

**Hill House Passport Academy Charter School  
Charter School Program Implementation Grant**

**ABSTRACT**

Hill House Passport Academy Charter School (HHPACS) is a blended learning high school in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that is committed to empowering students who have dropped out of high school to acquire the academic and life skills needed to earn their high school diploma and succeed in post-secondary education and career opportunities. Authorized by the School District of Pittsburgh, the school will open in September 2014. HHPACS will combine flexible scheduling, online work, face-to-face instruction, career exploration and wrap-around services to deliver a truly groundbreaking learning experience.

The “Passport” blended learning model is student-centric, providing an individualized and differentiated learning experience allowing each student to learn at his/her own pace. To accommodate student work and family responsibilities, each day HHPACS students will spend approximately three hours studying onsite at the school facility and an additional two and a half hours studying offsite at home or another location such as a public library with a computer and Internet. Teachers will carefully monitor the attendance and progress of each student. On a daily basis, HHPACS students engage in rigorous online curriculum combined with targeted, face-to-face classroom instruction. Academic coaches support teachers and closely monitor each student’s academic progress led by their onsite Pennsylvania certified teachers who carefully collect and analyze data to design targeted instruction for students including those who are struggling and those progressing through the curriculum at an accelerated pace. HHPACS recognizes that there are many non-academic factors that can impede a student’s ability to perform at his/her highest academic potential and will provide targeted social services as part of each student’s Individual Learning Plan.

The grant project “Hill House Passport Academy Charter School: Recovering and Reengaging High School Dropouts” will meet many critical initial two year implementation needs of the school. The funds requested in this grant application will be directed towards activities that support the development of the college and career readiness of HHPACS students; ensure the successful implementation of our instructional and wraparound service model; and strengthen the governance and management of our school laying a foundation for long term viability and sustainability through: board development and training; onsite staff development and training addressing effective teaching in a blended learning environment; development and responsive use of individualized learning plans; implementation of student and family engagement strategies; supplemental curriculum, assessment, and program resources for Keystone exam preparation; integration of data driven instruction; classroom technology including laptop computers and e-tablets, interactive whiteboards and projectors, portable speakers, digital cameras and microscopes; assistive curriculum in reading, writing and math as well as assistive technology such as text to speech software and online instructional resources for Special Education teachers and students (based upon IEPs).

This project supports the purposes of the Charter School Program by: increasing national understanding of a unique charter school model with potential to be replicated; enabling a high quality charter school to offer an effective individualized public school education choice to reengage students who have dropped out of high school; and providing the opportunity to evaluate the effects of this charter school model and grant project on students, student academic achievement, board and staff. The school mailing address is 1825 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219-4305. The Project Director for this two year Charter School Program Implementation Grant is Dwayne Homa Ph.D., HHPACS Principal (Phone: 724-705-4933; Email: hhpac.charter.school@gmail.com).