

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE**

Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools

CFDA # 84.282M

PR/Award # U282M140021

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT11706855

OMB No. , Expiration Date:

Closing Date: Jul 21, 2014

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This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
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* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="07/21/2014"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	---

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
---	---

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="262794676"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="0020272130000"/>
---	---

d. Address:

* Street1:	<input type="text" value="3175 Lenox Park Blvd. #410"/>
Street2:	<input type="text"/>
* City:	<input type="text" value="Memphis"/>
County/Parish:	<input type="text"/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="TN: Tennessee"/>
Province:	<input type="text"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code:	<input type="text" value="38115-4260"/>

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text" value="GCS Charter Management Office"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
--	--

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix: <input type="text" value="Mr."/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Derwin"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Sisnett"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	

Title:

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number: <input type="text"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="901-432-5443"/>
--	---

* Email:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

*** 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

M: Nonprofit with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.282

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-062014-002

* Title:

Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII): Charter Schools Program (CSP): Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools CFDA Number 84.282M

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-282M2014-1

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Gestalt Community Schools Expansion and Replication Plan

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant

* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

* b. End Date:

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="6,585,196.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="6,585,196.00"/>

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on
- b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:
Middle Name:
* Last Name:
Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

* Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.
19. Will comply with the requirements of Section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104) which prohibits grant award recipients or a sub-recipient from (1) Engaging in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect (2) Procuring a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect or (3) Using forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL <input type="text" value="Derwin Sisnett"/>	TITLE <input type="text" value="CEO"/>
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION <input type="text" value="Gestalt Community Schools"/>	DATE SUBMITTED <input type="text" value="07/21/2014"/>

Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

Approved by OMB
0348-0046

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
--	--	--

4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:

Prime SubAwardee

* Name:

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

Congressional District, if known:

5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:

6. * Federal Department/Agency: <input type="text" value="Department of Education"/>	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: <input type="text" value="Charter Schools"/> CFDA Number, if applicable: <input type="text" value="84.282"/>
--	--

8. Federal Action Number, if known: <input type="text"/>	9. Award Amount, if known: \$ <input type="text"/>
--	--

10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:

Prefix * First Name Middle Name

* Last Name Suffix

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a)

Prefix * First Name Middle Name

* Last Name Suffix

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* Signature:

* Name: Prefix * First Name Middle Name

* Last Name Suffix

Title: Telephone No.: Date:

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

GCS GEPA 427 statement.pdf

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

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Gestalt Community Schools
GEPA 427 Statement

Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) is committed to ensuring equitable access and participation for its students, families and staff. GCS has considered potential barriers to participation in its programs, and has taken steps to help those with special needs to overcome such barriers. While the attached application goes into further depth about the steps GCS has adopted, the following examples demonstrate GCS's commitment to equal access:

- Teachers are trained to approach students using an active constructive response, i.e. to believe it is possible to overcome whatever disadvantages (e.g., low-income, disability, English as a second language) faced by students and that good teaching must build on a student's background.
- GCS provides highly qualified ELL (English Language Learner) and/or special education teachers, commensurate to the size and needs of the student population.
- Our ELL program includes academic support, including a supplemental reading curriculum to support effective language acquisition, and community events, including orientation to the school community and a parent support group, as well as interpreters.
- GCS provides an inclusive environment for our scholars; our special education, gifted education, and ELL teachers co-teach with the general educators. The full-inclusion model allows students to receive individualized and small group instruction within the general classroom. Benefits are transference of knowledge, deeper level of instruction, removal of the stigma around receiving special education services, and maximization of student involvement with peers.
- Modifications of class work, class projects, assessments, and homework are ongoing with the full inclusion model of instructional resource services.
- Special assessment accommodations are given during state/district assessments when needed.
- Training in racial and cultural sensitivity is provided to all staff, as is training in special education policies, procedures, techniques, and laws.
- GCS partners with community organizations, faith-based institutions, and the Department of Human Services to recruit students from underserved communities. We know providing informational meetings and events in the community gives greater access for families who face barriers such as transportation. As such, community partnerships such as the Boys and Girls Club, Memphis City Parks and Recreation Centers, local faith-based institutions, and local businesses provide an avenue to reach all families, regardless of barriers.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION Gestalt Community Schools	
* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Derwin"/> Middle Name: <input type="text"/>
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Sisnett"/>	Suffix: <input type="text"/>
* Title: <input type="text" value="CEO"/>	
* SIGNATURE: <input type="text" value="Derwin Sisnett"/>	* DATE: <input type="text" value="07/21/2014"/>

Abstract

The abstract narrative must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals, expected outcomes and contributions for research, policy, practice, etc. Include population to be served, as appropriate. For research applications, also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study)
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

You may now Close the Form

You have attached 1 file to this page, no more files may be added. To add a different file, you must first delete the existing file.

* Attachment:

CSP Abstract for Gestalt Community Schools

Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) is a K-12 charter management organization serving students in Memphis, Tennessee. GCS currently operates four schools with a total enrollment of 1,820. As of early 2014, Gestalt Community Schools does not yet have a decade of results; it is still a relatively new organization. However, what it does have is excellent student performance data for the students it has had since opening in 2008. It also continues to show an upward trend in student performance. In fact, Power Center Academy Middle School, GCS's first school, has been honored by former U.S. senate majority leader Bill Frist's State Collaborative on Reforming Education as the highest performing public middle school in the state of Tennessee.

The leadership team of GCS, along with a seasoned charter school consultant, spent 18 months developing a management/business plan to scale the work that began in 2008 with GCS's first school. Through the support of the CSP grant, GCS will grow from four high performing charter schools to 10 high performing charter schools and establish the capacity to serve 5,090 students by 2019. This application meets the purpose of CSP (CFDA 84.282) by demonstrating GCS's capacity to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools with demonstrated records of success, including success in increasing student academic achievement. For additional information, please see contact information below.

Gestalt Community Schools
3175 Lenox Park Blvd., Suite 410
Memphis, TN 38115

Derwin Sisnett, CEO



Project Narrative File(s)

* **Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[View Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

[Add Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[View Optional Project Narrative File](#)

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Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) charter management organization operates a network of four high-quality schools in Memphis, TN. GCS currently serves 1,820 scholars with an aggressive growth plan to open and expand six additional schools over the next five years, serving a total of 5,090 scholars at capacity. The following schools are in the current GCS portfolio:

Power Center Academy Middle School (PCAMS): 6120 Winchester Road, Memphis, TN 38115. Founded 2008. Serves grades 6-8. Authorized by Shelby County Schools (formerly Memphis City Schools). Subgroups and achievement data are as follows:

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
392	97	1	1	1	81	10	0.50	6.5

2012-13 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8
Math	All Students	66.5	22.7	33.0	50.8
	African American	65.5	21.2	30.1	29.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	73.4	76.6
	Hispanic	n/a	30.6	36.4	43.9
	White	n/a	n/a	61.0	56.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	65.3	22.4	29.6	33.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
Reading	Students with Disabilities	33.4	18.4	25.6	22.7
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
	All Students	66.4	23.2	29.1	52.8
	African American	66.1	21.9	25.8	31.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	64.2	69.6
Hispanic	n/a	29.8	29.0	38.5	
White	n/a	n/a	64.3	57.8	

	Economically Disadvantaged	63.6	23.2	24.7	36
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	19	25.4	26.7	22.3
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Attendance Rate	All Students	97.4	95.7	94.6	95.4
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*not reported on State Report Card

2011-12 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8
Math	All Students	49.8	19.2	26.6	47.1
	African American	49.2	18.0	24.9	28.8
	Asian	n/a	n/a	66.6	71.2
	Hispanic	n/a	27.2	30.9	39.5
	White	n/a	n/a	54.5	53.8
	Economically Disadvantaged	48.1	18.1	23.8	36.1
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	54.9	32.9	51.3	62.9
	Students with Disabilities	27.3	20.5	28.1	37.3
	Students without disabilities	51	19.0	26.4	48.5
Reading	All Students	63.6	20.8	29.5	51.3
	African American	63.2	19.9	26.1	32.2
	Asian	n/a	n/a	62.7	68.5
	Hispanic	n/a	27.2	29.0	38.9
	White	n/a	n/a	64.5	58.7
	Economically Disadvantaged	62.8	20.4	24.8	38.8
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	66.2	26.9	60.2	68.7
	Students with Disabilities	30.8	29.5	31.8	43.3
	Students without disabilities	65.2	19.6	29.2	52.4

Attendance Rate	All Students	98.1	94.3	94.6	95.5
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2010-11 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced					
		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8
Math	All Students	39.2	11.8	22.63	41
	African American	38.2	10.7	19.4	23.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	62.6	66.2
	Hispanic	n/a	16.7	24.5	32.3
	White	n/a	n/a	50.1	47.5
	Economically Disadvantaged	39.8	11.3	19	29.8
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	36.7	20.4	48.2	56.3
	Students with Disabilities	**	11.3	23.1	31.5
	Students without disabilities	42	11.9	22.6	42.4
Reading	All Students	51	17.5	26	48.5
	African American	50.7	16.8	22.4	28.4
	Asian	n/a	n/a	61.4	65.7
	Hispanic	n/a	21.2	25.6	35.5
	White	n/a	n/a	60.9	56.3
	Economically Disadvantaged	50.9	16.6	21.4	35.6
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	51.7	32.1	58.2	66.1
	Students with Disabilities	13.6	24.2	26.8	40.3
	Students without disabilities	54.2	16.7	25.9	49.7
Attendance Rate	All Students	96.7	94.6	94.3	95.2
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Data suppressed by State of Tennessee due to FERPA regulations

Power Center Academy High School: 5368 Mendenhall Mall Rd, Memphis, TN 38115.

Founded 2011. Serves grades 9-12 (12th grade added in 2014-15). Authorized by Shelby County Schools (formerly Memphis City Schools).

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
598	99	0	1	0	81	8%	0.50%	9.1

2012-13 State Assessment Proficient & Advanced		Power Center High	Comparison School (Wooddale High)	District (Memphis City) Grades 9-12	State (TN) Grades 9-12
Math (Algebra I & II)	All Students	63.9	13.4	40.0	51.1
	African American	64	12.4	24.9	32.6
	Asian	n/a	n/a	64.8	73.6
	Hispanic	n/a	11.3	33.7	45.3
	White	n/a	n/a	58.0	58.0
	Economically Disadvantaged	63.6	12.6	25.5	39.8
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	*	8.6	11.1	20.7
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Reading (English I & II)	All Students	75.9	26.8	39.1	63.8
	African American	70.4	25.4	35.4	42.6
	Asian	n/a	n/a	80.7	76.4
	Hispanic	n/a		47.3	53.8
	White	n/a	n/a	77.5	71.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	67.8	16.6	34.5	50.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	8.3	6.1	13.1	24.2
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Attendance	All Students	96.5	89.4	91.4	94.4

Rate					
Attrition Rate	All Students	.4	7.2	8.1	2.7

*not available on State Report Card

Note: As the 12th grade will not be added until 2014-15, graduation data is not applicable.

2011-12 State Assessment Proficient & Advanced		Power Center High	Comparison School (Wooddale High)	District (Memphis City) Grades 9-12	State (TN) Grades 9-12
Math (Algebra I)	All Students	73.8	19.0	33.8	55.3
	African American	73.8	19.9	31.5	38.0
	Asian	n/a	n/a	67.4	74.8
	Hispanic	n/a	10.0	40.9	49.5
	White	n/a	n/a	62.5	61.8
	Economically Disadvantaged	72.5	18.6	30.8	45.2
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	78.6	22.0	49.7	67.9
	Students with Disabilities	**	5.1	19.4	25.2
	Students without disabilities	81.4	20.6	36.0	59.3
	Reading (English I)	All Students	85.3	35.6	43.2
African American		85.2	34.7	40	46.7
Asian		n/a	100	n/a	n/a
Hispanic		n/a	35.3	n/a	n/a
White		n/a	n/a	78.6	73.4
Economically Disadvantaged		82.8	35.2	37.4	52.7
Not Economically Disadvantaged		93.3	39.0	69	80.6
Students with Disabilities		20	10.6	7.8	24.1
Students without disabilities		90.8	39.0	47.5	70.9
Attendance Rate		All Students	96.3	87.0	90.6
Attrition Rate	All Students	1.5	13.6	12.8	n/a

**Data suppressed by the State of Tennessee due to FERPA regulations

Humes Preparatory Academy: 659 North Manassas St., Memphis, TN 38107. Founded 1930 and operated by Memphis City Schools. Grade 6 only was taken over by GCS in 2012 under a phase-in model. In 2013-14, GCS took over grades 5-8. Only data for Grade 6 for 2012-13 is available. For 2014-15, grade 5 will be consolidated with Klondike Academy, and Humes Academy will serve grades 6-8. Humes Academy is operated in conjunction with the Achievement School District (ASD), an LEA created by the State of Tennessee to move the bottom 5% of schools statewide to the top 25%. After consistent designation as a “failing school” under Memphis City Schools, Humes was targeted for turnaround efforts. In 2012-13, it was converted to a charter school under GCS management and ASD oversight. The following test scores reflect baseline data from GCS’s first year of operation of the 6th grade. Although low, they represent a gain of 3-10 percentage points in almost every subgroup and overall.

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
451	99	1	0	0	99	23	0.50	20.9

2012-13 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Humes Academy	District (ASD)	State (TN)
Math	All Students	17.9	19.6	50.8
	African American	17.3	19.4	29.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	76.6
	Hispanic	n/a	15.4	43.9
	White	n/a	26.1	56.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	18.5	20.2	33.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	n/a	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	n/a	7.8	29.7
	Students without disabilities	23.5	*	*
Reading	All Students	27.6	13.6	50.4
	African American	27.1	13.2	31.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	69.6
	Hispanic	n/a	0.4	38.5
	White	n/a	27.2	57.8

	Economically Disadvantaged	27.7	13.8	36.0
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	n/a	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	6.3	7.2	30.5
	Students without disabilities	34.3	*	*
Attendance Rate	All Students	93.7	83.3	94.4
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a

*not available on State Report Card

n/a indicates subgroup too small to report

Klondike Preparatory Academy

1250 Vollintine Ave, Memphis, TN 38107. Founded 1938 and operated by Memphis City Schools. Grades K-2 only were taken over by GCS in 2013 under a phase-in model. In 2014-15, GCS will manage all grades. To date, no State Assessment data under GCS management is available. Serves grades K-5.

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race/Ethnicity	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
379	96	2	2	0	100	10%	0%	6.9

COMPETITIVE PRIORITIES

We request consideration under Competitive Priorities 1, 2, and 3.

Competitive Priority 1: Low-Income Demographic. Gestalt Community Schools selects new communities to target on the following basis:

1. Clear academic need of students
2. High poverty rates in the community
3. Interest by the community to utilize a strong college prep K-12 set of schools
4. Interest by a community development organization to revitalize a section of town with GCS

PCA Middle School and PCA High School serve the Hickory Hill area of Memphis; 81% of

these scholars receive free/reduced lunch benefits. Humes Preparatory Academy and Klondike Preparatory Academy are located in Crosstown/North Memphis; 99% and 100% of these scholars, respectively, receive free/reduced lunch. New schools will serve similar demographics.

Competitive Priorities 2: School Improvement. Humes Preparatory Academy and Klondike Preparatory Academy are operated in conjunction with the Achievement School District (ASD), an LEA created by the State of Tennessee to move the bottom 5% of schools statewide to the top 25%. After consistent designation as “failing schools” under Memphis City Schools (now defunct) management, both Humes and Klondike were targeted for turnaround efforts. In 2013, they were converted to charter schools under GCS management and ASD oversight.

Students in all GCS schools participate in structured intervention (RTI) for academic and behavioral needs. Please see additional information on p. 12, “Response to Intervention.”

Competitive Priority 3: Promoting Diversity. GCS will provide an inclusive environment for our scholars. In this environment our special education, gifted education, and ELL teachers will co-teach with the general educators. For methodology and policies, please see “Special Student Populations and At-Risk Students” on p. 13. School populations of (SpEd) students and English Language Learners (ELLs) are under “Absolute Priority” on p. 2-8.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Quality of the Eligible Applicant

The success of Gestalt Community Schools in increasing student achievement is best exemplified in our flagship school, Power Center Academy Middle School (PCAMS). PCAMS was the recipient of the SCORE Prize from the Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education in 2011, and one of three finalists for the prize in 2012. In this competition, Power Center Academy was recognized as Tennessee’s highest performing public middle school.

Every year from 2010-2013, PCAMS students have made gains as a whole, for a three-year improvement of 27.3 points in math and 15.4 in reading. Similar gains have been realized in the primary subgroups represented: nearly all GCS students are African American and most are economically disadvantaged. Please see “Absolute Priority” p. 2-8 for a detailed chart, as well as p. 11-16 for more about how GCS assists economically disadvantaged scholars.

Scores at Power Center Academy High School (PCAHS) are following the same trends, although we do not yet have three years of data or graduation rates; grade 12 will be added in 2014-15. Scores at Humes Academy reflect baseline data from our first year of operation of the 6th grade. Klondike Academy does not yet have a year of state achievement data, as GCS operated only K-2 in 2013 and state assessment testing begins in third grade.

Both PCAMS and PCAHS were honored as 2013 State of Tennessee Reward schools, which recognizes the top 5% of schools statewide in terms of student progress.

Closing Gaps. Historically in Tennessee, African American students have not achieved at the same level as their peers. While 40-70% of all students have demonstrated proficiency on state assessments, only 23-46% of this subgroup have done the same. GCS schools serve primarily African American students (97-99% of student population), and have seen significant and consistent improvement, helping close this achievement gap.

For example, 65.5% of PCAMS scholars in the African American subgroup achieved proficiency or better on math assessments in 2012-13, as compared to 29.1% of African American students statewide. Likewise, 66.1% of PCAMS scholars were proficient in reading, compared to 31.1% statewide. This same trend is seen for 2011-12 and 2010-11, with African American scholars improving at GCS schools, while continuing to struggle across the state.

Achievement of Low-Income Scholars. GCS scholars have consistently outscored their peers at the district and state levels, most notably closing the gap between economically disadvantaged and not disadvantaged. Comparing the PCAMS economically disadvantaged subgroup to that of the State of Tennessee as a whole highlights the stark difference: 65.3% of our low-income scholars scored proficient or better in math in 2013, as compared to 33.5% in the state. Similarly, 63.6% of our scholars were proficient in reading, as compared to 36.0% in the state.

This difference is consistent over the past three years, with scores for economically disadvantaged students statewide stagnating, while GCS has seen improvement. For 2010-13, economically disadvantaged PCAMS scholars achieved a three-year net gain of 25.5 percentage points in math and 12.7 points in reading in this subgroup, while statewide the gains were only .4 points and 3.7, respectively.

Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Turnaround Efforts. As described in “Competitive Priority 1” on p. 8, GCS selects communities to target based in part on clear academic need of students and high poverty rates in the community. Hickory Hill in Southeast Memphis was selected for the GCS flagship school using these criteria. In the University of Memphis “Community Information Project for Hickory Hill,” it was reported that in the past decade this community has seen dramatic increases in the youth population at a rate of 11%. During this same time, the number of households headed by single parents increased significantly. A large proportion of these are female-headed households—a total increase of 200% in Hickory Hill. Meanwhile, median income levels for these households are 7.6% below the country average, with 34% of these below poverty level. About 81% of our Hickory Hill students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

In addition to opening Power Center Academy Middle and High to serve Hickory Hill, GCS has partnered with the Achievement School District (ASD) to turn around North Memphis/Crosstown area schools designated as failing. As previously described, ASD was created by the State to catapult these schools from the bottom 5% statewide to the top 25%, a solution that has been overhauling the education system in Tennessee, and especially Memphis.

In North Memphis/Crosstown (zip code 38107), about 30% of families live below the poverty level, according to the U.S. Census; 17% earn less than \$10,000 annually. At GCS schools in this community, 99% or more of students receive free/reduced lunch benefits. Unemployment remains high at 9.5%, but this tells only part of the story—more than 42% of people over 16 in this community are not in the labor force at all, which combined with the unemployment rate means more than half the adult population earns no income.

Response to Intervention (RTI). Due in part to these community circumstances, nearly all students are below grade level by 2-3 years when they enter a GCS school. Remediation is critical to success, and therefore is built into the daily schedule and integrated into core course instruction. Entering students are given a national norm-referenced test of basic skills upon acceptance to the school. Results are quickly analyzed by the GCS Assessment and Numeracy Coordinator and used to create targeted, individualized assistance for our students.

Based on grades and assessment results, students are assigned to Response to Intervention (RTI) tiers. Each tier has a distinct intervention. Tiers are rooted in skills, which fall into one of the following categories: comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, computation, mathematics fluency, and problem solving. Daily enrichment periods (and some electives) are designed to provide students with research-based remedial programs in math, reading and study skills.

Academic Tiers	Interventions and Supports
Tier I Core Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group instruction in class • Re-teach lessons for entire class • Online intervention programs • Monitoring weekly common assessment results
Tier II (Outside of Core Instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45-minutes of intervention instruction outside of the core content area • Before- and after-school tutoring by the teacher • Online intervention programs • Bi-weekly progress monitoring
Tier III (Outside of Core Instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online intervention programs • Hour of intervention instruction • Bi-weekly progress monitoring • Saturday school 3 hours every week Oct.-May

In addition to academic tiers for RTI, GCS also has tiers for behavior, as well as social and emotional supports, as follows:

Behavior Tiers	Interventions and Supports
Tier I Core Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schoolwide PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) • Gestalt Lenses of Excellence
Tier II (Outside of Core Instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in and check-out process • Good Behavior Game • Small group counseling • Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
Tier III (Outside of Core Instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group and individual counseling • S-Team process • External counseling • Behavior intervention plans • Extreme disorders may involve alternative placements

The internal environment of schools will also be essential to turnaround success. Please see p. 21-25 under “Focused Learning Environment” for more about GCS school culture.

Special Student Populations and At-Risk Students, including *Application Requirement 4*

Overview of Approach. GCS provides an inclusive environment for our scholars; our special education, gifted education, and ELL teachers co-teach with the general educators. The full-inclusion model allows students to receive individualized and small group instruction within the

general classroom. Benefits are transference of knowledge, deeper level of instruction (differentiation of instruction, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, group projects), removal of the stigma around receiving special education services, and student involvement with peers is maximized. Based on GCS schools, the population will be at least 10% SpEd and .5% ELL.

SpEd and the GCS academic program. The special needs department at GCS works closely with our LEA's Exceptional Children Division to identify and support our special education program. Our special educators provide the following: after-school tutoring to reinforce learning in subject curriculum areas; Saturday school intervention for Common Core and state assessments; weekly progress monitoring; weekly gifted and talented enrichment sessions to strengthen higher order thinking skills/creativity by development of projects/language arts; monitoring and alignment Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives to areas of need for students with disabilities; co-teaching and planning in reading, mathematics, writing; and consulting with general education teachers weekly to determine student progress.

Our students with disabilities (504 plans) receive the following: monitor and modify service plans based on students' needs; consult with students, parents, and teachers to ensure plan is appropriate and relevant to students needs; monitor weekly interventions; and counseling services for emotional and social needs.

Staffing and Resources. For collaboration and true inclusive programming, teacher teams have common planning periods with special education staff to work on student program modifications and consultations. Each special education teacher is considered a consultant to classroom teachers and is trained in utilizing different teaching techniques. Training in special education policies, procedures, techniques and laws is provided for all staff. The faculty at GCS pre-assesses, develops unit plans, and modifies and adjusts class assignments to promote new ways

of achievement and academic success in students. Other support staff – psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist or social worker – are retained as needed.

Ensuring Compliance. Special assessment accommodations are given during state/district assessments. If students need assignments clarified, instruction is provided by the Instructional Resource Teacher, who works collaboratively with the general teacher to provide classroom and instructional adaptations, identify and explain students' learning styles, and suggest differentiation strategies for instruction. Co-planning is ongoing.

The full inclusion model of instructional resource services evaluates compliance issues as they relate to the students' IEPs. State performance indicators are used in the development of students' IEPs, aligning their skills with the expectation of the local school district.

Modifications of class work, class projects, assessments, and homework are ongoing with the full inclusion model of instructional resource services.

Identification of Students with Needs. The identification of special needs students begins with classroom teachers who are most familiar with each student's learning patterns and challenges. During weekly data meetings, teachers review, analyze, and discuss individual student's progress in the general education curriculum. Re-teaching plans are designed, implemented, and monitored by the grade-level team for students who have not mastered concepts during the initial teaching/testing phase. In addition, the school conducts progress monitoring of student performance, which provides a strategic method of evaluating instructional changes.

Those students who need more educational support as identified through progress monitoring, or who do not make sufficient academic progress after the above steps have been implemented, may be referred for further evaluation through the local school district or to their family physician for evaluation of a medical condition. If the completed diagnostic shows the

student is eligible for special services or support, an Individual Education Plan or a 504 Student Services Plan may be developed.

Students who continue to have difficulty in the general curriculum and whose progress monitoring indicates they are making less than adequate progress are given more intensive intervention. These students continue to receive progress monitoring, but instructional support may be in the form of smaller instructional groups in the general education classroom, extra assistance from a volunteer tutor, and/or intensive support during intervention sessions from GCS teachers. Parents are notified of their student's academic difficulties and engage with the school guidance counselor, teachers, and other support staff in the process of problem solving and discussing supportive educational options. Relevant data – such as internal and external assessment results, vision and hearing screenings, and attendance data – are reviewed.

ELLs. The Tennessee Board of Education has an English as a Second Language (ESL) program policy (3.207) that GCS follows. It is designed to set the standards for Tennessee school districts in providing services to non-English language background (NELB) students who are also limited English proficient (LEP). These students are referred to as English language learners (ELLs).

In addition to core courses and electives, ELL students have the opportunity for additional assistance in reading and writing during after-school academic coaching, provided by GCS teachers and qualified volunteers. Academic coaching sessions are documented for time and knowledge accrual to provide optimal service.

Currently, GCS has few (.5%) ELL students and anticipates a similar student population in new schools. GCS will provide highly qualified ELL and/or special education teachers, commensurate to the size and needs of the student population. These teachers will be able to

provide remedial mathematics/reading services, but will also be qualified to teach gifted students who have excelled in one or more areas of education.

The ELL program includes academic support, including a supplemental reading curriculum to support effective language acquisition, and community events, including orientation to the school community and a parent support group, as well as interpreters.

Gifted and Talented Students. GCS works with the district to identify gifted scholars. A parent or teacher can refer a scholar for screening for gifted services. A screening team of educational professionals considers screening information, previous evaluations, and teacher/parent input to determine if a comprehensive evaluation is needed. The team's decision is based on multiple data sources: academic achievement, creative thinking, academic performance, and cognition/intelligence. Once scholars are identified, GCS assigns a gifted certified teacher to provide 3-4 hours of supplemental projects and resources. She meets weekly with the scholars to develop extensive projects based on current curriculum and provide enrichment sessions to strengthen higher order thinking.

Project Design

Mission and Goals & Application Requirement 1

The GCS mission is to empower citizens who will be college-ready, career-ready, and community-ready. GCS works toward achieving this mission by providing its students with an exceptional educational program defined by rigorous curriculum standards, and coupled with high expectations for academic achievement. GCS develops future leadership through the integration of core components: high expectations for academic achievement, integrated technology, and community service.

In 2014-15, GCS will serve 1,820 scholars, with a growth plan to expand two existing schools, and open and expand six additional schools over five years (three elementary, two middle and one high school) that will serve a total of 5,090 Memphis scholars at capacity. Each new school will serve one or two grades during its first year of operation, and add a grade each year until capacity is reached: K-5 for elementary, 6-8 for middle, and 9-12 for high schools. Below are enrollment figures through 2019, which includes adding three grades at Klondike and one grade at Power Center Academy High in 2014-15:

GCS Enrollment Projections					
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
# Schools, Network-wide total	4	6	8	10	10
# Schools, New	0	2	2	2	0
# Schools, Expanded	2	0	2	4	6
Enrollment, New Seats	0	510	450	450	0
Enrollment, Expansion Seats	213	0	288	511	724
Enrollment, Network-wide total	1,820	2,466	3,324	4,330	5,090

School Development. Gestalt believes great schools do not exist in a vacuum. Schools are at a tremendous disadvantage and likely to be working against themselves if they are developed without the greater community in mind. Thus, a hallmark of GCS is creating great schools that catalyze great communities. As previously described, GCS identifies its target communities by those in high poverty areas and having low student performance, but the community will also have a community development organization partner who will work to help revitalize the section of town where the school will be placed.

GCS believes schools can help to revitalize communities and strong families can help students succeed. This partnership becomes a trust between GCS and the community to deliver

quality of life improvements for its residents. By having this partnership, GCS can focus on educational achievement while the community is catalyzed to enhance itself.

Academic Plan & Application Requirement 4

School environment refers to the social, academic and emotional contexts of a school—the “personality” of the learning context— and how it is perceived by students, staff, and community. GCS schools will be guided by the following critical elements:

- High expectations for academic achievement
- Integrated technology
- Community service
- Longer school day and longer school year
- Focused learning environment

For specific, measurable goals and assessments, please see “Evaluation Plan” p. 48-54.

High Expectations for Academic Achievement. All adults maintain high expectations for all GCS scholars. The goal is to see at least 1.5-2 years of growth each year. Students will have an increased reading, dedicated daily writing, and extended mathematics program. The root of the academic design is to utilize the full day to present challenging content in many subjects while also providing enrichment subjects.

GCS focuses on the basics of reading and math, but not to the detriment of other key real-life learning such as economic literacy, persuasive reasoning, or scientific exploration. Students drill, but they also have the opportunity to critically think and express themselves through varied instructional techniques, such as classroom project-based learning assignments and individual student story-retelling/presentations.

Core to structuring an environment of high expectations for academic achievement is the understanding of each child's areas of deficits and mastery. As a result, scholars are assessed every week. The weekly assessments are used to structure the following week's small group instruction. Scholars are divided into teams of 3-5 for direct instruction. While one group of scholars is in the small group, receiving direct and strategic instruction, the remainder of the class is broken down into two additional groups. These groups include project-based learning group and individual digital learning group. Groups change frequently based on the individual scholar's progress. These groups are a key part of the GCS blended learning rotational model.

Integrated Technology. Our scholars are afforded the opportunity to be on the cutting edge of technology. Scholars use virtual labs, attend webinars, and take electives in robotics. Students use technology such as iMovie, blogs, MS Office, and the Internet to produce projects anchored in real-world challenges. One laptop is provided for each child, and GCS students have access to computer labs for individualized, digital learning groups. These groups provide individualized assignments based on the learner's skill deficits, thus creating a customized, differentiated assignment in reading and math for every child. In addition, scholars have supportive online RTI skill-based assignments to support the RTI face-to-face instruction. Teachers use integrated technology simulations, presentation tools, and audio to enhance instruction.

Our teachers use the power of technology to assess and receive real-time data to drive instruction. To gauge how students are performing, an elaborate set of assessments is used, including formative assessments geared to state standards. Student groupings and re-teaching are determined from the results. GCS uses an online system that delivers teacher-made assessments each week and generates real-time reporting from these assessments. Gradebook software and

Student Management Systems (SMS) is also utilized, so student data can be organized and shared between staff.

Community Service. GCS wants its scholars to invest in their community; that is why service is a vital part of the school’s mission. Service learning teaches scholars how to communicate and get along with others, to be empathic, to take pride and ownership in their community, to give back to others and, overall, to learn and improve as human beings.¹ Community service is implemented through strategic projects anchored in the National Youth Leadership Council standards. The following components drive GCS best practices:

K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

<p>Meaningful Service Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.</p>	<p>Link to Curriculum Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.</p>	<p>Reflection Service-learning incorporates reflection activities that are ongoing and prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one’s relationship to society.</p>	<p>Diversity Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.</p>
<p>Youth Voice Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences.</p>	<p>Partnerships Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.</p>	<p>Progress Monitoring Service-learning engages participants to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.</p>	<p>Duration and Intensity Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.</p>

Longer School Day and Longer School Year. Core to our work is the extended school day. The schools will operate 7:15 am to 4:00 pm for grades K-2 and 7:30 am to 4:30 pm for older grades, plus early morning and evening hours. The school will be open for its students for 200 days and for its staff for 220 days (compared to 180 days for the local district), with the school year running from the last week in July to the last week in May. The additional time will be

critical to the success of the school. Re-teaching, remediation, and targeted supports are built into the day, as well as before- and after-school time, Saturday school and summer programming.

Focused Learning Environment. GCS schools sweat the small stuff. It is the small components of the culture that makes a big impact. Those components include the following:

Operational Components	Academic Components
Morning Meeting: Scholars meet within grade level teams every morning to start the school day. Morning meeting consist of pledges and chants to motivate each student to produce his/her best.	Blended Learning Rotational Model: Each classroom is set-up with 3 to 4 groups based on leveled reading tiers. Groups rotate from direct learning station to project-based station, to individualized learning station.
Uniforms and School Supplies: Scholars are provided one free uniform and school success kit filled with supplies for one school year.	Monthly Project-Based Learning Assignments: Each month scholars are given a real-life scenario to apply their current learning to and to propose a possible solution.
Study Zones: Our hallways are study zones; as they wait to transition to their next class, our students are engaged in independent reading.	Study Guides: Scholars in grades 3-12 receive unit study guides to assist in preparing for more complex interim and unit assessments.
Library Baskets: The baskets consist of fiction and non-fiction books, which are placed on the cafeteria tables to increase independent reading.	Co-Teaching Station and Parallel Teaching Models: The general education and special education teacher co-plan lessons. These lessons are delivered in small group stations or parallel teaching, in which students are divided into two smaller learning groups.

Each class will consist of a teacher to student ratio of 1:25. Students in kindergarten will also have part-time teacher assistants to help with small group instruction. All classes will operate in an inclusion setting. Reading, writing and mathematics teachers will engage in a co-teacher model with general education teachers and special education teachers.

GCS school culture is founded on the belief that all students can make academic gains through high-quality instruction geared toward student mastery of standards, intensive support and remediation when scholars do not reach the benchmarks, hard work and consistency, and support of school program and policy by parents.

Also key to the school culture is GCS 101, which is the framework for how our teachers and students will operate in our school community. In the fall of 2011, GCS was able to extrapolate best practices from its flagship charter school, Power Center Academy Middle School (PCAMS), to create a network-wide set of expectations with regard to school culture. This set of expectations incorporates a variety of expectations in the following categories:

Morning Seminar	Morning seminar is a daily routine that starts our day off right. GCS teachers are required to assign their homeroom scholars roles during this time (to lead in the pledges and chants of our school) and to make relevant logistical announcements for the day.
Greeting Scholars	Warm/strict is the tone and professional is the culture. Our scholars are greeted with structure and fairness, and enter a professional environment, immediately sitting in SLANT (Sit up, Listen attentively, Ask and answer questions appropriately, Nod your head when you understand, Track the speaker), position.
Classroom Environment	Each teacher has the same order of items on their board (today's date, SPI, agenda, and homework on the left-hand side). They have posters dictating school procedures such as the High Five Hand Signals, 3 R's (Respectful, Ready, and Responsible), Code of Honor, Laptop Policy, etc. Every classroom has a word wall focusing on the terminology of the class. Every teacher tracks both behavior and academics visually in the classroom.
Hallway Transitions	Our scholars are monitored at all times. Teachers dismissing scholars stand in a position to monitor scholars already in transition. This is for the safety of our scholars, and the efficiency of our instructional day.
Cornell Notes Instructional Power Point	Cornell Notes are utilized to push higher-order thinking when learning new concepts. PowerPoint presentations are created to structure a lesson's logistics and concepts.
Establishing Big Goals	Big Goals are the epitome of backwards planning. Each subject has at least one quantitative big goal and one qualitative big goal that are ambitious, measurable, and feasible.
Zero Zone, No Zone, Go Zone, and D.E.A.R.	Scholars travel in silence during all transitions. Scholars only transition on their own grade level's hallway, which is a Go Zone. This minimizes distractions for all scholars. When scholars stop in the hallway to wait for a class or other period of the day they drop everything and read (D.E.A.R.).
Classroom Ambassadors	Scholars take pride in what they are learning each and every day. As such, anytime a visitor comes to a classroom door, a scholar will greet them as the classroom ambassador.
Instructional Delivery	GCS teachers incorporate an "I do," "We do," and "You do" instructional technique into each lesson. GCS teachers incorporate instructional techniques from the book <i>Teach Like a Champion</i> .

RAFTS Projects-Student Quality Work	Every month our scholars complete a quality-work project that culminates their learning in each class each month. This project takes the form of a creative writing assignment where the scholar takes on a role and writes to an audience in a particular format on a specific topic.
Planned homework, assessments	Every grade level plans out weekly homework assignment and assessments, so that our scholars are organized to complete homework and study for assessments and our parents are knowledgeable of said assignments.
Built-in remediation and intervention	Technology is utilized to accelerate data driven decisions for remediation and reteach. Teachers use data from formative and summative assessments to guide and dictate tutoring schedules, review objectives, and intervention for scholars with IEPs.

This foundation incorporates both procedural and instructional aspects of the classroom in a GCS school. More importantly, this set of expectations sets the tone for the high level of expectations for all GCS faculty, and, as such, our high level of behavioral and academic expectations for all GCS scholars.

The culture is introduced during summer orientation. Teachers complete a three-week comprehensive professional development session prior to the start of the school. The sessions focus on curriculum, assessment, school culture, and overall school operations. In addition, GCS scholars spend one week in the summer completing orientation on school culture and school readiness. Finally, parents receive a full-day orientation session on GCS 101, Code of Conduct, Code of Honor, and overall school culture.

As a part of our school-wide orientation for parents and scholars, our special educator and ELL teachers provide accommodations and translations for our students. Moreover, our special educator provides a separate one-on-one meeting for our scholars and parents who have IEPs or 504s to review components of the IEP or 504 and how GCS will address those needs.

Evidence of Promise: Research Supporting Academic Plan. The educational philosophy of GCS is fully aligned to the policy adopted by the Tennessee State Board of Education to strengthen the state's schools. The school's program embraces the following:

All students will have access to a rigorous curriculum that includes challenging subject matter, emphasizes depth rather than breadth of coverage, emphasizes critical thinking and problem solving, and promotes responsible citizenship and lifelong learning. The curriculum will be tied to the Tennessee Curriculum Standards. Teachers, parents and students will hold high expectations for all. Schools will communicate high expectations to students, parents, business and industry, and the community.ⁱⁱ

All students can attain academic excellence, provided they are given the necessary tools to be successful. Students are driven by authentic academic settings that encourage independence (Yair, 2000). Classroom practices at GCS are rooted in the constructivist approach, which offers students the opportunity to construct their own learning experiences and knowledge acquisition. For example, an elementary class is asked to design a community garden using the current mathematics standards/topics covered in the class. The direct instruction on geometry and measurement acts as a launching pad for constructivist approach. Students use the planting beds for a lesson related to measurements, perimeter, and area. They learn first with application then back into the formula of area and perimeter. Beginning with application helps the scholars construct their own, accurate meaning of area and perimeter, so the learning does not just rely on the teacher citing a formula, but on the scholar's hands-on experience.

Constructivism is a paradigm shift in education that requires teachers to spend less time lecturing, drilling students on basic facts, and rote learning. Students are taught, instead, how to

construct their own knowledge through social interaction and meaningful activities (Andrew, 2007). In addition, they are seen as individuals having their own concepts of knowledge built up over time, according to personal experiences and surroundings. The constructivist teacher uses teaching methods that help students develop, reflect on, evaluate, and modify their own internal conceptual frameworks.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, the constructivist teacher makes decisions, creates environments and selects meaningful assignments in which the student may be in charge of his or her own learning.^{iv} A constructivist teacher is flexible in his or her instructional approach and tries to understand each student's current conceptual framework (Andrew, 2007). Constructivist classrooms are ones in which teachers:

- create environments in which students are allowed to engage in actions and activity;
- foster student-to-student interaction in and out of the classroom;
- design activities that will increase student learning;
- structure learning tasks within relevant, realistic environments; and,
- bring out several solutions and representations of the same problem.^v

Why This Approach Suits the Target Population. GCS has a shared vision and commitment that all students will succeed. The constructivist way of teaching has been shown to work very well with at-risk populations; it allows the teacher to be flexible in his or her approach to teaching. In addition, the constructivist approach has a basic tenet that all students, regardless of background, are capable of learning. Heath (1983) suggests that demographic backgrounds (e.g., ethnicity, poverty and immigration status) affect how students respond to instruction and content.^{vi} Research has shown that what teachers know and believe about students impacts the learning process. More importantly, students are more likely to become engaged in the academic

learning and benefit from it when the teacher acknowledges, demonstrates respect for and builds on the skills, knowledge, language, and behavior patterns that students bring to school, regardless of background.^{vii} Therefore, all of the teachers at GCS are given ongoing training and evaluation in working with at-risk students.

Low-income and disadvantaged students are generally not taught by using constructivist or other methods that increase independent thinking. Further, these students are often not required to use analytical and higher-order thinking skills and are generally not taught by using cooperative learning methods.^{viii} However, according to Schieffer and Busse (2001), academic achievement is enhanced when cooperative learning methods and other methods that encourage independent thinking – instead of traditional, didactic methods – are used.^{ix}

Teachers who approach students by using an active constructive response believe that it is possible to overcome whatever disadvantages (i.e., low-income, disability, English as a second language) faced by students and that good teaching must build on a student's background. Use of cooperative learning and service learning encourages use of materials and activities to proactively design learning experiences that build on a student's strengths and encourage relevance to the student's life by addressing academic or social problems that students encounter at home and in the community (Shields, 1995). Making instruction meaningful to students may help them learn and grasp the material, and set up a cooperative learning environment, thereby reducing potential management problems and showing that the teacher cares about students.

Instructional Strategies and Methods. To create an innovative and constructivist classroom environment (while also recognizing that students require a variety of instructional strategies to respond to varied student learning styles) and to ensure the needs of all students are met, GCS utilizes the following core instructional strategies: 1) cooperative learning; 2) differentiated

instruction; 3) service learning; and 4) extended time in learning.

Cooperative Learning. Cooperative learning involves students working collaboratively in groups to complete a task or solve a problem. Characteristics include heterogeneous groups, interdependence fostered among members, encouragement of individual accountability, and explicit teaching of cooperative skills.^x Each student is expected to participate. The success of the group depends on the input of each individual. This teaching method has been shown to promote active participation, individual accountability, teamwork, and social skills.

Cooperative small-group learning – that is, students working together in a group small enough that everyone can participate in completing a collective task – has been the subject of hundreds of studies. All available studies arrive at the same conclusion: There are significant benefits for students who work together on learning activities.

In one comparison by Zhining Qin, David Johnson and Roger Johnson^{xi} of four types of problems presented to individuals and cooperative teams, researchers found teams outperformed individuals on all types and across all ages. Results varied by how well-defined the problems were (a single right answer versus open-ended solutions) and how much they relied on language. Several experimental studies have shown that groups outperform individuals on learning tasks and individuals who work in groups do better on later individual assessments.

In addition, cooperative group work benefits students in social and behavioral areas, including improvement in student self-concept, social interaction, time on task, and positive feelings toward peers. Researchers say these social and self-concept measures are related to academic outcomes, and low-income students, urban students, and minority students benefit even more from cooperative group work – findings repeated over several decades.

STEM is one concrete example of how cooperative learning is provided to all GCS students. During science class, students engage in cooperative learning STEM teams to conduct explorations through legos, robotics, bridge builders, engineering activities, video gaming, and design. STEM involves a wide-range of 21st century skills: teamwork, problem solving, and perseverance, as well as imagination, creativity, professionalism, and maturity. The founder of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), engineer and inventor Dean Kamen who organizes a national robotic competition, said, “To passively sit in a classroom is a nineteenth-century format. In this next century, you’re going to have to be creative or you’re not going to make it.”

Cooperative learning gives students another opportunity to be engaged in class discussions, limiting the number of disruptions during class time.^{xii} In cooperative classrooms, students work to help every student on their team achieve the objectives. Students learn to value giving and receiving help. They also learn to work together toward a common goal – a skill that most U.S. companies put at the top of their list for newly-hired personnel.^{xiii}

Consistent with the constructivist approach, cooperative learning offers students opportunities to construct their own knowledge through social interaction with peers. As students reflect on and modify developing concepts, teachers support cooperative learning activities while offering students the autonomy to make their own learning decisions.

In working with students with disabilities, cooperative learning and grouping work well. Cooperative learning helps students improve significantly more than control groups in both academic learning and social acceptance of students with disabilities.^{xiv} Likewise, grouping students together fosters interaction and encourages acceptance.^{xv} Using these methods helps support students with disabilities academically, as well as in developing social skills.

GCS recognizes that, despite the outstanding body of research on the subject, not all students learn best through the cooperative learning experience. By recognizing and training teachers in both the advantages and the disadvantages of cooperative learning, GCS teachers are better able to adapt and design instructional activities that increase student learning and monitor student outcomes.

Differentiated Instruction. Differentiated instruction is teaching method that customizes instruction to meet the special learning needs of each student in the classroom. Differentiation is based on research that all students are capable of learning at high levels, but may learn in different ways and through different learning styles. A learning style is the way an individual takes in and processes information. It involves concentrating on, processing, internalizing and remembering new and difficult academic information.^{xvi} Learning styles are not based on demographic background. Instead, they come from natural, inborn inclinations. If students know how they learn, they may take more responsibility for their learning and make the necessary adjustments when they encounter a teacher who does not teach to their preferred learning style.

Carol Ann Tomlinson^{xvii} describes differentiation as tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Whether teachers differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction. At its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. When a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction. Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile:

- **Content** – what the student needs to learn or how to get access to the information;

- **Process** – activities in which the student engages to make sense of or master the content;
- **Products** – culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply and extend what he or she has learned in a unit; and
- **Learning environment** – the way the classroom works and feels.

Use of differentiated instructional strategies is aligned with the constructivist approach. It requires students to assess how they learn and asks teachers to understand each student's conceptual framework and student learning styles, and design and modify instructional materials accordingly. Teachers may match appropriate instructional approaches to the learning style needs of the individual. Using differentiated instruction in classrooms means students of differing abilities and learning styles remain in class together, time is used flexibly in accordance with student need, and student learning is assessed in multiple ways. The teacher facilitates student learning with a goal of helping students become learners who are more self-reliant.

Our blended learning model supports the highest form of differentiation. In the blended learning rotational model, our scholars rotate to a direct-learning group and individualized learning group. These groups provide either different student products, extended time, or enhanced lesson based on the student. For example, a class could all study how to find evidence in a text to support their claims. One group receives more direct instruction on finding evidence in a text, while another group moves to application, in which they leverage the evidence and claims to formulate a persuasive paragraph or essay. In the individualized learning group, students receive a prescribed assignment aligned to their learning needs. The scholars work at their own pace to either go through an enrichment lesson or remediation lesson.

Community Service. Still another method is the use of service learning, a teaching method that, consistent with the constructivist approach, also focuses on getting students actively engaged in

the learning process – usually through participation in meaningful community service in their schools and communities. In addition, it teaches students how to communicate and get along with others, be empathic, take pride and ownership in their community, give back to others and, overall, learn and improve as human beings (Russell, 2007). The students at GCS participate in a community service projects in support of academic learning and a working relationship between schools and families. In addition, teachers receive additional training and in-service experiences to fprepare for the challenge of teaching diverse groups of children with a range of interests.

Research on the relationship between student achievement and service learning has identified a positive correlation between the two, resulting in mandatory community service for many school programs across the country. And while some level of community service has been demonstrated to make students more engaged in their learning and enthusiastic about school, service learning integrated through curriculum has significant impacts, such as:

- Highlighting ways learning can be applied in real-life situations;
- Helping students feel their schoolwork is significant, valuable, and worthy of effort;
- Allowing students to have some degree of control over learning;
- Assigning challenging but achievable tasks;
- Stimulating students’ curiosity about the topic being studied; and
- Designing projects that allow students to share new knowledge with others.^{xviii}

Research on service learning has documented positive effects of service learning participation on student engagement and increased academic achievement. In a 2005 study, high school students who participated in service learning were significantly more likely to say they enjoyed school than students who did not participate. In addition, student outcomes (e.g.,

academic achievement and attendance) improved when service learning programs lasted longer, teachers integrated service into curriculum, and students worked together on service projects.^{xix}

Service projects aligned to the curriculum build camaraderie and school spirit among students, and help develop critical thinking skills and an understanding of the world.

Extended Time in Learning. To facilitate the goal of providing students a top quality education while exposing them to the social and cultural opportunities around them, the schools operate on a schedule that includes both a longer day and longer school year than the traditional public school schedule (more details on p. 21). In offering extended time for students to meet both internal and external standards for academic excellence, GCS follows a block schedule that allows educators to teach at grade level while using digital content to help students with academic skill gaps. Students receive one-on-one support and engage in cooperative teams.

During a 90-minute class, students spend 30 minutes at each of three stations:

- *Direct Instruction:* The teacher provides explicit whole group instruction.
- *Cooperative Learning Teams:* The students are engaging in either guided practice or project-based learning in 2-4 member teams. Students rotate through learning stations.
- *Personalized Instruction:* Students work on an individualized, self-paced or teacher-prescribed assignments using digital content.

GCS provides the following instructional time per subject per week:

MINUTES Grades K-2	MINUTES Grades 3-12	SUBJECT/CONTENT AREA
90 Minutes	90 Minutes	Reading/Language Arts
90 Minutes	90 Minutes	Mathematics
45 Minutes	60 Minutes	Writing
45 Minutes	60 Minutes	Science (STEM)
45 Minutes	60 Minutes	Humanities (Social Studies)
30 Minutes	45 Minutes	Enrichment: Art, Physical Education, Music
30 Minutes	30 Minutes	Response to Intervention

TOTAL 375 Min.	TOTAL 435 Min.	
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Research that investigates whether extended time in school boosts student achievement varies widely, from a study in Massachusetts that found increasing the school day by 25% caused test scores to rise by 4-10 percentage points, to a study in Washington, D.C. that found no link between longer days and improved scores. In a paper that reviewed the full body of research on extended days and extended years, the authors conclude extended time is beneficial, particularly for at-risk students, provided the extra time is high quality: structured, planned, and supervised.^{xx}

Curriculum Overview. The curriculum is built around core content areas and guided by state and national standards. In addition, each GCS school has a special focus that reflects the community’s unique needs, such as financial literacy and entrepreneurship in Hickory Hill, and STEAM in North Memphis/Crosstown. GCS uses a combination of standards-based curriculum and resources, student-centered instructional techniques, and supplementary teaching and learning resources that are research-based.

GCS leverages content leaders and master teachers to help to develop curriculum for existing and future growth of schools. Leveraging teachers for backward mapping and curriculum development yields the following results:

- Knowledge Base- Teachers develop a strong knowledge base of Common Core standards and PARCC/state assessments.
- Lessons Learned- Teachers implement and revise curriculum for upcoming year based on student performance and academic feedback.
- Teacher Ownership- Teachers gain better ownership of the Common Core standards, instructional practices, and assessments.

Content leaders and master teachers help to develop curriculum maps, teaching resources, and assessments. They go through the following development cycle using Wiggins and McTighe’s “Understanding by Design”^{xxi} and Webb’s “Depth of Knowledge” for assessments:

Phase	Timeline
Backward Curriculum Map Training	April
Assessment Development Training	May
Curriculum Map and Assessment Development	May- June
Implementation in the classroom	August- March
Revision of curriculum maps and assessments	March

This cycle repeats for three years until we have field-tested and evaluated all curriculum maps, resources, and assessments.

Literacy. GCS scholars operate in a balanced literacy framework with these components:

- **Phonemic Awareness:** The focus is on the spoken word and individual phonemes. Students are learning to isolate and manipulate sounds and blends.
- **Phonics:** Teaching the students to attend to sounds. It helps the student make the connection of sound to print. It provides strategies for work attack skills.
- **Vocabulary:** Providing the students with multiple exposure to words including vocabulary connected to reading text, Greek and Latin root words, as well as high-utility and frequency words.
- **Fluency:** Students focus on the accuracy and flow of oral reading.
- **Comprehension Skills:** Ability to understand, interpret, and analyze any given text.

- **Writing Skills and Application:** Structured writing program using the 6 Traits +1 writing program with an emphasis on language integration and writing process. The traits are ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation.
- **Listening and Speaking Skills:** Development of listening and speaking skills that allows the students to solve problems, engage in accountable talk, and improve fluency.

Writing. The English language arts program at GCS is informed by the Tennessee state standards and provides its students with intentional balance of genres in both fiction and non-fiction. According to the *Common Core Standards Initiative*, this balance is important “...because college and career readiness overwhelming focuses on complex texts outside of literature; these standards also ensure students are being prepared to read, write and research across the curriculum, including in history and science. These goals can be achieved by ensuring that teachers in other disciplines are also focusing on reading and writing to build knowledge within their subject areas.”^{xxii}

Writing across the curriculum, writing to learn, and 21st century writing skills are the guiding principles for the writing instruction. Students write in traditional formats as well as in the new-media format associated with digital technologies such as computers, videos, podcasts, and the Internet. Writing across the curriculum (WAC) assumes writing can both foster and demonstrate learning in a variety of subjects or disciplines. It emphasizes writing practices that are common, communicable and portable as ways to encourage critical thinking and learning. Such practices include journals, in-class writing and linked assignments. The goal is to use writing in multiple ways to prepare students for a variety of disciplinary contexts.^{xxiii}

The writing process is part of the daily writing block, as well as integrated into the other core content areas. The English department works closely with the other core content

departments so students are supported as they read and write across the curriculum. Students access most of the texts online or digitally. These include classic and contemporary fiction, biography, poetry, business books, informational text, newspapers, blogs, magazines, essays and speeches. Students take an English/language arts class each year they are enrolled at GCS.

Mathematics. The mathematics framework includes the development of the following:

- **Conceptual Knowledge:** Inquiry-based learning to build comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations, and relations
- **Problem Solving:** Ability to formulate, represent, and solve mathematical problems. The capacity for logical thought, reflection, explanation, and justification.
- **Procedural Knowledge:** Skill in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately.
- **Fluency:** The targeted mathematical skills and concepts needed for each grade level.

Curriculum and Course Sequence: Business. Business curriculum and principles are integrated in social studies and writing classes. Students learn financial and economic literacy and entrepreneurship principles. The business curriculum standards and benchmarks GCS are based on the National Council on Economic Education and the National Business Education Association (NBEA).

Curriculum and Course Sequence: Social Studies/History. In addition to the core online textbooks, news articles, and magazines for each grade level in history, teachers actively incorporate supplemental educational texts, original sources and digital resources to truly make history come alive for the students. Hands-on lesson plans, videos, activities, online projects and discussion topics to enhance students' understanding of complex and often emotionally difficult topics are integrated into the curriculum to engage and invest the students.

Service learning is integrated within the social studies and history department. This emphasizes the importance of individual responsibility and citizenship as a means for improving academic achievement. Teachers are encouraged to link themes from their social science courses to the service learning projects that all students complete on an ongoing basis to identify how real social problems manifest themselves in our local community.

Management Plan and Personnel

Operations Plan and Capacity & Application Requirement 2

Timeline. GCS has established specific, measurable milestones to measure its progress. The milestones fall under the general categories of academic achievement, growth (total schools/enrollment) and 3) financial. The following is the opening and expansion schedule through 2019:

Growth Plan	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Power Center Middle	continue	continue	continue	continue	continue
Power Center High	expand: add 12 th grade	continue	continue	continue	continue
Humes Middle	continue	continue	continue	continue	continue
Klondike Elementary	expand: add 3 rd -5 th	continue	continue	continue	continue
PCA Elementary	n/a	new: K-1st	expand: add 2nd	expand: add 3 rd	expand: add 4th
Crosstown High	n/a	new: 9th	expand: add 10th	expand: add 11th	expand: add 12 th
Middle School	n/a	n/a	new: 6th	expand: add 7 th	expand: add 8 th
Elementary School	n/a	n/a	new: K-1st	new: 2nd	new: 3 rd
Middle School	n/a	n/a	0	new: 6th	new: 7 th
Elementary School	n/a	n/a	0	new: K-1st	new: 2 nd
Total Schools	4	6	8	10	10

The academic design, human capital methods and recruiting, performance management systems

and associated practices, final budgeting, facilities, and external relations (fundraising, student recruitment, partnerships) are all be functions of the central office at Gestalt. Gestalt believes it is in these main systems that system-wide quality control occurs. The individual schools also have great input into these systems so they are ever improving, but the school leadership will be largely focused on driving student performance in their schools.

Leadership Team: In addition to the School Leader (Principal), the leadership team of each school consists of the following: 1) Dean of Scholar Development: This dean executes and monitors scholar recruitment and admissions. He or she develops the summer orientation program, implements and monitors school-wide behavior programs, ensures quality extracurricular experiences, develops a school safety plan, and coordinates progress reports and report cards. The dean also works with the school counselor and GCS student services staff to create academic and/or behavior intervention plans for scholars. 2) Dean of Instruction: This dean works at the school level to support teachers. He or she provides model lessons, consults on lesson planning, and monitors the implementation of blended learning and project-based learning models. 3) The dean also works with GCS Curriculum Directors and Professional Development Directors, and coordinates college readiness sessions, study hall and student organizations.

GCS Human Resources, in consultation with school-level leaders, recruits and hires for new positions in Feb.-April to allow time for July orientation and development prior to the beginning of the school year in August.

Centralized Support. GCS charter management organization leaders support the launch and operation of network schools. The team consists of Chief Executive Officer Derwin Sisnett, Chief Academic Officer Yetta Lewis, Chief Operating Officer Reginald Manning, and Chief Financial Officer Holly Coleman. Sisnett has a BA in Psychology from Emory University, a

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Hollins University, and is working toward a PhD in Educational Psychology. His prior experience includes teaching at the post-secondary level and serving as CEO of a Community Development Corporation in Hickory Hill. He focuses on growth, fundraising, real estate development, building the Board of Trustees/reporting to the Board, new school development, external partnerships, and work with authorizers. Lewis has a BA from Salisbury University, a Masters of Education from Loyola College, and a Certificate of Technology in Education from Johns Hopkins University. Her prior experience includes 20 years in education as a teacher, administrator and consultant. She is responsible for recruiting, hiring, and supervision of educational personnel. She is also responsible for the academic quality and programming (e.g. professional development, special education, curriculum and assessments, instructional data management). Coleman drives financial planning and forecasting, creating systems and controls, managing purchasing systems, contracting, food services, real estate development, cash flows, payroll, and audits. Manning supervises IT, administration, the back office of HR such as benefits, building maintenance, and the operations/business managers at each school. Please see attached for their resumes.

Governance. Gestalt Community Schools is a 501(c)(3), federal tax-exempt, nonprofit organization in the State of Tennessee, and as such is governed by a board of directors. Each GCS school operates under a separate charter granted by a Tennessee chartering authority, and operates as an agent of GCS. The Governing Board ensures all provisions of the charter are fulfilled in a manner consistent with the spirit and letter of the law, oversees financial management of the school and approves the school budgets, and regularly reviews and approves the schools' curriculum and calendar, as well as the organization's goals and objectives. Board committees include: Development to support fundraising goals, Academic Excellence to support

academic objectives of the schools, Facility for site selection and lease/owner agreements, Leaders Support, Evaluation, Finance, Governance and Executive.

As the GCS model is fairly prescriptive, the school principal makes decisions impacting school-based priorities, works with teachers in creating sustainable and ever-improving lessons, and makes final hire/fire decisions. The principal also has great input in how the GCS model is best operationalized at his/her site. The professional development program is designed and driven by the CMO level, as are special education and remediation administrative supports.

The academic design, human capital methods and recruiting, performance management systems and associated practices, final budgeting, facilities, and external relations will be functions of the central office. GCS believes it is in these main systems that system-wide quality control occurs. The schools have input into these systems so they are ever improving, but the school leadership will be focused primarily on driving student performance. GCS will measure the successful delivery of services through surveys and leadership team meetings.

Please see below for a table of school- and organization-level decision-making responsibilities as they relate to key functions.

Function	Network Decision-Making	School Decision-Making
Performance Goals	GCS Board	N/A
Curriculum	GCS Admin Team	Principal
Professional Development	GCS Admin Team	Principal
Data Management and Interim Assessments	GCS Board	Principal
Promotion Criteria	GCS Board	N/A
Culture	GCS Admin Team	Principal/School Leadership Team
Budgeting, Finance, and Accounting	GCS Board and GCS CFO and COO	School Accountant
Student Recruitment	GCS Admin Team	Principal
School Staff Recruitment and Hiring	GCS Admin Team	Principal

H/R Services (payroll, benefits, etc)	GCS Director of Finance and Operations	School Accountant
Development/Fundraising	GCS Board	Principal
Community Relations	GCS Board GCS Admin Team	Principal/School Leadership Team
I/T	GCS Admin Team	N/A
Facilities Management	GCS Admin Team	N/A
Vendor Management / Procurement	GCS Director of Finance and Operations	School Accountant
Other operational services, if applicable	N/A	N/A

Application Requirement 3. GCS schools receive Basic Education Program (BEP), Title I, i3, E-rate, and School Improvement Grants (SIG). (Note: All SIG grants for GCS schools will be expended by the start of the CSP contract year.) BEP funds are routed from the federal level to the State, then to the LEA, then directly from the LEA to the school. The CMO reports enrollment data to the LEA to ensure funds are allocated correctly. Title I, E-rate, i3 and SIG funds are likewise routed from the federal level to the State, to the LEA, to the schools. The CMO ensures compliance, reporting, and submission of receipts for reimbursement. The School Leaders, in conjunction with the GCS Chief Academic Officer, develop a budget as part of their annual School Improvement Plan, including how these funds will be spent. See “Partners” below for private funders who have committed to help expand and sustain the GCS network.

Application Requirement 6—Financial Model. The financial model calls for each school to be self-sufficient (requiring only state per-pupil funds) five years after it opens, provided enrollment targets are met. Each school will serve one or two grade levels in year one of its operation, and add one grade annually until the school reaches capacity. Each school pays a 10% management fee to the CMO for services provided across the network.

Partners. Partnerships are essential to the success of GCS. Our key partnership is with Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF), which has committed to support our growth through financial

support, hands-on mentoring, ongoing evaluations, and expert recommendations. In March 2012, GCS secured a commitment from CSGF for \$3.5M (\$3M in grants, \$0.5M in low interest loans) over four years to expand the CMO network. In conjunction with this partnership, GCS anticipates a commitment from the Walton Foundation to provide \$250K in start up funding at the school level for each school opening over the next five years.

Community partnerships and networks are also essential; we have developed relationships with University of Memphis, Shelby County Schools, Achievement School District, Memphis City, Power Center Community Development Corp., fellow CMOs, Memphis Grizzlies, SunTrust Bank, Methodist Healthcare, Church Health Center, and dozens more. We have strong relationships with local foundations, who have invested \$4.5M through Feb. 2015 to expand the network, and we anticipate these partners will continue their support.

Application Requirement 5. All GCS schools are authorized under either 1) Shelby County Schools (formerly Memphis City Schools), the local LEA, or 2) Achievement School District, a statewide LEA created by the State of Tennessee to move the bottom 5% of schools to the top 25%. Both are referred to as LEA in the text below.

As the charter management organization, GCS serves as the primary source for curriculum design and implementation, resource allocation, partnerships within the community, wraparound services, sustainability plans, data procurement and analysis, and other services traditionally provided to public schools by the LEA. The authorizing LEA contributes to program design by providing recommendations and best practices from its wealth of experience; ensures the curriculum meets or exceeds the standards established by the State of Tennessee for career- and college-readiness; holds GCS accountable for meeting outcome targets and fiscal responsibility requirements; and facilitates the collection and reporting of program and

participant data. GCS gathers, tracks, stores and reports participant and program data. The LEA ensures compliance with all state and federal laws.

Community Involvement and Parent Engagement & *Application Requirement 7*

Community Contribution. GCS believes that by focusing on economic, educational and social programs, the local community, along with the city of Memphis, will benefit. Finding ways to *support* these programs, as opposed to simply *funding* them will create a culture for GCS that echoes grassroots efforts that have sustained communities in the past. GCS intends to support these programs through funding *and* community partnerships. It is clear that money alone cannot revitalize and sustain a community, but the people of a community can.

Since the inception of Power Center Academy Middle School in 2008, GCS has partnered with private and federal agencies to revitalize the Hickory Hill community. One of GCS's flagship initiatives is the PCA Town Center, a 43-acre planned development that will include residential and commercial space, performing arts center, sports complex, and social health center. It will be anchored by the future PCA Middle and Elementary School buildings.

The site of the Town Center was once home to 24 acres of blighted property that was declared a public nuisance by the City of Memphis. Early in the development of the Town Center, over 1,000 members of the Hickory Hill community—including PCA parents and scholars—attended a town hall meeting to learn more about the project. In addition to learning about the purpose of the Town Center, community members participated in a visual perception survey, the results of which were used by the project's architect to create the final design.

GCS schools directly address its economic, educational and social objectives by educating adolescent community members and their guardians; by providing additional jobs for community members and establishing partnerships with local businesses; and by establishing

service learning projects that bring together all members of the community. GCS instills a sense of pride and hope in a community that has experienced significant hardships in recent years.

Parental Engagement. GCS believes a home-school partnership is beneficial to students' academic success. To ensure this strong partnership, GCS is proactive in its steps to involve families in their child's education and the life of the school.

Teachers initiate communication with parents in the first week with a "call-a-thon" event, in which each parent is contacted to set the tone for positive communication throughout the year. Back-to-School Nights are held for each grade level within the first month of school, and parents get to know the culture of the school and the teachers of their scholars. Teachers leverage technology to further open the lines of communication and support with parents and families.

Parents attend a minimum of four meetings at the school. These include 1) orientation meeting, 2) first report card meeting, 3) grade conference, and 4) a midyear meeting. At the midyear meeting, teachers and parents have data from the third round of benchmark testing and use this to set academic goals for a successful completion of the year, as well as to discuss and to schedule any intervention supports. Families also have access to PowerSchool, which shows grades, assignments, tests, and quiz dates. Teachers have webpages where they post homework daily and upload all class notes and podcasts.

Family surveys provide an opportunity for parents and students to give the school regular feedback on a broad range of issues. This regular system of feedback enables the school to support its efforts to ensure parents' (or guardians') expectations and the school's expectations are well aligned in support of its goals and objectives and, more generally, student success. The survey system allows for the creation of additional opportunities for parental involvement and support, such as focus groups and working groups (i.e., ad hoc groups of parents pulled together

to focus on a particular issue revealed in a family survey).

There are several opportunities for parents to become involved, in addition to communicating with teachers and attending family events. An advisory board is enacted each year, and on that board are two parents and two community members. This board meets quarterly with the school leaders to talk about how they can support the school. The Parent Advisory Council (PAC), by law, includes eligibility for an active parent of GCS scholars to serve on the GCS Board of Directors. The parent representative is a full voting member of the Governing Board and provides parent representation and a parent voice to the deliberations and activities of the Governing Board.

Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment & *Application Requirement 10*

Recruitment Plan & Marketing. GCS partners with community organizations, faith-based institutions, and the Department of Human Services to recruit families from underserved communities. We know providing informational meetings and events at locations where our target population spends time gives greater access for our families. As such, community partnerships such as the Boys and Girls Club, Memphis City Parks and Recreation Centers, local churches, and local businesses provide an avenue to reach our families. In addition, receive referrals from the Department of Human Services, Shelby County Schools Choice Transfer Options, and Shelby County Schools Department of Exceptional Children.

As a part of our partnerships, we provide the following: informational meetings to parents, social events for potential students to meeting existing students, home visits at neighboring apartment complexes, and presentations as local faith-based events. Partnerships with local agencies coupled with traditional marketing resources such as brochures, radio

announcements, and the school's website provide information to the school community.

Marketing efforts also include public open houses and community information meetings to explain GCS's mission, goals and classroom instruction methods; distribution of promotional materials; public service announcements on local radio and TV; press releases; advertising in local publications; and a mailing to families in GCS communities.

Enrollment. GCS's enrollment policy prohibits discriminations on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services. Every aspect of enrollment and recruitment practices complies with Shelby County Schools, ASD, State of Tennessee and federal standards. Admission to GCS will be limited to the grades and ages of pupils served by the school. Participation shall be based on parental choice.

GCS will enroll all such eligible students who submit timely applications, unless the number of applications exceeds the planned capacity. For GCS schools authorized by the ASD, GCS will only enroll students who are zoned to attend or enroll in a school that is eligible to be placed in the ASD. To be eligible for admission, the student must provide proof of residence within the Chartering Authority or proof of eligible non-resident status for space available consideration; proof of minimum age; and a completed application form. Application forms require a student's name; date of birth; grade level; address; names, addresses, and telephone numbers of parents/guardians; names of siblings also applying; and a signature verifying that the information is correct and that the parents/guardians are choosing education at GCS for their child. Application forms must be submitted to the school by the annual deadline.

If the number of students meeting admission requirements exceeds the capacity of the school, program, class, grade level or building remaining after the initial student application period has ended, a lottery is used to determine admission within 7 days after the end of the

initial application period. When the school is at capacity, the remaining applicants are placed on a waiting list in the order their names were drawn in the lottery. The waitlist does not carry over to the following school year. GCS complies with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) with respect to the publication of students' names before, during and after the enrollment and lottery process.

Should applications exceed the planned capacity of an ASD-authorized school, students meeting the following requirements shall be given priority, as per state law: 1) Students who were previously enrolled in any public school that converted to become a public charter school; 2) Students who attended a public school within Memphis City Schools (now merged with Shelby County Schools);,3) Students who are not enrolled in a Memphis City public school but live within the district; and 4) Students who reside outside of Memphis City Schools.

Parents/guardians are notified by mail of each child's admission status and then have 14 calendar days after the postmarked date to return a signed enrollment registration card for each child offered enrollment, or signed waiting-list applicant card for wait-listed children. If no form is returned within 10 days, GCS makes three attempts to contact the family before the deadline. If no form has been returned by the deadline, the admission space or waiting-list order is given to the next eligible candidate. Parents who will not available at the home address and phone number listed on the application form during the notification period should contact GCS to make alternate contact arrangements.

Evaluation Plan

Performance Standards/Assessments & Application Requirement 1

The tables below outline some of the ways in which GCS measures progress toward its goals.

Performance Goal: State-Mandated Assessment. Students at GCS will achieve proficiency in

reading, language arts, and mathematics. GCS students will perform at an achievement level equal to or greater than the achievement level of their peers across the state and the district in all grades and on all subject tests, as demonstrated by a greater percentage achieving proficiency.

There will be no significant difference in test scores among subgroups.

Objectives	Measures	Reporting
Each year, the proficiency levels will grow by 8-10% in grades 3-12.	TCAP: State of TN assessments	GCS will provide student performance and growth data, and comparative and trend analyses, in the annual progress report to the authorizer and commissioner of education.
GCS will make Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) and subgroup growth gap targets.	AMO Targets	GCS will meet annual AMO and growth targets as defined by the LEA.
GCS will maintain an average attendance rate of 95% or higher.	Daily attendance and required DOE reporting	As required by Tennessee Department of Education.

Performance Goal: Norm-Referenced Assessment. Students will demonstrate strong yearly progress in the skills most fundamental to academic success – reading and mathematics. Each year, GCS will demonstrate, on average, in their national rankings in both reading and mathematics, an improvement of at least 1.5 NCE points on a nationally accepted norm-referenced test – Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP). In addition, there will be no significant difference in the test scores of the subgroups.

Objectives	Measures	Reporting
GCS students in each grade tested and in each subgroup tested will demonstrate both reading and mathematics improvement of (on average) at least 1.5-2.0 NCE points on a nationally accepted norm-referenced test NWEA MAP	Administered pre- and post-norm-referenced assessment in reading and mathematics	GCS will report annually on student performance and growth, and comparative and trend analyses
For students enrolled for 3 or more continuous years, the average scaled score of	NWEA Norm-referenced	GCS reports annually on student performance and

Objectives	Measures	Reporting
each grade and subgroup will be greater than students enrolled for fewer than 3 years	assessments math, reading, language	growth, and comparative and trend analyses

School-Specific Performance Goals. GCS will prepare future leaders of the community by teaching students to be innovative thinkers, problem solvers, and humanitarians. All students who graduate from GCS will have developed a formal plan for post-secondary success. All students graduating from the fifth grade will meet GCS exit standards, including not only academics but also standards in career planning, entrepreneurship and community service.

Objectives	Measures	Reporting
Students who have been with us for 3 years will leave at or above grade level in reading and mathematics	Lexile Levels for Reading NWEA MAP	Summary will be presented to the Board each May; Students take baseline in July and post in May
100% of 5th grade, 8 th grade and 12 th grade students will meet the community service standards, as required	GCS Lenses of Excellence	A summary will be presented to the Board in May of each year

In addition to State standards, the performance of existing schools will be used to establish workable benchmarks for newly established schools.

Closing Schools. GCS understands adverse conditions may negatively impact the quality and culture of existing schools. As such, no new schools will be established if performance goals of existing schools are grossly under target. Instead, resources and personnel will be redirected to the underperforming school(s) to mitigate the decline. Should enrollment or performance continue to lag, single grades may be merged into other network schools, and/or a “fresh start” approach taken to revitalize the existing school. School closure would only be considered in the event of the LEA’s revocation of the school’s charter. In the case of a GCS school’s charter being revoked, GCS would be proactive in working with the LEA, community members and

high performing neighborhood schools, including GCS, to transition students into other schools.

Assessments. GCS teachers analyze multiple sources of data to truly understand individual student performance. No single test can tell all there is to know. As the directors of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standard and Student Testing emphasize, “Multiple measures are needed to address the full depth and breadth of our expectations for student learning.”

Beyond the multiple-choice and short-answer items that are typical of current assessments, “...other types of performance measures – essays, applied projects, portfolios, demonstrations, oral presentations, etc. – are needed to represent and guide students’ progress.”^{xxiv}

GCS uses a comprehensive assessment and feedback system that gives students, teachers, parents, administrators and the State important information about the school’s success in preparing its students academically. Assessments are key ways to gauge program effectiveness. Frequent monitoring of student progress and use of assessment data to set specific learning goals for individual students are characteristics of high-performing schools.

GCS administers a variety of internal and external assessments and uses the results to make decisions about curriculum and instruction at the individual student level, the teacher/classroom level, and the school as a whole. Teachers use the information to determine how or when to differentiate instruction to ensure all students learn the standards.

GCS believes it is imperative each student be assessed at the end of every class. Daily class assessments give students and teachers the opportunity to improve student performance. Also, by addressing student performance regularly, students, parents and teachers have the opportunity to address long-term performance goals through short-term objectives.

Data-Based Decision Making. GCS collects a robust array of data that includes state, district, and school data, and employs user-friendly systems to make use of the many data points. The

school adopt software applications targeted for school use, with features such as electronic grade books and the capability to incorporate teacher-developed formative assessments, or the capability to store examples of student work in an electronic portfolio.

Each School Leader must be knowledgeable in educational technology and data analysis. Data do not have to be a lagging indicator. As fields of data are triangulated, leading indicators around the success or needs of the school's program are used to develop actionable steps. The School Leader plays a major role in framing targets for educational improvement, setting expectations for staff participation in data-informed decision making, and making resources, such as supported time, available to support the use of data. The School Leader provides the GCS Governing Board with regular analysis of data.

Students, parents, teachers, and administrators receive performance data in real-time. This is made possible through GCS's one-to-one laptop program in conjunction with data assessment tools that analyze variables directly correlated with student achievement. GCS uses Power School, Gradebook, and Pearson to assess data for each student. GCS incorporates software as a centralized system that distributes data to improve teacher efficacy and student achievement. This single database is accessible to each school at the micro level (student, parent, teacher) and macro level (central office, school-wide administrators).

A data-driven approach is present at all levels. The school year starts with a review of previous year's TCAP (State Assessment) data and the areas that were strong for our scholars versus the weak areas. This review is done by the leadership team and ties in to the introduction of school-wide academic goals for the year, therefore providing an example for how to analyze, interpret, and use performance data to improve student learning.

Each teacher is given a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the school year, which is aligned to Student Performance Indicators (SPI) that should have been mastered previously. Interpretations and analysis of this data allow for targeted remediation.

At a minimum, teachers create and administer a Common Core-aligned assessment weekly, utilizing an online assessment program. This program allows teachers to pull user-friendly data reports that are reviewed weekly with leadership. This analysis of data drives the structure and frequency of tutoring for our teachers, and the review and remediation for each unit assessment. Many teachers administer informal assessments more frequently than once a week, and use the results of daily assessments to drive the next day's learning.

Formative assessments have been created by an external organization and are administered three times throughout the year. Upon completion of each assessment cycle, each teacher is allotted three hours during the school day for data review, where the teacher and a member of the leadership team together create a targeted remediation plan for individual scholars and for individual SPIs within their content area.

Timely Feedback. Research states that providing the right kind of feedback to students can make a significant difference in their achievement. There are two key considerations. First, feedback that improves learning is responsive to specific aspects of student work – such as test or homework answers – and provides specific and related suggestions. Second, the feedback must be timely. If students receive feedback no more than a day after a test or homework assignment has been turned in, it increases the window of opportunity for learning. Feedback is a research-based strategy that teachers, and students, can practice to improve their success. ^{xxv}

GCS uses a web-based grade book that provides students and their parents/guardians with daily access to posted grades, attendance and a behavior log. Teachers are required to enter the

previous week's grades by Monday afternoon for the previous week's work. In addition, homework is posted every day.

Interim Assessments. GCS administers interim benchmark assessments in all core academic content areas. These assessments are aligned to the Tennessee curriculum standards and the Tennessee End-of-Course assessments. Teachers participate in professional development in the summer seminar prior to the start of the school year. This professional development focuses on the purpose of assessment, analysis, planning and re-teaching. It also trains teachers in the structure, content and expectations of monthly data meetings.

External Achievement Data. All teaching staff are involved in reviewing the standardized tests results and the assessments used throughout the school year. These results help the staff evaluate their collective and individual successes and areas for improvement. Moreover, all teachers are expected to analyze the test scores for their subject matter to identify areas on which they may need to focus more during the school year.

Each student is charged with improving his/her academic standing, regardless of the previous level of success. At the beginning of each year, every student develops an academic growth plan in a weekly college advisory session. These plans set goals and measure student achievement and success throughout the academic year. With the assistance of an advisor, individualized student plans use data to guide and revise goal setting.

Teachers regularly provide students and parents/guardians with ongoing feedback about student performance through progress reports and communication between each student's advisor and family. Teachers often send work home for parents/guardians to review; they contact parents/guardians if they see a significant slip in academic performance or a special skill that needs extra reinforcement at school and home.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Application requirements have been addressed within the context of the selection criteria.

Requirement 1) Please see “Project Design” p. 17-37 and “Evaluation Plan” p. 48-54 for objectives and methods of measuring progress. **Requirement 2)** Please see “Management Plan and Personnel” p. 38-47 for how GCS schools are operated. **Requirement 3)** Please see p. 42 for how GCS will ensure each school receives its commensurate share of Federal education funds. **Requirement 4)** Please see “Project Design” p. 17-37 and “Special Student Populations” p. 13-17 for educational program and curriculum. **Requirement 5)** Please see “Management Plan” p. 43 for the administrative relationship between the CMO and authorizer. **Requirement 6)** Please see p. 42-43 “Financial model” for how operations will be sustained. **Requirement 7)** Please see “Community Involvement” p. 43-46 for how parents and the community will be involved. **Requirement 8)** No waivers of federal statutory or regulatory provisions are necessary for the successful operation of the proposed schools. **Requirement 9)** The following major categories and initiatives will be funded by the CSP grant over the five project years: 1.) Start Up Furniture and Equipment; 2.) Start Up Materials and Supplies; 3.) Curriculum Development; 4.) Technology Platform; 5.) Data Dashboard; 6.) Teacher Recruitment and Retention; 7.) GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy; and 8.) Grant Travel and Management. Funds will enhance and expand the services and equipment provided through BEP, Title I, i3, and E-rate. Please see “Budget Narrative” attachment for line item detail. The following is an overview: *Start Up Furniture and Equipment.* In preparation for the opening of each GCS school, GCS will use CSP grant funds to purchase furniture including: 1.) student and teacher desks and chairs for classrooms, 2.) classroom tables, 3.) storage units/shelves, 4.) office desks, chairs, and tables for administrative spaces, and 5.) cafeteria tables and chairs. GCS will also purchase lockers or

storage cubbies for students. Since each GCS school ramps up grade by grade, only the furniture needed for the planned enrollment by year is purchased.

Start Up Materials and Supplies. An array of educational materials is incorporated into the GCS curricula including core, non-core, supplemental and intervention materials. Educational materials to be purchased using CSP grant funds include curricula for non-core subjects, supplemental curricula, digital content, intervention curricula for special needs, library materials, standardized test preparation materials, scientific calculators, and standard school supply kits.

The CSP grant will also fund NWEA/MAP assessments for all students.

Curriculum Development. GCS will utilize its teachers to help develop and/or revise curriculum maps, teaching resources, and assessments by subject and grade. GCS will use CSP grant funds to pay stipends upon successful completion.

Technology Platform. Technology is a key element of the GCS academic model. To support the instructional use of technology, GCS must continually expand and maintain an adequate network infrastructure. This infrastructure must be able to handle traffic levels and provide the security necessary to offer users a seamless instructional experience. With each new school, GCS must assess and build out the network infrastructure at each location. In subsequent years, GCS must maintain and upgrade the network.

Data Dashboard. As GCS continues to grow and technology is increasingly used in instruction and data management, it has become necessary to build a data dashboard. This dashboard will fully inform and support the increasing number of teachers and staff by allowing them to easily access, analyze and use the various sources of data. Each teacher will be able to access key performance metrics, saving each of them up to 25 minutes each day. The SQL server will connect to all sources of data that GCS currently uses, including the school's student information

system, learning management systems, performance management systems, accounting software, and operations tracking systems. Additionally, GCS is working with the University of Memphis and the Memphis Police Department to gain access to community effect metrics. The ability to target out-of-class hindrances to scholar growth will result in increases in meaningful partnerships with the community, parent engagement, and ultimately student achievement.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention. GCS will always have a need and demand for great teachers, especially for new schools establishing an entirely new faculty. CSP grant funds would be used to establish a signing bonus pool. By offering signing bonuses, Gestalt will be better able to attract high-performing teachers without the long-term financial impact of higher base salaries. Due to the lack of qualified STEM and special education teachers, providing signing bonuses for math, science, and special education would significantly increase the quality of education in our network. In addition, longevity bonuses will reward high performing teachers who remain in the network for three years or more to encourage retention.

GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy. “Research shows that teacher quality and principal quality are the two most important in-school factors for student success. The two are also closely linked.” (Fenton, Kellerman, & Schnur, 2011) The GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy is a comprehensive leadership development program. The program includes two distinctive pathways. Those pathways provide leadership coursework, professional development and coaching to aspiring school administrators and teacher leaders. The ultimate goal of the program is to recruit, develop, support, and mentor teacher leaders and school leaders.

This program is designed to meet the following needs for schools within the GCS network: sustain and retain high performing teachers and school leaders; improve instructional delivery ultimately producing a positive impact on student academic performance; and offer a

pipeline of trained school leadership teams that are prepared for the high demand of charter school leadership positions. The program includes three main components including a leader and teacher residency program, a teacher leadership program, and a professional development cycle. An emerging school leader will spend one year in a school-based residency program shadowing a high performing veteran principals. Resident teachers will be assigned to work with Master Teachers and will be focused on high need placements such as reading, mathematics, and special education. The teacher leadership program will identify and develop existing teachers to hold positions within the schools of master teachers, content leaders, and culture brokers. Finally, the professional development cycle will support all leaders and teachers.

Grant Travel and Management. The budget incorporates one trip on an annual basis to the CSP two-day meeting for project directors. GCS would also use CSP grant funds to purchase grant management software for planning, tracking, monitoring, etc.

Requirement 10) Please see “Management Plan” p. 46-48 for how all students in the community will be informed about the proposed charter schools. **Requirement 11)** Under Tennessee state law, charter schools cannot be LEAs. GCS currently operates two schools authorized by Achievement School District (Humes Academy and Klondike Academy) and two under Shelby County Schools (Power Center Academy Middle and High Schools). The proposed new schools will be operated under one of these authorizers, and will comply with Shelby County and ASD policies and procedures, including those regarding IDEA. **Requirement 12)** GCS has had no significant compliance issues. **Requirement 13)** Please see “Absolute Priority” p. 2-8 for all details of the GCS portfolio. Graduation data is not applicable for GCS schools as 12th grade will not be added until the 2014-15 school year. **Requirement 14)** Please see “Absolute Priority” p. 2-8 for student achievement data.

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Gestalt Community Schools Logic Model

Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) leverages Memphis community assets to empower citizens who will be college-ready, career-ready, and community-ready. We target communities with high rates of poverty and low student achievement. The network is expanding from four schools serving 1,820 scholars in 2014 to ten schools serving 5,090 scholars by 2019.

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	What we do	Who we reach	Short	Medium	Long
School staff, 115 in 2014	Educate K-12 students	5,090 students in targeted Memphis neighborhoods	Each year, TCAP (State Assessment) proficiency levels will grow by 8-10% in grades 3-12.	For students enrolled for 3 or more continuous years, the average scaled score of each grade level and subgroup within that grade will be greater than students enrolled for less than three continuous years.	Citizens who are college-ready, career-ready and community-ready.
CMO staff, 22 in 2014	Provide resources for students & teachers	2 (expanding to 3) impoverished communities ready for revitalization	GCS will make State Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) and subgroup growth gap targets.	Students who have been with us 3 or more years will leave at or above grade level in reading and math.	Better communities through education.
Rigorous curriculum	Analyze data to drive decision-making				
High expectations for achievement	Remediate struggling students	10 schools supported by the CMO by 2019	GCS students in each grade and subgroup tested will demonstrate reading and math improvement of 1.5-2.0 NCE points on a norm-referenced test NWEA MAP.	5th grade, 8th grade and 12th grade students will meet the GCS community service standards.	
Integrated technology	Empower students through service learning				
Extended school day and school year	Cultivate the "GCS 101" culture				
Focused learning environment	Support students and their families				
Professional development	Develop teachers and leaders				
Facilities, 10 by 2019	Build community partnerships				
Supplies & equipment					
Partners					
Funds					

Assumptions

All students can succeed academically if given the tools they need. Evidence shows the best way to achieve this for our target population is an innovative and constructivist approach.

External Factors

The community—high poverty rates, low student achievement, failing public schools, high unemployment, low educational attainment, many single-parent households

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P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 0248164828
Aug. 30, 2011 LTR 4168C E0
26-2794676 000000 00

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BODC: TE

GESTALT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
% DERWIN SISNETT
6120 WINCHESTER RD
MEMPHIS TN 38115-4014



015729

Employer Identification Number: 26-2794676
Person to Contact: Tonya Morris
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Aug. 19, 2011, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in March 2009.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(ii).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Please refer to our website www.irs.gov/eo for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

Gestalt Community Schools

Student Achievement 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13

Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) charter management organization operates a network of four high-quality schools in Memphis, TN. GCS currently serves 1,820 scholars with an aggressive growth plan to open and expand six additional schools over the next five years, serving a total of 5,090 scholars at capacity. The following schools are in the current GCS portfolio:

Power Center Academy Middle School (PCAMS): 6120 Winchester Road, Memphis, TN 38115. Founded 2008. Serves grades 6-8. Authorized by Shelby County Schools (formerly Memphis City Schools). Subgroups and achievement data are as follows:

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race/Ethnicity	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
392	97	1	1	1	81	10	0.50	6.5

2012-13 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8
Math	All Students	66.5	22.7	33.0	50.8
	African American	65.5	21.2	30.1	29.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	73.4	76.6
	Hispanic	n/a	30.6	36.4	43.9
	White	n/a	n/a	61.0	56.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	65.3	22.4	29.6	33.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	33.4	18.4	25.6	22.7
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
	Reading	All Students	66.4	23.2	29.1
African American		66.1	21.9	25.8	31.1
Asian		n/a	n/a	64.2	69.6
Hispanic		n/a	29.8	29.0	38.5
White		n/a	n/a	64.3	57.8

	Economically Disadvantaged	63.6	23.2	24.7	36
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	19	25.4	26.7	22.3
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Attendance Rate	All Students	97.4	95.7	94.6	95.4
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*not reported on State Report Card

2011-12 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8	
Math	All Students	49.8	19.2	26.6	47.1	
	African American	49.2	18.0	24.9	28.8	
	Asian	n/a	n/a	66.6	71.2	
	Hispanic	n/a	27.2	30.9	39.5	
	White	n/a	n/a	54.5	53.8	
	Economically Disadvantaged	48.1	18.1	23.8	36.1	
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	54.9	32.9	51.3	62.9	
	Students with Disabilities	27.3	20.5	28.1	37.3	
	Students without disabilities	51	19.0	26.4	48.5	
	Reading	All Students	63.6	20.8	29.5	51.3
		African American	63.2	19.9	26.1	32.2
		Asian	n/a	n/a	62.7	68.5
Hispanic		n/a	27.2	29.0	38.9	
White		n/a	n/a	64.5	58.7	
Economically Disadvantaged		62.8	20.4	24.8	38.8	
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	66.2	26.9	60.2	68.7	
	Students with Disabilities	30.8	29.5	31.8	43.3	
	Students without disabilities	65.2	19.6	29.2	52.4	

Attendance Rate	All Students	98.1	94.3	94.6	95.5
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2010-11 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced					
		Power Center Middle	Comparison School (Hickory Ridge)	District (Memphis City) Grades 3-8	State (TN) Grades 3-8
Math	All Students	39.2	11.8	22.63	41
	African American	38.2	10.7	19.4	23.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	62.6	66.2
	Hispanic	n/a	16.7	24.5	32.3
	White	n/a	n/a	50.1	47.5
	Economically Disadvantaged	39.8	11.3	19	29.8
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	36.7	20.4	48.2	56.3
	Students with Disabilities	**	11.3	23.1	31.5
	Students without disabilities	42	11.9	22.6	42.4
Reading	All Students	51	17.5	26	48.5
	African American	50.7	16.8	22.4	28.4
	Asian	n/a	n/a	61.4	65.7
	Hispanic	n/a	21.2	25.6	35.5
	White	n/a	n/a	60.9	56.3
	Economically Disadvantaged	50.9	16.6	21.4	35.6
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	51.7	32.1	58.2	66.1
	Students with Disabilities	13.6	24.2	26.8	40.3
	Students without disabilities	54.2	16.7	25.9	49.7
Attendance Rate	All Students	96.7	94.6	94.3	95.2
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Data suppressed by State of Tennessee due to FERPA regulations

Power Center Academy High School: 5368 Mendenhall Mall Rd, Memphis, TN 38115.

Founded 2011. Serves grades 9-12 (12th grade added in 2014-15). Authorized by Shelby County Schools (formerly Memphis City Schools).

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
598	99	0	1	0	81	8%	0.50%	9.1

2012-13 State Assessment Proficient & Advanced		Power Center High	Comparison School (Wooddale High)	District (Memphis City) Grades 9-12	State (TN) Grades 9-12
Math (Algebra I & II)	All Students	63.9	13.4	40.0	51.1
	African American	64	12.4	24.9	32.6
	Asian	n/a	n/a	64.8	73.6
	Hispanic	n/a	11.3	33.7	45.3
	White	n/a	n/a	58.0	58.0
	Economically Disadvantaged	63.6	12.6	25.5	39.8
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	*	8.6	11.1	20.7
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Reading (English I & II)	All Students	75.9	26.8	39.1	63.8
	African American	70.4	25.4	35.4	42.6
	Asian	n/a	n/a	80.7	76.4
	Hispanic	n/a		47.3	53.8
	White	n/a	n/a	77.5	71.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	67.8	16.6	34.5	50.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	*	*	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	8.3	6.1	13.1	24.2
	Students without disabilities	*	*	*	*
Attendance	All Students	96.5	89.4	91.4	94.4

Rate					
Attrition Rate	All Students	.4	7.2	8.1	2.7

*not available on State Report Card

Note: As the 12th grade will not be added until 2014-15, graduation data is not applicable.

2011-12 State Assessment Proficient & Advanced		Power Center High	Comparison School (Wooddale High)	District (Memphis City) Grades 9-12	State (TN) Grades 9-12
Math (Algebra I)	All Students	73.8	19.0	33.8	55.3
	African American	73.8	19.9	31.5	38.0
	Asian	n/a	n/a	67.4	74.8
	Hispanic	n/a	10.0	40.9	49.5
	White	n/a	n/a	62.5	61.8
	Economically Disadvantaged	72.5	18.6	30.8	45.2
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	78.6	22.0	49.7	67.9
	Students with Disabilities	**	5.1	19.4	25.2
	Students without disabilities	81.4	20.6	36.0	59.3
	Reading (English I)	All Students	85.3	35.6	43.2
African American		85.2	34.7	40	46.7
Asian		n/a	100	n/a	n/a
Hispanic		n/a	35.3	n/a	n/a
White		n/a	n/a	78.6	73.4
Economically Disadvantaged		82.8	35.2	37.4	52.7
Not Economically Disadvantaged		93.3	39.0	69	80.6
Students with Disabilities		20	10.6	7.8	24.1
Students without disabilities		90.8	39.0	47.5	70.9
Attendance Rate		All Students	96.3	87.0	90.6
Attrition Rate	All Students	1.5	13.6	12.8	n/a

**Data suppressed by the State of Tennessee due to FERPA regulations

Humes Preparatory Academy: 659 North Manassas St., Memphis, TN 38107. Founded 1930 and operated by Memphis City Schools. Grade 6 only was taken over by GCS in 2012 under a phase-in model. In 2013-14, GCS took over grades 5-8. Only data for Grade 6 for 2012-13 is available. For 2014-15, grade 5 will be consolidated with Klondike Academy, and Humes Academy will serve grades 6-8. Humes Academy is operated in conjunction with the Achievement School District (ASD), an LEA created by the State of Tennessee to move the bottom 5% of schools statewide to the top 25%. After consistent designation as a “failing school” under Memphis City Schools, Humes was targeted for turnaround efforts. In 2012-13, it was converted to a charter school under GCS management and ASD oversight. The following test scores reflect baseline data from GCS’s first year of operation of the 6th grade. Although low, they represent a gain of 3-10 percentage points in almost every subgroup and overall.

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
451	99	1	0	0	99	23	0.50	20.9

2012-13 State Assessment (TCAP) Proficient & Advanced		Humes Academy	District (ASD)	State (TN)
Math	All Students	17.9	19.6	50.8
	African American	17.3	19.4	29.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	76.6
	Hispanic	n/a	15.4	43.9
	White	n/a	26.1	56.9
	Economically Disadvantaged	18.5	20.2	33.5
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	n/a	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	n/a	7.8	29.7
	Students without disabilities	23.5	*	*
Reading	All Students	27.6	13.6	50.4
	African American	27.1	13.2	31.1
	Asian	n/a	n/a	69.6
	Hispanic	n/a	0.4	38.5
	White	n/a	27.2	57.8

	Economically Disadvantaged	27.7	13.8	36.0
	Not Economically Disadvantaged	n/a	*	*
	Students with Disabilities	6.3	7.2	30.5
	Students without disabilities	34.3	*	*
Attendance Rate	All Students	93.7	83.3	94.4
Attrition Rate	All Students	n/a	n/a	n/a

*not available on State Report Card
n/a indicates subgroup too small to report

Klondike Preparatory Academy

1250 Vollintine Ave, Memphis, TN 38107. Founded 1938 and operated by Memphis City Schools. Grades K-2 only were taken over by GCS in 2013 under a phase-in model. In 2014-15, GCS will manage all grades. To date, no State Assessment data under GCS management is available. Serves grades K-5.

2014-15 Projected Enrollment	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other Race/Ethnicity	% FRPL	% SPED	% ELL	% with Disabilities
379	96	2	2	0	100	10%	0%	6.9

Please note: In 2008, the State of Tennessee toughened the TCAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program) tests for reading, math and science as part of the Tennessee Diploma Project, a broad effort to improve education standards. The higher standards triggered a precipitous drop in the portion of students rated as proficient or advanced by the TCAP across the state.

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¹ Common Core State Standards Initiative (2014). "Myths vs. Facts."

<http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/myths-vs-facts>

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CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM – REPLICATION & EXPANSION GRANTEE ASSURANCES

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I certify that the grantee has submitted to the Secretary, or will submit within 30 days of the date of the Grant Award Notification, the following items:

- 1) All items described in section V (Application Requirements) of the Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year 2012, published in the Federal Register on;
- 2) Proof that the grantee has applied to an authorized public chartering authority to operate each charter school and provided to that authority adequate and timely notice, and a copy, of this application;
- 3) Proof of the grantee’s non-profit or not for-profit status;
- 4) A statement as to whether the charter school the applicant is proposing to replicate or expand currently receives, or has previously received, funding for this program either through a State subgrant or directly from the Department;
- 5) A description of how a charter school that is considered a local educational agency under State law, or a local educational agency in which a charter school is located, will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- 6) A description of the State or local rules generally applicable to public schools that will be waived for, or otherwise not apply to, the charter schools the applicant proposes to create or expand; and
- 7) Such other information and assurances as the Secretary may require.

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I also certify to the following assurances:

- 8) That the grantee will annually provide the Secretary such information as the Secretary may require to determine if the charter schools created or expanded under this grant are making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in 5203(b)(3)(C)(i);
- 9) That the grantee will cooperate with the Secretary in evaluating this program;
- 10) That the grantee will use the funds to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school in accordance with the requirements of the CSP;
- 11) That the grantee will ensure that a charter school that receives funds under this program will not receive funds for the same purpose under section 5202(c)(2) of the ESEA, including for planning and program design or the initial implementation of a charter school; and
- 12) That the State will grant waivers of State statutory or regulatory requirements, and a description of the State or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that will be waived for, or otherwise not apply to, the schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand.

Derwin Sisnett
NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL TITLE



Derwin Sisnett
CEO

July 21, 2014
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION DATE SUBMITT

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy: Educational Psychology, The University of Memphis, Memphis, TN; coursework completed

Master of Fine Arts: Creative Writing, Hollins University, Roanoke, VA; May 2005

Bachelor of Arts: Psychology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA; May 2003

EXPERIENCE

Gestalt Community Schools, Memphis, Tennessee, 2011-Present

Co-Founder, Chief Executive Officer

- Led the development of the organization from 1 school and \$1M annual operating budget to 5 schools and \$16M annual operating budget within 5-year span.
- Raised over \$23,500,000 to support organizational growth and community revitalization
- Founding school nominated as highest performing public middle school in state of Tennessee twice in three years; awarded top honor in 2012
- Supervise and direct all senior staff and consultants who are engaged by the organization

Power Center Community Development Corporation, Memphis, Tennessee, 2007-Present

Vice Chairman

Power Center Academy Town Center, Co-developer (2009-Present)

- Manage the design and development of 43 acre community revitalization project that includes two anchoring charter schools, wellness center, performing arts center, residential and commercial space
- Facilitate planning and development of site alongside architects, engineers, developers, urban planners, and community stakeholders

Founder and Chairman, Power Center Academy Charter Schools (2007-2011)

- Composed successful charter application for Tennessee charter middle (2007) and high (2010) schools and established the schools' Board of Directors and leadership team
- Directed the growth and development of charter schools, including hiring key employees, fundraising, and securing community partners

Executive Director (2007-2011)

- Developed initiatives designed to strengthen social, economic, and educational foundation of targeted region
- Established positive and constructive relationships with private and public sector

Memphis Light, Gas & Water, Memphis, Tennessee, 2012-Present

Vice Chair, Board of Commissioners

- Provide guidance and oversight for country's largest public three-service utility provider; \$2B under management
- Chair of Audit Committee and Supplier Diversity Committee

The University of Memphis, Department of Educational Psychology and Research, Memphis, Tennessee, 2008-2010

Adjunct Instructor

- Introduced undergraduates to theories and practices in the field of Educational Psychology

Mid-South Community College, West Memphis, Arkansas, 2005-2007

Coordinator of Retention Services

- Developed and implemented retention model for college
- Served as Chair of the Enrollment Management and Assessment Committee

English Instructor

- Instructed Developmental English and English Composition students in written and oral communication

NOTABLE PRESENTATIONS

- New York City Charter School Center Replicating Quality Schools Conference**, Memphis, TN 2014
- Shared best practices of CMO start up and development to audience of emerging charter school leaders
- New York City Charter School Center Replicating Quality Schools Conference**, New Orleans, L.A., 2013
- Shared best practices of CMO start up and development to audience of emerging charter school leaders
- Yale School of Management Education Leadership Conference**, New Haven, CT, 2013
- Presented strategies to mobilize communities for education reform
- Urban Land Institute Annual Conference**, Chicago, IL, 2013
- Presented the topic of establishing high performing schools to anchor community development
- Urban Land Institute Shaw Forum**, Chicago, IL, 2013
- Presented the topic of connecting real estate investment to quality urban public education
- Martin Institute Annual Conference**, Memphis, TN, 2013
- Presented the idea of changing schools from classroom to community change agents
- Teach for America TLD Summit**, Memphis, TN, 2013
- Presented the topic of rethinking education reform
- Yale School of Management Education Leadership Conference**, New Haven, CT, 2012
- Presented ideas related to making education relevant in the 21st century
- Women in Government Conference**, Memphis, TN, 2012
- Presented a case study on charter schools
- Education 2020, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, Lipscomb University College of Education, and Mayor Dean's Speaker Series on Charter Schools**, Nashville, TN, 2011
- Presented the background and intent of charter schools in underserved communities
- Catalyst**, Dallas, TX, 2011
- Presented the importance of strategically aligning church and state in faith-based community development
- Federal Reserve of St. Louis: Memphis Bankers Roundtable**, Memphis, TN, 2010
- Presented the importance of incorporating financial literacy in school curricula
- New American City *Urban Nexus: The New Face of Civic Engagement***, Memphis, TN, 2009
- Presented the topic of using education as a catalyst to rebuild communities
- Leadership Memphis Executive Training Workshop**, Memphis, TN, 2009
- Presented innovative programs in schools that are used to create, recruit and retain talent
- Federal Reserve of St. Louis Conference on Community Development**, Memphis, TN, 2009
- Presented the idea of using education as the foundation for workforce development in urban communities
- Mid-South Minority Business Council Conference on Economic Development**, Memphis, TN, 2008
- Invited as a panelist to share with aspiring business owners and community leaders key issues concerning community renaissance
- Noel-Levitz National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention**, Orlando, FL, 2007
- Invited to facilitate workshop on successful post-secondary school retention models

MEMBERSHIPS & BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Aspen Institute, Pahara-Aspen Fellow
Crosstown Arts, Trustee
Leadership Memphis, Alumni
Memphis Light, Gas and Water, Board Commissioner/Vice Chairman
New Memphis Institute, Alumni
Power Center Community Development Corporation, Board Member/Vice Chairman
The Dixon Gallery & Gardens, Education Committee Member
The Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence, Trustee
Urban Land Institute, Member

YETTA M. LEWIS

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Certificate of Technology in Education
Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 1998

M.Ed. Curriculum Instruction & Administration
Loyola College, Baltimore, MD, 1995

B.A. Organizational Communications, Minor in Art Education
Salisbury University, 1990

Advanced Professional Elementary Certification K-8
Secondary English Certification 7-12
Professional Administration Certification K-12 Maryland
Administration Certification K_12 Tennessee

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Power Center Academy, Memphis City Charter School, Memphis, TN (2008-Present)

Principal and Executive Director

- Recruit and retain highly qualified educators.
- Conduct classroom observations and teacher coaching.
- Plan and execute ongoing professional development
- Establish and monitor school culture and climate.
- Implement and maintain school improvement plan.
- Review lesson planning and instructional delivery to ensure alignment to standards.
- Provide manageable data reports and instructional protocol to impact student learning.
- Develop school-wide budget aligned to school improvement plan.
- Maintain safety of 300 scholars and 24 staff members.
- Conduct ongoing parent meetings.
- Present school status update PCA Board and stakeholders
- Monitor Title I funding and other grants.
- Organize curriculum committee for the selection of content.

Sherwood Elementary School, Memphis City Schools, Memphis, TN (2007-2008)

New Leader for New School Resident Principal

- Conduct classroom observations and teacher coaching.
- Provide model lessons to support teacher professional development.
- Monitor and protect the safety of over 680 students and 60 staff members.
- Implement revised progressive school-wide behavior plan.
- Develop Sherwood's first student run newspaper to enhance the writing of 5th grade students.
- Co-Chair the SACS- School Accreditation Process.
- Co-Chair Sherwood School-wide Behavior Committee.
- Create a school-wide morning routine for mathematics.
- Provide manageable data reports and instructional protocol to impact student learning.
- Conduct professional development on such topics as effective writing, efficacy, data-driven instruction and school-wide behavior plan

The JASON Project, Subsidiary of National Geographic Society, Washington DC (2005 – 2007)

Vice President of Curriculum and Professional Development

- Manage all facets of JASON Academy Professional Development Program with a \$3.5M budget.
- Provide oversight on creative and production aspects of JASON content.
- Administer JASON content relationship with grant agencies such as NOAA, NASA, and U.S. Department of Education.
- Responsible for the Marketing and Sales of Curriculum and Professional Development Programs.
- Ensure the development of scalable and sustainable professional development models.
- Establish online and on-site professional development models that are customized to meet instructor and administrative demands.
- Oversee a network of 27 JASON primary interactive network sites and 30 Regional Partners.
- Deliver quarterly progress and results reports to the Foundation President and Board of Directors.
- Serve as Co-Chair of the National Geographic Society Education Committee.

MarcoPolo Professional Development Program – MCI Foundation, Ashburn, VA (2001 – 2005)

Senior Manager

- Devised and introduced scalable models to deliver the MarcoPolo Professional Development Program for K-12 teachers, trainers, and administrators nationwide with a \$2.5M budget.
- Created, tested, and evaluated a wide range of electronic and traditional educational materials and programs that included Distance Learning, online, self-paced, and Web-conference courses.
- Monitored systems designed to provide professional development resources such as on-site training, continuing education credit, high-quality printed materials, teacher/trainer recognition programs, and other resources for states, schools, and/or districts.
- Negotiated and secured agreements with regional and national organizations to promote the MarcoPolo Program in their respective regions.
- Provided oversight and direction for the quality assurance and research aspects of the Professional Development Program.
- Managed a nationwide trainer network of 6,000 Field Trainers and 100 Certified Trainers.
- Oversaw the MCI Foundation Community Relations Training Program for staff of 1,500.

Riverdeep Interactive Learning, Cambridge, MA and Dublin, Ireland (1999 - 2001)

Regional Project Manager/Educational Consultant

- Created, monitored, and evaluated customized implementation plans for Riverdeep customers.
- Established competency-based professional development models.
- Implemented train-the-trainer professional development model for mathematics products.
- Conducted on-site training seminars and administered technical assessments at customer sites.
- Presented executive presentations to Federal and State Educational Agencies.
- Supported sales force efforts in Riverdeep products demonstrations.

Johns Hopkins Univ. Center for Technology in Education, Baltimore, MD (1997 - 1999)

Project Manager

- Coordinated and oversaw implementation of the Baltimore Learning Communities (BLC) initiative that resulted from \$6M National Technology Innovation Challenge Grant awarded to Baltimore City Public Schools by the U.S. Department of Education, with a \$1.5M yearly budget.
- Directed staff development activities of the Baltimore Learning Communities.
- Maintained effective documentation of project activities and successes.
- Conducted presentations on Baltimore Learning Communities Project to the business and education sectors.
- Prepared lesson plans, graded papers, and maintained records. Created various class projects, tests, and quizzes. Organized educational field trips for the students.

Johns Hopkins Univ. Div. of Education, School of Continuing Studies, Baltimore, MD (1999 – 2000)
Adjunct Instructor (Part-time)

- Planned, implemented, and monitored graduate level education courses in Collaborative Research and Inquiry Using Technology, and Integrating Technology into the Curriculum.

Harford County Community College, Bel Air, MD (1996 – 1998)

Adjunct Instructor (Part-time)

- Planned, implemented, and monitored English courses in English Composition: 101, and English Literature: 200.

Harford County Public Schools, Bel Air, MD (1996 – 1998)

BLC Professional Development Leader

- Planned, implemented, and monitored instructional delivery at William Paca Elementary School for 1100 students.
- Executed instructional planning and school improvement plan.
- Developed and managed technology integration plan.
- Coordinated and directed project-based learning with technology integration.
- Secured grant for \$25,000 to support after-school program
- Served as grade-level chair for 5th grade team.

Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore, MD (1990 – 1996)

5th to 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher (1991- 1994) /Assistant Principal (1994-1996)

- Prepared daily lesson plans and instructed classes at Edgewood Elementary (560 students) and Lombard Middle School (975 students)
- Planned, implemented, and monitored Core Learning Goals.
- Chaired Technology Planning Committee.
- Created and established Teacher Training Program.
- Monitored all school-wide discipline.
- Created Peer Mentor program.

PUBLICATIONS

Monster Storms: Exploring Nature's Most Powerful Forces Science Curriculum, JASON Project, 2006
MarcoPolo Cadre Logistics Manual, Ashburn, VA, 2001
TeamTech Learning Teacher's Resource Guide, Johns Hopkins University, 1999
Maryland Public Television (MPT Instructional Video), Baltimore, MD, 1999

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

NSTA, Title: Bringing Real Scientists to the Classroom, April 2006, California
NECC, Title: Access High Quality Internet Content for the Classroom, July 2004, Seattle, WA
CEC: Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention, Title: Building an Inclusive Environment with Technology, March 2000, Vancouver, Canada
Johns Hopkins University TeamTech Learning Summer Institute Coordinator, July 1999, Columbia, MD
NECC, Title: Building an Electronic Learning Community, June 1999, Atlantic City, NJ
FETC, Title: JHU: TeachTech Learning System: Project-Based Learning and Technology Integration, March 1999, Orlando, FL

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

Chairperson: MCI Diversity Committee, 2004
Alpha Sigma Nu Honor Society – Loyola College, 1995
Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Society, 1989

AWARDS

Fellowship Recipient of Loyola College Educational Leadership Program (*Financed Masters in Education*)
1993 Teacher of Year Nominee

REFERENCES

Professional and Personal References will be provided upon Request

EXPERIENCE

- March 2012 – Present **GESTALT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** Memphis, TN
Chief Financial Officer
- Drive the strategic financial planning process and assist in strategic decision making as a member of the senior leadership team. Ensure that financial milestones are being met.
 - Responsible for: creation and monitoring of budgets; financial analysis, timely and accurate financial reporting, and forecasting; creation of financial systems and controls; managing procurement and contracting processes; cash flow management; oversight of accounting functions and audit process.
- Jan 2010 – Feb 2012 **BUILDING WEALTH & COMMUNITIES CONSULTING** Memphis, TN
Financial Advisor/Consultant
- Served as financial advisor to colleges/universities, other not-for-profits, developers, municipalities, and small to mid-size businesses with a focus on: project feasibility and enterprise assessment; identifying, securing and structuring financing; and community economic development strategies.
- Feb 2007- **NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service** New York, NY Dec 2008
Director, Financial Management and Human Resources
- Served as chief fiscal officer managing \$20 mn operating budget, \$4 mn in grants and \$25 mn in annual endowment income. Prepared annual budget and reports and performed strategic financial modeling.
 - Served as chief human resources officer for full-time faculty and staff of 75 and part-time staff of over 200. Managed compensation, performance communication, hiring and employee relations negotiations.
 - Responsible for pre- and post-award management of over 200 gifts and grants.
- Feb 2005- Jan 2007 **PRAGER, SEALY & CO., LLC** New York, NY
Vice President, Higher Education Advisory Practice and Investment Banking
- Served as financial advisor to higher education clients (including Brown, Furman, Rutgers, and University of Vermont) in strategic debt management with responsibilities including: facilitating and managing the debt issuance process, managing rating agency relationships, and advising on bond and derivative transactions.
 - Performed financial analysis and managed deal structuring for higher education and not-for-profit clients.
- Aug 2000- Feb 2005 **GOLDMAN, SACHS & CO.** New York, NY
Vice President, Municipal Finance
- Executed over \$2.0 bn in tax-exempt bond issues for higher ed, not-for-profit and public sector clients.
 - New business responsibilities included: identifying and/or managing new higher ed clients, marketing tax-exempt debt products and derivatives, credit analysis, identifying financing ideas, developing and/or presenting oral and written financing presentations and proposals.
 - Transaction responsibilities included: performing financial analysis and modeling bond deal structures, deal document input and review, and coordinating pricing/underwriting process.
- Aug 1997- Aug 1998 **UPPER MANHATTAN EMPOWERMENT ZONE** New York, NY
Investment Associate
- Evaluated and solicited investment opportunities for a \$300 mn community development investment fund.
- Aug 1995- July 1997 **BAIN & COMPANY** Boston, MA
Associate Consultant
- Performed modeling and analysis on various strategic consulting projects for Fortune 500 companies.

EDUCATION

- 1998-2000 **NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, Kellogg Graduate School of Management** Evanston, IL
Master of Business Administration, June 2000.
- Concentration in finance, entrepreneurship, and public/non-profit management
 - Selected as a 1998 Goldman Sachs Fellow, BMA Annual Conference Co-Chair, Public/Non-Profit Management Club Co-Chair, Admissions Committee Member
- 1991-1995 **HOWARD UNIVERSITY** Washington, DC
Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in finance, *magna cum laude*, May 1995.
- National Merit Scholar, Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society, Golden Key National Honor Society

COMMUNITY Gestalt Community Schools, Board Member. River City Capital Investment Corp., Board Member.

Reginald Manning

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Accomplished professional with 7 years of leadership experiences and a keen understanding of business and organizational needs. Poised in the principles of product development, finance and management. Effectively grew revenue and market share for product lines in unfavorable market conditions through the strategic implementation of business solutions. Highly seasoned interpersonal and strategic background in non-profit, financial and transportation services lends to indispensable creativity and thought leadership in dynamic market conditions. Experienced and effective communicator and cross-functional leader committed to leveraging strengths, building consensus and inspiring possibilities.

CRITICAL CORE COMPETENCIES

Product Development	Business Management	Strategic Development
Global Product Launch	Market Research	Business Forecasting
Project Management	Data Analysis	Operational Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE & RESULTS

Chief Operating Officer, Charter School Management Gestalt Community Schools, Memphis, TN

August 2011- Present

Provides leadership and execution of financial planning, forecasting and operational systems for development of a charter school network. Strategically support the organizational development, overall data management and business model.

- Provide oversight of IT leadership in driving network and instruction design to establish centralized network solutions
- Management of HR, benefits, payroll and processing functions to support schools staff and personnel
- Develop financial models to support real estate development and overall cash budgeting systems for school network

Portfolio Product Manager, FedEx Express Freight FedEx Services Domestic Product Marketing, Memphis, TN

August 2009 - July 2011

Directly managed the Two & Three Day Express Freight products of \$790 million portfolio, to ensure market leadership, profitability, and product communications for the overall brand. Project managed cross-functional & international product team, through new product development phases to global market launch.

- Managed product content, placement and promotion to drive awareness and positioning of campaign development
- Delivered service enhancements for product line that contributed \$2.8 million incremental revenue over seven months
- Executed monthly financial analysis of products and communicated to senior executives to drive strategic operating decisions
- Led core team with over 25 cross functional members from six departments to launch new services in market

Significant contributions

- Evaluated and recommended revenue management strategy to Sr. officers to increase profitability by \$3 million
- Directed & communicated operational enhancements that increased revenue by 24% in 1 quarter
- Drove tactics that grew annual revenues by \$32 million with 7% less volume than previous year
- Managed and launched new products and service enhancements that enabled capabilities for 72 countries with \$140 million revenue impact

Product Manager, FedEx Commercial Ground FedEx Services Domestic Product Marketing, Memphis, TN

February 2008 - July 2009

Managed product performance, communications and service enhancements of a \$2 billion business unit. Implemented competitive strategies that influenced market share growth during a distressed economic period. Responsibilities included but not limited to:

- Produced product scorecard used to evaluate and communicate overall financial performance
- Developed strategies and marketing communications plans for sales implementation in competitive markets
- Evaluated primary research and provided recommendation to Sr. management

- Examined competitor's strategic positioning of services and provided internal communications to influence strategy
- Regularly provided verbal and written updates on product enhancements to executive management

Significant contributions

- Coordinated analysis that resulted in an \$18 million cost saving recommendation to Sr. revenue committee
- Championed launch of national service "superiority claim" positioned data driven selling tool to increase market share
 - Claim positioned and communicated via national periodicals, fedex.com, direct mail and electronic channels.

Sr. Marketing Analyst, Concept Innovation

June 2006 - January 2008

FedEx Services New Product Development, Memphis, TN

Facilitated the Voice-of-the-Customer process used to coach global project teams to identify, aggregate, and translate customer insights into new products and services. Key corporate methodology approved to build business solutions with the inclusion of customer needs.

- Led and consulted over 20 cross-functional teams through concept evaluation and business justification for corporate initiatives
- Conducted one-on-one customer interviews and innovated techniques to capture customer needs to drive business solutions
- Influenced concept teams and drove feature validation through quality function deployment (QFD) to prioritize service design

Significant contributions

- Created and administered international Voice of the Customer training workshop to Canadian counterparts for regional implementation
- Guest business practitioner of "qualitative customer insights" for University of Memphis Innovation Management and New Product Development Program 2007

Assistant Branch Manager, Retail Banking

July 2003– August 2004

SunTrust Bank, Durham, NC

Managed daily branch operations, audits and employees in financial retail location. Responsible for promoting in-store marketing programs, driving overall deposit growth and increasing customer loyalty.

- Coached employees to increase customer penetration through product knowledge and identification of customer needs
- Increased sales to new customers by 68% through proactive marketing strategies and cross-selling
- Earned Top 3 ranking in Regional In-Store Branch sales for 3 consecutive quarters

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Founding Board Member, Charter School Board

January 2008 – Present

Power Center Academy Charter School, Memphis, TN

Founding board member of a team that cultivated an idea into the creation of a high performing middle school recognized by the Wallstreet Journal for its mission an impact on students and their community.

- Influenced strategy, communication and business structure of the school for cultural and educational development
- Managed the financial strategy and overall reporting of financial P & L of school operations to key stakeholders for a \$1.8 million budget
- Interviewed school leadership and managed performance and bonuses structure of administration

EDUCATION, TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

Clark Atlanta University - Atlanta, GA

Masters of Business Administration, May 2006

- City University of Hong Kong – Kowloon Hong Kong
Asia-Pacific Business 2006

University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, NC

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, May 2002

University of Memphis - Memphis, TN

Innovation Management & New Product Development Program, 2006

Product Development Management Association

New Product Development Professional, Certification, 2006

Sequent Learning Networks

Product Strategy and Planning, Training, 2010

Gestalt Community Schools

School Name	Year Opened	Address	City	State	Zip	Grades Served	Authorizing LEA
Power Center Academy Middle School	2008	6120 Winchester Road	Memphis	TN	38115	6,7,8	Independent Charter/Shelby County Schools
Power Center Academy High School	2011	5368 Mendenhall Mall Rd	Memphis	TN	38115	9,10,11, 12	Independent Charter/Shelby County Schools
Humes Preparatory Academy	2013*	659 North Manassas St.	Memphis	TN	38107	6,7,8	Independent Charter/Achievement School District
Klondike Preparatory Academy	2013*	1250 Vollintine Ave	Memphis	TN	38107	K-5	Independent Charter/Achievement School District

*Prior to 2013 these schools were operated by Memphis City Schools.



July 18, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing to express my support for Gestalt Community Schools' application to the U.S. Department of Education's Charter School Program – Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools initiative (CFDA 84.282M). As President and CEO of the Charter School Growth Fund and an investor in the highest-performing charter school networks in the nation, I fully support Gestalt's proposed expansion, which I believe will improve educational opportunities for children in Memphis, Tennessee.

The Charter School Growth Fund ("CSGF") is a non-profit philanthropic fund that invests in the nation's highest-performing charter school operators to dramatically expand their impact on underserved students. Founded in 2005 by national philanthropists to transform K-12 education, CSGF has invested in more than 40 charter school management organizations that represent some of the most innovative and successful public school networks in the United States.

After a rigorous evaluation of Gestalt's growth plan, CSGF made a multi-year commitment to Gestalt Community Schools in 2012. We've been close partners ever since. Gestalt's Power Center Academy Middle and High School, which serve predominately low-income minority students, rank among the top-performing charter schools in the state of Tennessee; students at both schools consistently outperform students statewide. In 2013, Gestalt partnered with the state-run Achievement School District to transform one of the lowest-performing middle schools in Tennessee. The network now operates two schools within the Achievement School District. Gestalt has maintained a high level of quality as it has scaled, and we fully support Gestalt's future growth and its application to the Department of Education.

Sincerely,

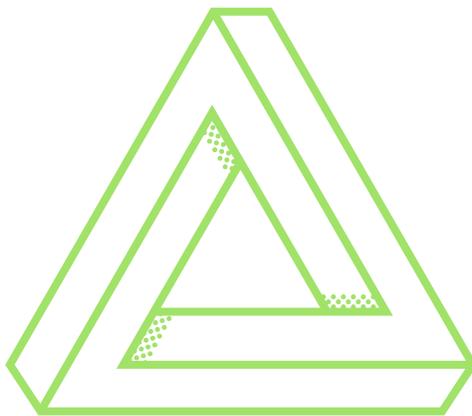


Kevin Hall
President and CEO
Charter School Growth Fund

**Gestalt Community Schools
Consolidated Network Financial Projections**

	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Enrollment	1,820	2,466	3,324	4,330	5,090
Schools	4	6	8	10	10
Income					
School Activities & Services	132,421	205,350	295,557	306,769	317,810
School Fundraising (includes Walton Startup Grants)	16,450	271,285	404,040	161,411	42,413
State of TN Education Funds	14,661,578	20,257,918	27,845,944	36,990,517	44,326,232
Federal Revenue (Title I, SIG, etc.)	1,361,241	1,145,801	1,005,623	1,317,005	1,537,167
CMO Management Fees	1,315,453	1,853,750	2,784,594	3,699,052	4,432,623
Philanthropic Funding & Grants*	3,505,000	1,500,000	1,250,000	1,000,000	-
Total Revenue	20,992,144	25,234,104	33,585,759	43,474,753	50,656,245
Expense					
School Employee Salaries					
School Employee Benefits	2,038,093	2,735,375	3,764,838	4,978,252	5,862,173
Contracted Services	4,255,211	5,471,559	7,857,104	11,052,119	12,884,394
Supplies & Materials	2,015,816	2,683,210	3,516,214	4,453,677	5,059,930
Other Charges (Insurance, PD, Etc.)	836,857	845,614	1,024,097	1,349,354	1,560,193
Capitalized Interest	24,480	31,090	37,711	44,466	45,355
Capital Outlay	639,866	564,944	935,578	1,177,425	761,294
CMO Salaries & Benefits					
CMO Other Expenses	1,139,275	1,077,110	1,134,613	1,166,168	1,213,314
Total -Expenses					
Net Income	622,454	621,607	735,771	792,030	2,124,873

* Includes CSGF, foundation funding including Hyde and Walton Foundations, i3 Grant and philanthropic funds to be raised.



A C H I E V E M E N T
S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2013-14

This edition of the Student Handbook supersedes and replaces all previous student handbooks and policies issued by the Achievement School District.

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WELCOME

We are excited about building the possible for our students in the Tennessee Achievement School District (ASD). People-powered, quality driven and ultimately busting barriers, our mission is to transform the educational paradigm in Tennessee by catapulting the lowest performing schools in the State to the same performance levels as top twenty five percent within five years. In doing so, we dramatically expand our students' life and career options, engage parent and community members in new and exciting ways, and ensure a bright future for the state of Tennessee. The ASD will do this by creating school cultures that support teachers, improve student outcomes, and sustain high levels of student achievement over time. We thank you for being a part of our team of committed students, parents, community members, and talented educators who are joining us on this critical mission in delivering an outstanding education to communities across the State .

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The Student Handbook is an important source of information for students, parents, charter partners and ASD employees. Many of the policies in this handbook are required by federal or state law. All of the policies are aligned with the ASD's mission and were created to help the ASD's students and their families successfully navigate the expectations and educational services of ASD schools. Students, parents, employees and charter partners may use this handbook as a reference for overall district policies, while learning about and relying on each school's individual Student Handbook for school-specific guidance on the implementation of district policies.

OUR SCHOOLS

The Achievement School District (ASD) directly manages some schools (Achievement Schools – ACH). The ACH schools follow the policies set forth in this handbook. The ASD has also authorized high-performing non-profit charter school operators or transformation partners to manage schools (e.g. LEAD Public Schools, Gestalt Community Schools, Aspire Public Schools). ASD public charter schools or schools operated by transformation partners independently define their expectations of students and the adults that support their success. In most cases, and unless otherwise stated in the charter or transformation agreement, charter schools may have their own policies that adhere to and/or are an extension of the district policies in this handbook.

ASD CULTURE

The ASD embraces a culture of support and a “Whatever it Takes” attitude. At the ASD, “Whatever it Takes” means working as hard as necessary to achieve the goal of college and career-readiness. This includes long hours, Saturday school, service, homework each night, and much more. Reaching for such high expectations is not easy for anyone. We work hard for each ASD school to be a family-oriented school with comprehensive and targeted student supports aimed at assuring students' success and well-being. ASD teachers, staff members, and school leaders are dedicated to championing students' success every year they attend our schools, and even afterward. The rules and policies that we enforce are often stricter than at other schools, but it is because we believe our students can and should be held to a higher standard. We are what we do every day, and excellence is a habit.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

APPLICATION, LOTTERY AND WAITLIST GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND:

The Achievement School District operates neighborhood schools with corresponding attendance area boundaries. The ASD guarantees enrollment to all attendance area students at either their assigned, neighborhood school or an equivalent placement. The ASD also guarantees the continued enrollment of non-attendance area students (e.g. transfers) who attended an ASD school prior to the transformation.

In the event of additional capacity, ASD schools can serve other eligible, but not 'guaranteed enrollment' groups of students. The following policy outlines the application, lottery, and waitlist processes that govern enrollment in the ASD

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT PRIORITY

Unlike open enrollment charter schools in Tennessee, ASD charter and Achievement Schools have limited student eligibility. ASD schools can enroll students in accordance with T.C.A. 49-13-106(a)(2):

"The achievement school district may authorize charter schools within the jurisdiction of the LEA for the purpose of providing opportunities for students within the LEA **who are zoned to attend or enrolled in a school that is eligible to be placed in the achievement school district**. For the purposes of this subdivision (a)(2), students shall not be considered "zoned" for a school that is open to all students within the LEA unless they are assigned to the school based on the LEA's geographic zoning policies."

The ASD has established and defined its own priority groups, listed below in order of enrollment preference:

PRIORITY GROUP	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
Attendance area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students with current, legal residence in an ASD school's attendance area	Guaranteed
Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Non attendance-area students who attended an ASD school prior to its transformation - including open enrollment and optional transfers	Guaranteed
Sibling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brothers and sisters of enrolled students (from any priority group)	Not guaranteed
Other ASD zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students with current, legal residence in <u>another</u> ASD school's attendance area	Not guaranteed
Other priority school zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students who <u>currently</u> attend a non-ASD Priority School or who have a current, legal residence in a non-ASD, Priority School attendance area	Not guaranteed

ENROLLMENT PROCESS:

The Achievement School District manages an annual common enrollment and school choice process called 'BestFit'. Each ASD school owns critical enrollment tasks, but district support team staff processes applications and assigns students to schools.

BEST FIT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
SCHOOL-SPECIFIC	DISTRICT-WIDE
Capacity decisions	Calendar/timeline
Student recruitment & outreach	Enrollment forms
Hiring & budget decisions	Application processing
Registration & orientation	Student assignment & notification
	Accountability & performance reporting

The Best Fit process exists to accomplish three major student assignment goals:

- 1.) Inform enrollment planning and key program decisions by accurately capturing the number of attendance area students who intend to enroll at their neighborhood school
- 2.) Support families interested in attending an ASD school other than their assigned ASD neighborhood school in exploring their options and applying for admission
- 3.) Process open enrollment (i.e. non-guaranteed) student applications in a transparent, fair, consistent, and efficient manner

The annual cycle of enrollment begins with conversations following the announcement of new ASD schools. Support team staff work with operators to analyze current enrollment, attendance area student population, and building capacity for each ASD school. The output of these discussions is a preliminary perspective on various enrollment scenarios and an estimated number of seats available for non-attendance area students.

The ASD publishes its application forms, releases a school choice guide, and invites operators to start recruiting students in late January. Operators are encouraged to reach out to families and ask them to complete the common enrollment form.

Families have the opportunity to indicate that they plan to return to/enroll for the first time in their neighborhood school. If a family would prefer to enroll in another ASD school, the form also allows them to rank their preferences among ASD schools. Families who are not zoned to any ASD school will also be invited to submit an enrollment form. Families who do not live in an ASD school attendance area will be strongly encouraged to rank more than one school preference in order to increase their odds of receiving an offer.

The Best Fit school choice process does not affect the ASD's neighborhood schools guarantee. First, attendance area students do not lose their seat if they do not submit a form or otherwise participate in the process. Second, school choice occurs in a risk-free way. An ASD attendance area student does not lose his/her seat in the neighborhood school by expressing a preference to attend another school unless he/she accepts an offer.

LOTTERY:

At the end of the student recruitment period, ASD support team staff will review the application management system and engage in additional enrollment planning conversations with operators. Operators must then decide the following:

- Anticipated school/program capacity by grade level
- The number of seats reserved for attendance area/continuity students (i.e. guaranteed enrollment)
- The number of seats, by grade level, available for open enrollment students (i.e. not guaranteed enrollment)
- The number of seats, by grade level, available for open enrollment students in the initial student assignment lottery

In order to be considered for the first student assignment lottery, an application must be received and entered into the application management system by 7PM on the submission date. Upon receipt of all enrollment forms, ASD support team staff will first remove any students with guaranteed enrollment at the school they have ranked as their first or only choice.

ASD support team staff will then run the online, electronic lottery process for the remaining students:

- 1.) The system sorts students, by grade level, into their associated priority groups (see page 1)
- 2.) After all students have been placed into a priority group, the system then randomizes the ranking of students within each group
- 3.) Students in a given grade level are then assessed, one by one, in order of their ranking
- 4.) For each student, if an opening exists in their first choice school, the student is assigned to that campus. If no opening exists, the system checks their second choice school, third choice school, and so forth
- 5.) Once the student is assigned to an opening at a school, their status changes from “applicant” to “offer made” in the application management system for that school
- 6.) The system then repeats the process for the next grade level. The system will automatically account for students with siblings selected earlier in the lottery process. Those students will then receive sibling priority in their grade level’s lottery

WAITLIST:

Openings may not exist for all students assessed during the lottery. If no opening exists, the student will automatically be waitlisted for all of his/her school choices. The order that a student is randomly processed in the lottery determines the order of that student on each school’s waitlist.

Because the same student could be placed on multiple schools’ waitlists, the process of admitting students from the waitlist will be managed centrally. If a school would like to offer a seat to a student on the wait-list, it should contact ASD support team staff to receive the highest ranking student’s contact information. Once the student’s information has been transferred to the school, he/she will be removed from other schools’ waitlists.

Waitlist policy differs slightly for students who live in an ASD school’s attendance area, but apply to attend another ASD school. In the event that an opening does not exist for the student at their preferred school, they will be placed on that school’s wait-list and assigned to their neighborhood ASD school. In order to prevent unnecessary intra-district enrollment variability, ASD students can remain on other ASD school’s wait-lists for the first two weeks of the school year. Following the first two weeks, those students will be removed from each school’s wait-list. Students who live in the attendance area of other Priority Zone schools not served by the ASD may remain on wait-lists indefinitely.

IMMUNIZATIONS

No students entering school, including those entering kindergarten or first grade, those from out-of-state and those from nonpublic schools, will be permitted to enroll (or attend) without proof of immunization, as determined by the Commissioner of Public Health.¹ It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school which the student is to attend.

Exceptions, in the absence of an epidemic or immediate threat thereof, will be granted to any child whose parent or guardian shall file with school authorities a signed, written statement that such measures conflict with his/her religious tenets and practices; or due to medical reasons if such child has a written statement from his/her doctor excusing him from such immunization.

Proof of exceptions will be in writing and filed in the same manner as other immunization records.

A list of transfer students shall be kept at each school throughout the school year in order that their records can be monitored by the Department of Health.

¹ T.C.A. 49-6-5001.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Public charter schools or schools operated by transformation partners in the ASD have their own expectations for students. In most cases, and unless otherwise specified in the charter or transformation agreement, their school policies will apply. However, the essential, TN-statute driven policies below are consistent across all schools in the ASD.

POLICY STATEMENT

Tennessee law requires that all children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) attend school.² Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present and on-time each day that school is in session. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring regular school attendance. Unexcused absences are prohibited by law and policy.

The Achievement School District will notify parents/guardians when students are absent, provide opportunities to restore the student's attendance and access to resources to address truancy challenges. Referral to Juvenile Court or to the District Attorney General will be the final option.³

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences for grades K-12 shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness or hospitalization of the student;
2. Illness or incapacitating condition of a family member that requires the temporary help of a student;
3. Death in the family;
4. Validated court appearances of the student;
5. Religious observances;⁴
6. One-day absence when the parent/guardian or custodian is deployed for military service and one-day absence when the parent/guardian or custodian returns from military service;⁵ or
7. Circumstances, which in the judgment of the principal, create emergencies over which the student has no control.

A student who does not receive prior approval from the teacher or principal/designee for an excused absence must submit documentation from a parent or guardian or other appropriate person describing the excused absence immediately upon the student's return to school, but, in any event, no later than three (3) school days after the absence was taken. If no documentation justifying the absence as excusable is submitted within the three-day period, the absence will become an unexcused absence.

APPEALS

Disputes over whether an absence is excused or unexcused shall be decided by the principal (or designee). After meeting with the parent/guardian, the principal will send the parent/guardian a letter confirming his or her decision and ensure that the student's attendance record is adjusted accordingly. The principal's decision can be appealed to the operator's designee, as specified in the principal's decision confirmation letter.

MAKE-UP WORK

The student is excused for the day or days of absences, not the material covered in his/her classes. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to request make-up work in all subject matter covered during his/her absence. All missed class work or tests (whether from excused or unexcused absence) may be made up provided the student makes the request immediately upon returning to school and provided class time is not taken from other students. Students who are absent the day of the scheduled state mandated tests will be allowed to take the required test in the allowed testing window.

² TCA 49-6-3001

³ TCA 49-6-3007

⁴ TCA 49-6-2904

⁵ TCA 49-6-3019

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal/designee shall be responsible for ensuring that:

1. Parents are notified of compulsory attendance laws, the school's attendance goals and expectations, and the consequences for noncompliance;
2. Parents and students are informed of the avenues to talk about attendance-related problems with persons at the school whom they trust when poor attendance and truancy are a result of another problem (e.g., family, social, economic);
3. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
4. All student absences are verified;
5. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness;
6. If necessary, verification is obtained from an official or other source to justify absences (e.g. letter from a doctor's office);
7. The school's student information system is updated daily with all students' attendance information to enable accurate district-wide reporting and monitoring of student attendance and interventions, when necessary; and
8. Unexcused Absence Procedures are implemented, including timely parent communications, attendance intervention support plan development and execution and operator/district notifications.

UNEXCUSED ABSENSE PROCEDURES

1. If a student is absent without an excuse, the school will implement school-based interventions to encourage regular school attendance. ASD operators may elect to implement varying interim parent communications and student interventions. At a minimum, the following attendance procedures shall be implemented upon the fifth (5th) unexcused absence:
 - a. Formal written communication from the school to parents/guardians informing them of their noncompliance with compulsory attendance laws, the consequences for failing to comply, and a request to participate in a school-level meeting to develop a plan to support the student's regular attendance. The plan shall be signed by the student, parent/guardian and principal and included in the student's file.
 - b. The student's truancy will be reported to the ASD and to the TN Department of Education via the school's weekly EIS transmission on student attendance, including the required transmission on student truancy that exceeds five unexcused absences.
 - c. All other forms of communications from the school to parents/guardians regarding student truancy may be conveyed in the form(s) that best meet student and school needs. Documentation of communication attempts and outcomes must be kept in the student's file, accessible by authorized district, state, community agency and law enforcement officials, upon request.
2. After a student has accumulated ten (10) or more unexcused absences, the Operator or in the case of Achievement Schools, the Principal Designee, will notify the Office of Portfolio Management (compliance@tnasd.org) using the electronic truancy form. All parts of the truancy form must be completed.
3. Within 48 hours of receiving notification from the Operator or Achievement School Principal Designee, a letter from the Office of Portfolio Management will be sent to the parents/guardians encouraging them to:
 - a. Partner with the school in implementing the student's attendance support plan and
 - b. Inform the parent/guardian that if the student has 15 or more days of unexcused absences, the Juvenile Court and/or District Attorney General's Office may be notified for appropriate legal action and the student will be dis-enrolled from school.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Any student who accumulates fifteen (15) or more days of unexcused absences within a school year may be referred to Juvenile Court and the District Attorney General's Office for appropriate legal action. However, every attempt shall be made to intervene to support students prior to referral to these agencies.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

GRADING SYSTEM

K-8

Each K-8 school in the Achievement School District has the autonomy to determine the appropriate grading system for that school. A school-wide reporting system is used and it specifies consistent grading and reporting throughout the entire school. Each school has also established a consistent procedure for determining the equivalency of a student's grades transferring from another LEA and/or ASD school. The schools' grading policies are public and accessible.

9-12

A uniform grading system is used by direct-managed and externally operated schools in the Achievement School District for all students enrolled in grades nine through twelve (9-12).⁶ Grades will be reported on progress reports, report cards, and transcripts as follows⁷:

- A. 93-100
- B. 85-92
- C. 75-84
- D. 70-74
- F. 69 - Below

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student shall be promoted to the next grade or course level upon demonstrating proficiency in the current grade or course level standards. The student's teacher and other school staff and leadership may participate in the decision to promote or retain a student. Special consideration for promotion and/or retention shall be given to students with special academic, social, and emotional needs. Social promotion is not a practice of the ASD.

Factors to be considered in the decision to promote or retain a student may include, but are not restricted to:

1. report card grades;
2. current knowledge and skill level, as determined by formal and informal assessments;
3. readiness to learn the knowledge and skills required at the next grade or course level;
4. record of previous intervention;
5. number of absences;
6. previous retention;
7. student conduct that may impact academic performance;
8. extenuating circumstances that may have adversely affected the student's participation in either the required instruction and/or assessments; and
9. expected benefits and risks of promotion or retention for the student.

⁶ TCA 49-6-407

⁷ The ASD will use the same grading scale as Memphis City and Shelby County schools to facilitate efficient student transfers. Upon completion of the merger, the ASD will also adopt the grading system of the new unified school district.

Students experiencing challenges meeting grade level expectations will be identified early in the school year. An intervention plan will be developed and implemented in consultation with the parent or guardian. A student's parent or guardian will be involved in any discussion about potential retention well in advance of a decision being made.

If a student is retained, s/he will continue in the same grade level or content area for another term or school year. The student who is retained will also receive an individual learning plan specifying the intervention(s) and support(s) necessary to meet grade level or content area standards.

APPEALS

The parent or guardian has the right to appeal the school's decision to promote or retain a student. If a parent or guardian of a student attending an Achievement School is not satisfied with the school-level decision pertaining to a retention or promotion, the parent may contact the ASD's Achievement Schools Head of Schools. If a parent or guardian of a student attending a charter school is not satisfied with the school-level decision pertaining to retention or promotion, the parent may direct concerns to the appropriate person or department identified in the charter school's internal grievance policy.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

High School students have the opportunity to earn high school credit and college credit simultaneously in certain courses. Students should see the school counselor for more information concerning dual enrollment courses.

TESTING PROGRAMS

Each school and/or external operator shall provide for a school-wide testing program which shall be periodically reviewed and evaluated by the Office of Performance and Practice. State-mandated student testing programs shall be undertaken in accordance with procedures published by the Tennessee Department of Education. Any test directly concerned with measuring student ability or achievement through individual or group psychological or sociometric tests shall not be administered by or with the knowledge of any employee of the system without first obtaining written consent of the parents or guardians.

Other tests may be administered as necessary as determined and approved by the school or as requested by students, teachers or parents when approved by the principal. Results of all group tests shall be recorded on the student's permanent record and shall be made available to parents and appropriate personnel in accordance with established procedures

AP Testing

AP exams will be administered on the school campus. If, for any reason, AP exams cannot be administered at the home school site, students will be provided the opportunity to participate in AP exams at another location. For additional information, please see your school counselor.

WORLD LANGUAGES

A student who passes the 8th grade World Language course with an average equivalent to a grade of "B" or better, in addition to earning a passing score on the exit examination, will earn 1.0 unit of high school World Language credit. The student will also be eligible for placement in year two of the World Language the following school year.

REQUIRED ASD ASSESSMENTS

Students shall take a series of assessments as outlined in the table below. These assessments provide educators with diagnostic information to assist in developing interventions for the purpose of increasing high school graduation rates and improving student preparation for postsecondary success. The results of such assessments shall be analyzed, reported, and discussed to determine next steps to facilitate student learning.

Assessment	Grades	Dates	Purpose for Administering	Resources
TCAP/MAAS/ ALT Portfolio	3 – 8	Apr 23-26	TDOE Requirement: summative assessment of student achievement on grade-level TN learning standards.	http://www.tn.gov/education/assessment/achievement.shtml
Constructed Response Mathematics	3 – 8	Oct 21-25 Feb 11-22 Apr 29-May 17	TDOE Requirement: Phase 1 & 2 and summative (3 rd administration) to gauge student readiness related to Common Core State Standards for mathematics as the state transitions. Phase 1 & 2 are teacher-scored.	http://www.tn.gov/education/assessment/ConstructedResponseAssessment.shtml
TCAP Writing Assessment (& 2012-2013 Pilot)	5, 8 and 11	Feb 4-8, Req'd (Pilot dates are flexible)	TDOE Requirement (& Pilot): Grade-specific assessment of students' essay writing skills. 5 th grade: narrative essay (a story); 8 th grade: expository essay (an explanation); 11 th grade: persuasive essay (an argument) for 2012-2013 requirement. Pilot administration for practice.	http://www.tn.gov/education/assessment/writing.shtml
ACT EXPLORE	8 th grade	Sept 17-Nov 9	TDE Opportunity: 1 st of 2 (2 nd is PLAN for 10 th graders) opportunities to gauge readiness and predict performance on ACT. Tests English, mathematics, reading & science.	http://www.act.org/expl/orestudent/tests/index.html
NWEA MAP (All ASD schools)	K – 10	Sept 10-14 Jan 14-18 May 6-10	ASD Requirement: three times per year formative, norm-referenced assessment of student growth in mathematics, reading, language (grade 2+) and science (grade 2+) from the beginning of the school year to the end. The online assessment is not grade-level specific, allowing for authentic assessment of student growth in mastery of TN learning standards (grades 3+) or common core standards (science & K-2).	http://www.nwea.org/support https://tnasd-admin.mapnwea.org
Achievement Network (ANet, Achievement Schools Only)	2 – 8	Sept 24-26 Nov 14-16 Feb 6-8 Mar 20-22	Four times per year, criterion referenced, formative assessment of student mastery of TN Mathematics and RLA standards taught in the previous instructional period (i.e., 6-9 weeks) in order to inform instructional decisions.	http://www.achievementnetwork.org/ https://my.achievementnetwork.org

TCAP ACHIEVEMENT PERCENTAGE OF FINAL STUDENT GRADE

Student scores on the TCAP tests will comprise **15%** of the student's final grade for the spring semester in the subject areas of mathematics, reading/language arts, science, and social studies.⁸

LOCAL TEST SECURITY

Secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, are not to be reproduced in any manner. School personnel and proctors are not to disclose the contents of secure tests with each other or with students. In addition, excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides. Access to the test shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need. Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to testing materials for personal gain.

Secure tests shall not be filed, copied, or used directly in instructional activities. Copying, reproducing, or paraphrasing test materials represent a breach of test security.

⁸ TCA 49-1-617

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In alignment with the State's graduation requirements, students must complete a minimum of 22 credits to graduate from any school in the Achievement School District. A school may require students to complete additional coursework that aligns with the school's curriculum and/or specify how the student must fulfill the electives requirement.

English – 4 credits

Mathematics: 4 credits – including Algebra I & II, Geometry, and a fourth higher level math

Social Studies – 3 credits

Science – 3 credits (Including Biology, Chemistry or Physics, and a third lab course)

World Language – 2 credits

Physical Education & Wellness – 1.5 credits

Personal Finance – 0.5 credits

Fine Arts – 1 credit

Electives – 3 credits (Math and Science, Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, Humanities, Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB))

Graduating with Distinction – A student attending an ASD school will graduate with distinction by maintaining a “B” or better average and meeting two of the following criteria:

1. Successful completion of a 3rd year of any World Language,
2. Successful completion of a 4th year of science,
3. Score at or above the readiness benchmarks on the ACT or SAT, or
4. National Merit finalist or semi-finalist
5. A composite score of 31 or higher on the ACT
6. A score of 3 or higher on two AP exams
7. 12 or more hours of transcribed post-secondary credit

STUDENT INFORMATION GUIDELINES

FERPA AND TENNESSEE LAW

WHAT IS FERPA?

FERPA stands for the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act – administered by the US Department of Education. FERPA guarantees certain rights to families with respect to their children’s education records. Tennessee’s laws regarding open records, contained in T.C.A. § 10-7-504, further refine the requirements for handling student records and information.

What are education records?

Education records include anything that contains information directly tied to a student (i.e. personally identifiable) and is maintained by a school or education organization. These records span formats and include both print and electronic information.

The law distinguishes between “education records” and directory information.

What is directory information?

Directory information includes things that would generally not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, such as name, address, photograph, and age. Directory information may not include things such as a student’s social security number or grades. Schools are required to notify parents of what information they designate as directory information. Please reference the attached sample notification for the ASD’s suggested definition of directory information.

If appropriately designated, directory information can be disclosed to anyone. However, parents must have the right to ‘opt out’ of having their child’s information released. Tennessee law does not allow for schools to identify student achievement as directory information. Therefore, schools cannot post honor roll or other academic information without consent.

WHAT ARE MY REQUIREMENTS AS AN ASD SCHOOL?

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION

Under FERPA, a school must annually notify parents of their rights. The annual notification must include information regarding a parent's right to inspect and review his or her child's education records, the right to seek to amend the records, the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information from the records (except in certain circumstances), and the right to file a complaint with the DoE regarding an alleged failure by a school to comply with FERPA.

FERPA exempts disclosure of records to school officials with a legitimate educational interest from parental consent. Therefore, the school must also notify parents of its definitions of the terms "school official", and "legitimate educational interest." The annual notification may be published by various means, including any of the following: in a student handbook, at annual registration, in a letter/notice to parents, or on the school's website. Additionally, the ASD recommends schools include their directory information notice as part of the annual notice of FERPA rights.

PARENT ACCESS

Under FERPA, a school must provide a parent with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her child's education records within 45 days following the receipt of a written request. A school is required to provide a parent with copies of education records, or make other arrangements if necessary (e.g. The parent cannot travel to the school to view the record.)

Under FERPA, a school is not required to provide information that is not routinely maintained or to create new education records in response to a parent's request. Accordingly, a school is not required to provide a parent with special updates on his or her child's progress in school unless such information already exists in an education record.

AMENDMENT

Under FERPA, a parent has the right to request that inaccurate or misleading information in his or her child's education records be amended. While a school is not required to amend education records, it must consider all requests. If the school decides not to amend a record in accordance with a parent's request, the school must inform the parent of his or her right to a hearing on the matter. If, as a result of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth his or her views. That statement must remain with the contested part of the student's record for as long as the record is maintained.

The FERPA amendment procedure exists to challenge facts that are inaccurately recorded. It may not be used to challenge a grade, an opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about a student. FERPA was intended to require that schools keep fair records, not to override the standards and procedures for making academic assessments, disciplinary rulings, or placement determinations.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Under FERPA, a school cannot disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records unless the student's parent has provided written consent. However, there are a few important exceptions to that rule:

1. FERPA allows "school officials," including teachers, within a school to access personally identifiable information contained in education records provided the school has determined that they have "legitimate educational interest" in the information. School officials can include: teachers, administrators, support staff, nurse/health staff, etc. As mentioned previously, a school must define both "school officials" and what it deems "legitimate educational interest" in its annual notification to parents. A school official generally has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities.
2. Another exception permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent, to another school or district in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. The sending school may make the disclosure if it has included a statement that it forwards education records in such circumstances in its annual notification of FERPA rights.
3. For students who are in state custody (including foster care), the Tennessee Department of Children's Services may access a student's educational records without parental consent, and school districts are not required to notify the parents of the child before releasing the information pursuant to a court order.

The need to maintain confidentiality implies that records should be stored in a safe and secure location. Student records are kept in a locked file cabinet or another location with equivalent security.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

1. Consult the following resources:
 - a. <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/parents.html>
 - b. http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/sealea_overview.pdf
2. Contact your child's school (see Appendix).

Complaint: Families have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Achievement School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Directory Information: The Achievement School District may disclose "directory" information unless the parent/eligible student annually objects to such disclosure in writing to the Superintendent within two weeks of enrollment. Directory information includes: Name, address, phone number, date of birth, grade level, gender, participation in officially recognized activities, weight and height of athletes, dates of attendance and photographs.

Medical Information: The District may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

SURVEYS OF STUDENTS

Surveys for research purposes shall be allowed by the ASD when the project is viewed as contributory to greater understanding of the teaching-learning process, the project does not violate the goals of the ASD and the disruption of the regular school program is minimal. The Office of Performance and Practice shall develop administrative procedures for approving requests for conducting surveys by agencies, organizations or individuals. The requests shall outline what is to be done, who is to be involved and how the results will be used and distributed.

Parents shall have the right to inspect all instructional material that will be used for a survey, analysis or evaluation as part of a federal program. No student may, without parental consent, take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information covering:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally privileged relationships;
7. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent; and
8. Income.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Each school will provide and/or provide for special services that may be required to facilitate equitable access and participation of students based on varying factors such as being an English Language Learner (ELL), a homeless or migrant, special education or gifted services; students' achievement level on State assessment; or attending a Title I school. Students and parents/guardians have the right to request teachers' and other paraprofessionals' qualifications.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English Language Learners (ELL) are non-English language background students whose level of oral, reading, and written proficiency in English does not allow them to fully benefit from the curriculum and creates difficulty in regular classroom curriculum without specially designed modifications. ELL students have not yet met the definition of fluent English proficient (FEP). If the inability to understand, speak, read, or write the English language excludes a student from effective participation in the educational programs offered by the school, the school shall take appropriate action to rectify the English language deficiency in order to provide the student equal access and participation in its programs. The school shall develop and periodically update a local plan for providing ESL services for students whose native or dominant language is not English. The plan for implementation of appropriate instruction and ESL services for students who have limited English proficiency shall be in accordance with the current Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards of the State Board of Education, and state, and federal law.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The ASD is the local education agency (LEA) for all students with special needs (students with disabilities and gifted students) geographically zoned to attend schools operated by the ASD. Schools offer a full continuum of placement and service options to meet the needs of all students. Unless otherwise required by a student's individualized education plan (IEP), all students with disabilities/gifted students may attend the same zoned school as her/his nondisabled/non-gifted peers, as the vast majority of special education needs can be met in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) at any ASD school. Each school shall provide access to a free appropriate public education to all disabled children ages 3-21, inclusive, residing within the jurisdiction of the school system.

The plan for implementation of appropriate instruction and special education services shall be in accordance with the current *Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards* of the State Board of Education⁹, and State¹⁰, and federal¹¹ law. Administrators, principals and teachers are responsible for providing an Individual Education Program (IEP) for each disabled student and for adhering to all components of this policy. Parents are responsible for becoming knowledgeable of their rights and participating in the IEP process.

HOMELESS AND MIGRANT STUDENTS

Educational services will be provided for homeless or migrant students in accordance with local, state and federal guidelines (NCLB). A homeless child (defined in NCLB) lacks fixed, regular and adequate residence or has a primary residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations, a public or private place not designated for use as regular sleeping accommodations for humans.

⁹ TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.09(3)(b)

¹⁰ TCA 49-10-101

¹¹ Education of Individuals with Disabilities 20, 1400-1485. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (Note: 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has been interpreted by the courts to include individuals with contagious diseases to be disabled.)

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

No student will be denied an education solely because of a communicable disease, and his/her educational program shall be restricted only to the extent necessary to minimize the risk of transmitting the disease.¹²

Parents or guardians of infected students shall inform appropriate school officials of the infection so that proper precautions for the protection of other students, employees, and the infected student shall be taken.

No student with a communicable disease which may endanger the health of either himself/herself or other individuals will enter or remain in the regular school setting. If a school principal has reason to believe a student has a communicable disease which may endanger the health of either himself/herself or other individuals in the regular school setting, the principal shall:

1. Assign the student to a setting which will protect other students, employees and the student himself; or
2. Exclude the student from school until certification is obtained from a physician or the County Health Department by either the parent or principal stating that the disease is no longer communicable.
3. If the superintendent/designee has reason to believe that the student has a long-term communicable disease, the principal must require confirmation from a physician or the County Health Department as to the student's condition. If the student is confirmed to have a long-term communicable disease the principal shall refer the student for special education services.

The superintendent/designee may request that further examinations be conducted by a physician or County Health Department and may request periodic re-examinations after the student has been readmitted to the school.

Expenses incurred from examinations requested by school officials shall be paid by the ASD.

The names of all students excluded from school under this policy will be forwarded to the office of the superintendent.

¹² T.C.A. 49-2-203; Rule 0520-01-03-.08.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Public charter schools or schools operated by transformation partners in the ASD have their own expectations for students. In most cases, and unless otherwise specified in the charter or transformation agreement, their school policies will apply. However, in those cases in which a student is expelled from a charter school or a school operated by a transformation partner, the expulsion procedure outlined below will apply.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Each student is expected to behave in a manner that exemplifies dedication, discipline, desire, honesty, loyalty and respect. Students will be held responsible and accountable for behavior that conveys these principles. Proper behavior is expected at all school-sponsored activities both during and after the regular school day. The ASD believes it is the role of educators to teach students proper behavior and to work with students who make poor decisions so they can become equipped to be college and career-ready adults. Students who consistently or repeatedly fail to uphold the ASD standards of conduct and behavior, however, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

For this policy, "suspension" means the removal of a student from the student's regular school program for up to ten (10) school days. This suspension may be in or out of school. "Expulsion" means removed from the student's regular school or removed from school attendance all together for 11 or more days.

SERIOUS INFRACTIONS OF THE ASD STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

In order to assure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, violence, and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors may be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year.

1. Bringing a drug, drug paraphernalia, or a dangerous weapon onto a school bus, onto school property or to any school event or activity; or
2. While on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity:
 - a. Being under the influence of a drug; or
 - b. Possessing a drug, drug paraphernalia or dangerous weapon; or
 - c. Assaulting or threatening to assault a teacher, student or other person.

Expelled means removed from the student's regular school or removed from school attendance all together. Nothing in this code shall be constructed to prohibit the assignment of expelled students to an alternative school. The ASD Superintendent may modify this expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

The following behaviors are also considered serious infractions and may lead to immediate suspension and/or expulsion.

1. Violence or threatened violence against the person or property of any personnel or any student attending or assigned to any school;
2. Possession of a pistol, gun or firearm on school property;
3. Possession of a knife or other weapons, etc., as defined in TCA 39-6-170, on school property;
4. Willful or malicious damage to the theft of real or personal property of the school or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school;
5. Unlawful use or possession of barbitol or legend drugs as defined in TCA 53-10-101;
6. Unlawful use or possession of alcohol;
7. The sale or distribution of drugs and alcohol;
8. Assault or battery on school employees; (*this includes physical and explicit verbal assault*)
9. Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school or truancy (*with prior unsuccessful interventions*)

SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSION AS CONSEQUENCES FOR SERIOUS AND/OR PERSISTENT MISBEHAVIORS

A student may be suspended and/or expelled for serious infractions. Misbehaviors in violation of the Student Code of Conduct not otherwise constituting an expellable offense may become a serious infraction subject to expulsion and/or suspension when the misbehavior is so persistent that, in cumulative effect, it is significantly disruptive of the educational process. The decision to expel shall be based on an assessment of the facts and circumstances of each case. Relevant factors, without prioritization, include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the misconduct, the student's age, grade level, history of prior misconduct, health and safety issues, and disruptive effects upon the educational process.

SUSPENSION PROCESS

In addition to the above list of serious violations, the Principal or designee has the authority to suspend a student for a period of up to five (5) school days to further investigate an incident or because of an emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety of students or staff.

A. PREREQUISITES TO SUSPENSION

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or designee must hold an informal conference with the student to:

1. Notify the student of the accusations against him/her;
2. Allow the student to relate his/her version of the incident; and
3. Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

B. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

If the Principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Principal or designee must notify the student's parents/guardians that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home on the day the suspension occurs. The Principal/School Director or designee will notify a suspended student's parents/guardians of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Principal/School Director.

C. CREDIT DURING SUSPENSION

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

EXPULSION PROCESS

This process applies to expulsions (removal from the regular program for more than ten (10) days) in all ASD schools, including charter and transformation schools. If any ASD school finds the most serious disciplinary consequence – expulsion from school – to be required for a student, it should follow the steps below before applying an expulsion.

A. PREREQUISITES FOR EXPULSION

Prior to expelling a student, the Principal or designee must hold an informal conference with the student to:

1. Notify the student of the accusations against him/her;
2. Allow the student to relate his/her version of the incident;
3. Give the student a short-term suspension; and
4. Notify the student that the case is pending review for expulsion.

If the Principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants expulsion, the person must send the case before the Hearing Panel.

B. HEARING PANEL

The Principal or designee will notify the Hearing Panel of the pending expulsion and the Hearing Panel reviews the case, including supporting documents and witnesses. The Hearing Panel makes a determination to apply an expulsion or recommend a different response.

Immediately following the hearing on expulsion, the Hearing Panel will notify the student and the student's parents/guardians in writing of the decision. The decision shall specify:

1. The length of the expulsion, if any;
2. OR the recommendation of a different response, if necessary;
3. Assignment to an alternative school, if applicable;
4. When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
5. The right to appeal the decision to the ASD Superintendent or designee.

C. NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The Principal or designee must immediately notify the student's parents/guardians about the Hearing Panel decision, the grounds for the decision, and if the expulsion is applied, the time and place for the student to report. If the expulsion is applied, the Principal or designee shall immediately give written or actual notice to the ASD Superintendent. If the expulsion is applied, the Principal or designee shall also immediately give written or actual notice to the parent or guardian and the student of the right to appeal the decision to expel. All appeals must be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) days after receipt of the notice and may be filed by the parent or guardian, the student or any person holding a teaching license who is employed by the ASD or an ASD authorized charter or transformation operator if requested by the student. The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter.

D. APPEAL TO A DISCIPLINARY HEARING AUTHORITY APPOINTED BY THE SUPERINTEDENT

Appeals of expulsions shall be heard by a disciplinary hearing authority, consisting of members appointed by the Superintendent. Each appeal shall be heard by a hearing authority with at least one licensed employee of the ASD or one of its authorized schools. The hearing shall be audio recorded.

1. The Superintendent or designee shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the parent or guardian, the student and the Principal or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall also notify the parties that:
 - The notice shall include the reasons for the expulsion and state the same student rights as provided for suspension hearings, above.
 - The hearing will be held within ten (10) days of the beginning of the expulsion.
 - The hearing authority may affirm the decision of the Hearing Panel, or order removal of the expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable.

E. DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY HEARING AUTHORITY

Immediately following the appeal hearing, the hearing authority will notify the student and the student's parents/guardians in writing of his/her decision. The decision shall specify:

1. The length of the expulsion, if any;
2. Assignment to an alternative school, if applicable;
3. When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
4. The right to appeal the decision to the ASD Superintendent or designee.

E. APPEAL TO THE ASD SUPERINTENDENT OR DESIGNEE

The student or his/her parents/guardians may appeal the Disciplinary Hearing Authority's decision. The appeal process is as follows:

1. Parents will meet with the Superintendent's designee (within 48 hours of decision)
2. If the meeting with the Superintendent's designee fails to resolve the situation the parents can request a hearing with the ASD Superintendent by notifying him in writing within seven (7) calendar days of the date of receipt of the decision by the Disciplinary Hearing Authority.
3. The ASD Superintendent will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Authority at a specially called meeting.
4. The ASD Superintendent or designee will notify the student and his/her parents/guardians of his/her decision, in writing, within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

No employee of the ASD shall engage in corporal punishment, condone its use, or seek permission from another (including a parent) to administer it. Some examples of corporal punishment include, but are not limited to:

- Shoving, striking, grabbing, shaking or hitting a student
- Throwing objects at a student
- Unreasonable restraint of a student
- Directing others to engage in any of the activities listed above

There may be times when an ASD employee may need to use physical contact with a student. This should only be done for reasons of self-defense or defense of another. Any action done for these reasons must be:

- Proportional to the student's conduct; and
- The most restrained means available to control the situation

Resorting to physical contact to protect oneself or another and/or regain/maintain order must be a last resort after all other reasonable means have been exhausted. Restraint and/or isolation of special education students are governed by relevant TN state law. Each situation will be reviewed by the ASD.

SAFE RELOCATION OF STUDENTS

Employees who are directly responsible for a student's education or who otherwise interact within the scope of their assigned duties may relocate a student from the student's present location to another location when such relocation is necessary for the student's safety or the safety of others, or intervene in a physical altercation between two (2) or more students to end the altercation by relocating the student. Such employees may use reasonable force to physically relocate the student or intervene in a conflict if the student is unwilling to cooperate with the employee's instructions.²

If an employee is unable to resolve the matter with the use of reasonable or justifiable force are required, the student shall be allowed to remain in place until such a time as local law enforcement officers or school resource officers can be summoned to relocate the student or take the student into custody until such a time as a parent or guardian can retrieve the student.

In the event that physical relocation becomes necessary, the teacher shall immediately file a brief report of the incident with the building principal. If the student's behavior constitutes a violation of the ASD's zero-tolerance policy, then the report shall be placed in the student's permanent record. Otherwise, the report shall be kept in the student's discipline record, and not become a part of that student's permanent record.

The superintendent/designee shall create procedures to implement this policy, consistent with State law. Each building administrator shall fully support the authority of the employees' authority under this policy, and fully implement the policy and procedures of the system.

STUDENT WELFARE

Student Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying or Cyber-Bullying

The Achievement School District supports and provides for an academic learning environment that is free from any type of harassment, bullying, intimidation, or cyber-bullying. Harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined by the State¹³, means any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation at any official school bus stop that it is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process.

Cyber-bullying means bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), computers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, and web sites.

This type of misconduct is prohibited and students who engage in any of the aforementioned are subject to disciplinary action. Student harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying that occurs off-campus is also subject to an appropriate course of action by the school.

Each school has a protocol for reporting and handling harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying. Students are provided with resources and training encouraging a positive learning environment and the appropriate resources should the student need to report any of these behaviors. It is the responsibility of all school personnel to report harassment, bullying, and/or cyber-bullying to the school principal. Upon the report of such misconduct, the principal will investigate the allegations and proceed with the appropriate course of action identified in the school's protocol.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

The ASD considers parent and community support and input vital to school accountability and success. ASD Achievement Schools and public charter/contract schools have their own internal parent and community grievance and escalation policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are available from the schools upon request. In most cases, and unless otherwise specified in the charter or transformation partner agreement, their school grievance policies will apply. However, the general policy and procedures for addressing parents' concerns or complaints about any ASD school in the district are provided below.

If parents or community members have a concern about any ASD school, they should follow the following policy to reach a satisfactory resolution: (see summary chart on page 4: ASD Parent and Community Grievance Resolution Process):

1. **CONTACT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP:** Parents and community members are encouraged to communicate any concerns or complaints that they have directly with school leadership in accordance with schools' individual grievance policies, as most concerns can only be resolved at the school level.
2. **CONTACT ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOLS OR CHARTER OPERATOR LEADERSHIP:** If the school leader does not satisfactorily resolve a parent's complaint, the school's grievance policy specifies at least one additional department or leader to whom grievances may be escalated within the organization that operates the school.

¹³ TCA 49-6-1016

- a. **ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOLS:** If a parent or guardian of a student attending an Achievement School is not satisfied with the outcome or school-level decision pertaining to a grievance, the parent may contact the ASD's Achievement Schools Head of Schools.
- b. **CHARTER SCHOOLS:** If a parent or guardian of a student attending an ASD charter school is not satisfied with the outcome or school-level decision pertaining to a grievance, the parent may direct concerns to the appropriate person or department identified in the operator's internal grievance policy.

3. **CONTACT THE CHARTER SCHOOL'S GOVERNING BODY:**

- a. **ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOLS:** The Achievement Schools do not have a Board of Directors. If a parent or guardian of a student attending an Achievement School is not satisfied with the Achievement Schools Head of Schools' decision pertaining to a grievance, the parent may contact the ASD's Office of Portfolio Management (Step 4).
- b. **CHARTER SCHOOLS:** Each charter school or charter management organization is governed by a board of directors and is subject to oversight by its authorizer, the ASD. ASD charter schools or charter management organizations may have specific policies for appealing school decisions to its board of directors. If a parent or guardian of a student attending an ASD charter school is not satisfied with a school-level or operator-level decision pertaining to a grievance, the parent or guardian may share concerns with the board of directors through such mechanisms. The board meets publicly on a regular basis. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the ASD charter school principal for further information.

The governing bodies of ASD-chartered schools are the legal entities with authority to make final decisions regarding:

- Staffing;
- Instruction and instructional support program;
- Use of time; and
- Student support services and discipline practices (with the exception of expulsion)

Thus, for most concerns, the ASD does not have authority to overturn the decisions of charter schools regarding student services and staff. If warranted, the sole actions that the ASD has the authority to take beyond informing and influencing a charter operator to resolve an inadequately addressed Tennessee statute-defined violation on its own are to: 1. slow or stop the expansion or replication of a school or 2. revoke the charter.

The statutes that govern Tennessee charter schools provide specific criteria for the ASD to consider revocation or renewal of a charter¹⁴ if the operator did any of the following:

- Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in the charter (including failure to adequately address parent concerns);
- Failed to meet or make adequate yearly progress toward achievement of the state's accountability system for two (2) consecutive years (past the first year of operation); or
- Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

4. **CONTACT THE ASD OFFICE OF PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT:** If a parent has a concern that a school has violated the law, applicable district policy, a charter contract or student safety responsibilities AND problem-solving efforts with school leadership and with either the Achievement Schools' Head of Schools or a charter school operator's designated grievance officer and board of directors fails to satisfactorily address a parent's concern, then the parent may appeal to the Achievement School District's Office of Portfolio Management for assistance resolving the issue. When warranted, the Office of Portfolio Management will engage the ASD's General Counsel and/or external authorities to investigate and/or address an issue. The decision documented by the Office of Portfolio Management shall represent the input and final decision of the ASD leadership team.

¹⁴ TCA 49-13-122

Where the issue involves a criminal violation of the law (e.g., a parent believes that his or her child has been physically abused by a school employee or another student), the parent should immediately contact the local police department and the TN Department of Children's Services (DCS). School and district personnel who suspect student abuse are required to notify DCS and the ASD Office of Portfolio Management, and shall immediately do so upon notification or substantiated suspicion that a student has been abused.

EMERGENCY OR WEATHER SHUTDOWN

In the event of severe weather conditions or other emergencies, the ASD may be closed. Each of the ASD schools follows the decision of the Superintendent or his designee regarding school closings. Parents/guardians should listen to the radio, watch local TV stations, or check the Achievement School District's website and expect to be contacted directly to know the Superintendent's or his designee's decision for the particular day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE ASD'S STUDENT HANDBOOK School Year 2012-13

Please read the following statements, sign below, and return to your child's school.

Understanding and Acknowledging Receipt of ASD's Student Handbook

I have received and read a copy of the ASD's Student Handbook. I understand that this Student Handbook supersedes all prior Student Handbooks, and that the policies and benefits described in the Student Handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the ASD at any time.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

Parent's or Guardian's Signature

Date

Parent's or Guardian's Printed Name

APPENDIX

PARENT AND COMMUNITY GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION FLOWCHART

1. Which type of problem am I having?

General Issues

- Disagreement with a teacher or another student
- Don't like a discipline decision, except expulsion or if the decision could involve special education

Enrollment Issues

- Confusion about enrollment
- Never received a school assignment
- I want to transfer my child to another school
- School said we should transfer or school said my child isn't a good fit

Special Ed Issues

- My child is not receiving the special education services required by his/her IEP
- I disagree with a decision made by the IEP Team

Critical Issues

- My child has been expelled, or other serious discipline issues
- My child is in danger and the school hasn't responded
- Any serious legal or safety issues that the school has not addressed

2. Who is responsible for working with me to find a solution?

These issues are the responsibility of the school. The ASD can't mandate decisions in these areas.

Most issues can be resolved by the school. The ASD's student enrollment office will ensure that all ASD-eligible students are granted enrollment in accordance with ASD policy.

These issues can be resolved by the school. The ASD's special education office can serve as a mediator and will ensure all required services are provided.

For these issues, the Portfolio Office will work with you until the issue is resolved.

3. What steps need to happen to address my problem?

- € **Today** you may contact the principal.
- € **Within 5 School Days** you should hear a response.
- € **After you've talked with the school** you may not be happy with the decision. The Principal can make many decisions for the school, and the ASD may not be able to change them.

FOR TRANSFERS

- € Please meet with your school to begin the transfer process.

FOR OTHER ISSUES

- € **Today** you may call or email the ASD's enrollment office at 901-352-0395 or enrollment@tnasd.org.
- € **Within 2 days** the enrollment office will let you know the next steps to resolve your issues.

- € **Today** you may contact the principal.
- € **Within 3 School Days** you should be invited to a school IEP Team meeting to discuss your child's needs. The school must give you a 10-day notice. You may choose to meet sooner. You may request that the ASD's Spec. Ed. Coordinator attend.
- € **Within 10 School Days** of the IEP Team meeting, any changes made to the IEP will be implemented unless otherwise determined by the IEP Team.

- € **Today** you may contact the ASD's Portfolio Office at compliance@tnasd.org or at 615-378-7528 to describe your concern and previous school/operator/school board requests for help.
- € **Within 2 School Days** the ASD will organize the people needed to get an answer and update you & the school re: next steps.
- € **Within 5 School Days** the ASD will let you know the plan to address your problem, if it's not already addressed.

4. What happens if my problem isn't resolved after I've done everything on the list?

If the school principal does not respond within 5 days or the response is unsatisfactory, you can reach out to: A. the operator's designated leader and if necessary, the Board, if it is a charter school or B. with the ASD's Head of Schools at [REDACTED] if it is an Achievement School.

To request an appeal of an expulsion, you may contact the instructional support office within 5 school days of the expulsion notification at [REDACTED].

Your child should continue to attend the assigned school, as applicable. If within 5 days, your student's enrollment issue is not resolved by the ASD's enrollment office, you may contact the ASD's portfolio compliance office at compliance@tnasd.org or at 615-378-7528 for review.

Please review the [Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#) for steps to take if you disagree with the IEP Team's decision. If your child's new IEP is not implemented within 10 days of the IEP Team meeting, please contact the ASD's special education office at [REDACTED]. The special education office will support the school's implementation of the IEP and will notify the ASD's portfolio compliance office for review.

You will always be able to reach your ASD Portfolio Office contact by email or cell phone. These issues may not be solved immediately, but your contact will make sure you know what's going on, and won't stop until we find an answer.

LIST OF ASD SCHOOLS

School Name and Address	Phone	School Leader
Brick Church College Prep 2835 Brick Church Pike Nashville, TN 37027	615-806-6317	Edon Katz
Cornerstone Prep – Lester 320 Carpenter Memphis, TN 38112	901-416-3640	Lisa Settles
Corning Achievement Elementary 1662 Dabbs Avenue Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3926	Jessica Jackson
Frayser 9 th Grade Academy 3389 Dawn Avenue Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3700	Russ Ramsey
Frayser Achievement Elementary 1602 Dellwood Avenue Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3840	James Dennis
Georgian Hills Achievement ES 3930 Leweir Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3750	Victoria Jackson
Grad Academy 1880 Prospect Memphis, TN 38106	901-206-8848	Mr. Keyundah Coleman
Hanley Elementary #1 680 Hanley Memphis, TN 38114	901-416-5958	Barbara Harris
Hanley Elementary #2 680 Hanley Memphis, TN 38114	901-416-5958	Nikita Reed
Humes Preparatory Academy-Lower 659 North Manassas Memphis, TN 38107	901-310-2999	Greg Rockhold
Humes Preparatory Academy-Upper 659 North Manassas Memphis, TN 38107	901-310-2999	Julia Callaway
KIPP Memphis Academy Elementary 2248 Shannon Avenue Memphis, TN 38109		
KIPP Memphis Preparatory Middle 2230 Corry Memphis, TN 38106	901-791-9793	Crystal Windless
Klondike Preparatory Academy 1250 Vollintine Memphis, TN 38107	901-310-1999	Robyn Liebenhaut
Westside Achievement Middle 3389 Dawn Avenue Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3700	Dirk Bedford
Whitney Achievement Elementary 1219 Whitney Avenue Memphis, TN 38127	901-416-3949	Debra Broughton

TENNESSEE PRIORITY SCHOOLS

(as of 08/2012)

- Bailey Middle School (Davidson)
- Brick Church Middle School (Davidson)
- Buena Vista Elementary Enhanced Option (Davidson)
- Gra-Mar Middle School (Davidson)
- Napier Elementary Enhancement Option (Davidson)
- Smithson-Craighead Middle School (Hamilton)
- Brainerd High School (Hamilton)
- Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy (Hamilton)
- Dalewood Middle School (Hamilton)
- Orchard Knob Elementary (Hamilton)
- Orchard Knob Middle (Hamilton)
- Woodmore Elementary (Hamilton)
- Whiteville Elementary (Hardeman)
- Sarah Moore Greene Elementary / Magnet (Knox)
- Airways Middle School (Memphis)
- Alcy Elementary (Memphis)
- American Way Middle (Memphis)
- Brookmeade Elementary (Memphis)
- Caldwell-Guthrie Elementary (Memphis)
- Carver High School (Memphis)
- Cherokee Elementary (Memphis)
- Chickasaw Junior High School (Memphis)
- Coleman Elementary (Memphis)
- Corning Elementary (Memphis)
- Corry Middle School (Memphis)
- Cypress Middle School (Memphis)
- Denver Elementary (Memphis)
- Douglass Elementary (Memphis)
- Fairley Elementary (Memphis)
- Fairley High School (Memphis)
- Fairview Jr High School (Memphis)
- Ford Road Elementary (Memphis)
- Frayser Elementary (Memphis)
- Frayser High School (Memphis)
- Geeter Middle School (Memphis)
- Georgia Ave Elementary (Memphis)
- Georgian Hills Elementary (Memphis)
- Grandview Heights Elementary School (Memphis)
- Graves Elementary (Memphis)
- Hamilton High School (Memphis)
- Hamilton Middle School (Memphis)
- Hanley Elementary (Memphis)
- Hawkins Mill Elementary (Memphis)
- Hickory Ridge Middle School (Memphis)
- Hillcrest High School (Memphis)
- Humes Middle School (Memphis)
- Kirby Middle School (Memphis)
- Klondike Elementary (Memphis)
- Lester Elementary School (Memphis)
- Lucie E. Campbell Elementary (Memphis)
- Magnolia Elementary (Memphis)
- Manassas High School (Memphis)
- Manor Lake Elementary (Memphis)
- MCS Prep School – Northeast (Memphis)
- MCS Prep School – Northwest (Memphis)
- MCS Prep School – Southeast (Memphis)
- MCS Prep School – Southwest (Memphis)
- Melrose High School (Memphis)
- Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering (Memphis)
- Memphis School of Excellence (Memphis)
- New Consortium of Law and Business (Memphis)
- Norris Elementary (Memphis)
- Oakhaven Middle (Memphis)
- Raleigh Egypt High School (Memphis)
- Raleigh Egypt Middle School (Memphis)
- Riverview Middle School (Memphis)
- Shannon Elementary (Memphis)
- Sheffield Elementary (Memphis)
- Sherwood Middle School (Memphis)
- South Park Elementary (Memphis)
- South Side Middle (Memphis)
- Spring Hill Elementary (Memphis)
- Treadwell Elementary (Memphis)
- Treadwell Middle School (Memphis)

- Trezevant High School (Memphis)
- Vance Middle School (Memphis)
- Westside Middle (Memphis)
- Westwood Elementary (Memphis)
- Westwood Middle/ High School (Memphis)
- Whitehaven Elementary (Memphis)
- Whites Chapel Elementary (Memphis)
- Whitney Elementary (Memphis)

Budget Narrative File(s)

* **Mandatory Budget Narrative Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

[Delete Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

[View Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

To add more Budget Narrative attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

[Add Optional Budget Narrative](#)

[Delete Optional Budget Narrative](#)

[View Optional Budget Narrative](#)

Gestalt Community Schools
2014 CSP Budget Narrative

Introduction

In 2012, Gestalt Community Schools (GCS) concluded a year-long business planning process culminating in a plan to grow from a charter school network of two high-performing charter schools to ten high-performing charter schools in approximately five years. The planning process was conducted in partnership with the Charter School Growth Fund (“CSGF”), a non-profit that invests philanthropic capital in the nation’s highest performing charter school operators in order for them to expand their impact on underserved students. The timing of school openings, management and staffing needs, professional development and budget requirements were considered in careful detail for each school. Plans and assumptions were challenged and tested at every stage of plan development by experts in the charter school field. GCS successfully secured a partial investment from CSGF to begin the growth plan. GCS developed milestones with CSGF to track progress of actual growth and performance. An annual review process with CSGF ensures GCS stays on target and on budget. GCS is focused on obtaining the funding needed to successfully launch new charter schools as these schools ramp up to full enrollment. The end financial goal for each GCS school is to reach financial sustainability on public per pupil dollars as quickly as possible.

Five-Year Budget Summary

GCS operating projections have been carefully modeled out over the next five years. The following budget narrative describes the proposed budget for the CSP grant based on GCS projections. The projections are based on the following CSP school opening schedule and projected enrollment. The total funding requested is \$6,585,196 over the five project years.

Enrollment Projections	Year 1: 2014-15	Year 2: 2015-16	Year 3: 2016-17	Year 4: 2017-18	Year 5: 2018-19
# Schools, Total	4	6	8	10	10
# Schools, New	0	2	2	2	0
# Schools, Expanded	2	0	2	4	6
Enrollment, Total	1,820	2,466	3,324	4,330	5,090
Enrollment, New Seats	0	510	450	450	0
Enrollment, Expansion Seats	213	0	288	511	724
Annual Funding Request	\$409,975	\$1,479,427	\$1,721,734	\$1,809,065	\$1,164,995

The following major categories and initiatives will be funded by the CSP grant over the five project years: 1.) Start Up Furniture and Equipment; 2.) Start Up Materials and Supplies; 3.) Curriculum Development; 4.) Technology Platform; 5.) Data Dashboard; 6.) Teacher Recruitment and Retention; 7.) GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy; and 8.) Grant Travel and Management.

Descriptions of the major categories and initiatives to be funded by the CSP grant are provided below, followed by an itemized budget breakdown, by project year, for each budget category.

Start Up Furniture and Equipment

In preparation for the opening of each GCS school, GCS will use CSP grant funds to purchase furniture including: 1.) student and teacher desks and chairs for classrooms, 2.) classroom tables, 3.) storage units/shelves, 4.) office desks, chairs, and tables for administrative spaces, and 5.) cafeteria tables and chairs. GCS will also purchase lockers or storage cubbies for students. Since each GCS school ramps up grade by grade, only the furniture needed for the planned enrollment by year is purchased.

Start Up Materials and Supplies

Educational Materials. A wide array of educational materials is incorporated into the GCS curriculum including core, non-core, supplemental and intervention materials. Educational materials that will be purchased using CSP grant funds include:

- curriculum for non-core subjects such as foreign language, business, robotics, etc.,
- supplemental curriculum for which needs will be assessed in each individual school and classroom,
- digital content delivered through educational software,
- intervention curriculum for identified special needs,
- novels, e-books, and library materials to supplement reading skills for all students,
- standardized test preparation/study materials,
- scientific calculators, and
- standard school supply kits ensuring all students are prepared for instruction from the first day of school regardless of their financial situation.

Assessments. GCS schools assess student performance and mastery early and often. Weekly tests and interim assessments help teachers and administrators form learning groups that rapidly change, based on student learning. Both online programs and teacher-directed support help scholars to make great gains in one year (sometimes as much as 2+ year's gain in one year). In order to carefully gauge how scholars are performing, an elaborate set of assessments is used, including formative assessments that are geared to the state and common core standards.

Assessments include standardized tests, (TCAP, Common Core, PSAT, ACT Explore, etc.), NWEA/MAP, weekly teacher made tests by subject, and daily assessments such as homework,

reading logs, etc. The assessments that will be purchased with the CSP grant are NWEA/MAP assessments for all students.

Curriculum Development

GCS will utilize its teachers to help develop and/or revise curriculum maps, teaching resources, and assessments by subject and by grade. The teachers will go through the following development cycle from Jay McTighe’s “Understanding by Design” and Webb’s “Depth of Knowledge” for assessments:

Phase	Timeline
Backward Curriculum Map Training	April
Assessment Development Training	May
Curriculum Map and Assessment Development	May-June
Implementation in the classroom	August-March
Revision of curriculum maps and assessments	March

This cycle will repeat for three years until we have field-tested and evaluated all curriculum maps, resources, and assessments. The teachers will work under supervision of the CMO staff. GCS will use CSP grant funds to pay stipends upon successful completion.

Technology Platform

Technology is a key element of the GCS academic model. As an organization, GCS values the impact that technology has on our ability to deliver a robust education to our scholars. GCS teachers and scholars are provided with one to one daily access to technology in the classroom for use during direct instruction. Technology is also used in intervention and to customize learning to each scholar during individualized learning times throughout the school day.

To support the instructional use of technology, GCS must continually expand and maintain an adequate network infrastructure. This infrastructure must be able to handle an adequate amount of traffic and provide the security necessary to offer all users a seamless instructional experience. With each new school opening, GCS must assess and build out the network infrastructure at each location. In subsequent years, GCS must maintain and upgrade the network as necessary.

Data Dashboard

As GCS continues to grow and technology is increasingly used in instruction and all aspects of data management, it has become necessary to build a data dashboard. This dashboard will fully inform and support the increasing number of teachers and staff by allowing them to easily access, analyze and use the various sources of data available. Once this tool is in place, each of our teachers will be able to access key performance metrics, saving each of them up to 25 minutes each day. This means that at a system level, GCS teachers will have over 276 additional hours each week to commit to planning and instruction. The SQL server will connect to all sources of data that GCS currently uses, including the school's student information system, learning management systems, performance management systems, accounting software, and operations tracking systems. Additionally, GCS is working with the University of Memphis and the Memphis Police Department to gain access to community effect metrics. The ability to target out-of-class hindrances to scholar growth will result in increases in meaningful partnerships with the community, parent engagement, and ultimately student achievement.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

GCS will always have a need and demand for great teachers, especially for new schools establishing an entirely new faculty. Along with the demand comes the reality that talented teachers, particularly in urban areas, are highly marketable. Incentives above their base salary

can be a powerful incentive to attract or retain high performing teachers. Competition for highly effective teachers in Memphis is increasing each year as CMOs, from across the country and local, establish new charter schools in Memphis, new Municipal School Districts are being created in suburban areas, and the City of Memphis struggles with the turnaround of its educational system. CSP grant funds would be used to establish a signing bonus pool. By having the ability to offer signing bonuses, Gestalt would be able to better attract high performing teachers without the long-term financial impact of higher base salaries. Due to the lack of qualified STEM and special education teachers, providing signing bonuses for math, science, and special education would significantly increase the delivery quality of education in our network. In addition, longevity bonuses will reward high performing teachers who remain in the network for three years or more, in an effort to break the national cycle in which teachers remain at charter schools for one to two years before pursuing more traditional school models. Having teachers remain in the network for a longer period would create a sense of stability for the scholars and the network.

GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy

“Research shows that teacher quality and principal quality are the two most important in-school factors for student success. The two are also closely linked.” (Fenton, Kellerman, & Schnur, 2011) The GCS Teacher and School Leader Academy is a comprehensive leadership development program. The program includes two distinctive pathways. Those pathways provide leadership coursework, professional development and coaching to aspiring school administrators and teacher leaders. The ultimate goal of the program is to recruit, develop, support, and mentor teacher leaders and school leaders.

This program is designed to meet the following needs for schools within the GCS network: sustain and retain high performing teachers and school leaders; improve instructional delivery ultimately producing a positive impact on student academic performance; and offer a pipeline of trained school leadership teams that are prepared for the high demand of charter school leadership positions.

The program includes three main components including a leader and teacher residency program, a teacher leadership program, and a professional development cycle. An emerging school leader will spend one year in a school-based residency program shadowing a high performing veteran principals. Resident teachers will be assigned to work with Master Teachers and will be focused on high need placements such as reading, mathematics, and special education. The teacher leadership program will identify and develop existing teachers to hold positions within the schools of master teachers, content leaders, and culture brokers. Finally, the professional development cycle will support all leaders and teachers.

Grant Travel and Management

The budget incorporates one trip on an annual basis to the CSP two-day meeting for project directors. GCS would also use CSP grant funds to purchase grant management software for planning, tracking, monitoring, etc.

Personnel:

The budget for personnel will be used as follows for the applicable programs described above:

Personnel	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Curriculum Development						
Data Dashboard						
Recruitment and Retention						
Teacher and Leader Academy						
Total						

Curriculum and Assessment Development and Revision Stipends included in the budget are planned as follows:

	Project Year 2			Project Year 3			Project Year 4		
Description	#	Stipend Amount	Total	#	Stipend Amount	Total	#	Stipend Amount	Total
Curriculum Development Stipends	8	\$2,500	\$20,000	4	\$2,500	\$10,000	2	\$2,500	\$5,000
Assessment Development Stipends	8	\$2,500	\$20,000	4	\$2,500	\$10,000	2	\$2,500	\$5,000
Curriculum Revision Stipends	8	\$1,500	\$12,000	4	\$1,500	\$6,000	2	\$1,500	\$3,000
Assessment Revisions Stipends	8	\$1,500	\$12,000	4	\$1,500	\$6,000	2	\$1,500	\$3,000
Total			\$64,000			\$32,000			\$16,000

Budgeted funds for the data dashboard personnel will pay the salary of a dedicated staff person to work on strategy, development, integration and implementation. This experienced IT professional will have expertise in this area and work closely with GCS management, school

leaders and teachers to continually assess needs, develop customized solutions and integrate new technologies into the data dashboard.

Recruitment and retention personnel costs will fund signing bonus pools for the recruitment year prior to the opening of each of the new GCS schools. The retention bonuses will be used to retain high performing three-year teachers from PCA Elementary and Crosstown High.

	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Signing Bonuses						
Retention Bonuses						
Total						

The Gestalt Teacher and Leader Academy will pay for one resident school leader and two resident teachers for the years prior to new school openings. Existing GCS teachers will be paid stipends to take on additional duties and serve in the roles of Master Teachers, Content Leaders and Culture Brokers in their respective schools. The costs by position are detailed below:

Teacher and Leader Academy	No. Positions	Salary / Stipend	Total Annual Cost
Resident School Leaders	1		
Resident Teachers	2		
Culture Brokers	3		
Content Leaders	3		
Master Teachers	1		

Fringe:

The budget for fringe benefits is calculated at 30% of salary costs. GCS contributes approximately 9% of employee salaries for retirement plans. Payroll taxes are approximately 11% of salaries. Finally, healthcare costs vary based on the plan chosen by employees. The

average GCS contribution to employee healthcare plans is approximately 10%. Fringe costs are budgeted by project year as shown below:

Fringe	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Curriculum Development	\$0	\$19,200	\$9,600	\$4,800	\$0	\$33,600
Data Dashboard	\$26,511	\$27,306	\$28,126	\$28,969	\$0	\$110,912
Recruitment and Retention	\$19,500	\$33,600	\$33,600	\$0	\$21,900	\$108,600
Teacher and Leader Academy	\$39,000	\$43,650	\$43,650	\$4,650	\$4,650	\$135,600
Total	\$85,011	\$123,756	\$114,976	\$38,419	\$26,550	\$388,712

Travel:

The budget for travel will fund aspects of the Teacher and Leader Academy. The budget includes \$17,000 for Project Years one through four and \$8,500 for Project Year five. Travel costs will be used to send Leaders and Teachers to relevant local and out of town professional development seminars and conferences. GCS plans to leverage the expertise of Master Teachers by sending them to professional development and then having them train other teachers in their area of expertise.

GCS plans to send two individuals to the annual CSP meeting at a maximum cost of \$2,500 per year. The budget includes airfare not to exceed \$550 per person (Memphis has among the highest airfares in the country, even with advance purchase), two hotel nights totaling up to \$250 per night per person, meals totaling \$50 per day per person, and transportation (transfers, parking, etc.) totaling \$100 per person.

Equipment:

The budget for equipment will fund start up costs to equip new schools with furniture and lockers as described in the Start Up Furniture section above. The start up furniture budget, by

project year, is detailed below. Having opened and expanded four schools in the CGS network to date, GCS has worked to find the best priced options for new and used furniture and equipment to meet the needs of our schools.

Equipment	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Start Up Furniture	\$0	\$123,950	\$174,450	\$195,750	\$153,022	\$647,172
Technology Platform	\$0	\$120,000	\$175,000	\$209,000	\$37,000	\$541,000
Total	\$0	\$243,950	\$349,450	\$404,750	\$190,022	\$1,188,172

The equipment budget for the technology platform covers the cost of critical network infrastructure equipment as described in the Technology Platform section above. The table above details the technology equipment needs by project year.

Supplies:

The budget for supplies will fund the critical educational materials and instructional resources needed, with a heavy emphasis on technology, to deliver high quality instruction to GCS scholars in the classroom. It will also fund technological resources for efficient and effective data and grant management, critical elements for a rapidly growing organization with aggressive academic and financial goals. The budget breaks down by project year as shown below:

Supplies	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$239,700	\$346,860	\$451,670	\$340,280	\$1,378,510
Technology Platform	\$0	\$256,006	\$398,535	\$601,741	\$372,153	\$1,628,435
Data Dashboard	\$10,450	\$104,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$114,700
Teacher and Leader Academy	\$5,350	\$5,350	\$5,350	\$5,350	\$5,350	\$26,750
Grant Management	\$6,294	\$6,294	\$6,294	\$6,294	\$6,294	\$31,470
Total	\$22,094	\$611,600	\$757,039	\$1,065,055	\$724,077	\$3,179,865

Start up supplies are described in the Start Up Materials and Supplies section above. Curriculum including educational software, non-core subject textbooks, standardized test study materials, etc. are budgeted at \$225 per new student. Novels and library reading materials are budgeted at \$35 per student annually. Assessments are budgeted at \$50 per student annually. Student supplies are budgeted at \$75 per student annually. Calculators are budgeted at \$85 per new student.

The supplies budgeted as part of the technology platform cover, in part, the cost of Chromebook laptop computers for each student, charging carts, printers, classroom projectors and/or Apple TVs (depending on school/classroom), and supplemental iPads for certain classes.

Supplies budgeted for the Data Dashboard will purchase a Tableau Business Intelligence software (\$104,250), reader licenses and SQL server (\$10,450 for both) to establish the dashboard.

Supplies of \$5,350 per year will provide Teacher and Leader Academy professional development sessions (three and five week summer institutes and sessions throughout the school year) with books and materials.

Supplies budgeted under grant management will pay the annual license fees for Amplifund, a grant management software.

Contractual:

The budget for contractual expenses is as follows by project year:

Contractual	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Year 4	Project Year 5	Total
Technology Platform	\$0	\$41,100	\$70,518	\$126,276	\$97,846	\$335,740
Data Dashboard	\$0	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$108,000
Total	\$0	\$68,100	\$97,518	\$153,276	\$124,846	\$443,740

For the technology platform, contractual expenses are for software including user-based license fees for supplemental software programs used by students, teachers and staff. To support the instructional model using technology in the classroom, GCS contracts with Education Elements to provide a single sign-on platform for teachers and scholars. This platform will integrate all digital curriculum and data into one system maximizing instructional time by reducing the access points for content delivery. The cost of single sign on access for each new scholar and teacher is included in the budget.

Contractual expenses for the Data Dashboard cover the annual maintenance costs to support the dashboard software and server.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008
Expiration Date: 04/30/2014

Name of Institution/Organization

Gestalt Community Schools

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs*						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

***Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: To: (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify):

The Indirect Cost Rate is %.

(3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is %.

Name of Institution/Organization Gestalt Community Schools	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
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**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
FOR THE SF-424

1. Project Director:

Prefix:	First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:	Suffix:
	Derwin		Sisnett	

Address:

Street1:	3175 Lenox Park Blvd #410
Street2:	
City:	Memphis
County:	
State:	TN: Tennessee
Zip Code:	38115
Country:	USA: UNITED STATES

Phone Number (give area code)	Fax Number (give area code)

Email Address:

2. Novice Applicant:

Are you a novice applicant as defined in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 (and included in the definitions page in the attached instructions)?

- Yes No Not applicable to this program

3. Human Subjects Research:

a. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project Period?

- Yes No

b. Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

Yes Provide Exemption(s) #:

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

c. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to this form as indicated in the definitions page in the attached instructions.

<input type="text"/>	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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