 1st grade. The program allows staff to conduct one-to-one or written benchmark assessments with students and receive instant diagnostic profiles and suggested instructional activities to remediate skill gaps.
- *The mCLASS:DIBELS Next* assessment identifies the needs of each student in grades K and 1 in the area of literacy. The short, one-minute fluency measures for foundational reading skills compare student progress with predictive, research-based benchmark goals. These results allow teachers to track progress and target instruction to individual student needs.
- *Study Island Blue Ribbon Pathway Assignments*- To ensure students in grades 2-12 are mastering coursework throughout the year, teachers will use a series of Blue Ribbon Pathway Assignments to determine students' mastery level of state standards. Students will answer a series of Math and English questions on a monthly basis that will take approximately fifteen to thirty minutes, depending on the number of standards being assessed each week and how long students take to complete each assignment. Teachers will use the Pathway results to determine which students need additional support on a skill or standard. Those who do not pass with an 80 percent or better or show signs of needing additional support will be supported in breakout sessions where teachers can provide targeted instruction to help remediate their deficiencies to support them with building strong foundational skills to move forward in their coursework.

iii. **Unified Assessment Plan of Individual Students, Cohorts and School as Whole**

Provide a unified assessment plan that demonstrates how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as whole throughout the year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter agreement. Explain how these assessments align with the school's mission, curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

Every 6-8 weeks all students will be given benchmarks tests in reading and math to assess their mastery of the standards taught during that time period. Teachers at each grade level and across the school segments (elementary, middle and high school) will review the data and not only draw conclusions regarding students' progress, but put Individualized Learning Plans in place for each student to address their areas of deficit. These plans are the basis for differentiation in the classroom through small group sessions, and individualized lessons facilitated through technology-enhanced supplementary curriculum such as Dreambox and ALEKS.

The administrative team will review the data with the teachers to monitor student achievement while also noting data patterns that may indicate a teacher needs additional professional development or other interventions.

On a yearly basis, the school will employ a Student Achievement Improvement Process (SAIP), explained

further in section 4.b.ii below, will be the primary means of self-evaluation of the curriculum, instructional methods and practices. The SAIP process is a multi-stage planning process using key metrics identified from the school’s charter, which will take into consideration data collected about the success of the school. Results should determine whether the School is having success reaching its academic and nonacademic goals as stated in measurable terms in this charter application.

b. Data-Driven Programs and Instruction:

Describe a comprehensive system to review data (including achievement, attendance, and behavior/suspension data) to inform instruction and needed supports.

i. Frequency of Data Collection

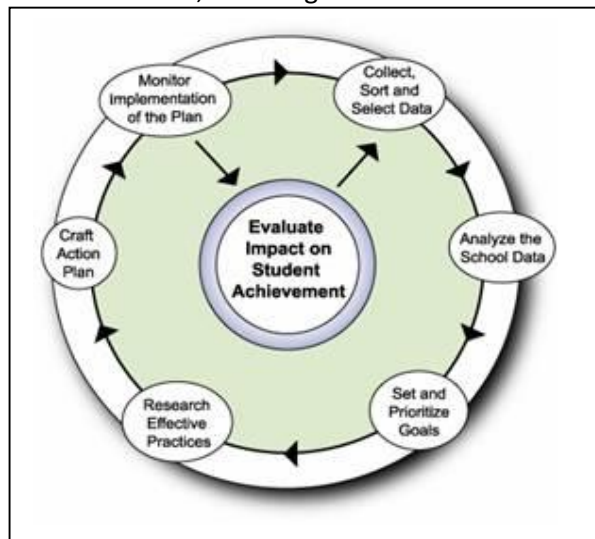
How frequently will the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data? Which school staff member will be responsible for managing this process, and what types of technology will be utilized?

This School has a robust and comprehensive data collection program that informs all aspects of the school. On a regular basis the School will utilize the SAIP process, which stands for School Achievement Planning. The process, detailed below, looks at a wide variety of data available, including academic achievement, attendance, and behavior data. The SAIP process is initially lead by a member of the administrative team to provide guidance and modeling, but as teams are able, they run the process themselves.

Stage 1: Prepare for Readiness to Benefit

The School Achievement Planning Team must be aware of their own readiness, abilities, and willingness to embark in a collaborative strategic planning process. All Team Members should:

- Understand how decisions are made
- Agree on decision-making strategies for working toward consensus
- Commit time to meet and resources to support this work
- Assure open communication and trust among members
- Possess an understanding of the purpose of the SAIP process



Stage 2: Collect, Sort, and Select Data

- Team collects and sorts information, past performances on state testing, anecdotal information from parents, from attendance records and other sources
- Team verifies data is current and correct

Stage 3: Analyze the School Data

- Team analyzes school data to understand current student achievement
- Team displays achievement and other data types in ways that are understandable to all audiences and stimulates shared responsibility
- Team clearly articulates answers to the following questions:
 - Who are the specific groups of students at our school (i.e., at risk, minority, advanced learner, etc.)?

- How does each of these groups perform on various measures?
- What does this data tell us about the strength and weaknesses of the program for these specific populations?
- Team schedules frequent data reviews and considers whether new information should change SAIP

Stage 4: Set and Prioritize Goals

- Team identifies three-to-five areas based on data review. Goal-setting includes answering questions such as:
 - What are the areas of greatest need based on student achievement in subgroups?
 - Which strategic areas have the highest potential for impact?
- Team follows a systematic process to develop focused, student-centered, measurable, realistic, and time-bound goals to improve student achievement
- Team discusses desired and anticipated gains from SAIP implementation

Stage 5: Research Effective Practices

- Scantron testing, Study Island, tutoring sessions, and other strategies that have proven to be effective should be imbedded throughout the SAIP

Stage 6: Craft Action Plan in the form of a Scorecard with Key Metrics Identified

- The Team creates a plan and Scorecard that converts data analysis into action. Time spent in detailed planning at this stage is critical. The Action Plan should be detailed enough so that all staff members understand their role, stakeholders see a clear focus, and measurable goals are identified.

Stage 7: Monitor Implementation of the Plan

- Team monitors SAIP action plan quarterly or as new information/data is obtained
- Team discusses the progress of the Action Plan and its impact on student achievement
- Team assures the activities and tasks for each goal are moving forward under the identified timelines
- Team considers what revisions are needed to accomplish the learning improvement goals and increase student achievement

Stage 8: Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement

- Evaluating the impact of the SAIP brings the process full circle. It is a time to measure effectiveness, determine which practices will be continued, and start the process again.
 - Team collects and analyzes data to determine if School goals were met and if student achievement resulted
 - Team evaluation report creates an SAIP to implement the following August

The Principal is ultimately responsible for ensuring program goals are being met and that staff are held accountable for meeting them. The school will review progress towards goals on a quarterly basis (at the minimum). Students and guardians may also be asked to participate in ongoing discussions if/when goals are not met to make improvements and enhancements to the school’s program.

ii. Use of Data to Assess Program

How will the school use multiple sources of data to self-assess and design necessary reforms?

Data is a critical component of the educational design at the School. Student performance will be evaluated continuously throughout the school year in several ways including:

- Formative and summative content-specific assessments built into every lesson to guide and tailor the pace of progress to each child's needs;
- Proficiency on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests and the Keystone Exams;
- Performance and growth measured on the Scantron Performance Series assessments; and
- Student progress monitoring (and for high school students, 4-year Graduation Plans).

The School's teachers are expected to frequently analyze student performance data in order to provide appropriate instruction and support that is tailored to meet the specific needs of each student. Because core subject content is primarily delivered to students using the online curriculum, Teachers are able use data to inform instruction in meaningful ways like providing effective interventions, building supportive relationships, and inspiring students to take responsibility for their own learning rather than spending time lesson planning or doing administrative tasks that prevent them from teaching.

iii. Monitoring the Achievement Gap with Data

How will data be used to monitor the achievement gap?

During the SAIP process and in the weekly data meetings, one of the key analysis that will be done is regarding the performance of subgroups. Research is clear that African American male students tend to perform at a lower rate than their peers. Given the demographic makeup of the west Philadelphia area, we believe that this will be a strongly represented subgroup for the School and we will consistently monitor not only the academic performance data, but also the behavior data and other inputs.

Another important subgroup that we believe will be represented at the School are students who receive special education services. While the formal IEP and special education monitoring tools will be in place for these students, it is important to monitor their academic performance as a subgroup, and as compared to their peers. Unless a student has a modified graduation plan or qualifies for an alternative state test, this subgroup of students must progress on a track similar to their peers, although the strategies and supports for their growth may be unique.

As the enrollment for the School begins we will carefully monitor to discern other subgroups that should be included in the analysis as well.

iv. How Teachers will use data to serve students

How will data be used to help teachers to better serve students who are behind and/or students who require additional rigor?

Teachers will use a wide variety of data to develop and refine the instructional program for all students. When the data reveals that a student needs remediation or enrichment, the teacher has a variety of mechanisms available to support these students, including, but not limited to, differentiated content, tutoring, new instructional approaches to the concept and allowing the student to spend more time on a concept.

The use of data should be evident as you walk through the School. We expect to see students working on devices such as laptops or iPads that provide access to differentiated content through products such as ALEKS or Dreambox, or a student who is taking an online course that is not offered at the School, such as Russian or Calculus II. We also expect to see teachers working individually with students to monitor their progress and supporting them as they work towards mastery of the standards in that course.

v. Use of Data for Decision-Making

How will data be used in decision-making?

Regular Analysis of Achievement Data To Inform Student Grouping And Monitor Progress

Data is used powerfully throughout the model and is integral to our instruction and decision making. While the SAIP process and the weekly team meetings provide regular opportunities to review data, the Professional Learning Communities is another key element that facilitates the use of data in decision-making.

Based on the work of Daniel R. VENABLE in *How Teachers Can Turn Data into Action*, teachers will form Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze student achievement data and implement action plans designed to promote student achievement. These meetings will occur one day per week during planning time, and will initially be chaired by the Teaching and Learning Coach (TLC). As the PLCs learn the process of the data meeting, they will then lead their own session, with the TLC acting as a mentor. Key to their success is the fidelity of the data meeting, of which the key drivers are outlined below.

Four Essential Questions

1. What is it we want our students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student has learned the content?
3. What will we do when some students have not learned the content?
4. How can we extend and enrich the learning for students who have demonstrated proficiency?

Expectations of a Collaborative Team

- Norms: agreements and commitments
- Agenda: roles and responsibilities
- Goals: be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely)
- Data: used for decision making
- Action Plan: written, reviewed, and revised

Types of Meetings

- Benchmark: meetings that occur following fall, winter, and spring DIBELS assessment windows; or following unit assessments (i.e. math, science, social studies, writing)
- Progress Monitoring: meetings that occur in 4-8 week intervals

Source: *Successful Grade Level Meetings: Combining an Academic and Behavioral Focus* by Kim St. Martin

We expect that teachers will use the data from their own classrooms in much the same way as they plan instruction, determine mastery of standards, and reflect on the outcomes of their planning. We aspire to hire reflective teachers who will also reach out for support from the TLC and Principal for assistance when they don't see the expected gains in performance, or they are interested in learning other ways to teach a concept.

vi. Data Triggering Corrective Actions by Principal

Explain what might trigger corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

Data will be used throughout the school and it is the Principal's job to make sure, along with oversight by the Board, that everyone is held accountable. The Principal will use data to make sure students are performing and receive personalized support, as well as making sure that the teachers are effectively supporting students.

As Principals monitor data, they may increase observations of specific teachers whose data lead him/her to believe that students are not mastering standards at the rate expected, or they may encourage students to take a more challenging class if the data suggests a need. In all, corrective actions should occur as a typical response on a regular basis, and not one that is put in place when the situation becomes egregious. Instructional time is valuable, and it is up to the Principal to make sure that it is used effectively and efficiently by all involved, including the students.

c. Communication of Data to Parents & Stakeholders

What indicators and information will be reported to parents and other stakeholders regarding the individual progress of their children, as well as the progress of the school overall?

i. Dissemination of School and Student Performance Data to Parents

How and when will school performance and student performance data be disseminated to parents?

Students and parents have constant access online to the child's performance data. In this model, they do not have to wait for the report cards. Teachers are always available to walk a parent or student through the results and to help interpret them if they are not able to access them online or to understand them.

The School calendar also specifies times that teachers will hold parent conferences. Please see the school calendar for teacher/parent conference dates. Individual Learning Plans ("ILP's") will also go out quarterly, which clearly articulates the standards students have mastered.

ii. Parent Complaint Process

What is the school's plan to review parent complaints, concerns, and questions regarding the school's progress toward its goals as they arise during the school year?

The School is interested in achieving and fostering student/family satisfaction. The following procedures are intended to ensure that student/family grievances are addressed fairly by the appropriate people in a timely manner. The School prohibits discrimination against students/families on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin or religion.

1. All concerns and issues should first be directed to the student's teacher. If a teacher cannot resolve the issue (e.g., materials and computer issues), he or she will direct the parent/responsible adult to the appropriate contact for assistance. The teacher will monitor the concern to ensure resolution.
2. If the issue or concern is about the teacher, parents are advised to contact the Principal.
3. If the concern is not resolved at the teacher, lead teacher, or Academic Administrator level, students and parent(s)/responsible adults, custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) should address any concern or grievance in writing to the Principal. The Principal must respond within ten (10) working days.
4. If the concern or grievance is not resolved by the Principal, the parent(s), custodian(s), or legal

guardian(s) may, within ten (10) working days of the Principal's response, request a meeting (via phone or in person) with the Principal to discuss the concern or grievance. The meeting request must be in writing. The Principal shall investigate and respond within ten (10) working days.

5. If the family's concern is not resolved at the meeting with the Principal, the family may file a complaint with the Board. The Board may address the complaint directly, or the family may file a complaint in writing with the Division of Nonpublic, Private, and Charter School Services Pennsylvania Department of Education. After receiving the complaint, the Department will determine if it merits referral to an existing complaint procedure (e.g., special education, professional employee misconduct). If the complaint cannot be referred under existing procedures, the redacted, written complaint, (or paraphrased oral complaint), will be forwarded to the School for a response. The School will have ten business days to issue a written response. After receipt of the response, the Department will determine if the complaint is resolved, or if further investigation is required.

iii. Communication of Academic and Non-Academic Performance

Describe how progress on both academic and non-academic goals will be communicated to other stakeholders such as community members, students, and staff.

The digital nature of the model lends itself perfectly to parent communication for those who have access to the internet, and the school will endeavor to make its facilities available for parents who do not, and to make computer training available to those who need it. The curriculum and student information systems tell parents whenever they want how their child is doing, and what work he or she is doing. Parents do not have to wait six weeks for the traditional report card.

The instructional model provides parents with the ability to monitor and support student learning through an online system, a benefit for parents who may not be able to visit the school facility. In this model, parents can monitor student coursework, assessment data, mastery of objectives, etc. via the online systems and tools.

The School website will also house regular reports related to the School goals and our progress towards them. We believe that this transparent process will allow prospective students and families to better understand our mission and how our academic profile compares to others in the community.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLIANCE

This section provides an overview of the proposed school's leadership, governance, staffing, and organizational plans. The school oversight structure should demonstrate the capacity to handle start-up and operational challenges.

1. Founding Coalition

a. Applicant Capacity:

Describe the makeup of the group or partnership that is working to apply for a charter, including the names of the founding coalition and professional backgrounds and experiences for each.

- i. *Provide evidence as to why the applicants have the collective capacity to successfully perform all tasks needed to open a new school.*

The founding coalition of applicants is constituted of the founding board, expert advisors and significant partners.

The School's Board has a vision and enthusiasm for building an excellent school in West Philadelphia and is well positioned to provide necessary oversight and support for the successful implementation of the charter school's mission. The Board and its advisors have all of the requisite talents and experience to govern the school, including expertise in education, the arts, technology, finance, facilities, charters, government relations, compliance and legal matters.

The founding board is as follows:

Dr. Andrew Porter

**Dean, Graduate School of Education
George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education
University of Pennsylvania**

Dr. Porter began his academic career on the faculty at Michigan State University (1967-1988), where he co-directed the Institute for Research on Teaching and served as associate dean for Research and Graduate Study. During this time, he also took three years' leave from MSU to serve as a visiting scholar at the National Institute of Education, where he created and was first chief of the Methodology and Measurement Division and later associate director in charge of the Basic Skills Group.

From 1988 to 2003, he served as Anderson-Bascon professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he directed the Wisconsin Center for Education Research. In 2003, he joined the faculty of Vanderbilt University, where he was the Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations in the Peabody College of Education and Human Development and served as director of the university's Learning Sciences Institute.

Dr. Porter is a former president of the American Educational Research Association (2001) and was elected a member of the National Academy of Education in 1994, where he has been vice president since 2005. He is a Lifetime National Associate of the National Academies.

He is a present or past member of a dozen scholarly editorial and advisory boards, including *American Educational Researcher*, *Educational Researcher*, *Teachers College Record* and *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*. He is the author or co-author of 42 book chapters, 70 scholarly articles, dozens of technical reports, and one book. A partial list of publications is listed in his more detailed bio in Attachment 17.

Dr. Porter has published widely on psychometrics, student assessment, education indicators, and research on teaching. One line of work centers on teachers' decisions about what to teach, which includes curriculum policies and their effects on students' opportunity to learn. Currently, his research is supported by the National Science Foundation: he is senior researcher, How Does Induction and Continuing Professional Development Affect Middle School Mathematics Teachers' Instruction and Student Achievement? Teacher Professional Continuum (TPC), principal investigator on a U.S. Department of Education Institute for Education Sciences (IES) grant to investigate the psychometric properties of the VAL-ED assessment of K-12 school leadership, an instrument he built with Wallace Foundation support (learn more at www.valed.com), co-PI on an IES-funded national research center on cognition and science instruction, co-PI on an IES national R&D center applying cognitive science principles in middle school science curricula, and co-PI on an IES postdoctoral program.

To read more about Dr. Porter and his work, visit his website at www.andyporter.org.

His education includes a B.S. in Education from Indiana State University, an M.S. in Educational Psychology from the University of Wisconsin, and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Wisconsin.

Michael Adler
Managing Partner of the Law Office of Michael E. Adler

Michael has extensive business, nonprofit and legal experience. He focuses his practice on the representation of publicly-traded and privately-held corporations, restaurants, developers and property and financial management companies in complex commercial and litigation matters, including insurance, real estate and contract issues.

He is presently serving as a trustee and Chair of the Grants Committee of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation and an officer of the Temple University Alumni Association. He has served as President of the Temple Law Alumni Association and Vice President of the Board of Directors of Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El in Wynnewood, PA. He is an active member of the Temple American Inn of Court, the Global Philadelphia Association, and the General Counsel to American Friends of Ariel and Dolce Suono Ensemble. He was recently elected a Committeeman in Lower Merion Township. He is a member of the Litigation Section of the American Bar Association and recently served as the Financial Secretary of the Young Lawyers Division of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

He has a particular interest in the School's focus on the arts and he handles numerous pro bono matters on behalf of Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (PVLA) as well as other nonprofits such as the Society Created to Reduce Urban Blight (SCRUB) and the Support Center for Child Advocates.

He was recently selected by his peers in the Pennsylvania Law Weekly and the Legal Intelligencer as a "Lawyer on the Fast Track" and in Philadelphia Magazine as a Pennsylvania "Super Lawyer." Mr. Adler received his Juris Doctor from Temple University School of Law, Magna Cum Laude, in 1998 and his

Bachelor of Arts from Rutgers University, With Honors, in 1995. Mr. Adler is admitted to practice in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and before the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court.

Edward P. Kelly

Chair, Business/Corporate Transactions and Real Estate Group

Raffaelle & Puppio, LLP

With his business background, Ed will likely be the treasurer of the Board.

He is a partner in the firm of Raffaelle & Puppio, LLP where he represents clients in a wide variety of corporate transactions, real estate, business entity formation and governance.

Previously he was a partner in the law firm Astor Weiss Kaplan & Mandel, LLP. where focused on the areas of Business Transactions, Corporate Law, and Commercial Real Estate Leasing and Acquisitions. In addition, Ed represents landlords and tenants in office and retail leasing matters, and advises borrowers and lenders in commercial loan transactions.

Ed is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, is admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and is a member of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

Additional Board Members

The board is also recruiting additional talented board members with skills that will help the school succeed. For example, Ajay Raju, among others, will join the board in the next few weeks.

Ajay Raju

Managing Partner, Philadelphia Office

Reed Smith, LLP

Ajay serves as a member of the law firm Reed Smith LLP's Executive Committee and as the Managing Partner of the firm's Philadelphia office. His legal practice is national and international in scope, with a strong emphasis on structured finance and real estate capital markets transactions. On the civic front in the Philadelphia region, in 2011, Ajay was appointed by Mayor Michael Nutter to the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, the region's premier workforce development agency and the City's fiscal agent for state and federal employment and training funds. In 2011, Ajay founded tradephilly, a nonprofit dedicated to increasing Philadelphia's value in the global marketplace.

A sought-after thought leader, he appears as a regular on Inside Story, a Sunday-morning news and roundtable debate show which airs on ABC's WPVI station serving the Greater Philadelphia market. Ajay also serves as a member of the Board of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Southeastern Pennsylvania's leading business advocacy organization; as a Board member of the World Affairs Council, the region's preeminent leadership and educational forum on international affairs; as a member of the Corporate Executive Board for the Philadelphia Museum of Art; as a Trustee of Lincoln University, a historically black university; as Pennsylvania State Chair of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys; as a member of the Archbishop's Cabinet for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia; as a founding board member of I-LEAD, a Philadelphia community-based college degree program; as a board member of the

Philadelphia Live Arts Festival & Philly Fringe; as a member of the National Constitution Center's Corporate Council; and as a member of the board for Comcast/NBCUniversal's Joint Diversity Council.

Ajay is a graduate of the Temple University Beasley School of Law.

Erica Atwood

**Director of Black Male Engagement for the Mayor
City of Philadelphia**

Erica started her career by working in the non-profit arena with the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania. Her ambition and professional goals led her into the special events arena working organizations with including The Marian Anderson Award, The Wilma Theater, Millennium Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Music Conference and The Philadelphia Inquirer.

In 2007, Erica took on the position of Deputy Finance Director and Event Manager for the Nutter for Mayor Campaign. Following this successful campaign, she became President of the Nutter Inaugural Committee, Philadelphia Realized. She began in the Nutter administration as Deputy City Representative for the City of Philadelphia, representing the Mayor as a protocol officer and overseeing management of events and special projects as directed by the Mayor's Office. Currently, she serves as Director of Black Male Engagement for the Mayor. In this role, she works to align resources and initiatives with a specific goal to reduce disparities between economic and social outcomes of Black men and boys, and those connected to them.

Over the years, Erica has been involved with a number of non-profit organizations and currently serves on the Community Impact Strategy Committee for the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, Board of Directors for the Chilean American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia, Chair for the Philadelphia Youth Poetry Movement Board of Directors, the Steering Committee for IMatter Campaign for the Family Planning Council, and the Philadelphia Clear Channel Radio Community Advisory Board. In addition, she was named one of the 101 Emerging Connectors by Leadership Philadelphia in 2008, is a 2014 Drexel University Leading for Change Fellow.

Erica is a native of Camden, NJ and currently resides in the University City section of Philadelphia, PA.

Advisors

The board is also supported by expert advisors: A brief summary of their backgrounds are:

Alan C. Kessler, Esq

Partner, Duane Morris LLP

Alan Kessler has expertise in general counseling and government relations as well as many other areas involving complex litigation. Mr. Kessler represents charter schools, real estate developers, banks, airlines, healthcare institutions and hospitals and alternative energy companies.

Mr. Kessler has worked with a wide range of clients, including small nonprofits, large Fortune 100 companies, real estate developers, municipal authorities, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Authorities and other governmental agencies.

Mr. Kessler's public service activities include serving as a member of the Clinton/Gore Presidential Transition Team in 1991-1992; as a presidential appointee by President Clinton as the vice chair of the Presidential/Congressional Commission on Risk Assessment and Risk Management (1994-1998); and as a presidential appointee by President Clinton, confirmed by the U.S. Senate, to the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service. He was elected chair of the USPS Board of Governors in 2008, having served as vice chair since 2005, and President Obama appointed him to a second term, with the Senate confirming, in 2009. He also has served as finance vice chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), as a national finance vice chair of Gore 2000, Vice President Gore's presidential campaign, and as a national finance chair of Hillary for President in 2008.

On a regional level, Mr. Kessler was a Township Commissioner for Lower Merion Township and a member of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. Kessler previously acted as co-chair of the Mayor's Transition Committee for Mayor Edward Rendell (1992) and as a member of the Executive Committee of Philadelphia 2000. He served as a member and co-chair of Governor Rendell's transition team. He was a member of the Electoral College for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 2000. Additionally, he is currently a member of the board of directors of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, Drexel University, Penn Medicine Campaign Board and the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, where he serves as a member of the executive committee. He was also appointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court as chair of the Supreme Court's Continuing Legal Education Board. Mr. Kessler also was appointed by Governor Rendell as finance chair of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party.

Mr. Kessler is a 1975 graduate, with honors, of the University of Maryland School of Law and a graduate, with honors, of the University of Delaware.

Stephanie Kosta, Esq.
Partner, Duane Morris LLP

Stephanie Kosta represents a diverse clientele in complex business matters, including class actions, liquidation / bankruptcy, and employment disputes, including appeals and petitions to the Supreme Court of the United States. Ms. Kosta provides counsel in government relations, as well on litigation alternatives, including settlement and mediation.

In 2013, Ms. Kosta was selected by the Philadelphia Business Journal as one of its "40 Under 40" honorees. The 40 Under 40 award recognizes young professionals in the Philadelphia region for outstanding success and contributions to their community. Ms. Kosta was also selected in 2007 and 2010-2013 as a Pennsylvania "Rising Star" in the area of Business Litigation by Super Lawyers, a publication of Thomson Reuters.

Ms. Kosta is a 2002 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, where she was a staff member of *The Georgetown Immigration Law Journal*, and a *summa cum laude* graduate of Temple University, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She is conversant in American Sign Language.

Partners

In addition, the founding coalition has partnered with a number of outstanding organizations to deliver the highest quality educational program and an outstanding music and dance program.

Pansophic Learning and LR School Management

Pansophic Learning is one of the leading experts in blended learning. LR School Management is a wholly owned subsidiary of a sister company. Pansophic and LR School Management have extensive experience managing schools and providing results. The management team includes expertise in all of the facets necessary to run a successful school including curriculum, school management, teacher training, teacher hiring and management, administration, assessment, state reporting and financial management. The team has been involved with many large charter schools for more than a decade and had had success delivering strong academic performance in city schools, including the Hunter School in Philadelphia. The model has also been proven to work in Washington DC, and rural Mississippi. The proper implementation of a strong technology based basal curriculum with on-site teacher training has driven strong academic improvement everywhere the team implemented it. Teachers also thrive under this model where they receive the support to do their jobs properly with an organization that recognizes their performance. Additionally, the team at LR management has access to extremely successful musicians who will help make the performing arts part of the school unique, adding a great new choice for students in Philadelphia. This team is uniquely positioned to build a strong academically successful school that is run with strong fiscal management and blends music into the program at all grade levels.

US Performing Arts

The School has partnered with US Performing Arts, one of the premier performing arts educational organizations in the world, in order to bolster the powerful arts program the school intends to have.

US Performing Arts is particularly interested in exploring a partnership with the proposed Philadelphia Music and Dance Charter School because Philadelphia has no arts schools with the kind of professional caliber training and exposure of an arts organization like US Performing Arts. We believe that their expertise in arts education and facilitating the dreams of young passionate students in the arts through training and education can truly change lives. A partnership with this school would enable us to provide students with the same quality education in the arts year-round that we provide in the summer to outstanding students around the country.

US Performing Arts, founded in 2002, has partnered with top-tier colleges and universities in providing quality summer training workshops for K-12 students in the performing and visual arts, including digital media, for over 13 years. Over these years we have forged successful partnerships with UCLA, UC Irvine, Pepperdine University, TCU, UC Berkeley, UT, Austin, Rutgers University, Cal State Long Beach, UMass Amherst, Georgetown University, Barnard College, Mount Holyoke, Stanford University, Webster University, Hampshire College, Florida State University, and others. These intensive conservatory-style workshops draw students from around the globe. This past summer our programs drew students from all over the US and from Asia, Australia, Europe, South America, and Africa. It is time to work to enable them to work with the talented students of Philadelphia.

2. School Leadership

b. Leadership:

Identify the Principal/school leader candidate, if known. If unknown, outline a timeline and plans for recruiting, hiring, and developing the Principal/school leader.

- i. *Attach a job description for the Principal/school leader position.*

The School's Administrators are expected to demonstrate expertise in curriculum, instruction, assessment, finance, facilities, business management, governance and administration.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the vision and mission of the School; is shared and carried out by all school stakeholders, including all staff members. The Principal will work collaboratively with the Board and LR School Management, and serve as the instructional leader overseeing the school's instructional program, finances, operations, enrollment, community, and state and other assessments, while holding teachers accountable for ensuring positive academic outcomes and student success.

The founding group has not yet identified its Principal. It will advertise widely to undertake a thorough search for candidates both in Pennsylvania and other states. It plans to recruit outstanding leaders from the local area, from Teach for America alums, from New Leaders for New Schools, and from leading joint business school and education school programs such as the ones at Harvard University, Columbia University and Stanford University. Three leading candidates will be interviewed after thorough reference checks. Prospective staff and parents may also participate in the interview process (a similar rigorous recruitment process will occur for teaching staff).

LR School Management's extensive search, both local and national, will have a particular focus on recruiting individuals such as minorities who are underrepresented in educational leadership and might better understand the culture and background of the student body. The founders will utilize their connections in the educational arena to solicit candidates, ads will be placed in various publications and websites that include educational organizations representing various ethnic and other groups; state charter associations will be contacted; ads will be placed in national publications (such as *Education Week*) as well as on multiple educational websites.

To the extent the School has enrolled families and hired teachers, a representative group will also be involved with the interview process.

A job description for the position of Principal is included as Attachment 3.

- ii. *Explain why the identified individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Provide qualifications, resume and professional bio for this individual, if available.*

The school has not identified a specific individual to lead the school at this time.

c. Leadership Team beyond the Principal:

Identify any other key leadership positions planned for the school.

- i. *Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these*

positions and provide qualifications, resumes and professional bios for these individuals.

One of the key leadership positions that enables the School to succeed academically is the Teaching and Learning Coach (“TLC”). The primary goal of the TLC is to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about and comfortable with the digital and physical curriculum, and can use it to effectively teach their students. Central to accomplishing this goal is for the TLC to provide comprehensive curriculum training to all teachers. Trainings will be tailored to the needs of the individual schools, and ongoing support throughout the school year will be provided as well. A schedule for school visits, demonstration lessons and professional development opportunities will be scheduled by the TLC with each school.

A more detailed description of this role is under the Professional Development Section below.

d. Recruitment of Teaching Staff:

Outline the school’s procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting all federal and state required criminal and child abuse background checks.

- i. Attach the charter school’s hiring and personnel policies.*
- ii. Attach the charter school’s organizational chart.*
- iii. Provide a description of the staffing model (for example: students per classroom, teachers and aides per classroom; teacher to student and adult to student ratios).*

A copy of the School’s draft Personnel Policies are attached as Attachment 5.

In the first year of operation, the process to advertise for, select and employ instructional, counseling and support staff for the School will begin after the charter has been approved the charter and school enrollments are confirmed. This means that prior to opening in the fall of 2015, the process to advertise for, select and employ instructional staff for the School will take place in the spring and summer of 2015. After the first year of operation, teaching personnel and other staff will be recruited beginning in the spring and continuing into the summer of each school year. The School will maintain personnel and confidential records in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations and standards.

Teacher candidates will be interviewed by the Principal who will make hiring recommendations to the Board. The Principal will screen candidates’ references, and facilitate thorough background investigations ensuring a criminal record checks in compliance with Act 114 – 24 PS 1-111, as well as appropriate state certification, educational, DMV, official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse, and personal references. Candidates will be required to comply with all state laws requiring fingerprinting and other documentation for applicants who have made it through the interview process. Throughout this entire process, the School will correspond with applicants regarding the status of their applications such that the best-qualified candidates understand the process and their standing in the selection process.

Teachers will be employed by the School’s Board. Compensation levels (salary and benefits) for teachers will be competitive with local salaries and benefits.

Dismissal of Teachers

In the interest of fairness and attracting strong teachers, the teachers will have due process rights as part of the draft School’s Personnel Policies, attached as Attachment 5.

Staffing Model

As indicated in the budget and in the staffing plan below, the School’s K-5 program is designed to have one teacher for every 30 students with floating paraprofessionals as needed, and a specific administrator, the Teaching and Learning Coach, whose entire job is to coach and support teachers in this model.

In Year 1, the ratios are as follows:

- The student to teacher ratio is approximately 21 to 1, not counting the paraprofessionals.
 - The student to instructor ratio is approximately 15 to 1, including the paraprofessionals.
 - The student to adult ratio is approximately 12 to 1.
- i. *Provide a description of the staffing model (for example: students per classroom, teachers and aides per classroom; teacher to student and adult to student ratios).*
 - ii. *Provide a staffing list that identifies:*
 1. *Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years*
 2. *Administrative, instructional and non-instructional personnel*
 3. *The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and any specialty teachers*
 4. *Operational and support staff positions*

Here are the positions budgeted in year 1 through five for administration and for instruction. The role of LR School Management is explained more in the following Finance and Budget sections.

Admin Staff	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
School Personnel					
Office Manager/PA's	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.0
Arts Coordinator	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Nurse	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Food Service	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
LR School Management Personnel					
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Asst Principal	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0
Academic Manager/TLC	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.0
Business Manager	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Enrollment/Mktg/PR	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
IT Manager	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5
Total Headcount	8.0	8.0	11.0	12.5	12.5

Instructional Staff	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Teachers	14.0	23.0	34.0	42.0	43.0
Parapros	6.0	7.0	9.0	10.0	10.0
SPED	3.0	6.0	8.0	10.0	10.0
Counselor	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0
Total Instructional	24.0	37.0	52.0	64.0	65.0

The following are brief summaries of job responsibilities for staff:

Teachers: Teachers are certified in the content area in which they will teach and are employed as the subject matter expert for one or more of the core subjects taught on site. (**Math, English, Science, or Social Sciences, though assignments may vary depending on state requirements.*) Teachers are responsible for ensuring a student masters each skill and can demonstrate proficiency of learning objectives and/or state standards. They are also responsible for providing targeted instruction that supports each student's growth areas including remediation and/or enrichment activities and measuring the effectiveness. Teachers lead the data review and analysis process to best design appropriate learning opportunities for each student and plan efficient lessons that support students in the learning process.

Special Education Teacher: The Special Education teacher will manage all Special Education (SPED) cases, support students with IEP's or 504 plans, manage special education district and state compliance regulations, and help Teachers provide modifications and accommodations to qualified students as needed.

Paraprofessionals: A Paraprofessional ("Parapro") is responsible for supporting students with their daily work and ensuring that work is being completed in a timely manner. Parapros are also responsible for monitoring student behavior and maintaining order in the labs, grading papers, managing behavior, and supporting Teachers. A Parapro will check daily assignment completion, track overall course progress, support students with questions, probe further thinking, and support students get through their daily learning experience. Academic coaches are also trained to review important data metrics to best provide intervention support for students as needed.

Guidance Counselor: The Guidance Counselor will provide comprehensive counseling support to all students as it is needed, lead students through developing and tracking post-secondary plans, tracking grades and credits, planning college visits and tours, and helping prepare students for college and/or a career pathway. The Guidance Counselor may also serve as a Dean of Student Life handling disciplinary issues and truancy cases (in collaboration with the Principal); planning school events; connecting students and parents/guardian to community resources; and providing additional resources to students and parents/guardian that enhances their school experience.

Office Manager: This individual supports daily operations and functions at the main office of the school, including but not limited to; student attendance, administrative tasks, reports, student records, filing, facility management, etc.

Business Manager: The Business Manager will help manage financial policies and practices, school budgets, state compliance, human resources, and the daily operations of the school.

Enrollment Coordinator: The Enrollment Coordinator drives recruiting and marketing efforts to maintain full student capacity, and appropriately manages any resulting waitlists.

School Nurse: The Nurse provides preventive health services to support the education process by working to assure the health of students in a manner that promotes optimal physical, mental, emotional and social growth and development.

3. Leadership and Staff Evaluation and Development

a. Leadership/Staff Evaluation:

Explain how the school will evaluate the performance of the school leader and the faculty.

- i. *Attach any evaluation tools that have already been prepared and/or provide a thorough description of the evaluation system.*
- ii. *Explain how the school would handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as how the school will plan for leadership and teacher changes and turnover.*

The School's Board will implement rigorous, transparent and fair evaluation systems for the School's teachers, non-teaching professionals, and administrators including the Principal in compliance with Act 82 of 2012. The evaluation systems will differentiate effectiveness with data on student growth and include timely and constructive feedback for the staff including the Principal. The evaluation system will be designed to support the development of more effective educators in the classroom as well as those in school leadership positions resulting in improved student achievement.

Teachers

Teaching staff will be evaluated throughout the year by the Principal. The Principal will weave staff reinforcement of the school culture, values, and behavioral norms into the evaluation process. Instructional staff members will be evaluated based upon their effectiveness in these areas and a plan for improvement will be developed if necessary. The Board is in the process of adapting these guidelines to ensure their alignment to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Educator Effectiveness System.

The School's teacher evaluation is designed to help all highly qualified Teachers become highly effective blended school educators. The following beliefs guide the teacher's development in this process.

- Effective Teachers believe that all students can learn.
- Effective Teachers are caring, fair, and respectful.
- Effective Teachers hold high expectations for themselves and their students.
- Effective Teachers dedicate time for preparation and reflection.
- Effective Teachers are continuous learners.
- Effective Teachers provide critical feedback for their peers.
- Effective Teachers receive critical feedback from their peers, students, and learning coaches.

Employee Goal Setting

At the beginning of the year, teachers will be asked to establish their own individual goals that support the School's mission. Through the formal observation process, each teacher will identify specific goals to achieve throughout the year, including the goals in the teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan, that support the School's mission. From their personal goals, teachers will develop measurable objectives and targets based on among other things: (1) areas for improvement; and (2) areas outside their general job responsibilities that support the School's general goals.

Progress of goal attainment will be tracked by each teacher and will be reviewed periodically by Principal's (or their designee) throughout the year to ensure they are on track towards goal completion.

At the end of the year, each teacher will meet with the Principal to review their informal and formal observations, individual goals, and progress from the school year. The performance review process is an opportunity for the Principal or Academic Administrator to go over the comprehensive collection of data that further identifies each teacher's contribution to the School.

This goal setting process is also conducted by the School's non-instructional staff.

Evaluation

There are two types of evaluations Administrators will conduct throughout the year; *formal* and *informal*. Informal observations take place any time throughout the year and do not have to be announced or scheduled in advance. The purpose of informal evaluations is to use a simple checklist that can easily allow an administrator to identify what is happening or not happening and provide immediate feedback to a teacher to improve performance.

Informal Observations

Informal observation feedback does not need to be reviewed in great detail, but by using a simple form and process, it can serve as a starting point for additional discussions and recommendations to help a teacher improve his/her practices in the classroom or in the Flex Center. Teaching staff will be informally observed at least three times each quarter (roughly twelve times a year), and the frequency should increase for staff members who may be identified as low performers or who may be struggling to perform daily job responsibilities. Informal observations will be evaluated using an Informal Observation Checklist.

Formal Evaluations

The Principal will evaluate Teachers and staff at least twice a year formally. The formal observation rubric is very objective, as it details exactly what is expected of Teachers and teaching staff (i.e. paraprofessionals) according to a rating scale 1 to 4 or from "Unsatisfactory" to "Distinguished". Teachers will also be evaluated based on three domains: Instruction, Communication, and Professionalism.

Formal observation data is then compiled after each round and used to identify top and low performers, and ultimately to communicate reasons for promotions, new opportunities, or coaching support from Administrators.

Teachers and coaches are the first point of contact for student and parents and the effective performance of their duties is critical to student success and retention. Clear expectations, paired with experience and training are key to their performance.

Administrators

The School will utilize a Principal Performance Evaluation Process as the foundation for its Administrator Evaluation system. However, the Board is in the process of adapting the guidelines below to ensure their alignment to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Educator Effectiveness System.

Monitoring and assessing the Principal's performance with respect to the School's specific educational

and financial goals is among the Board's primary responsibilities. To facilitate this process, the Principal will provide regular reports on students' academic progress, the School's financial performance, facilities and other aspects of the School's business operations, human resources issues, parent satisfaction, and other relevant matters. An annual review of the Principal will be done using survey results from various constituencies.

Highly qualified Administrators will be crucial to the success of the School. The School will set high standards for hiring Administrators and will set equally high standards for evaluating their performance on the job. After hiring instructional leaders who have the required experience and education, the School will provide them with a performance review to be done in cooperation with their immediate supervisors. Administrators will do a self-evaluation of their job performance with feedback provided by their immediate supervisor. This self-evaluation will be conducted as frequently as the Administrator desires, but at least annually. Following the PDE Pennsylvania Leadership Standards, this performance review will evaluate the performance of the school Administrators in terms of how well and to what extent they meet the standards, specifically:

1. The administrator has knowledge and skills to think and plan strategically, creating an organizational vision around personalized student success.
2. The administrator is grounded in standards-based systems theory and design and is able to transfer knowledge to his/her job as an architect of standards-based reform in the school.
3. The leader knows how to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making at all levels of the system.
4. The leader creates a culture of teaching and learning with an emphasis on learning.
5. The leader manages resources for effective results.
6. The leader collaborates, communicates, engages, and empowers others inside and outside of the organization to pursue excellence in learning.
7. The leader operates in a fair and equitable manner with personal and professional integrity.
8. The leader advocates for children and public education in the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
9. The leader supports professional growth of self and others through practice and inquiry.

b. Leadership/Staff Development:

Describe the applicant's plan for supervising, supporting, and developing staff. Describe the improvement process if teacher and staff standards are not met.

- i. *Present a plan for how the school will build human capital within its staff. What types of growth opportunities will be provided for school leaders? How will teachers be supervised and supported and how frequently will they be observed?*
- ii. *Describe how professional development will align with the school's mission as well as with the proposed curriculum.*
- iii. *Describe the goals of the professional development program for teachers. How will the success of this program be measured?*
- iv. *Describe the process for improvement and intervention for teachers and leaders who need additional supports.*

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL TO IMPLEMENT BLENDED MODEL

The Board fully appreciates the benefits of and supports the need for ongoing professional development for all teachers and other staff. Professional development opportunities will, therefore, be a combination of LR School Management's best practices and training along with state mandated annual professional development for all teachers and other staff. As part of the model, the school will have a full time, on-site, Teaching and Learning Coach.

The Teaching and Learning Coach's (TLC) focus is on:

- The development and on-going support of each teacher's individual Professional Development Plan.
- Chairing the weekly data conferences for each team, which will take place weekly.
- Researching and bringing forth best practices that support the School's mission and goals
- Delivering school-wide professional development, as needed, on topics such as:
 - Interactive whiteboard use in the classroom
 - Scantron Performance and Achievement series
 - Classroom management/school climate strategies
 - Differentiation in the content areas
 - Grade level math standards, content and strategies
 - Grade level science standards, content and strategies
 - Grade level history standards, content and strategies
 - Grade level reading standards, content and strategies
 - Effective lesson planning
 - Parental involvement strategies
 - Characteristics and strategies for working with students with learning disabilities

The Board will create an overall Staff Development Plan with LR School Management for the School. This plan will be rooted in a culture of continuous improvement and ongoing professional development, which will ensure that teachers and staff are equipped and prepared to deliver high quality instruction that supports the full range of student academic needs. The Staff Development Plan will feed directly into each teachers' individual Professional Development Plan. The instructional staff will participate in a variety of engaging training sessions year-round. These will include, but are not limited to, a wide variety of types of training to maximize effectiveness in the blended school environment; introduce and refresh them about effective digital instructional methodologies; strategies that best serve at-risk, ELL and special needs students; develop their confidence and ability to perform well in a public charter school environment; and create a firm knowledge base about the school's mission, vision and goals. Because we assume that most staff will not have prior experience in a blended learning setting, ongoing training will particularly focus on the skills they will need to master to be successful with this model. This training will take place before school starts and throughout the year. Its purpose is to provide teachers and staff with training more school specific and essential to their daily responsibilities at the school.

4. School Operations

a. School Calendar:

Attach a copy of the school calendar and identify hours of operation to demonstrate compliance with Section 1715-A regarding minimum days or hours of instruction per year: 180 days or 900 hours for elementary grades; or 180 days or 990 hours for secondary grades.

The School will comply with Section 1715-A regarding 180 minimum days or 900 hours for elementary grades and 180 days or 990 hours for secondary grades. Hours of operation will be from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

A copy of the School calendar is included as Attachment 9.

b. Health Care Benefits:

Attach the proposed school's health care benefits plan for school employees. If the health care benefits plan does not provide the same benefits as those provided to School District employees, provide a letter from the proposed school's benefits consultant explaining why the same health care benefits cannot be provided because of the relative size of the proposed school.

The School will provide the same or similar health care benefits as teachers in the School District of Philadelphia.

c. School Operations Experience:

Identify the operations team for the proposed charter school. Indicate the team members' experiences and qualifications to operate the school, attaching resumes if available.

- i. *Describe how school operations will be managed. If an external organization will be contracted for the operation of the school, describe why that organization was selected as well as which specific responsibilities will be assigned to the external organization. A copy of the finalized management contract must be submitted with the application.*

When the charter is granted, LR School Management is proposed to be the network's Education Service Provider (ESP), managing the daily operations of the School as well as providing the School's curriculum. LR School Management is a wholly owned subsidiary of a sister company to Pansophic Learning. Key personnel who are on the school's development team include:

Ron Packard, CEO

Ron Packard is the CEO and Founder of Pansophic Learning, a global technology-based education company. Packard is a well-known educator, entrepreneur and visionary as well as the author of the highly regarded and reviewed book Education Transformation. Packard was previously the long time CEO and Founder of K12 Inc. He oversaw the growth of K12 from just an idea to almost one billion in revenue, making it one of the largest education companies in the world. During his tenure, revenue compounded at near 80%. Before K12, Packard was the Vice President of Knowledge Universe and CEO of Knowledge Schools, one of the nation's largest early childhood education companies. He was also instrumental in the successful investments in Learn Now, Children's School USA, Leapfrog, TEC, and Children's Discovery Center. Packard also worked for McKinsey & Company and for Goldman Sachs in mergers and acquisitions. Packard has received the Education Industry Association's James P. Boyle Entrepreneurial Leadership Award, as well as the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the IT Services & Solutions category in Greater Washington. The University of Chicago's Booth School of

Business named him a Distinguished Alumni, and he also received an Outstanding Leadership Award from the United States Distance Learning Association. He is Chairman of the Board for Middlebury Interactive Languages, LLC, a member of the K12 Inc. Board of Directors, and sits on the Digital Learning Council. Packard previously served on the Department of Defense's Education Advisory Committee. Packard has been featured on nationwide radio and television shows and magazines, including Bloomberg TV, Forbes, and the Washington Post to name a few. He holds a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago, both with honors.

Maria Szalay, COO

Maria Szalay, Cofounder and Chief Operating Officer, brings over 20 years of strategy, operations and development capability to Pansophic Learning. Ms. Szalay joined K¹² in 2000 and was instrumental in growing K12 from a pre-revenue startup to a \$900 million public company. In this time, she served in a variety of roles including product management, product development, operations, strategy, and corporate development. Prior to joining K¹², Ms. Szalay served as practice director at Operon Partners, an e-business consulting firm. At Operon Partners, Ms. Szalay led consulting teams assisting clients with turnkey eBusiness strategy, product management and business transformation consulting services. She worked directly in client organizations developing business plans to obtain funding, and also assisted with the implementation of online initiatives, with specialized expertise in integrating these solutions with their brick-and-mortar business. Prior to joining Operon Partners, she worked at Telecom New Zealand rolling out the company's Online Solutions business, where she was instrumental not only in developing the online strategy and implementation plan for Telecom Broadband, but also in executing to the implementation plan. Prior to that, Ms. Szalay worked for eight years as a management consultant at KPMG, assisting clients with systems implementations, product marketing and placement initiatives, including new product and service launches. Ms. Szalay started her career at Shearson Lehman. She holds a BS/BA from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and an MBA from American University.

Eric Waller, CIO

Eric Waller, Chief Information Officer, brings 30 years of experience driving product and technology vision delivering rich user experiences through scalable architectures for commercial consumer and enterprise products to Pansophic Learning. Mr. Waller joined K12 in 2001, as Chief Technology Officer and SVP of Software Development, he has driven technology strategy and vision, drove development of K12's advanced proprietary learning technology, and was responsible for all aspects of information technology operations. Prior to joining K12, Mr. Waller served as Chief Technology Officer and VP of Product Development at OneSoft, an enterprise eCommerce platform provider, responsible for Product Development, Product Management, and Product Marketing driving the development and vision of their eCommerce, enterprise application integration, and business intelligence and visualization platforms. Prior to joining OneSoft, he was Managing Director of the Commercial Products Division at Cigital establishing the commercial products team responsible for Sales, Marketing, Product Development, and Customer Support for their software testing and security products. Mr. Waller started his career with Grumman Technical Services at Kennedy Space Center after attending the University of Florida.

Mark Kushner, Head of North American School Development

Mark Kushner is one of the nation's leading experts regarding charter schools and innovative school models. Prior to joining Pansophic Learning, he was Vice President of Blended Learning at K¹² Inc., the country's largest provider of online courses to Kindergarten – 12th graders and the largest operator of charter schools. Mark was also CEO of Flex Public Schools, a partnership with K¹² created to open a new model hybrid high school, combining the best of online education with the best of traditional education.

Prior to K¹² and Flex, Mark was the founding CEO of Leadership Public Schools, a charter school organization dedicated to serving low income students in California. A former high school English teacher, coach, Principal, and attorney, he previously founded one of the first charter high schools in the country. He teaches a course on charter schools at Stanford University's School of Business and School of Education, served as a California state charter commissioner for 10 years, and has served on a number of education boards. Selected honors include the Harvard Club of San Francisco's Secondary School Educator of the Year, and the Hart Vision Award, the highest award given to charter school educators in California. Mark earned a B.A. from Wesleyan University, and completed graduate work in literature, law and educational administration at The Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Oxford University, University of San Francisco (J.D.), and Harvard University (Ed.M.).

Sue Furick, VP, Academic Affairs

Sue Furick is a multi-state certified educator with over 20 years of experience teaching in grades PreK-8. As a public school teacher in several states, she helped create and taught in numerous programs designed to address the needs of gifted learners. Following her teaching tenure Sue joined K¹² Inc. as a lead developer for its Math and Science programs in grades K-8. She went on to create and oversee partnerships with charter school boards and school districts who were interested in using the K12 curriculum in a traditional school setting. The Discovery model she developed assisted partners in turning around historically low performing schools and designing schools with high academic performance as a key goal. During her time at K¹² she was honored with the CEO's Dedication award for *"commitment in moving the company forward."*

Following her 11 years at K¹² Inc., she joined Kaplan Higher Education Campuses to create and oversee their blended learning model. While at Kaplan she also had oversight of the training and development of Kaplan Higher Education Campuses' 1000+ teachers.

Sue earned her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education with an emphasis in math and science education from Virginia Tech. After several years of teaching she returned to Virginia Tech and earned a Master of Arts in Education with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction.

Jeff Stark, Vice President, Finance

Jeff Stark provides budget, planning, and finance support Pansophic Learning's businesses, which he has done since he joined K¹² in June 2012. Before K¹², Jeff spent almost 10 years at Discovery Communications where he was VP, Finance for the company's International Networks and Discovery Education. Prior to that, Jeff worked in a variety of finance and accounting roles at companies such as Arthur Andersen and Rand McNally. Jeff is a CPA and also served as an officer in the United States Navy.

Mr. Stark received his Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Purdue University and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

d. School Operations Plan:

Explain how operations services will be delivered to the proposed school, including a specific timeframe and plan, relative cost structure, and the party ultimately responsible for service delivery.

A detailed explanation of the operations services provided to the School including the cost structure and responsibilities are detailed in a Services Agreement attached as Attachment 11.

i. Truancy Tracking and Attendance Plan

In Pennsylvania, students aged 6 to 17 must attend school, and each LEA is responsible for tracking and combating truancy. Describe the charter school's plan for keeping attendance and reporting and combating truancy. Explain which staff member will be the school's Attendance Designee and detail the school's process for implementing Truancy Elimination Plans and making truancy referrals.

Teachers will verify attendance to ensure that students are attending daily, making progress in the curriculum, and tracking state mandated hours and days of instruction. A student's failure to attend without legal excuse will be recorded and reported as an unexcused absence. Truancy proceedings will begin after a student accumulates three unexcused absences.

In the event of any student withdrawal, for any reason, the School will notify the district of residence within 15 days with a copy of the School Withdrawal Form and/or truancy letters if a student has accumulated too many unexcused absences with little or no attempt to resolve issues through a Truancy Elimination Plan. A copy of all withdrawal forms and district notification will be kept in the students file.

At the School, students and their parents will be notified in writing by the school staff person designated by the Principal after the student has accumulated 3, 5, 10, and 15 days of unexcused absences. When a student age 17 and older has reached 20 days of unexcused absences, the student and parent will be notified in writing of the student's removal from the School. Students under 17 years of age who have 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences will be removed from the IPCS charter schools roles and their home districts will be notified.

The Board will adopt an attendance policy in alignment with Pennsylvania and district policies including but not limited to the provisions described below:

- Class attendance and participation in classroom activities are the basic underlying components of a student's academic work and are necessary for the accomplishment of curriculum objectives.
- The School operates under a daily schedule of 8:00 am – 3:30 pm.
- The School considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school. A student should not receive a failing grade for any of the situations listed below so long as the student makes up all missed assignments. Assignments must be completed prior to the close of grades for students to be eligible to pass the report period:
 1. Illness or injury that necessitates home recuperation which must be verified in writing by the parent/ guardian, school nurse or physician.
 2. Weather emergency, impassable roads, school transportation problems or quarantine.
 3. Bereavement and/or to attend the funeral of a family member.
 4. Hospitalization.
 5. Principal-approved reasons for absence from school or class, i.e., field trips, activities, assemblies, service learning, counseling, mentoring, support groups, early dismissal, college/postsecondary visits, attendance at college/postsecondary courses, etc.
 6. Involuntary exclusions from school or class such as suspension or as mandated by legal or medical professionals.
 7. All absences occasioned by observance of the student's religion on a day approved by the

School as a religious holiday shall be excused. A penalty shall not be attached to an absence for a religious holiday.

8. The School shall, upon written request of the parents/guardian/guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program acknowledged by the Board. Such instruction shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year, and its organizers must inform the School of the child's attendance record. The School will not provide transportation to religious instruction. A penalty shall not be attached to an absence for religious instruction.

The School will recognize other justifiable absences for part of the school day. These shall include medical or dental appointments, court appearances, family emergencies, or other urgent reasons.

The School has developed a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP), in alignment with the TEP described in Section IV (A) (3) BEC 24 P.S. 13-1327, in order to work strategically to reduce the incidence of truancy. Teachers are the first line of defense for compulsory attendance, as they are the first to recognize students with possible attendance issues. Therefore, teachers will implement a plan of action including, but not limited to:

- Sharing and reviewing school policy on attendance and student responsibilities with students and families;
- Contacting the student's parent/guardian upon their absence;
- Meeting individually with students to discuss reason(s) for absence;
- Following up with the building Principal (or assigned truant officer);
- Making referrals to guidance counselors;
- Collaborating with other school staff members as appropriate; and
- Contacting Children and Youth Services for support.

Subject to further review and updating, the Truancy, Tardy and Probation policies from the draft Parent/Student Handbook are detailed below:

Truancy Intervention

- In order for an absence to be excused, the student must provide official documentation, clarifying the reason for the absence. Without proper documentation submitted to the School, the absence will remain unexcused, and all attendance policies will apply to all unexcused absences. The documentation to excuse attendance can include but is not limited to; a doctor's certification, court documentation, appointment letters, funeral arbitrary, and other official documents.
- At **3 unexcused absences**: The School will notify the student and parent/guardian regarding the need for a joint conference upon the third unauthorized student absence. The school-family conference will engage all participants involved in the student's life to explore possible solutions to increase the student's school attendance. The purpose of the school-family conference will be to discuss the cause(s) of the truancy and to develop a mutually agreed upon plan to assure regular school attendance. The school-family conference will provide both parties with the opportunity to identify, understand and explore all issues contributing to the student's truant behavior. Participation by the student and family will be an integral component for this conference. In addition, representatives from relevant and/or involved community-based agencies, community and school services and school personnel may be invited to participate. During the school-family

conference, a Truancy Prevention Plan shall be developed cooperatively with the student and other meeting participants. Issues to be addressed at the school-family conference will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Appropriateness of the student’s educational environment;
 - Possible elements of the school environment that inhibit student success;
 - Student’s current academic level and needs;
 - Social, emotional, physical, mental and behavioral health issues;
 - Issues concerning family and home environment; and
 - Any other issues affecting the student’s attendance.
- At ***7 unexcused absences***: The student is required to sign an attendance contract with an Advisory Leader or Academic Administrator. At this point, the student has missed 10% attendance in classes. The student may participate in a recovery plan in order to make up instructional time with appropriate authorization from their teacher; however, recovered time must be documented with the registrar. Students can participate in the Recovery Plan only once per semester and it is optional.
 - At ***12 unexcused absences***: An intervention conference is set-up with a parent or mentor, and the student is placed on probation. If a parent or mentor is not available, the student will participate in a conference with a school Administrator. At this time, the conference is documented with the student signature, Scantron testing is completed and referrals to other at risk/dropout programs and GED programs are provided. At this point, the student has missed 15% attendance.
 - After ***16 unexcused absences***: An evaluation is completed to discuss other educational options that may include a transfer to another program, which must be approved by the Principal. Parents or mentors will be informed of the outcome in writing. At this point, the student has missed 20% attendance in their classes; therefore, the student will not earn any credit.

Probation

The purpose of probation is to inform the student of their academic standing as a result of their truancy. Documentation will be provided to the student to outline the number of unexcused absences. The student will be required to participate in the intervention conference, in which the student’s truancy will be discussed, including how this affects his or her academic success. All individuals present will create an action plan in order to increase attendance and academic performance. All action plans will be created on an individual basis to ensure the student’s success.

Tardy Policy

Students are expected to report to class by 8:00 am. The School does not condone students arriving late to class.

- Students arriving late by 10 minutes or more, for three times, will be required to complete in-school suspension during out of school time.
- If a student does not complete the mandatory in-school suspension during out-of-school time, the student will receive an out-of-school suspension and parent/guardian will be notified.
- Three tardies will equal one absence, which will in turn affect the student’s grades and attendance percentages.

ii. **Compliance with District Enrollment System**

Schools will be required to enter all relevant student information into the District's system of record for enrollment and payments (currently the School Computer Network or SCN). The District will provide schools with access to this system. Describe the charter school's plan for ensuring that these data are up-to-date and accurate.

The School will to enter all relevant student information into the District's system of record for enrollment and payments (currently the School Computer Network or SCN) as requested or required by the charter authorizer and applicable law.

iii. **Transportation, Food Services, Health Services and Immunization Compliance**

Describe the delivery of services including transportation, food services, student health services, and immunization compliance.

Transportation

Students will either be driven by their parents, walk to school or, consistent with applicable law, be driven to school by the District buses.

The School will be responsible and budget for transportation for field trips and after-school activities, contracting with the District transportation system or directly with private transportation companies to schedule buses for these purposes.

In order to ensure the safety of students, all bus drivers will be required to have the state mandated documents and clearances:

- Commercial Driver's License
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania School Bus Driver's Physical Examination Form
- Pennsylvania School Bus Endorsement
- Criminal Record Check
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance

Transportation for students with disabilities and those serviced under Section 504 will be provided in accordance with all applicable federal and state law including §711.42 Transportation. Under §711.42 Transportation, students with disabilities and those serviced under Section 504 must be provided transportation to the School by the school district of residence, if the charter school is located in their school district of residence, a regional charter school of which the school district is a part or a charter school located outside district boundaries at a distance not exceeding 10 miles by the nearest public highway. This includes transportation to an ESY program, if that program is held at the charter school. The need for transportation will be determined by the IEP committee including any modification or necessary accommodations such as specialized equipment.

Food Service

The school's proposed facility as an operational cafeteria. The food preparation and service areas will accommodate the number of students who will attend the School.

In accordance with Pennsylvania School Code 24 PS 13-1337, the School will seek technical advice and assistance from the Department of Education regarding the establishment and operation of its school food program as well as training for personnel engaged in the operation of such programs.

The School will attempt to work with School District to determine if the district is willing to provide food service to the school. The Board will also identify other vendors to support the School’s food service program. The Board is currently considering a contract with Preferred Foods.

The School will ensure that its food service operations comply with required federal and state standards and regulations.

iv. Parent and Citizen Complaint Process

Describe the process established to review complaints and concerns of parents, students, and teachers regarding the day-to-day operations of the charter school. Include lines of authority and outline steps for a parent or citizen to address the board.

Please see the Parent Complaint Process described above.

5. Recruitment, Admissions & Enrollment

a. General Enrollment & Target Populations:

Explain the anticipated demographic characteristics of the population to be served, and provide evidence that the school will achieve and sustain its proposed enrollment figures.

The School aims to serve and attract students that represent the incredible diversity of West Philadelphia. The sections below explain the projected enrollment goals, the projected ethnicity, and evidence that the school will achieve and sustain its proposed enrollment figures.

i. Projected Enrollment Maximums by Grade Level

State the projected enrollment maximums by grade level for each year of the charter term

Here is a chart with projected enrollment by grade level during the charter term.

Enrollment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
K	50	50	50	50	50
Grades 1-5	100	150	200	250	250
Grades 6-8	75	150	225	250	275
Grades 9-12	75	150	225	325	350
Enrollment	300	500	700	875	925

There is no cap on each class. The building we are currently looking to use has a capacity of at least 1,000 students so ideally, we would want to average about 75 students for each grade level at capacity. This would help us to maximize the utilization of our instructional staff.

ii. Projected Racial, Ethnic, Special Education, ELL and FRL Rates

State the projected racial and ethnic composition, special education, ELL, and free/reduced lunch eligibility rates.

Based on the profiles of nearby elementary and middle schools, the new West Philadelphia High School, and the closest charter school (Penn Alexander), we expect the following student composition of the school:

- Racial composition:60% African American, 10% Hispanic, 10% Asian and 20% White.
- Special education:17-19%.
- ELL:5%
- Free/reduced lunch eligibility: 63%.

iii. Data to Support Projections

Provide data to support the above projections and evidence to suggest that the school will be able to meet and sustain them over the term of the charter.

The chart below shows the number of students in the age range we aim to recruit within three miles and five miles from the site we propose, constituting significant evidence that we can achieve and sustain our proposed enrollment figures. Based on the numbers presented, even recruiting just 1 student out of a hundred within 3 miles would be more than we could hold. The School’s partners have found that, based on their experience in Philadelphia and other regions, they can traditionally recruit many more students than this percentage penetration as well.

Age and Mileage Range	Number
<i>Students ages 5-9 within 3 miles</i>	<i>29,019</i>
<i>Students ages 5-9 within 5 miles</i>	<i>56,789</i>
<i>1% penetration of 5-9 yr olds 5 miles</i>	<i>568</i>
<i>2% penetration of 5-9 yr olds within 5 miles</i>	<i>1136</i>
<i>3% penetration of 5-9 yr olds within 5 miles</i>	<i>1704</i>
<i>Students ages 10-14 within 3 miles</i>	<i>25,579</i>
<i>Students ages 10-14 within 5 miles</i>	<i>50,446</i>
<i>1% penetration of 10-14 yr olds within 5 miles</i>	<i>504</i>
<i>2% penetration of 10-14 yr olds within 5 miles</i>	<i>1008</i>
<i>3% penetration of 10-14 yr olds within 5 miles</i>	<i>1513</i>

b. Recruitment & Marketing:

Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing. The plan must provide equal access to any family interested in the new school.

i. Outreach Plan for Diverse Community

Provide details about the applicant’s outreach to families in poverty, academically

low-achieving students, students with disabilities, ELL students and their families, and other youth at risk of academic failure.

As part of its outreach plans, the School will make available information on its educational design, curriculum and policies to all persons, including parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils, considering enrollment in the school. The information will include, but not be limited to: background on the Curriculum; the School's blended learning model; the partnership with US Performing Arts, and a Parent-Student Handbook that includes policies on admission, enrollment, role of the responsible adult, grade level promotion, course level placement, materials and computers, internet service, special education, standardized tests, teacher conferences, and more information about the school.

The School's recruitment strategies are based upon a recruitment model that has been used successfully in Pennsylvania as well as other states to attract diverse student bodies. Components of the model described below include a variety of marketing techniques designed to match the charter school program and applicants' educational and personal needs.

Strategies include:

- School representatives will meet with community stakeholders throughout West Philadelphia and nearby areas to spread the word and recruit students.
- Information sessions open to interested families and the general public will be held throughout the area as well as online. Information sessions will be advertised in various print and electronic media. During these sessions, prospective parents and students will have the opportunity to interact with the curriculum, including lessons and materials, and have questions answered.
- The School may inform students and families about enrollment opportunities and other program information through a variety of media such as radio, TV, Internet, newspaper ads, and out of home advertising (e.g., billboards) as necessary.
- The School will establish a website and will use this as the primary mechanism to communicate with interested, prospective families.
- Enrollment applications for the School will be available online as well as at the school's administrative office.
- After initial enrollment is finalized, parents of students enrolled will be invited to a parent orientation session. At the orientation session, parents may meet the school administrative staff, teachers, and possibly other LR School Management representatives. Sessions will be designed to inform parents about navigating a blended learning school, technical support, lesson delivery, effective communication, and school policies.
- The School will distribute recruiting materials about the school's mission, curriculum, leadership, and the application process to public places such as libraries or schools.
- After school starts, the School will assess the efficacy of the each of the outreach strategies (TV, Radio, online search, etc.) to promote school enrollment and determine better strategies to continue meeting enrollment targets. The assessment of these strategies is also used to develop a long-term, multi-year marketing plan which takes into account re-enrolling students and the amount of marketing investment needed to attract new students in order for the school to meet its enrollment projections.
- All materials will be translated into Spanish and there will be translators at events.
- Special information sessions will be held in partnership with community based performing arts institutions that serve students after school.

Outreach to Educationally and Economically Disadvantaged Populations

The School will be inclusive and open to all eligible students. There will be no discrimination in the admission of students to the school on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, or special needs. Upon admission, for any student with a disability will comply with all federal and state laws regarding the education of students with disabilities. The School will not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability. The School will accept transfer students during the school year if space is available at appropriate grade levels.

To better reach economically disadvantaged populations, we will use strategies that have proven effective for other schools, including media advertising in languages other than English and direct contact with youth service organizations including local YMCA/YWCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs, and church based youth-groups. We will hire community recruiters who will be able to communicate in the specific languages of each immigrant population and who have established ties to each of these communities.

ii. Partnerships

The plan should include specific outreach strategies such as partnerships with non-profits, community organizations, parent groups, etc.

The School will reach out and partner with local nonprofits and community organizations such as the local YMCA and homeowners associations. We will also leverage our board member who is dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania which has many strong and long standing connections to the West Philadelphia community.

iii. Marketing Plan

Describe the venues and mass media outlets the applicant will use to reach a wide variety of students and families.

As stated above, the School will utilize a variety of methods to reach out to potential families including but not limited to: information sessions open to interested families and the general public as well as informing the public about enrollment opportunities through media outlets such as radio, TV, Internet, and newspaper ads.

c. Admissions, Lottery, and Enrollment:

Describe the admissions, lottery, and enrollment process the school will use to select students, and provide a timetable to be used for admitting students.

i. Efforts to Ensure Equal Enrollment Opportunity for All Applicants

Describe how the school will ensure equal enrollment opportunity to all applicants.

Pursuant to Section 1723-A, the School will enroll any eligible student who resides in Pennsylvania who submits a timely application for enrollment (with preference given first to students residing in Philadelphia). The admissions process will ensure that all enrolling students and their families understand the mission and unique nature of the School. A series of open information sessions will be held throughout the district. These events will be free, open to the public, and advertised in various print and electronic media. The information sessions will give interested families the chance to view the curriculum in action, closely inspect the books and materials, meet teachers and staff, and address any questions or concerns about the school.

The School will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, intellectual ability or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English Language or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district. The school will not use achievement tests, entrance examination tests or other means of testing a student's intellectual ability in order to grant or deny admission. The school will not judge a student's grade point average in consideration of any student enrollment. Students will receive "seats" based on a non-discriminatory random draw. Upon admission of any student with a disability, the School will comply with all federal and state laws regarding the education of students with disabilities.

The School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate against any student based on ethnicity, creed, gender, national origin, or disability.

ii. Diverse School

Describe how the school will ensure that its enrollment will not exacerbate segregation in the School District's existing schools. (Section 1730-A of Act 22: "The local board of school directors of a school district which is operating under a desegregation plan...or a desegregation order...shall not approve a charter school application if such charter school would place the school district in noncompliance with its desegregation order.")

The School's vision is to serve students with different learning styles, aptitudes, levels of knowledge and development. At our School students receive an individualized curriculum designed to meet state standards and graduation requirements and are provide the remediation and interventions necessary for success.

Additionally, we recognize that students who are eligible for special education services or support under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504 are protected under federal statutes and regulations intended to prevent discrimination (34 CFR Part 104 and 28 CFR Part 35). The School will ensure that all qualified students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities. In compliance with federal laws, the School will provide to each qualified student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school programs and extracurricular activities.

iii. Admissions and Enrollment Policies

Attach admissions and enrollment policies and/or procedures (ex: admissions, lottery, waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers). All policies must be in compliance with state and federal law. Policies and procedures should address the questions below:

- 1. What process does the charter intend to use to back-fill rosters from waiting lists if new spots open after the school year begins?*
- 2. Will students whose parents are active participants in the development of the school will enroll outside of the lottery process, as permitted by Section 1723-A of the Charter School Law? How does the applicant define*

'active participant' in the development of the school? What proportion of total enrollment will be represented by students in this group, and how will the school maintain fair and equitable enrollment practices in light of this exception?

A copy of the School's Admissions and Enrollment Policies are attached as Attachment 12. The flexible nature of the curriculum makes it relatively easy for the school to back-fill rosters during the school year if new spots open after the school year begins.

The School is not giving priority to parents who are involved with the development of the School. As students approach grade 9, they have two options related to the performing arts: (1) continue with a course of study to provide more exposure and fluency in either dance or music, or (2) audition for teachers and experts in the field to apply of a concentrated track in their interest area. Students in this track are pursuing professional opportunities in their field upon graduation.

6. Student Discipline

a. Student Discipline and Code of Conduct

i. School's Code of Conduct

Attach a copy of the school's code of conduct. The code must include clear procedures for student suspension and expulsion.

A copy of the School's Code of Conduct Standards is included as Attachment 13.

The standards for conduct and student discipline are based upon a philosophy of Positive Behavioral Intervention. We believe that a positive learning environment fosters student achievement. To this end, teachers will be trained in positive expectations, classroom management and lesson mastery. Positive expectations begin with the understanding that what is expected of students will greatly influence their achievement with academics and with life. The more the school, student and family are joined as partners, the greater a student's chance of success. A teacher who employs significant and purposeful feedback to students will create an environment of positive expectations. In order to maximize student learning and minimize student misbehavior, routines and procedures must be carefully planned and implemented. As a staff, teachers will have significant input in developing effective discipline policies with clearly articulated rules and effective classroom management strategies. Consequences and rewards for each rule will be developed and consistently employed. Other strategies such as rewarding/awarding academic achievement and student fidelity to school values will help to create a proactive, positive learning environment. This philosophy and approach creates an environment where students can succeed because they know at the start what is expected of them and how to surpass those expectations.

The School also recognizes that students come to school with a vast array of needs that can impact academic and non-academic achievement. We will work to establish partnerships with various organizations and businesses that can supplement the school's support services. Additional services and partnerships to support student success may include:

- Mentoring and Role-Model Programs

- Career Assessment and Exploration
- Post-Secondary Transition Planning (including resume drafting, the reality of financial aid, applications, essays, etc.)
- Academic Tutoring
- Leadership Development Programs
- Paid Internships
- Alcohol, Chemical and Tobacco Abuse Program in accordance with 24 P. S. § 15-1547(g)

The School will fully comply with 24 P.S. §13-1317.2 Safe Schools and Possession of Weapons.

The School recognizes and is committed to ensuring that no student enrolled in the school is suspended or expelled without due process. Due process requirements guarantee all students the right to fair notice, fair procedures, and a fair hearing.

ii. Staff Training re Equitable Implementation of Discipline Policies

Describe how the staff will be trained on implementation of discipline policies. How will the school ensure that the code of conduct does not disproportionately impact students of color, students who are learning English, or students with disabilities?

Staff are trained in the Responsive Teacher model, a method of closely monitoring discipline data and adjust behavior modification strategies as needed. Discipline in this blended model tends to be reduced since the teacher mostly teaches in small groups, greatly reducing poor student behavior in the classroom as well as the need for strong classroom management skills.

All staff will be trained on the discipline policies of the School prior to the start of school.

iii. Special Needs and Discipline Code

How will the school take into account the needs and rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings? Who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with federal laws and regulations governing the discipline of students with disabilities, including manifestation determination reviews?

The School cares deeply about students with disabilities and will be sure to follow the law and appropriate due process.

If the need arise, however, the Principal will have the authority to suspend or remove a student as a disciplinary action, upon conferring with the Special Education Teacher and/or Director, Guidance Counselor, and the Board of Trustees. The School will adhere to all Code of Federal Regulations on discipline provisions for students with disabilities that pertain to sections 300.530, 300.532(a), 300.532 (b), 300.533, 300.534, and 300.536. The School will ensure record keeping on the number of days a student with a disability has been suspended or removed for discipline reasons. Alternative instruction will be provided for students of compulsory school age who are suspended or expelled. We will also ensure that parents/guardian and students with disabilities receive appropriate notification regarding suspensions or removals for disciplinary reasons. When a suspension or removal of a student with a disability constitutes a disciplinary change of placement, the Principal, Special Education Teacher and/or Director and Guidance Counselor will follow the Federal Regulations and ensure that the student is provided with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as defined in the federal regulations. The

School will also ensure that the student is referred for a manifestation determination and that the student's parent/guardian is provided with a copy of procedural due process rights.

iv. Communication to Students and Parents Re Discipline Code and Expectations

Describe how students and parents will be informed of the school's discipline policies and expectations.

Describe the school's policy for due process and provision of instruction. Attach a proposed policy and explain how the school plans to provide students with due process and required instruction. Describe due process procedures for suspension and expulsion that comply with the Public School Code.

The School's data dashboard and easily accessible student information online makes it easy for parents with internet access to be informed of their student behavior. Students and parents will also be informed of the School's discipline policies and expectations via the school website, emails, texts, written materials and at school events so parents without internet access will be adequately informed as well. Translators will be available at events when needed and the School materials will also be translated into other languages as needed

- b. Due Process:** *Describe the school's policy for due process and provision of instruction. Attach a proposed policy and explain how the school plans to provide students with due process and required instruction. Describe due process procedures for suspension and expulsion that comply with the Public School Code.*

All students are to be treated with fairness and respect. Students have a right to be heard and are to be provided the opportunity to explain their version of events to administrators. This intent will be applied to discipline issues that may lead to suspension or expulsion.

- c. Safety Plan:** *How will the school address issues of safety at the school? What strategies will be employed to improve the building climate?*
- i.** *Outline the steps that have been taken to formulate a comprehensive school safety plan. Attach a copy of the school safety plan that demonstrates a sound knowledge of Act 26 of 1995, the Safe Schools Act. Detail how the school safety plan will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.*

School safety has many aspects, including doing background checks on staff, health and safety monitoring, building security, and evacuation plans, among other things. The Board will monitor these safety plans each year.

Fingerprinting/Background Check

Employees of the Schools will be required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required. The Principal shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Board on a periodic basis. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

TB Testing

The Schools will do tuberculosis testing as required or as needed.

Diabetes

The Schools will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parents or guardians. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

- A description of type 2 diabetes.
- A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes.
- A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
- A description of treatments and prevention of methods of type 2 diabetes.
- A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

Medication in School

The Schools will adhere to Pennsylvania law regarding administration of medication in school.

Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis

The Schools shall adhere to Pennsylvania law et seq. regarding vision/hearing/Scoliosis screening as applicable to the grade levels served by the Schools.

Emergency Preparedness

The Schools shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school sites. These handbooks shall include but not be limited to the following responses: OSHA policy compliance, fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations and shall be submitted for charter authorizer receipt and review. These handbooks shall include an evacuation plan, and general school safety, injury and illness prevention.

Staff shall be trained on emergency and appropriate first aid responses.

Bloodborne Pathogens

The Schools shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace.

Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

Drug Free/Smoke Free Environment

The Schools shall maintain a drug, alcohol, and smoke free environment.

Facility Safety

The facility to be utilized by the Schools must be in compliance with applicable State and local Building Codes.

The Schools agree to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. The Schools shall conduct fire drills periodically.

The Schools will review reports regarding the structural integrity of the building, and act accordingly.

ii. Which staff member will be responsible for reporting Act 26 and Gun Free Schools Act violations?

The Principal will be responsible for reporting Act 26 and Gun Free Schools Act violations.

7. Board of Trustees

a. Board Creation/Transition:

Identify the incorporator of the charter corporation. Explain the role of the applicant in participating in the Board of Trustees. If the applicant team is not the initial governing board, explain how and when the applicant will transition leadership to the formal governing board and how the applicant will support the school during start-up and in the longer term. Please attach a copy of the Articles of Incorporation filed with the Pennsylvania Department of State.

Incorporator and Advisors

A copy of the Articles of Incorporation are attached as Attachment 15.

The incorporator of the nonprofit is Alan Kessler, Esq., a partner at Duane Morris. He and fellow Duane Morris partner Stephanie Kosta, Esq., both charter experts, are advising the Board with respect to charter requirements, legal matters, and overall good governance practices.

Applicant Team

The applicant team is the initial governing board. A summary of their skills and backgrounds are listed in the section above regarding the founding coalition.

b. Governance:

Describe how the proposed school will be governed. Explain how the governance and administrative structure is aligned with the school's mission and goals.

i. Governance Plan

Explain the general philosophy of governance for the proposed school, and include a list of any committees that the board will form (for example: governance committee, education committee, finance committee, etc.)

"Experts agree that the single most important attribute of the successful charter school is a clear sense of purpose or mission shared by parents, students, staff and the school's board of trustees. A common vision of what it means to be educated and how one becomes educated forms the basis of a coherent school design."

The Board shall have and exercise the corporate powers prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and more particularly described in the Charter School Law and its Charter. The essential function of the Board shall be policymaking, the assurance of sound management, and active participation in the provision of necessary funds. The Board has ultimate responsibility to determine general, academic, financial, personnel and related policies deemed necessary for the administration and development of the School in accordance with its stated purposes and goals. More specifically, the Board's authority shall be, without limitation:

- (1) to approve policies and procedures regarding employment, including but not limited, to appointment, promotion, contracts, leaves of absence, fringe benefits, qualifications of professional and nonprofessional staff, professional development and dismissal of employees;
- (2) to adopt the curriculum or courses of study and text materials;

- (3) to approve institutional documents and policy statements at the Board's discretion to assure compliance with the Articles of incorporation, Bylaws, Charter, and Board Policy;
- (4) to sue and be sued, complain and defend and participate as a party or otherwise, but only to the same extent and upon the same condition that political subdivisions and local agencies can be sued;
- (5) to make contracts and leases for the procurement of services, equipment, and supplies;
- (6) to incur temporary debts in anticipation of the receipt of funds;
- (7) to solicit and accept any gifts or grants for School purposes;
- (8) to establish the annual academic calendar;
- (9) to adopt and approve the annual budget and to make revisions therein;
- (10) to establish enrollment policies and procedures;
- (11) to adopt and approve policies and procedures to assess student achievement;
- (12) to approve or ratify all contracts as determined by the policy on contracting;
- (13) to be final arbiter of all disciplinary matters;
- (14) to authorize any annual audit by an independent certified public accountant;
- (15) to fix the salary or other compensation of the Principal, teachers, and other employees,
- (16) to approve all personnel actions;
- (17) to designate depositories of School funds;
- (18) to have and exercise all of the powers and means appropriate to effect the purpose or purposes for which the School is chartered; and
- (19) to have and exercise all other powers enumerated in the Nonprofit Corporation Law or otherwise vested by law in the corporation and consistent with the Charter School Law.

The Board will be responsible for providing an innovative and autonomous blended learning K – 12th grade school with the mission of and in accordance with the aims and goals contained in the charter granted to it, fulfilling the purposes of Pennsylvania charter schools as spelled out in 24 P.S. §17-1702-A. To assist with this mission, the Board has formed a partnership with LR School Management, which has an ideal blend of resources and experience. As an ESP partner, LR School Management has the capacity and experience to support the day-to-day operations of a high quality blended school model that will combine the best of face-to-face and digital learning that will produce high academic achievement outcomes for students. The Board will govern the school, overseeing policymaking, the assurance of sound management and governance, and active participation in the provision and/or solicitation of necessary funds. While LR School Management may provide advice and input for the development of policies concerning the educational and operational issues of the school, the Board will have the ultimate responsibility to determine the general, academic, financial, personnel and related policies deemed necessary for the administration and development of the school, in accordance with its stated purposes and goals. The Board will evaluate LR School Management on its performance in accordance with terms of Products and Services agreement and the charter. LR School Management will reasonably cooperate with such monitoring and oversight including any independent, third-party financial and administrative audits of the program. Administrative staff, will be employees of LR School Management, while the teachers and counselor will be employees of the Board.

Understanding of and commitment to the School's mission and vision will be reinforced through Board orientation and training, strategic planning and evaluation.

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees of the charter school, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, shall be used in order to take action on the following subjects:

- School calendar with requisite number of days and hours.
- Adopting textbooks and/or instructional materials
- Adopting the annual budget
- Purchasing or selling of land
- Locating new buildings or changing the locations of old ones
- Creating or increasing any indebtedness
- Adopting courses of study
- Designating depositories for school funds
- Entering into contracts of any kind where the amount involved exceeds \$200
- Fixing salaries or compensation of teachers, or other employees of the charter school.

The Board is the governing body of the School and has the responsibility and authority over the charter and the operations of the School. In compliance with §17-1716-A, the Board of the School will have the authority to decide matters related to the operation of the School, including, but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum and operating procedures, subject to the School's charter. The Board will have the authority to employ, discharge and contract with necessary professional and nonprofessional employees subject to the school's charter and the provisions of applicable state law. The Board will comply with the act of July 3, 1986 (P.L. 388, No. 84), [FNI] known as the "Sunshine Act." Appropriate notice of a Board Meeting's date, time and place will be given by the required means of publication.

ii. **Bylaws**

Include copies of the school's proposed by-laws. Do not attach boilerplate corporate bylaws. The bylaws must be appropriate for the governance of a charter school.

A copy of the charter school bylaws is included as Attachment 16.

iii. **Board Members**

Submit the names and resumes of potential board members. Explain their collective qualifications for governing the proposed school and note whether additional board members are being recruited.

The Board's names and a summary of their background and qualifications are described in the section above regarding the founding coalition, and are also attached as Attachment 17.

The School's Board members have a vision and enthusiasm for building an excellent school in West Philadelphia and are well-positioned to provide necessary oversight and support for the successful implementation of the School's mission. The Board and their advisors have all of the requisite talents and experience to govern the school, including expertise in education, the arts, technology, finance, facilities, charters, government relations, compliance and legal matters.

iv. **Board's Relationship to Staff, Students, Parents and Community**

Describe the board's relationship to the proposed school's administration, teaching staff, students, parents, and community members.

The board as a governance body will include parents once the school has enrolled families. Following best practices, the Board will focus on oversight based on informed research, staff reports, testimony from parents, observations at the school and other sources. They are not to be involved too much in the

day to day operations of the school but instead should focus on the overall success of the school in the long term.

That being said, the board encourages parents and the community to be involved. For example,

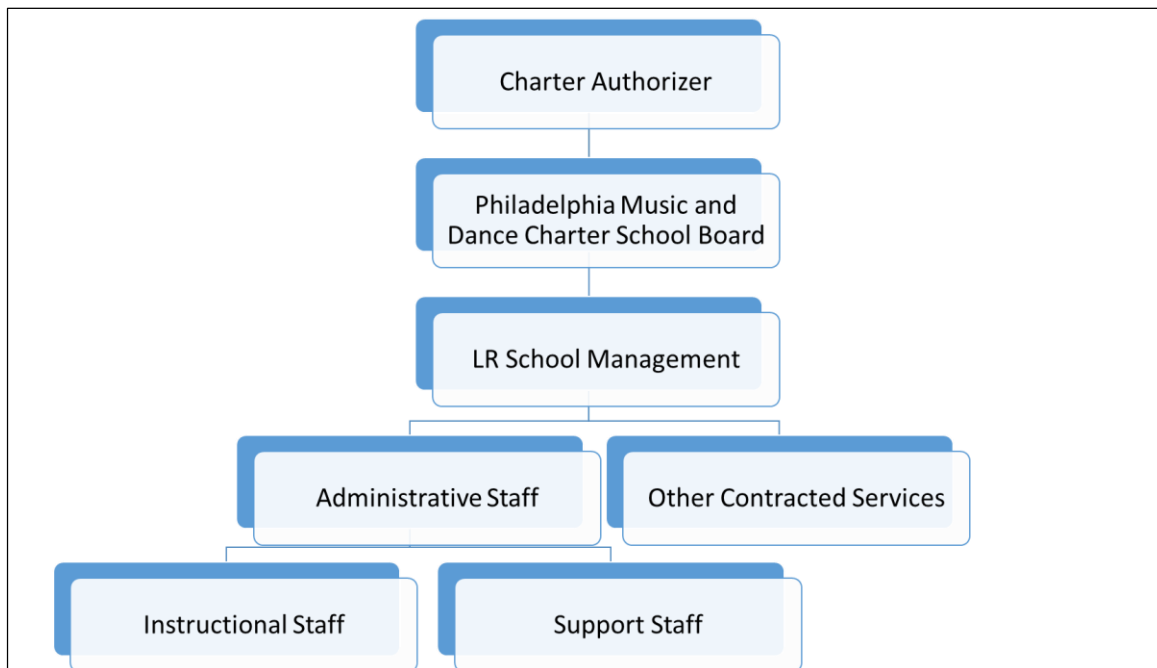
- Parents will be actively encouraged to attend Board and other School meetings and to participate on ad-hoc committees appointed to address specific issues.
- The Parent Advisory Council is parent-driven and is recognized as the official voice of parents.
- Parents are free to contact teachers, specialists, and other parents to solve problems, give feedback, or pass on ideas and insights to the school community.
- Parents can log on to the School website and participate in a moderated online community discussion board to facilitate a constructive and interactive communication process.
- Parents can complete annual surveys to express their satisfaction with and/or critiques of the School.
- New opportunities for parents, students, and community members to contribute will always be considered.

Students and parents can also provide immediate curriculum feedback. Lessons contain a user feedback button that will allow the School and LR School Management to identify learning issues on a real-time basis.

v. **Organization Chart re Board**

Provide an organizational chart showing lines of authority among the board, advisory bodies (if any), administration, staff, parents and students.

Here is an organizational chart regarding the board relationship to the school and its contracted service providers:



vi. **Parent Representation on Board**

Will there be parent representation on the Board of Trustees? How many? Voting or non-voting? How will parent representatives be identified and selected for the board?

As provided in the By Laws, nominations for Trustees may be made by a Nominating Committee or by any Trustee at any regularly scheduled or special meeting. Trustees cast an open, public ballot. A simple majority of a quorum is required for election.

If there are vacancies on the Board, they will be filled by a vote of the Board of Trustees. Each Trustee elected in this way will hold office for the remainder of the predecessor's unexpired term. If a Trustee resigns, giving notice that the resignation will become effective at a future time, the Board of Trustees will have the authority to elect a successor to take office when the resignation becomes effective.

The Board may, at their discretion, nominate a parent to serve on the Board.

vii. **Board Meetings and Notice of Meetings**

How often will the Board of Trustees meet? How will parents know when and where?

Board meetings will be at the School once the site is ready to occupy and will meet every month or every other month as needed, usually in the evening.

c. **Ethics & Sunshine Law:**

Provide detailed information on how the school will ensure that Board members are familiar with the Sunshine Law, the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, and the Open Records Law.

i. **Board Training Re Ethics and Sunshine Law**

The Board's independent legal counsel and charter school experts from Duane Morris such as Alan Kessler and Stephanie Kosta, as well as other qualified entities, will ensure that the Board is trained on ethics rules, the Sunshine Law the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, and the Open Records Law as well as best practices regarding governance and charter school operations and law.

ii. **Board Conflict of Interest Policy**

Provide a copy of the proposed school's conflict of interest policy for the board.

A copy of the board's conflict of interest policy is included as Attachment 18.

III. FINANCE AND FACILITIES

The finance plan should detail financial systems and processes and demonstrate, under realistic revenue assumptions, that the school will remain viable for the length of the charter term. The proposed budget should align with all proposed programming, staffing plans, student enrollment projections, etc. The facilities plan should describe the school's ability to secure and prepare a facility within the allotted timeframe.

First year and five year operating budgets are included as Attachment 19. Details on private and public funding, and expenses are available in the detail sheets in the format provided in the Manual of Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pennsylvania Public Schools.

1. Finance and Operations

a. Financial Forms and Narrative:

*Develop a preliminary detailed one-year budget and a high level five-year operating budget. Use the excel budget template, **Appendix V**.*

OVERALL BUDGET OBJECTIVE

The goals of the five-year budget is to achieve student and enrollment growth while working towards a balanced budget. LR School Management will help the school have the necessary funds to operate and grow the school through interest-free loans and the subordination of fees as needed.

PRIORITY OF PAYMENTS

To ensure that the School has funds available, LR School Management has set up a payment priority list to ensure that the School's expenses are always paid before LR School Management is paid for curriculum and other services. The priority is as follows:

1. Salaries and taxes for Teachers and Other Staff.
2. School Expenses such as Rent, Utilities, and outside services.
3. Loan repayments to LR School Management (described below)
4. Fees to LR School Management for Curriculum and other education products (described below)
5. Management fees to LR School Management (described below)
6. Subordination Guarantee to LR School Management (described below)
7. Academic Performance Bonus to LR School Management (described below)

i. Revenue Budget Narrative

Provide a budget narrative that clearly describes revenue assumptions. Include information on all revenues that will be available to the school both from the School District and from other sources. This should include, but is not limited to, assumptions regarding the charter per pupil rate, assumed enrollment, state funding, and grants/other funding.

REVENUE

Enrollment: All revenue is based on our enrollment projections, which starts at 300 in Year 1 and grows to 925 by Year 5. See the table below for enrollment breakout by grade by year.

Enrollment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
K	50	50	50	50	50
Grades 1-5	100	150	200	250	250
Grades 6-8	75	150	225	250	275
Grades 9-12	75	150	225	325	350
Enrollment	300	500	700	875	925

Local Funding: We have assumed funding of \$7,996 in Year 1 with slight growth thereafter.

State Funding: We have calculated state funding based on a 50% reimbursement of both FICA and PSERS contributions. We used 21.40% to calculate the PSERS contributions.

Special Education: For SPED funding, we have assumed that 17% of the enrollments will require these services and that the school will be receiving an additional \$15,077 for each of these students. We have also assumed that we will be spending all of these funds on personnel (aides and staff) and any additional services that are required.

Title I/At-Risk: Based on local statistics, we are assuming 63% of students qualify for Title I or At-Risk funding. Based on the eligibility level, we are planning to apply for the school to have a Schoolwide Title I program.

Free and Reduced Lunch: The School is planning on offering both lunch and breakfast. Fees will be charged up to the amount of the FRL subsidy amount. For those students that qualify (63% assumed), FRL funding will be used to offset what they must pay. Participation is assumed to be 85% for lunch and 60% for breakfast. All fees that are collected are assumed to offset the cost of providing the meal service including any food service employees of the school.

Loans from LR School Management: Interest-free loans will be provided from LR School Management to the School, at the School’s request, to cover any shortfalls in funding, primarily in start-up and the first year. The term of the loan is over the remainder of the Term of the Charter and Management Agreement. It is anticipated that loans from startup through the first year of operation will total about \$775,000, which will be paid off by the end of Year 5.

Other Grants: The school will be filing for federal implementation grants totaling \$375,000, which are included in this budget. LR School Management will help the School research and apply for other such grants as they come available.

ii. **Expense Budget Narrative**

Provide a budget narrative that clearly describes expenditures assumptions. Detail all major assumptions regarding staffing and benefits costs, debt, facilities and maintenance costs, and other major expenditures.

PRE-OPENING EXPENSES

In the months leading up to the opening of the school (the “Pre-Opening” period), we estimate the school will need about \$218,000 in operating expenses, which include rent, utilities, insurance and office supplies while the School is getting set up and recruiting new students. In addition, we anticipate that School will need about \$330,000 in capital purchases to get the building ready for occupancy, including building improvements, kitchen space, and cable and wiring of the school for internet and phones. At

the option of the School, if these funds are needed and other funding sources cannot be secured, LR School Management will provide an interest free loan for these amounts to the School, which will be paid back over the term of the charter.

ONGOING EXPENSES

Staffing: Instructional Staff is in the budget at levels to ensure that proper student-to-teacher ratios are maintained. The average salaries for teachers (\$54,000), para-pros (\$29,000), SPED teachers (\$60,000) and counselors (\$54,000) are weighted with an average benefits rate of 56%. (See Exhibit 19 for a breakdown of the benefits rate.) The table below for the breakdown of staff by year:

Instructional Staff	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Teachers	14.0	23.0	34.0	42.0	43.0
Parapros	6.0	7.0	9.0	10.0	10.0
SPED	3.0	6.0	8.0	10.0	10.0
Counselor/Dean	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0
Total Instructional	24.0	37.0	52.0	64.0	65.0

The Administrative Staff for the school is split into two groups. “School Personnel” are employees of the School and are reflected in the five-year budget. “LR School Management Personnel” are employees of LR School Management. Their costs are covered by the fees paid to LR School Management. The average salaries for the office managers (\$35,000), Arts Coordinator (\$45,000) and food service personnel (\$25,000) are also loaded with a 56% benefits rate. (See Exhibit 19) The table below for the breakdown of the staff by type and year:

Admin Staff	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
School Personnel					
Office Manager/PA's	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.0
Arts Coordinator	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Nurse	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Food Service	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
LR School Management Personnel					
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Asst Principal	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0
Academic Manager/TLC	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.0
Business Manager	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Enrollment/Mktg/PR	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
IT Manager	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5
Total Headcount	8.0	8.0	11.0	12.5	12.5

Curriculum: The budget represents the fees charged to the School by LR School Management for the use of its curriculum as well as the cost of any 3rd party curriculum.

Facilities and Maintenance: In looking to secure an appropriate facility to house the charter school, we analyzed property rental and utility rates across Philadelphia, particularly in the area of the current facility, and contracted with a reputable real estate broker to ensure that lease and build-out costs do not exceed the budgeted amount. The building we have found currently fits those criteria as do several back-up buildings.

Extracurricular Activities: Since the school is focused on music and dance, we have added expenses in the budget to reflect the activities and supplies required to support this program. We have assumed \$200 per student in elementary and middle school grades and \$750 per student in high school. Some additional costs may be covered through fundraising by the school, but no fundraising has been assumed in the budget.

LR School Management's Fees: The full price of the fees that LR School Management will charge are in Exhibit 19 and Exhibit 25. Most fees are charged on a per pupil basis. The fees break down into several groups:

- **Education Management & Administration:** These fees cover program consulting services as well as the management of the school including personnel management, administrative duties, budget and financial reporting and support, and other such duties. This fee covers the salary and benefits of many of the on-site personnel provided by LR School Management, including the Principal and Business Manager.
- **Professional Development:** LR School Management will be providing teacher training via a full-time on-site teacher trainer. LR School Management will also contract for additional training services and supplies.
- **Technology Services:** This fee is for various services provided by LR School Management in support of the blended School's extensive technology needs.
- **Academic Bonus:** To further the Board's goal of improving academic performance of all students in the School, the Board has determined that if the School achieves a set of pre-determined academic performance goals, then LR School Management would receive a bonus for its helping the staff succeed. This bonus would only be paid, as indicated above under the agreed-upon order of payments, if there were sufficient funds after paying all the other costs of the school.

Debt/Debt Service: In the budget we have included a line for debt service. LR School Management has agreed to provide an interest-free loan to the School for the start-up costs and any budget shortfalls that cannot be covered through the discounting of our fees. The term of the loan is over the remainder of the term of the agreement. We estimate that the School will require a loan of \$548,000 to cover the Pre-Opening expenditures (discussed above) and \$226,000 during the first year of operation to cover operational deficits (on top of the discounted fees.) By Year 2, the School should not require any further loans.

iii. Contingency Plans

Provide an explanation of how the school would address situations in which the detailed revenue and expenditure assumptions were not realized (e.g. lower than anticipated enrollment, higher than expected facilities costs, higher than expected personnel costs, etc.)

LR School Management has agreed to subordinate our fees to cover any deficits during the term of the agreement. LR School Management has agreed to help the School cover any cash shortfalls as needed and requested. If revenues are lower than expected, LR School Management will work collaboratively with the Board to plan appropriate program reductions commensurate with the funding reduction and subordinate its fees as needed. Ideally, no core functions would have to be cut. If extreme, LR School Management is still confident that we can operate the school with higher supervisor ratios, less facility space and less counseling support.

iv. Additional Financial Support

Provide plans or evidence of any additional opportunities for financial support that clearly document how the school will raise the funds detailed in the budget.

The School will operate the charter school in a fiscally responsible manner with the standard per pupil revenue for public charter schools in the state of Pennsylvania and IDEA special education entitlement funding. The school's major costs are direct student instruction, facilities and technology. The school

will properly estimate the program’s budget consistent with its enrollments thereby minimizing budget expenditures until enrollments materialize.

Together, the Board and staff will work to increase their knowledge and understanding of state, federal and other funding opportunities to help build and maintain a sound financial basis for the school, including grants. However, the School recognizes that grants can be dependent on the demographics of students enrolled in the school and, therefore, it is not planning on receiving any discretionary or competitive grant funds to achieve financial goals—other than per pupil revenue and IDEA special education entitlement funding.

Board and staff development will include training about school finance and funding sources. Attendance by board members and staff at national and state conferences will provide opportunities to learn from federal, state and private funding source presenters as well as other charter schools about current and upcoming grant opportunities.

b. Internal Financial Controls:

Describe plans to ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance for the proposed school.

i. Compliance with GAAP

What checks and balances will be in place to ensure the organization’s compliance with generally accepted accounting procedures (GAAP) related to managing the financial operations of the school?

The administrative staff, under the guidance of the Board, will be accountable for compliance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to public schools, including budgets and financial records. The School’s accounting will comply with generally accepted accounting procedures (GAAP) related to managing the financial operations of the school.

Checks and balances to ensure compliance are indicated below. As required, the School will have a third party independent audit of its finances.

ii. Financial Policies and Procedures

Provide a set of financial policies and procedures that the organization will use to manage the financial operations of the school. Include the proposed school’s internal controls policy.

The Board will establish a Finance Committee made up of knowledgeable financial advisors who will work closely with the Business Manager to ensure that the financial needs of the School are met and that there is full compliance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations that apply to charter schools.

The Finance Committee and the Business Manager will work together to prepare and implement internal controls and processes to protect the assets of the school and minimize the possibility of fraud or misuse of funds. The internal controls and procedures manual will address things like the following that will be reflected in the Produce and Services Agreement between the School and LR School Management (this is not intended to be an exhaustive list and may change based on school needs):

- **Cash receipts and disbursements**
 - Authorized signatories

- Approval authority levels
- Segregation of duties
- Monthly bank reconciliations
- **Procurement Process**
 - Purchase requisitions
 - Approved vendors
 - Approved authorizers re: purchase orders
 - Reconciliations that product and services invoiced have been received
- **Human Resource Policies and Processes**
 - To address the approval of hires and staffing needs
 - To ensure there are no conflicts of interest among hired staff
 - Ensure the confidentiality of all personal and personnel information
 - Ensure benefits are competitive and provided
 - Ensure compliance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations
 - Implement an employee performance evaluation system
 - Provide staff with professional development opportunities
- **Fixed Asset Policy**
 - Dollar amount for capitalization
 - Depreciation periods
 - Asset tagging
 - Annual inventories
- **Budgeting, Forecasting and Reporting Processes**
 - All financial records will be kept in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for 501(c)(3) entities.
 - Annually the Business Operations Manager will prepare a “working budget” by March 15 for review by the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees. Working with the Board and Committee, the Business Manager will make all necessary arrangements for final Budget approval by July 1st for the succeeding fiscal year.
 - Monthly the Business Manager will prepare a financial report which will address the changes in net assets for the period in addition to a monthly cash flow statement and balance sheet.
 - All variances from the approved Budget will be investigated and explained.
 - Quarterly, based upon year-to-date results, the Business Manager will prepare a full-year forecast for comparison to the approved budget. This will enable the Board of Trustees to take the necessary actions, if any, to ensure the budget is met.
 - The Business Manager will ensure monthly that all regulatory reports are filed in a timely manner.
 - The Business Manager, working with the Finance Committee and the Board, will identify an independent accounting firm to audit the books and controls annually. A minimum of three firms will be considered based upon their experience in charter school audits and their reputation for quality and integrity. The sole decision will rest with the board of Trustees.
 - The Business Manager will work closely with the auditors each year to ensure the

audit is conducted in an efficient manner and any recommendations are implemented immediately.

- For heightened accountability, both the Administrative Assistant and the Business Manager will be trained on the Operating Budget Management System (OBMS) for the purpose of providing assurance that the information is in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and procedures for the PED.

iii. Financial Monitoring

Describe the financial monitoring process that will be used. Specify the reports to be generated and the frequency of these reports, and identify the party responsible for generating and/or reviewing the reports.

The Business Manager will work with the Board to procure federal entitlement funds, state funds, and other grants and ensure that each is properly accounted for in accordance with Fund Accounting standards. The School will comply with the required State of Pennsylvania financial procedures. The school treasurer shall settle the accounts annually with the School's Board for each school year.

An annual school audit shall be conducted according to the requirements of Article 24 of the School Code of 1949. The Board of Trustees shall follow requirement set forth for school boards in this section.

c. Insurance Coverage:

Required insurance coverage plans include the following: health, property and general liability, professional liability, automobile, worker's compensation, educator's legal liability, Director and Operator's insurance and tail coverage.

- i. Identify insurance broker(s) where possible.

A copy of the insurance coverage plans that will comply with law is included as Attachment 21.

The School will indemnify the District of Philadelphia, the School Reform Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, any related entities, and their respective members, officers, employees, officials and agents. In addition, the School will obtain liability insurance coverage naming the District Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Education as Additional Insured on a primary basis. The Board is working with Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. to obtain insurance coverage. The coverage will meet or exceed the state insurance requirements including Workers' Compensation Liability, Commercial General Liability, Directors' and Officers' Liability and Legal/Professional Liability, Automobile Liability, Umbrella/Excess Liability, Property Insurance, Student Accident Coverage, and Fidelity Bond.

d. Fiscal Management:

i. Finance Team

Identify the finance team for the proposed charter school. Provide a job description or resume for key team members, and these individuals' experiences and qualifications to manage the school's finances.

A Business Manager will be hired by LR School Management in conjunction with the Board. This person will be responsible for the financial management of the School and will work with the Board to ensure proper approval of expenditures. The Business Manager will also be responsible for financial reporting, budgeting, and forecasting. The Business Manager will also be supported by the finance team at LR School Management. A job description for the Business Manager position is included as Attachment 4.

- ii. *If an external organization will be contracted for financial management, describe why that organization was selected as well as which specific responsibilities will be assigned to the external organization.*

No external organization will be used for financial management.

2. Facility Needs

Describe the applicant's plan for leasing or purchasing a school facility which would be ready for full operation of the school prior to the school opening date. Please complete the Facility Planning Questionnaire (Appendix VI).

A completed Facility Planning Questionnaire is included as Attachment 23.

- i. **Description of Facility**

If the applicant currently holds or plans to rent or purchase a facility, please describe it. Describe the location of the facility, any plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. The charter school facility must comply with all state and local fire, health and safety requirements. Applicants must be prepared to follow applicable city zoning laws.

The applicant intends to locate the school in the area of University City in West Philadelphia in the Priority zip code areas of either 19104 or 19139, two of the School District's priority target neighborhoods where it "would most benefit Philadelphia's students... based on local school quality, the lack of charter options, district utilization rates, and poverty rates."

The applicant has retained a number of prominent real estate brokers to canvas the areas and they have found a number of promising sites that are conveniently located, accessible to families, have sufficient space, appear affordable, and who have landlords who are interested in leasing to us if the school is approved.

The School's first choice is 4700 Walnut Street between 47th and 48th, the former West Philadelphia high School site. This building is slated to be converted into housing, but, as indicated below, the developer is interested in using some of the space, perhaps up to 90,000 feet for a high quality school. The building is classrooms, gyms, cafeterias, science labs and other specialized space that would benefit the broader community if they were used as part of a school. The community has made it clear numerous times that it wants that location fixed up as it is currently poorly lit and abandoned at night.

As indicated below, the developer of this site is interested, but we also have a few backup sites that are attractive options as well in case they are needed.

- ii. **Letter of Intent from Landlord**

Include details of arrangements that have been made to lease or purchase the facility. Attach a letter of intent from the owner or landlord to demonstrate that the facility will be secured in sufficient time to begin the school year. Provide a detailed timetable of the projected steps and dates leading to the opening of the proposed school.

The developer of 4700 Walnut, Strong Place Partners, out of New York City, is currently in the final stages of purchasing the site, and the community strongly wants this blighted area of the neighborhood to be rehabilitated and spruced up as soon as possible.

One of the brokers for the charter school, Tactix Real Estate, has had extensive conversations with this developer about charter schools such the Philadelphia Music and Dance Charter School leasing space in

the building, and the developer has stated to our broker that he intends to lease to us if the charter school is approved and this use is supported by the community. Based on comments as part of the process in the site being approved for development, the community strongly supports a high quality school located there since there are so many low performing schools in the area. Having families in this blighted part of western University City will greatly support the resurgence of the community. The purchase is expected to close within 45 days and the developer wants to respect the process. He therefore has asked us to wait until the site is finalized before he gives us his Letter of Intent.

Based on these conversations with the owner, we have been told by the experts that there is a strong likelihood of opening the school at this site. It is zoned for a school; it is built to be a school; it needs little work to reopen part of the space as a school; the community wants a school; and the developer, finally about to own the building after years of work with just a few approvals left, is willing to lease to us at an affordable price. It is win-win for everyone.

The Schedule would for opening would include finalizing a lease in the Spring, and commencing a vigorous cleanup of the building soon thereafter. There will be little construction needed for this phase of the School's operations. Several photos of 4700 Walnut are attached as part of Attachment 26.

Contingency Plans

Out of an abundance of caution, however, the School has looked at a number of promising sites nearby as backups. We have attached Letters of Intent for several of these nearby properties to show that we have viable options if for some reason 4700 Walnut Street falls through. These backup Letters of Intent are attached as Attachment 26.

Several backup sites are nearby at 23 South 52nd Street and 4021 Market Street. These are smaller but at least would enable the school to open with a smaller initial school.

A third backup with a loft like space is at 851 N. Preston Street in University City with 30,000 feet available. It has good access, open space, and likely an affordable price.

All of the sites are relatively in or near University City and the University of Pennsylvania.

b. Space Requirements:

Explain how the site is a suitable facility for the school, describing the square footage, total number of classrooms, administrative space, gym, cafeteria, labs, etc. Include a discussion of and timeframe for the renovations that are required to receive a certificate of use and occupancy as a school.

- i. *Discuss plans for maintaining the facility on a day to day basis (custodial) and extended basis (facility maintenance).*

The space needs of the School, due its blended learning nature, are flexible regarding space. We would prefer a larger space, perhaps from 50,000 to 90,000 feet so we can grow the school, but it is essential that we at least secure space to open. That could be as small as 15,000 square feet. If needed, we can find additional space later when it is needed.

As indicated in the attached Facility Space planning document, we want to have space for a few hundred students the first few years and then grow ideally to approximately 900 students in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. Ideally, we would want between 10-15 classrooms year 1, ~20 rooms year 2 and perhaps ~30 rooms in year 3.

It is wonderful that the proposed site already has science labs with gas burners. Having a gym is also a huge plus. And so is its historical use as a school as this should make it much easier to get a certificate of use and occupancy for the school.

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

Schools with strong community engagement are sensitive to and meet the needs of the students and families in the proposed community. Applicants should demonstrate connections that have been established within prospective communities and provide evidence of the proposed school's capacity to integrate itself into the community that it hopes to serve.

1. Targeted Community

a. School District Needs:

*Will the proposed school be located inside a District boundary that has been identified by the District as in need of high quality seats? (See **Appendix IV** for more information.)*

- i. *Identify the target community and briefly describe current educational options in the vicinity.*

The School plans to locate in or near the ZIP codes, 19104 and 19139 that the District has indicated is a priority area based on neighborhoods where it “would most benefit Philadelphia’s students... based on local school quality, the lack of charter options, district utilization rates, and poverty rates.”

- ii. *Explain how the proposed school will add to the array of educational options available.*

The quality educational options in the area are few and far between. Greatschools.org ratings indicate that almost all the public schools in or near University are a 1 or 2 out of 10, with 1 being the lowest score. The only exception is the Penn Alexander charter school which has a 9 out of 10 and which has a huge waiting list.

Furthermore, the 2015 projections from the 2010 consensus indicate that there more than enough students to fill the school, with over 50 students within 5 miles.

Initial data suggests that the blended-learning model can provide more options to public schools, parents and students, particularly when it takes best practices with digital curriculum and combines those with strategies that are known to work well in face-to-face instruction. The School will offer individualization, flexibility, a high degree of structure where and when it is most needed, high standards, a unique and proven instructional model, rigorous curriculum and assessments, and an engaging way to connect parents and Teachers in an innovative public school model. With its added focus on Advisory and college and career prep, the School is positioned to serve those students still searching for the learning environment that best fits their unique needs.

Furthermore, this educational design is truly innovative. Few if any schools in the Commonwealth offer its proposed instructional model and academic intervention strategies. The School intends to share best practices with other public schools and hopes that its successes will provide an example for charters and district schools across Pennsylvania.

- iii. *Will the school consider offering enrollment preference for students residing in a specific catchment area or matriculating from a particular feeder school? If so, explain the details of the enrollment preference and provide a rationale for it.*

The School will not be giving priority to any students in the enrollment process unless they are dependents of employees working at the School.

b. Community/Local Connections:

Identify the steps taken to assess the educational needs and priorities of families in the community where the proposed school will be located. Describe the anticipated relationship of the charter school to the surrounding community, and vice versa.

- i. *Summarize the feedback received from community and civic leaders, families, and other stakeholders. How will the program provided by the proposed charter school meet a need in the community?*

The applicant team has spoken with members of the community on the street, in restaurants, in the nearby YMCA, in community associations, at Penn, and a number of people who support our school. The program will meet a need in the community for high quality public school options in or nearby University City.

- ii. *In what capacity will community agencies or other entities work with the proposed charter school? Identify any community organizations and/or community leaders that have expressed support for the proposed school.*

See Attachment 24 for Letters of Support from the Community.

- iii. *How does the charter school plan to solicit feedback from the community and other stakeholders on school operations, safety, transportation, facilities, etc?*

Stakeholders across the community agree that much is left to be done and many more left to reach to serve the needs of today's youth. The school has a plan in place to strategically build relationships throughout the surrounding communities. We will continue working diligently to establish partnerships with:

- Postsecondary degree programs to ensure that its students have the opportunity to earn dual college credit, participate in college campus visits and obtain access to financial aid counseling as early as possible so that they will be prepared to pursue a college education;
- Locally based business, non-profit organizations and government agencies to provide students with the opportunity to explore their career interests, gain work experience in paid or unpaid internships, develop valuable job skills, and be mentored by professionals so that they are ready to be successful in the world of work; and
- Social service agencies and faith-based institutions to secure critical wrap around services that will address the non-academic needs of students and remove obstacles in their path to achieving success in college, careers and life.
- Arts organizations that can bring a varied offering of cultural and immersive art experiences to the students at the School.

c. Evidence of Support:

Provide evidence of support from parents and any identified community partners. Provide an honest and thoughtful assessment of demand to enroll.

- i. *Evidence should be concrete and specific to the proposed school. For example, evidence could include letters of support/commitment, petitions, non-binding pre-enrollment forms, or minutes and sign-in sheets from community meetings and feedback sessions.*

The School has also secured letters of support and signed petitions demonstrating interest on the part of community residents to have access to more public school options (see Attachment 24).

- ii. *Memoranda of understanding and/or contracts with community partners should specify the resources to be committed or contributed from the partner, as applicable. If the proposed school will rely on a community partner to provide a service that is integral to the operation of the school, inclusion of a copy of the contract or MOU is strongly encouraged.*

The School does not yet have contracts with local community organizations, though we do have an exciting letter of intent from US Performing Arts, one of the country's elite arts education organizations.

2. Parent Engagement

a. Parent Support of Proposed School:

Describe the role of parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.

- i. *How will the school inform parents and the community about the school's development?*

The School will provide consistent, accurate, and appropriate communications to all families of enrolled students and to the community. We will employ various communication methods to ensure that parents and the community are well informed of all pertinent school issues in a timely manner. The Principal and staff will utilize the following strategies and tools for such communication:

- Website
- School Signage outside
- Banners advertising events
- Sending letters home from school
- Online and physical school bulletin boards
- School newsletters
- Email
- Phone calls (including mass school auto-dialer messages)

How will the school engage parents in decision-making related to the school's development?

The School will also provide many ways for parents to be directly involved in the operations of the school, including, but not limited to:

- Attending Board and other school meetings and participating on ad-hoc committees appointed to address specific issues;
- Participating in the Parent Advisory Council³;
- Contacting Teachers, specialists, and other parents to solve problems, give feedback, or pass on ideas and insights to the school community according to school policies;
- Communicating on the moderated school online community discussion board;
- Completing online parent surveys;
- Providing a system for parent volunteerism, including an efficient system for background checks. This parent volunteering system will describe the parent volunteer opportunities, process for communicating to parents and a system for tracking and background checks;

³ Using National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Implementation Guide as a resource for developing the Parent Advisory Council.

- and
- Other contributions that parents choose to make to the school.

Furthermore, parents will have the opportunity to evaluate the program, Teachers and Administrators through annual surveys.

Direct parental involvement is crucial to the success of the School. The most fundamental role that parents will play is that of learning coaches supporting their child's learning and continuously evaluating the School's operation, governance, and instructional program in relation to their child's growth.

Parents will be asked to support school-wide initiatives, participate in school-based activities, and support the school's goal for every student to reach their full academic potential. The school will offer support through monthly parent training, speakers, and modeling. Sessions will focus on: reading and helping children improve reading comprehension; essential skills for grammar and writing; motivating struggling learners; focus on reluctant writers; essential note taking skills; numbers and math concepts in the real world; and converting early struggles to a successful year. Most of the sessions are planned to be webinars or synchronous online sessions using web conferencing tools to make them most accessible to parents. The timing and topics for face-to-face sessions will be determined once the school is open and operating and the staff has a clearer picture of parent and student needs.

Parents will be expected to be proactive, to contact teachers, specialists, and other parents to solve problems, and to give feedback or pass on ideas/insights to the school community. The School also expects parents to volunteer their time and effort on behalf of the school, and to suggest, help organize, and participate in field trips, other educational outings, and social events.

b. Parent Engagement Strategy:

Describe parents will be engaged in the life of the school over time, in addition to any proposed governance roles. How will the school build sustainable family-school partnerships to strengthen support for learning?

- Parents will be engaged in the life of the School as a result of the following:
 - Parents are actively encouraged to attend Board and other meetings and to participate on ad-hoc committees appointed to address specific issues.
 - The School will organize a Parent Advisory Council. The Parent Advisory Council is parent-driven and is recognized as the official voice of the Schools' parents. The group serves as a direct communication link between families and the school and is a resource for parents, both as a source of conveying school information to families as well as relaying parental suggestions to the school administration.
 - Teachers will initiate regular conferences and conversations with parents about their child's progress and also about parents' needs and concerns about the operation of the school.
 - The School's website will have a moderated community discussion board to facilitate a constructive and interactive communication process.
 - Parents will help continuously evaluate and improve the school. The School will survey parents annually to determine their satisfaction with their overall experience. Criteria of the survey will include the curriculum, instruction, administration, support, quality and delivery of materials,

working with the lessons, student progress, student attitude towards learning, communication, and interaction with other prep students and parents. Parents are welcome to give critiques and/or endorsements regarding their experience at the School.

Throughout the school year, the Principal, other Administrators, and Teachers will account for contributions that parents and community members have made to the operations and governance of the school and communicate this to the Board and the school community through the school website, in print reports and in face-to-face meetings. New opportunities for parents and community members to contribute will always be considered.