

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



APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE

Charter Schools Program (CSP); Grants to Non-SEAs; Planning, Program Design, Implementation

CFDA # 84.282B

PR/Award # U282B160011

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT12007193

OMB No. , Expiration Date:

Closing Date: Oct 06, 2015

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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="10/03/2015"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

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

State Use Only:

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

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Vision Academy Charter School"/>	
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="47-2256408"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="0868690370000"/>

d. Address:

* Street1: <input type="text" value="41 E Baltimore Ave,"/>
Street2: <input type="text"/>
* City: <input type="text" value="Lansdowne"/>
County/Parish: <input type="text"/>
* State: <input type="text" value="PA: Pennsylvania"/>
Province: <input type="text"/>
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code: <input type="text" value="19050-2200"/>

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text"/>	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="Adem"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Oksuz"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
Title: <input type="text" value="CEO"/>	

Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text" value="Vision Academy Charter School"/>
--

* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="484 466 2124"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="484 441 1366"/>
---	---

* Email: <input type="text" value="adam@vacharter.org"/>
--

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

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

G: Independent School District

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

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

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

R: Small Business

* 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-082115-001

* Title:

CSP Grants to Non-SEA Eligible Applicants for Planning, Program Design, and Initial Implementation
CFDA Number 84.282B

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-282B2016-1

Title:

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

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

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

Vision Academy Charter School Application for Planning, Program Design, and Initial Implementation
CFDA Number 84.282B

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="276,855.00"/>
* 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="276,855.00"/>

*** 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="Adem Oksuz"/>	TITLE <input type="text" value="CEO"/>
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION <input type="text" value="Vision Academy Charter School"/>	DATE SUBMITTED <input type="text" value="10/03/2015"/>

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: Adem Oksuz
* Street 1: 41 E Baltimore ve. Street 2: _____
* City: Lansdowne State: PA: Pennsylvania Zip: 19050
Congressional District, if known: _____

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

6. * Federal Department/Agency: US Department of Education	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Charter Schools CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.282
--	--

8. Federal Action Number, if known: _____	9. Award Amount, if known: \$ _____
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10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:
Prefix _____ * First Name Adem Middle Name _____
* Last Name Oksuz Suffix _____
* Street 1: 41 E Baltimore Ave Street 2: _____
* City: Lansdowne State: PA: Pennsylvania Zip: 19050

b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a)
Prefix _____ * First Name Adem Middle Name _____
* Last Name Oksuz Suffix _____
* Street 1: 41 E Baltimore Ave Street 2: _____
* City: Lansdowne State: PA: Pennsylvania Zip: 19050

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: Adem Oksuz
* Name: Prefix _____ * First Name Adem Middle Name _____
* Last Name Oksuz Suffix _____
Title: CEO Telephone No.: 484 466 2124 Date: 10/03/2015

Federal Use Only: _____ **Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)**

PR/Award # U282B160011

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

OMB Number: 1894-0005
Expiration Date: 03/31/2017

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.
- (4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

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.

	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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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 Vision Academy Charter School	
* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
Prefix: Mr.	* First Name: Adem Middle Name:
* Last Name: Oksuz	Suffix:
* Title: CEO	
* SIGNATURE: Adem Oksuz	* DATE: 10/03/2015

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:

Vision Academy Charter School Implementation Grant Abstract

The Vision Academy Charter School (Vision Academy) opened its doors in the 2015-16 school year to students in kindergarten through fourth grade. The first charter school in the William Penn School District, which borders the Philadelphia School District in southeastern Pennsylvania, Vision Academy Charter School is fully enrolled with 200 students and currently has a waiting list of over 500 students. The appeal of the school is its use of the evidence-based Core Knowledge Sequence curriculum as its learning foundation and Direct Instruction as its teaching methodology, its commitment to building self-reliant learners who nimbly use technology and project based learning to drive their own academic achievement, its acknowledgement that all children learn differently, and its authentic inclusion of parents in the education process.

The leadership and staff of the school are highly experienced in working in the charter school environment and the school's governing board includes educators and community members with the strengths needed to govern and support a large public non-profit organization. Vision Academy Charter School embodies not only the vision of the community to expand educational opportunities for disadvantaged children, but also the spirit of the charter school movement which was founded on the tenets of empowering parents and educators to pursue emerging educational tools and philosophies.

The funding for this implementation grant will provide critical support to provide professional development; to refine and differentiate academic programs and expand curriculum to new grade levels; to adopt and integrate technology as a tool for developing self-reliant learners; to improve outreach to the community and parents; and to provide furnishings to improve the educational setting.

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](#)

VISION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



***APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE
CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM NON-SEA
PLANNING, PROGRAM DESIGN, AND
IMPLEMENTATION (84.282B)***

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Absolute Priority: Supporting High-Need Students

Vision Academy Charter School, chartered in the William Penn School District in Daleware County in Pennsylvania, is intentionally designed to support high-need students. Through evidence-based curriculum that is not currently available in the authorizing district or any bordering district and a comprehensive extended day program, students will have quality teaching and the necessary time to meet and exceed challenging academic standards. Vision Academy Charter School opened in September 2015 with with 200 students in kindergarten through fourth grade and will eventually serve 360 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The commitment to each student is to provide the foundation that will lead to success in college and career. To build core academic skills, the school will utilize direct instruction at the younger grades. To build the essential autonomy necessary to meet demanding academic programs, the school will grow high-need students' skills in collaborative and self-directed learning by gradually introducing project based learning and the "flipped classroom" model to foster self-reliance, critical thinking, and collaborative skills as students become older. This combination of evidence-based content and promising digital instruction will build students' capacity to drive their own college- and career-ready success.

Vision Academy Charter School is uniquely designed to address the defecits in learning and expectations that many high-need students and families have historically encountered in the past. According to most recent state testing scores, the William Penn School District is ranked 457th of 468 school districts in the state and all but one school in the district ranked in the lowest quintile in the state (SchoolDigger, 2015). September enrollment at Vision Academy closely mirrors the district, with 92% of the student population African American, 93% economically disadvantages, 10% English Language Learners, and 12% students with disabilities.

The **mission** of Vision Academy Charter School is to prepare students in kindergarten through eighth grade to become responsible and articulate students and citizens by using a comprehensive curriculum designed to foster academic success and current technology to build self-reliance.

The core philosophy of the Vision Academy Charter School is that all students can achieve success through the fidelity of implementation of the five research-based pillars:

- 1) Precise scope and sequence supported through quality curriculum and extended day in a small school environment to ensure mastery of content.
- 2) Calculated delivery model that is refined and improved through the use of data.
- 3) Frequent demonstration of student achievement beyond the test through project based learning and on-line learning opportunities that will lead each student toward autonomous education advocacy.
- 4) Consistent use of school-wide and individual positive behavior support systems.
- 5) Authentic parent engagement that breaks down walls of education disenfranchisement and builds strong home and school relationships.

In developing the program, the founding group developed a logic model to support their theory for school success based on evidence-based practice and anecdotal experience with students in the community. Several founding members work with at-risk youth at the high school level and noted that these adolescents were typically unprepared, not only for the rigors of high school but the expected skills of self-managed learning. Further, founding members noted that many students came from households where parents were working so much that they had little time to attend to their children's academic needs, leaving students with limited guidance and support out of school. Thus, the resulting logic model:

Vision Academy Charter School Logic Model

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Core-Knowledge Curriculum	Students meet state standards and understand interdisciplinary nature of academics	Improved interest in learning and enthusiasm for new subject material	Well rounded individuals who will be successful in any setting
Direct instruction	Students master content without gaps meet state standards	Greater confidence in content and improved engagement in school	Individuals committed to mastery of information
Instructional materials aligned to standards and teaching methodology	Students master content; teachers teach appropriate content and measure success effectively	Students are more engaged in learning; teachers more successful in teaching content	Students recognize “pathways” for learning; develop strong teachers and teacher-leaders
Extended day	More students meet or exceed standards	Less stress on families, connect content with fun	Lifelong learners who connect learning with personal enrichment
Special supportive programming for high-need students, student with disabilities and ELL	Close achievement gaps; provide immediate corrective action; more students meet standards	Improved attitude toward learning; better family/school interactions	Resilient individuals able to overcome obstacles and attain personal success
Project-based learning at higher grades	More students exceed standards; greater community interaction	Improved independent learning skills and critical thinking skills.	Collaborative individuals who understand complex issues and can identify solutions
Flipped classroom and strong technology foundation	Students meet or exceed standards; gain technology skills	Improved independent learning and critical thinking skills; use technology to learn	Tech-savvy individuals who can use tech to solve problems
Evidence-based Positive Behavior Support Program	More on-task behavior, fewer class disruption, students meet state standards	Supportive and respectful school culture, improved home/school relationships	Individuals who value cooperation and can self-manage behavior in college and career settings
Evidence-based parent engagement plan	More parents attend meetings and participate in family events.	Closer relationships between families and school	Parents with greater confidence in the education system; willingness to become learners themselves

Curriculum and Instructional Practices

Meeting Rigorous State Standards and Preparing College and Career Ready Students

CURRICULUM

The educational program for Vision Academy Charter Schools is based on the highly regarded Core Knowledge Sequence and the use of direct instruction as the teaching pedagogy, gradually incorporating project-based learning at higher grades. The school will support students in kindergarten through eighth grade (opening K-4 and growing by a grade each year), with two classes of 20 students at each grade and a maximum of 360 students. By establishing a small school community, research (Cotton 1996) shows that there is greater flexibility in instruction, greater community interaction, and increased opportunities for personalization.

Predicated on the widely held recognition that the ability to learn is based on the content already mastered, the Core Knowledge Sequence is a clear outline of content that is aligned to state Common Core-based standards and anchors and designed to improve knowledge, language, and skills by scaffolding upon previously learned content, thus ensuring that each student not only grasps the skills necessary for the subject matter, but has attained the cultural literacy that is imperative to understanding the value of the content (Hirsh, 1985). Learning subject material in isolation creates silos of knowledge that cannot be applied beyond the setting, and limits a student's capacity to understand the interdependency of content which promotes cultural literacy. This cultural literacy, according to Hirsh, is a key contributor to the widening achievement gap between students from affluent communities and those from less means. This gap is sharply evident in Delaware County, where a number of the highest performing schools in in the state sit minutes from the home district of Vision Academy. The Core Knowledge Sequence bridges this

gap through very specific content mapping, allowing teachers to effectively deliver content that is specifically designed to be interconnected and foster subject mastery and cultural literacy.

In the research of Hernandez, 2011, a longitudinal study linked students who failed to read proficiently by third grade with four times the likelihood of dropping out before high school graduation. This research identified the connection between literacy and all other learning. In 2012, the Core Knowledge Foundation released a study in collaboration with the New York City Department of Education comparing literacy performance of kindergarten through second grade students using the Core Knowledge Language Arts approach versus the district's existing model. The foundation of the Core Knowledge Language Arts program, which differs from most traditional literacy programs, sits with two distinct strands of learning: skills (such as phonics instruction, spelling, writing) and listening and learning (content rich read-aloud focused on a specific topic to build knowledge and vocabulary). The result is that these two strands not only build the mechanics of reading, but provide the support for comprehending what is being read and the essential background knowledge for literacy. The overarching results of the study showed that students in the Core Knowledge classrooms achieved more than double the gains than their matched peers according to the Research and Policy Group of the New York City Department of Education. Thus, the literacy gains that students make using the Core Knowledge Sequence play an important role in their success in high school, college, and career.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is designed to evolve a student's understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of school subjects. Students do not encounter content in isolation. Instead, they are given consistent and cohesive exposure to the interdependency of subjects and their impact in the development of the body of knowledge that exists today. For instance, while studying the history of the Renaissance, fifth graders may read Shakespeare's *Midsummer*

Night's Dream in ELA, study the great engineers and related mathematic properties of the time, apply scientific properties of Galileo, and study how all of these together impacted humanity.

Making sure that all staff stays on track with this interdisciplinary system, a quarterly content teaching map will be posted on the primary wall of the teachers' meeting room that clearly outlines weekly curriculum content to be covered and interdisciplinary tactics to be deployed. The Director of Instruction will monitor this map to ensure that staff members are meeting teaching goals, appropriately utilizing evidence-based instructional strategies, and making full use of the instructional materials and technology to maximize each student's learning experience and academic outcomes.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

According to the federal Best Evidence Encyclopedia federal database, direct instruction is a highly rated tool for teaching disadvantaged students. Explicitly outlining the skill learning and utilizing frequent group repetition, direct instruction helps teachers know where students stand in the learning process and ensures that students master content before moving on. Direct Instruction serves as the fundamental "how" of teaching at Vision Academy, with the infusion of greater autonomy through project-based learning in sixth, seventh and eighth grades.

In the 2006 Comprehensive School Reform Quality Reports on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models, Direct Instruction was identified as one of two systems with the greatest evidence for school success. The report also identified Core Knowledge as a moderate system for school-wide success. Through years of research, these programs, when used as a whole to drive instructional practice, have shown to improve outcomes for students and create a culture for learning that helps teachers be successful (CSRQ/American Institutes for Research, 2006). Direct Instruction has multiple studies that demonstrate positive outcomes.

Yu and Ranchor's (2000) study show that Direct Instruction had a positive impact in higher grades with DI students in upper elementary grades outperforming the control group. Benner et al. (2002) reported similar findings in their work at younger grades. Anderson, et al (1995) and Klahr & Carver(1988) found direct instruction effective in teaching complex mathematics concepts, such geometry, algebra, and computer programming. Rittle-Johnson (2006) found that direct instruction was most successful when it came to student achievement in mathematics.

While students will work collaboratively on projects that demonstrate their knowledge of curriculum under teacher direction in early grades, the greater focus is on mastering fundamentals skills essential to higher levels of critical thinking. However, as disadvantaged students grow into adolescents, it is essential to empower them with the capacity to drive their own academic success. Students today encounter dissonance between the current preparation in elementary and middle schools toward independent learning and the expectations of the high school and college setting. In the *The Learning Gap*, Stevenson and Stigler (1992) suggest that one of the greatest challenges facing teachers is students lacking the necessary grade appropriate skills or knowledge. Students frequently have limited experiences in developing autonomy in learning and often fail to understand the information they lack in order to attain higher levels of learning. The result can be students entering a higher grade with limited ability to fully access academic programming. Thus, as students at Vision Academy move to higher grades, they will encounter greater and greater autonomy in learning, preparing them for high school and college where teachers serve as facilitators and more and more coursework is managed independently.

To help students become self-driven and self-reliant learners, Vision Academy Charter School will employ a "Flipped Classroom" model that will call upon teachers to develop online direct instruction lectures or find age appropriate online resources that will serve as homework

for students, while classroom time will be devoted to what may have been traditionally homework (such as working on math problems independently) and active learning such as lab work, project work, or other active learning efforts. The flipped classroom requires students to become active learners and teachers to master technology as an authentic tool in teaching and learning. Students will need to use their critical thinking skills to develop their own questions and theories related to content and bring those questions to class. Further, it allows for critical class time to be used in collaborative, project-based learning that will help increase middle-school aged students' independent learning as well as social and emotional skills. The flipped classroom encourages students toward greater autonomy in learning and helps them develop the skills of inquiry learning that are necessary for success in high school, college and career. All students in grades six through eight at Vision Academy will receive a laptop. Students who do not have access to the internet at home will have priority in the extended day program and during class time to access the internet. Additionally, lectures will be recorded and available for downloading and later review to additional support students lacking internet access at home.

Bergman and Sams, 2012, widely considered the leaders in flipped classroom systems, state: "One of the greatest benefits of flipping is that overall interaction increases: Teacher to student and student to student. Since the role of the teacher has changed from presenter of content to learning coach, we spend our time talking to kids. We are answering questions, working with small groups, and guiding the learning of each student individually."

Because of the small school and class size, this method of delivery will accelerate learning for students and will provide the foundation for students to become their own advocates in learning. Vision Academy will employ the flipped classroom at upper grades (6-8) and will ease students into the effort gradually, either with only a single class or with portions of a class.

While the flipped classroom is still relatively new, substantial research related to cognition and media demonstrate its value.

In addition to the flipped classroom, students in upper grades will access greater autonomy in learning as classrooms augment Direct Instruction with Project Based Learning (PBL). According to Buck Institute for Education (2015), an expert resource on PBL, Project Based Learning includes:

- **Key Knowledge, Understanding, and Success Skills** – Projects are focused on student learning goals, including standards-based content and skills.
- **Challenging Problem or Question** - The project is framed by a meaningful problem to solve or a question to answer, at the appropriate level of challenge.
- **Sustained Inquiry** - Students engage in a rigorous, extended process of asking questions, finding resources, and applying information.
- **Authenticity** - The project features real-world context, tasks and tools, quality standards.
- **Student Voice & Choice** - Students make some decisions about the project, including how they work and what they create.
- **Reflection** - Students and teachers reflect on learning, the effectiveness of their inquiry and project activities, the quality of student work, obstacles and how to overcome them.
- **Critique & Revision** - Students give, receive, and use feedback to improve process.
- **Public Product** – Students present their work publicly.

With the combination of the flipped classroom and integration of PBL, Vision Academy students will graduate with the knowledge and skills to be autonomous learners with the capacity to direct their own future in classrooms, careers, and life.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

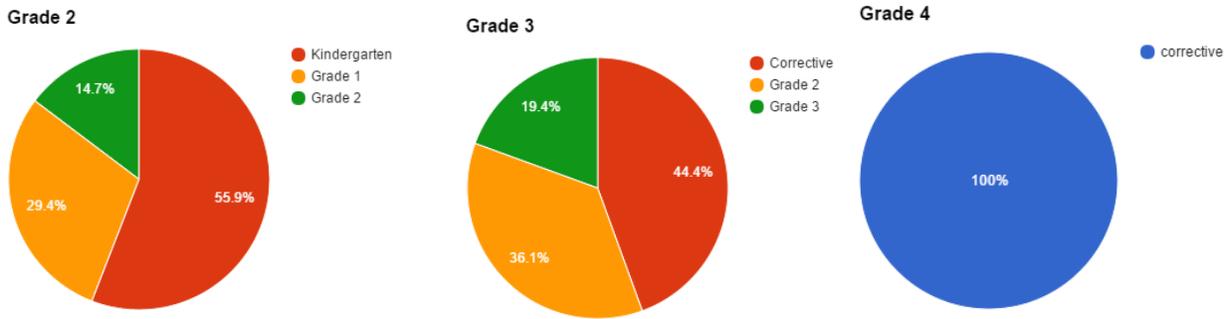
English Language Arts

In order for elementary students to be successful, it is necessary for them to develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The Core Knowledge Reading program is a research-based and balanced program of guided small-group direct instruction and followed by reading tasks and activities. Vision Academy's Direct Instruction aligned with the Core Knowledge Sequence features

- *Homogeneous Skill Grouping*
- *Scripted Class Sessions*
- *Intense, Constant Student Interaction*
- *Teaching to Mastery*

To address significant deficits, Vision Academy is utilizing the McGraw Hill Direct Instruction "Fast Cycle" program for remediation to grade level that is designed to help students bridge two years of learning into a single year. For students who have tested in a "transitional" level where they are less than a year behind, enrollment in the extended day with additional one-to-one and group tutoring support will be added to the standard day. Students not on grade level reading in third and fourth grade will be placed in the Corrective Reading program and provided time during the day and extended day in one-to-one or group support.

Based on initial testing through the nationally normed Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress, approximately 33% of students in first grade are reading at grade level. However, according to MAP testing completed during the first weeks of school, on grade level proficiency significantly drops in higher grade levels:



In second grade, 85.3% of students are not on grade reading level; 80.3% of students in third grade are not on grade level; 100% of students in the incoming fourth grade class do not meet grade level reading standards.

The school projected these deficits based on the historical performance of the district on state testing. As suggested with Direct Instruction, students are grouped in homogeneous skill levels, but their grouping is fluid. For students with greater deficits, groups are smaller, and the largest group is comprised of students on grade level. This grouping system also provides opportunities for advanced learning for students who are exceeding grade level standards. Students who make fast progress through remediation will move quickly to more advanced groupings. In addition to the “Fast Cycle” program, Vision Academy will provide extended day support. For students performing two or more grade levels below proficient and struggling to gain proficiency, a Saturday Academy will be offered.

Students in seventh grade are projected to be performing at “Proficient” reading levels on the state assessment and expected to analyze text, compare and evaluate it from several points of view, and synthesize common themes, principles, ideas, or concepts across texts and genres. Through the flipped classroom model, students will read or follow online lectures out of class,

opening class time to Socratic group discussions or small group instruction for struggling learners while others work on individual activities or group projects.

Vision Academy will utilize the Response to Intervention model to support students that have not achieved grade-level ELA proficiency at all stages, from kindergarten through eighth grade. While all students are instructed on grade-level standards, the school is engaged in effectively differentiating content and providing both in-class and out-of-class supports to help close the achievement gap often encountered by students living in poverty, students with disabilities, and ELL students. Student placement in ELA/RTI is determined on various formative testing results, teacher and/or parent recommendation, and day-to-day classroom performance.

Writing to standard is a common expectation across curriculum. In ELA, students are provided direct instruction on grade-appropriate conventions of writing, including sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, word choice, and essay styles. Editing, revising and evaluating writing are also an integral part of the writing process. Opportunities across curriculum include personal dialogue journals, record results of investigations, note-taking, and learning logs.

Vision Academy utilizes the McGraw Hill ELA texts aligned with Core Knowledge and supportive direct instruction materials.

Mathematics

Vision Academy will be using Singapore Math as its primary resource for mathematics. The explicit system for teaching mathematics that aligns with current state standards helps to ensure that all students gain essential numeracy skills at early grades and a full understanding of the strong connectivity to higher order processes. Singapore Math use of bar modeling is highly regarded as the “secret” to its success. Bar modeling helps students visualize numeric

relationships in word programs. Students at early grades learn bar modeling for addition and subtraction, but the system can be expanded to work with multiplication and division problems, fractions, ratios, and percents. Bar modeling helps students make sense of math and provides a logical way to attack complex problems. Singapore Math also makes use of technology, including calculators, computers, and any other tools that facilitate greater understanding and improve speed in problem-solving. Through direct instruction and additional instructional time, it is expected that all students will complete algebra prior to eighth grade graduation and be proficient in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) examination. This preparation will ensure that all Vision Academy graduates are prepared for a rigorous high school program.

As with ELA, incoming students have demonstrated deficits in meeting grade-level proficiency. Again, struggling students are placed in small homogeneous grouping that are fluid in placement. The teacher closely monitors growth and establishes individualized learning plans for students designed to address automaticity and concept weaknesses. For students performing two or more grade levels below proficient and struggling to gain proficiency, a Saturday Academy will be offered.

As with ELA, Vision Academy utilizes an RTI approach that provides structured support for students who are not achieving on-grade level performance in mathematics. Determinations for RTI are based on normed formative testing as well as classroom observation, teacher and parent recommendation.

Science

Vision Academy utilizes the Full Option Science System (FOSS), a hands-on science curriculum that is aligned with state standards. Additionally, teachers will integrate lesson plans

developed through the Core Knowledge Institute and fellow teachers that align with the Core Knowledge Sequence and further students' understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of the arts, science, language, and mathematics.

Social Studies

Social studies serve as the opportunity to integrate all aspects of the Core Knowledge Sequence. Utilizing the McGraw Hill series that is aligned to Core Knowledge, students will access social studies content that integrates concepts from all academic content areas. To help increase comprehension of the content, younger students will work under teacher direction to develop individual and group projects, while older students will work on projects that are independently driven. Semi-annually, students will present Core Knowledge projects or activities as a Curriculum Night to parents and the community, demonstrating their understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of learning and their mastery of content. Additionally, students in higher grades will take this knowledge and use it in a project-based learning experience. Students will be expected to present their work to a larger community (such as an elected official, a government employee, a business leader, community leader, etc.) and discuss the problem that was identified, the research completed on the problem, and the proposed solution to the problem.

Technology

From the earliest grades, students will gain understanding of technology and use it as a tool in learning. Because of the flipped classroom focus, students must have the comfort level to explore and create using technology to be fully engaged in the learning process. While mastering state standards in formal "computer" classes, students will also be empowered to access technology in different ways, from creating digital content to communicating with

teachers and fellow students in closed, online forums. Because teachers will be immersed in technology, helping students access and understand technology as a tool in learning will often be centered in the content classroom – not in a separate “computer” class. Technology is used to track student performance, deliver individualized student support, access research and develop presentations for project-based learning and support after school programming. Classroom technology includes computers, smart boards, and access to laptop carts. Students will receive their own laptop computers in grade 6.

The Arts

In addition to pull-out art and music classes that present a structured curriculum aligned to the state standards, the arts are thoroughly integrated into the school’s Core Knowledge program. The Vision Academy art teacher is among the key resources to classroom teachers as they plan lessons aligned to Core Knowledge, helping faculty and students gain a greater understanding of the interdependence of the arts, culture, science and technology. Creative exploration in the arts will take place in extended day programs where students will have the opportunity for collaborative and self-guided projects, such as band, yearbook, and drama.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

There are two basic models for ESL programs: the skills-based program and the content-based program (Norden, 2001). Generally, a skills-based program devotes 5-15% of the school day (depending on the students’ grade-level) to target language learning, with the instruction focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. These programs are mostly implemented as pull-out programs, which have been reported to be rather unsuccessful.

According to the content-based model, on the other hand, an English

Language Learner's (ELL) achievement in school, the classroom, and ultimately in the work world rests upon their ability to master academic language.

The SIOP model offers a content and inquiry-based framework for teachers to present concepts to ELLs in the inclusive mainstream classrooms through strategies, techniques, and accommodations that make new information comprehensible for language learners. Intended for both language and content teachers, the SIOP model offers eight research-based components that are grouped into 30 strategies essential for making content comprehensible for ELLs. These eight components, Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review/Assessment, while intended specifically to address the academic success and development of students' learning through a second language, share many features recommended for high quality academic instruction of all students, including the heritage learners.

Thus, Vision Academy Charter School's language program includes: standards-based English as a second language instruction supported by the SIOP model, content area instruction aligned with the corresponding standards and adapted to meet the needs of the students and assessment processes that reflect the academic standards and instruction. The language program meets a three-part test which is mandated by federal law (Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, *Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (1981)). The program is: (1) based on sound educational and language learning theory; (2) implemented with sufficient resources and staffed by appropriately prepared personnel; and (3) periodically evaluated.

Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Supporting educationally disadvantaged students and students with disabilities qualified for support services as identified by IDEA

Vision Academy draws students with academic aptitudes and achievement from across the spectrum. The school's Response to Intervention process includes parents, teachers, and specialists (as needed) to create a holistic approach. Students in all tiers receive differentiated instruction designed to support access to content standards and to improve academic achievement. Each student is evaluated regularly and updated plans are designed as necessary. The school's RTI model follows this path: If, after one marking period, there is no noted improvement, the team meets again to review existing supports and identify further necessary efforts. If, after two marking periods, no improvement is noted, the student is referred for special education testing. At any time, however, a parent may request such testing.

If a student is identified as "at risk" of not completing their education based on factors such as poor school performance, poor attendance or behavioral difficulties they are referred to the school's Child Study Team which is appointed by the school CEO. The team will recommend additions to the student's personal education plan beyond RTI, which is specifically designed to provide appropriate interventions, such as, but not limited to, the following: tutoring, counseling, mentoring, apprenticeship programs, personal education plans, and family outreach.

The school is committed to serving students identified with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and with the appropriate accommodations as identified in individualized education or 504 plans. The school has established standard procedures for recommendation to testing by staff, and informs parents that they may request testing for a learning disability at any time. The school follows regulatory timeline procedures for the notification, testing, and meeting process, and has certified special educators and a special education coordinator on staff

to ensure compliance with all regulatory documentation and appropriate service delivery to students with disabilities. The school integrates modifications (such as scribes, assistive technology, extended test-taking time) into the school day as much as possible, and provides academic, social, and other supports in an mainstreamed environment. The IEP/504 team utilizes numerous data points to track success related to IEP goals and monitors all students with disabilities to ensure that they receive appropriate grade-level content reflective of the identified disability needs. Because of the small class and school size, differentiation has been particularly effective with special education students.

Specific support activities that are open to all students, but targeted toward disadvantaged and/or struggling students (both those with and without identified learning disabilities) include:

In-school individual support focused on core content:

- Students are provided one-on-one staff or volunteer tutoring on specific content matter during the school day;
- Individualized learning programs;
- Extended learning time during the school day in ELA and Math for all students;
- Homework Club/Extended Day that encourages participation by students from disadvantaged households. It includes not only specific content support as identified through RTI or individual teachers, but also snack. Counseling and parent engagement opportunities are also offered during this time frame, as needed;
- Saturday Academy for identified students to complete individual programs.
- Counseling and problem-solving support.

In-school group support focused on core content:

- Small RTI group interventions, led by certified teachers;
- Small group tutoring led by university student volunteers;
- School-Wide Positive Behavior Support that is connected to individual and class academic goals;
- Character development.

Extended Day

As a school with a commitment to all learners, it is essential to offer activities beyond the school day that connect traditional classroom content to its broader application and afford extra time for struggling learners. Vision Academy achieves this through a vast array of clubs that enhance academic, social, and emotional skills of students. The school administration is committed to the small school model that allows each student to be actively engaged in an activity. Thus, most clubs have about 10 members, allowing each member to play an active role in decision-making and delivery of club activities. This year, the school projects the following clubs:

Art Club; Band; Book Club; Community Service Club; Dance Club; Drama Club;

First Lego League Club; Geography Bee; Early Elementary Study Club;

Jr. First Lego League Robotics Club; MathCounts Club; Newspaper Club; Photography Club;

Science Club; Words with Friends/Scrabble Club; Spelling Bee; Yearbook Club.

With support from this grant, Vision Academy will establish its Extended Day academic and club program by creating structures and systems upon which the educational, vocational, recreational and social programs are built. There is no fee for participation, and it is open to all students. Currently, the school capitalizes on its relationship with local universities and professionals to help lead several of the clubs in a voluntary means, but plans to employ an

Extended Day Coordinator as the school grows to its full complement. Regular programmatic review has identified areas for improvement that will extend both core content access, but also improve students' problem solving and critical thinking skills. Professional development and program development will be strategically expanded with the additional funding.

Strategy for Assessing Project Objectives

The strategy for assessing the quality of this project will be based on the Building Charter School Quality frameworks for academic and operational quality. This framework was developed by a consensus panel that included the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, CREDO of Stanford University, the Colorado League of Charter Schools, and multiple individuals engaged in the charter school movement, such as government officials, charter school founders and board members, and educators from all levels. Please see Appendix A4 for a copy of the recommended frameworks. The Vision Academy academic quality framework will focus on cohort student achievement, progress over time achievement, and student engagement. Additionally, the school will benchmark performance both locally and nationally to gauge its efficacy in addressing achievement gaps and delivering improved academic outcomes. The board and school administration will set goals based on initial data. Additionally, the school has set objectives that reflect high expectations for personal and social outcomes that are critical to academic achievement, including attendance and suspension/time out. Measurement tools will include:

- NWEA MAP –This assessment benchmarks student performance against peers nationally.

- McGraw Hill Reading Mastery Placement – This assessment helps appropriate place students for ELA/Reading.
- 4Sight Benchmark Assessment – This assessment is the aligned formative assessment to the state summative test, the PSSA. This assessment was selected to ensure that our course content is correctly calibrated to state standards.
- Full-length PSSA practice assessments – This assessment is based on typical PSSA questions and provides a more carefully aligned picture of likely performance on the state test. It is also valuable in giving younger students practice in summative testing settings.
- DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of of Basic Early Literacy Skills) measures phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency, and vocabulary comprehension of students in kindergarten through second grade.

Additionally, staff will developed local formative and summative assessments that are aligned with state standards and provide a richer, more finely tuned picture of student achievement. Assessment results serve as a primary source of dialogue and learning during faculty Professional Learning Community (PLC) time. These instruments are the foundation for the individual learning plans that are developed for all students at the school. Formulated by teachers, parents, students, and other staff as necessary, the plans serve as a critical benchmarking tool that informs all members of the education team – especially the student. The individual learning plan does not override any plan created for students with identified disabilities.

The Building Charter School Quality Operational Framework sets objectives for success that are essential in maintaining ongoing charter school sustainability. These measures focus on financial performance and sustainability (measures include student enrollment, liquidity,

occupancy expenses, and annual audit reviews); board performance (measures include goal setting and monitoring, reporting compliance, leadership oversight and evaluation, contract management and oversight, public accountability and transparency, and continuous improvement); and parent and community engagement (measures include parent/student satisfaction and excess demand). The following are specific goals and objectives for Vision Academy Charter School:

Students will achieve the highest possible academic success

1. By year two 80% of all Kindergarten through Second Grade Students will demonstrate grade level skills in reading measured by DIBELS testing and in mathematics as measured by end-of-year testing in Singapore math.
2. Students will sustain consistent incremental growth toward achieving the state mandated proficiency as measured by improved standardized test scores and adequate yearly progress on the PSSA tests.
3. By year four, at least 20% of all students in Third through Eighth Grade will demonstrate advanced status in state testing.

Students will exceed PSSA subgroup performance of their peers in the William Penn School District.

1. By year two, special education students will exceed performance on PSSA subgroup performance of their peers in the William Penn School District.
2. By year two, the learning gap will be less than 10% in all other subgroups and the aggregate of Vision Academy on PSSA.

Students will demonstrate annual growth.

1. 80% of all First through Eight Grade Students will demonstrate at least one year of growth in reading and mathematics as measured by Measure of Academic Progress testing and PSSA testing

Students will demonstrate academic inquisitiveness and independence.

1. 100% of students will display t projects at semi-annual school curriculum nights.
2. 100% of Sixth through Eighth Grade Students will present to a group of invited guests that will include parents, professionals, and community members an independently driven project that addresses a current community issue.
3. 80% of Sixth through Eighth Grade Students will participate in a flipped classroom experience and successfully pass that class.

Students will be at school and on time for classes.

1. Students will meet state mandated adequately yearly progress (AYP) goals in daily attendance and participation rate in assessments
2. The daily student attendance rate will be 90%, less than 10% daily tardy
3. The number of missed classes due to unexcused absence will be less than 3% annually

Vision Academy Charter School will be a safe environment that will set the stage for improved student outcomes.

1. The aggregate number of out-of-school suspensions and reportable incidents will be lower than similar grade clusters in the William Penn School District.
2. The school will provide at least two presentations on its positive behavior support system to parents/guardians annually.
3. 100% of students and staff will participate in school-wide character development programming

Students will appreciate education as a personal endeavor that will support their own goals in college and career.

1. Students will follow the Vision Academy code of conduct evidenced by less than 75% of students being cited for a Code of Conduct.
2. Students will fulfill all coursework requirements and participate in assessments as reported by teachers, evidenced by more than 90% of the student body passing

Vision Academy will be a school where parents/guardians are engaged in their children's education allowing them to foster and support long-range personal academic goals of their individual child and the entire student body.

1. At least one parent will serve as member of the school's Board of Directors.
2. 95% of parents/guardians of Vision Academy students will participate in at least one face-to-face parent (or guardian)/teacher meeting.
3. 80% of parents/guardians will attend at least one curriculum night event throughout the school year.
4. Surveys measuring parent satisfaction will have at least a 50% return rate
5. Parent satisfaction surveys will demonstrate at least 85% of parents are highly satisfied with Vision Academy.
6. By Year 4, 60% of parents/guardians will be engaged with the National Network of Partnership Schools TOPS homework program.
7. Annually, the school will convene an Action Team based on the National Network of Partnership Schools research that includes parents and will produce at least two events annually designed to improve parent engagement with learning.

8. The school will log parent volunteer hours and will demonstrate an annual increase in volunteer time.

Vision Academy will maintain a consistent staff and student body that will accelerate learning and contribute to continuity in the delivery of content and services.

1. 80% of students who are enrolled in September at Vision Academy will complete the school year.

2. 85% of students will be reenrolled annually by Year 4.

3. By Year 4, staff retention shall be greater than 80% and shall remain at minimum an average of 80% retention over each subsequent renewal.

Vision Academy will be compliant with all laws and regulations applicable to charter schools in Pennsylvania thus ensuring all students and staff members receive fair and equitable treatment, assuring proper use of taxpayer funds, and supporting continuity in service to students.

1. Vision Academy will submit 100% of required student and staff data on time.

2. Vision Academy will submit 100% of required financial data on time.

Community Support and Parental/Community Involvement

The Vision Academy Charter School is the first charter school in the William Penn School District. It was developed by a diverse group of community leaders who believed that families in the area were seeking an alternative for their children in a school that acknowledged the value that each family and child brings to the school community. Founders include an Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, the founder of an afterschool program for at-risk youth, an educator working in the foster care system, in addition to business and community leaders. The founding board actively worked together, visiting an out-of-state Core

Knowledge demonstration school and collaborating with experts in education and parent engagement from the immediate area and from New York and Maryland. The community was further consulted for input through multiple informational meetings that outlined the proposed curriculum and instructional practices and gathered feedback. Additionally, the founding board collected approximately 200 pre-enrollment applications before the school had even been approved. The application for Vision Academy was submitted in 2012, and rejected by the district board of directors. Pennsylvania law allows for consideration of appeal by a statewide panel. Founders collected 1,400 signatures in support of Vision Academy and the state board of appeal approved the school finding that it met all of the rigors of the state law.

Ongoing community support for the school has been demonstrated by the full enrollment of the school at the start of the school year and a waiting list of 500 students. The school has actively engaged families in the community through an interactive website, flyers, open houses, the news media, and word of mouth. Continued community engagement will be fostered by a Community Advisory Committee that is comprised of two board members of the school and community members from within the school (such as students, parents, teachers) and beyond the school (such as business owners, community leaders, and educators). Please see Appendix B 6 for members of the Community Advisory Committee.

Parent Engagement

Parent interest played a critical role in founding Vision Academy. Parental engagement is critical to student success, but in serving high-need students, many parents are reluctant to attend school activities that may highlight barriers they have faced in the past.

To increase parent engagement in a structured format, the school will establish a Parent Teacher Organization that serves as a primary conduit for formal interaction between school

leadership and teachers and parents. Parents and teachers will sit on a number of committees that are coordinated through the PTO. Leadership of the PTO will, at minimum, sit on the Community Advisory Committee.

To ensure that the parent voice plays a role in governance, by policy, at least one parent serves on the Board of Trustees, as a voting member, ensuring a significant voice in the operations of the school.

Parents will be involved in the control and management of YSMCS by participation or representation on the subcommittees of the board, in compliance with the by-laws for the School. Policy also requires that teachers make formal contact with parents on a monthly basis to discuss a student's progress in academic and non-academic areas and this contact is logged in student records and telephone/meeting logs.

It is the day-to-day involvement in a student's school life that is the critical component of parent engagement. Engagement begins in the admissions process with orientation and home/school workshop which provide information about the school and its programs. During orientation, parents are invited to become a member of any of the committees that are established to improve the school. In addition to scheduled events that encourage parents/guardians to visit the school, such as open houses, report card conferences, and Curriculum Nights. The school's small size allows for frequent interaction with staff members who communicate regularly with parents outside of scheduled updates. Parents/guardians who are unable to come to the school to discuss student progress or participate in school activities will receive personal home visits from staff to be given updates on student progress and share their thoughts on their child's progress.

Quarterly progress reports for students include narratives that give further depth to student performance. Narratives are provided in the parent/guardian native language to ensure

clear communication. Parents are encouraged to use these narratives as a starting point for further discussion about student performance with a signed feedback form. In addition to their individual student progress, the school provides parents with a quarterly school review that highlights whole school performance. At any time, parents may inspect and review all of their children's educational records maintained by the charter school, as well as the school's aggregate standardized test results and the results of parent satisfaction surveys.

Parents' input is solicited for teachers' evaluations. As valued members of the education team, parents will have input into teacher evaluations via the teacher satisfaction survey instruments. In addition to teacher evaluation, the Annual School Assessment will document parents' opinions and suggestions regarding whole school operations.

By joining the Johns Hopkins University National Network of Partnership Schools, which is a source for the Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork, the school will be delivering a structured parent engagement program in this area.

The Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) Interactive Homework provides the framework for any teacher to regularly keep more families informed and involved in their children's learning and help more students complete their homework. TIPS Interactive Homework is part of a comprehensive program of school, family, and community partnerships and is an example of "Learning at Home" activity of the partnership.

TIPS features homework assignments that require students to talk to someone at home about something interesting that they are learning in class. TIPS helps solve some important problems with homework:

- TIPS helps all families become involved, not just the few who know how to discuss math, science, or other subjects.

- TIPS makes homework the student's responsibility and does not ask parents to "teach" subjects or skills that they are not prepared to teach.
- TIPS asks students to share and enjoy their work, ideas, and progress with their families.
- TIPS allows families to comment and request other information from teachers in a section for home-to-school communication.

School Marketing and Equitable Enrollment Practices

Vision Academy is committed to ensuring that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to attend the school. Marketing includes outreach directly to potential parents and teachers, as well as to pediatricians, counselors, social service agencies, and other youth advocates. At open houses, prospective students and their parents or guardians are provided a comprehensive presentation about the school. Invitations to "open houses" are widely distributed to parents and students throughout the local school district. The school forwards announcements to the public through many routes, such as community organizations of all kinds, direct mailings, public and private elementary schools, after-school programs, youth and community centers, businesses and civic organizations, and flyers posted and distributed in various communities.

Interested parents and guardians who did not attend one of the school's open houses are provided upon request with a packet of written materials covering all the topics formally discussed at the open houses and a meeting is scheduled with appropriate school staff for interested parties to review all the materials in person and tour the school. Teachers serve as translators for parents with limited English proficiency. Prospective students and their parents or guardians are encouraged to spend a day visiting the school and sitting-in on classrooms.

Interested parents/guardians are required to complete and submit an application form to be considered for the lottery (if one is required). Applications are available at the school, at open

houses held at accessible locations throughout the community, and on-line. The application follows regulatory requirements, requesting basic biographical information (name, age, etc.), contact information, and other important facts (e.g., school currently attended). Staff is available to assist any parent or guardian who needs help completing the application.

Completed applications must be submitted prior to the deadline to be considered if a lottery is required. If the number of eligible applications for admission exceeds the spaces available for students, a random lottery is held. Such a lottery is open to the public, and attended and/or audited by a representative of a disinterested outside organization.

Admission to the school is solely based on lottery when a grade is oversubscribed. The school does not discriminate in any admissions policy and actively seeks to recruit a diverse student body and diverse teaching body.

Quality of Project Personnel

School Management

The Board of Trustees governs all operations of the school, delegating day-to-day management functions to the administrative staff and establishing a reporting relationship between the board and the school director. The board is responsible for ensuring that the school is run in compliance with the charter application and all applicable laws and for ensuring the school's sustained financial viability.

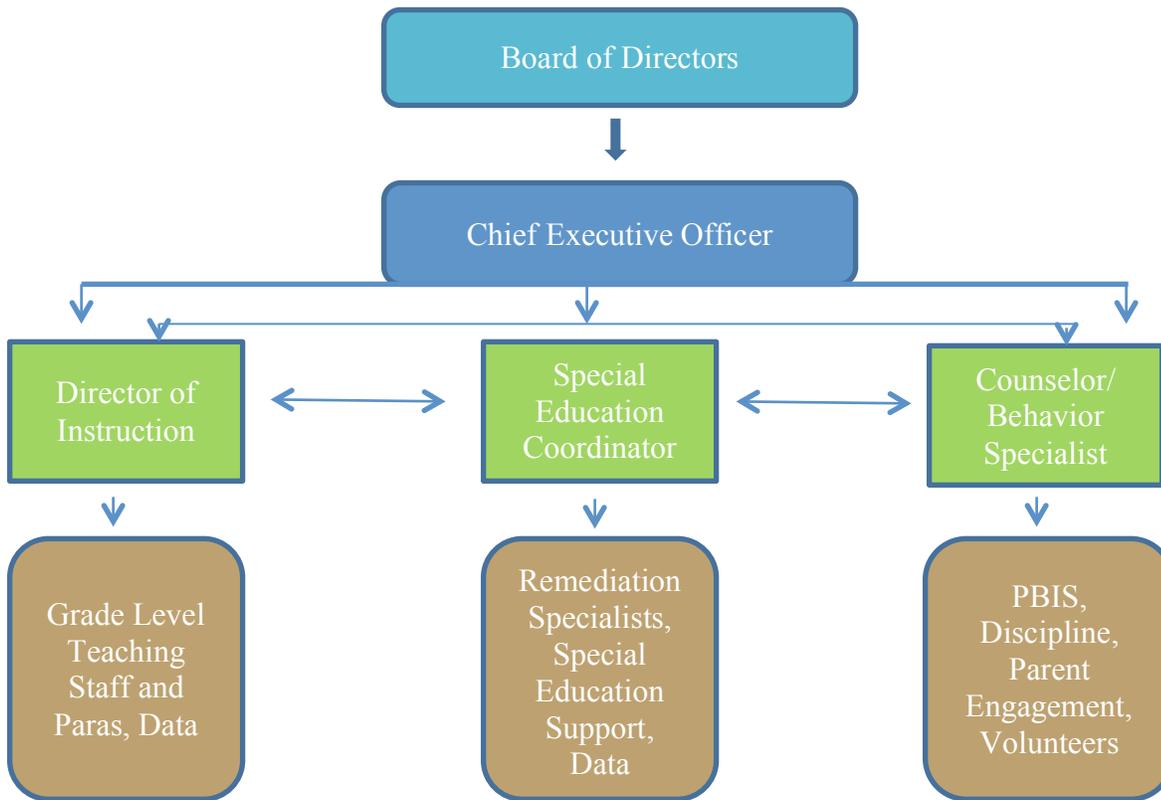
In transitioning from founding board to operating board, the Board of Trustees participated in development and orientation. To ensure continuity of training and board development, the school's Board Development Committee manages the board recruitment process and conveys the school's mission and the individual expectations for board members to

all candidates so that newly recruited board members enter with a firm understanding of the school's mission, the Founding Coalition's vision, and their role within the board. A formal orientation program at the beginning of each new term will serve as a forum for founders to articulate their vision to the board while allowing an opportunity for new and old board Members to merge into an effective team. Among the broader roles and responsibilities of Board of Trustees are:

- 1) Ensure the charter school's mission and purpose is maintained and updated;
- 2) Select the charter school administrators;
- 3) Support the charter school administrator and review his or her performance;
- 4) Ensure effective organizational planning;
- 5) Ensure adequate resources;
- 6) Manage resources effectively;
- 7) Determine and monitor the charter school's programs and services;
- 8) Enhance the charter school's public image;
- 9) Assess School and Board performance.

The leadership team of Vision Academy includes Dr. Ertugrul Cubukcu, President of the Board; Adam Oksuz, CEO; Isaac Durmus, Director of Instruction; Sherry Hales, Special Education Coordinator; and Andrea Simpson, School Counselor/Behavior Specialist. Their resumes are included in Appendix B1, B2, B3, B4, B5. The leadership team combines 54 years of teaching and school leadership serving disadvantaged students in both district and charter school settings.

The leadership organization chart is as follows:



Serving as Chief Executive Officer of Vision Academy is Adem Oksuz. Mr.Oksuz involved in the development of educational program for the school from the beginning. He holds bachelor’s degree in science education and a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership from Pennsylvania State University. He served as the Principal of Sonoran Science Academy Tucson, one of the top performing schools in the state, and eventually became Superintendent of Sonoran Science Academy Schools, which included 7 public charter schools serving students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades and more than 200 staff and faculty. In addition to his direct teaching and school administration, Mr. Oksuz has served as an educational consultant, developing systems to support schools in curriculum, instruction, capacity, and assessment, and also as a monitor of Title I, II, III programs, Priority/Focus Schools Programs, and School Improvement Grant

Programs for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Mr. Oksuz has extensive experience managing the financial aspects of charter schools and has the rare expertise of understanding the interdependence of day-to-day academic operations with budgeting and implementation of continuous improvement processes.

Financial Services

Michael Whisman, CPA from Charter Choices, Inc. will provide financial services to include a) Accounts Payable and Receivable Services, b) Payroll Services, c) PDE, Federal Grant, and Tax Reporting, d) Internal Reporting and Budgeting. Michael managed the local charter school audit practice of the 13th largest US public accounting firm. His organization continues to provide consulting services to many of Michael's previous audit clients. Since the inception of the charter school law, Michael has been an active member in the charter school community. Michael has testified numerous times in Harrisburg at the House of Representative Education Committee hearings on the topic of charter school funding. As an advocate for school choice, Michael has dedicated his career to charter schools and to looking for alternative methods of educating the students of Pennsylvania. Most recently, Michael's idea of a bilingual cyber charter school became reality when the Pennsylvania Department of Education Appeal Board approved the charter application, making the Cyber Charter School one of the first bilingual cyber charters schools in the nation. Michael is a shareholder at Charter Choices, Inc.

Director of Instruction

Working with Mr. Oksuz as Director of Instruction is Isaac Drumus. Mr. Drumus began his teaching career as a biology teacher in Azerbaijan. Upon moving to United States, his career expanded to include responsibilities as the department chair of the Patterson Charter School for Science and Technology. He has served as a vice principal, principal and dean of academics

and is a certified principal in Pennsylvania. He has managed curriculum and extended-day programming and has demonstrated expertise in data-driven instruction, Direct Instruction, and curriculum alignment.

Special Education Coordinator

Essential to meeting the academic needs of underserved students is a comprehensive educational support team. Sherry Hales serves as the Special Education Coordinator. Ms. Hales holds a master's degree in special education and served as a special education teacher in the Philadelphia School District and eventually as an educational consultant to learning support teachers. Her background in working with diverse students with a broad range of learning needs and utilization of RTI as a component of addressing learning support will help Vision Academy ensure that all students are given the appropriate tools and assistance to success.

School's Counselor

Andrea Simpson serves as the school's counselor and behavior specialist. Ms. Simpson holds a master's degree in school counseling and certification in elementary school counseling. She also is a licensed Behavior Specialist and has assisted both district and charter schools in developing and implementing successful Positive Behavior Support programs. She will work closely with other administrators and staff in developing individualized Positive Behavior Support plans, including Functional Behavior Assessments. Ms. Simpson will also direct parent engagement programs and work with students and families to address any discipline or attendance issues.

President of The Board

The governing board of Vision Academy is led by Ertugrul Cubuku, PhD. A graduate of Harvard University, Dr. Cubuku is an internationally renowned expert in nanotechnology and

widely published. Currently an assistant professor at University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Cubuku teaches, manages teaching assistants, and manages the nanotechnology lab. Dr. Cubukcu is an expert at data evaluation, program management and research and is effective in evaluation.

Vice President

Leslie Lewis, founder and director of Fresh Start, a community-based after school program for at-risk youth, serves as the board Vice President. A lifelong resident of the community, Ms. Lewis has experience in working with at-risk children, program management, community relations and education. She has worked closely with the district through her after-school program and is recognized as a selfless educator in the community.

Treasurer

Gohan Sheker serves as treasurer of the board. Mrs. Sheker is the manager of Martin Mainline Honda and has a Masters in Business Administration.

Other Members

Board member Carletta Mason holds a master's degree in education and currently works with foster care placement and support. She has worked extensively with at-risk children and children with disabilities. Member Linwood Morris is a respected community member who manages his own automobile racing program and brings expertise in marketing and community outreach. Member Halil Erol is a research scientist with expertise in data evaluation. Member Bonita Barnwell is a parent of a Vision Academy student.

Community Advisory Committee

To establish a more formal relationship with the community, the Board has established a Community Advisory Committee that is the official connection between the school and its broader community. Membership to the Community Advisory Committee will include at least

two members of the School's Board of Directors, but otherwise, membership and numbers are unlimited. Community Advisory Committee Members are from diverse backgrounds to include retired educators, former politicians, retired PA State Representative, businessmen, parents whose students are enrolled at the School.

School Staff Diversity and Evaluation

Staff and administrative selection is based on identifying the best-qualified personnel without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, marital status, or disability. The school policies ensure equal opportunity for the advancement of staff members and equal treatment in the areas of training, promotion, transfer, layoff, and termination.

By appealing for staff through connections to the community and universities in the area that attract underrepresented minorities, Vision Academy has been successful in recruiting a diverse administrative and teaching body who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. *Currently, the school has 20 faculty, 30 % are minorities, 40 % are first generation college graduates, 20% are multi-lingual, 100% have more than one certification or highly qualified designation.*

From this, clearly the school has achieved a successful staff recruiting and marketing plan that reflects its commitment to diversity. The School and its employees sign a contract with the terms of employment for the teaching, administrative, and other positions negotiated within the parameters of relevant Pennsylvania statutes. The faculty and staff are required to enter into individual term employment agreements resembling those used in business, but explicitly stating that all requirements of the Charter Law are incorporated into the agreement. Teaching staff may be obligated to provide services or in service-days, during the school academic year, or during the entire year depending upon their role in the school. The agreement affirms that any materials

created by staff members for use by the School, or produced using the staff or resources of the school, are works-for-hire and all intellectual property rights are vested in the school.

Upon selecting candidates for hiring, the CEO presents his recommendations to the board for approval. The board then offers the approved candidates an employment contract. Vision Academy strongly believes that the quality of the professional staff is an important factor in determining the quality of education offered in the school. It is the responsibility of the school administration to locate and recruit the best-qualified candidates to meet the school's educational needs. The school will search for certified personnel for all positions. However, in case of shortage of certified candidates or for any other reason, uncertified candidates with required qualifications will be considered.

Staff selection is based on strong academic preparation, professional competence, intellectual rigor, emotional maturity, enthusiastic professional attitude, knowledge of instructional practices, and ability to contribute to the advancement of the school's educational goals. Among other factors, emphasis will be placed on the candidate's academic record and his/her previous relevant experience. Staff must be willing and able to provide the educational support that a diverse student population requires in the school. Vision Academy's teaching staff members must fulfill their individual responsibilities and work in concert with the other members of the teaching team.

Vision Academy may choose to implement some of the following in attracting and retaining prospective staff members; (i) Establishing school-university partnerships. (ii) Hiring young, motivated and successful new teachers. (iii) Hiring new teachers under temporary, emergency, or provisional licenses. (iv) Offering salary schedule credit for higher education experience. (v) Placing high-demand teachers above entry level on the salary scale. (vi) Offering

support to beginning teachers. (vii) Providing financial and non-financial rewards to successful teachers.

Vision Academy provides development opportunities to teachers and other staff, both during the day through Professional Learning Communities and through identified staff development days. Professional development is identified through a rigorous evaluation system, student performance, mission-driven delivery needs, and subject area standards updates and legally required trainings. The intensity and specificity of the Core Knowledge curriculum and Direct Instruction require that each teacher fully understand content and its delivery. The Director of Instruction and invited specialists provide intensive start-up training and ongoing support to ensure fidelity to the academic program. Additionally, prior to the opening of school, all teachers attend workshops where the mission of the school, school practices and procedures, performance goals, expectations and codes of conduct will be clearly defined. Teachers form working-learning teams. Teams review principles and strategies of effective classroom management and are introduced to assessment tools the school uses. Experts in the field provide training in specific educational areas including curriculum, instruction methods, special education and other programs.

Vision Academy adjusts teacher schedules for PLC time. During that time, teachers focus on improving content delivery through shared reflection, data evaluation and modification as needed. This collaborative and supportive system helps struggling educators gain a stronger foothold in instruction and helps build opportunities for teacher leaders. The school holds monthly faculty meetings to find collective ideas developed by the staff members. The school encourages the staff members to attend workshops and courses given outside of school and the authorized expenses are reimbursed within the limits of the budget. Alternatively, teams of

teachers may request to use the funds to invite presenters to give workshops or courses at the school. Teachers are also be encouraged to become instructional leaders on the state and national level by attending and participating in state and national subject matter conferences.

Successful teaching is based on successful supervision. Vision Academy follows the professional development model “The Frameworks Model” authored by Charlotte Danielson and the work on teacher evaluation by Danielson and McGreal (2000). This model defines formative supervision as serving the purpose of enhancing the instructional skills of teachers by providing constructive feedback, acknowledging exceptional practices, and giving direction for professional development. Non-certified staff will be held to the same criteria to establish internal instructional consistency throughout the organization. School administrators will set annual goals for student achievement and staff development for each faculty member. The board will approve those goals at an annual meeting. The evaluation to identify if goals had been achieved consists of data collection through the following sources:

Formal observations

Formal observations will be prearranged (announced) observations of the teaching and learning process for an entire instructional period. Data related to student interaction, classroom management, lesson planning and implementation, and other specific areas will be collected and shared with the teacher to promote learning-focused dialogue, feedback, and reflection. Formal observations must include both a pre-conference and a post-conference. The pre-conference will be scheduled by the supervisor, prior to the observation, for the purposes of sharing information about the planned instructional lesson and/or establishing trust and rapport. The pre-conference also provides notice of the time and date of the classroom observation.

The post-conference provides opportunities for the supervisor to share oral and possible written feedback as a part of a learning-focused dialogue. The formative purpose of the post-conference is to dialogue about the teaching and learning observed, with the intended outcome of enhancing performance and instructional effectiveness that improves students' learning. The post-conference is completed by the supervisor and teacher within three school days of a classroom observation, and preferably within 24 hours of the observation.

Informal Observations

Informal observations are observations of the teaching and learning process for at least 15 minutes in length, which must include some type of oral or written feedback. When possible, supervisors will engage teachers in a learning-focused dialogue about the observed lesson. Informal observations may be announced, but will be generally unannounced visits, at the choice of the supervisor. When a post-conference is provided, the purpose and procedures for conducting it and providing feedback are virtually the same as for a formal observation, although the length is typically briefer.

Daily Walkthroughs (Virtual Walkthroughs)

Walkthroughs are brief classroom visits where supervisors spend a short amount of time in classrooms for various purposes. The role of walkthroughs is consistent with educational research regarding the importance of visible instructional leaders. Supervisors are encouraged to complete walkthroughs on an ongoing basis to get regular "snapshots" of the teaching and learning process. Supervisors are not required to provide teacher with oral or written feedback collected during walkthroughs.

Supervision Process for Vision Academy Charter School Formative Process

<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Self- Supervision</i>	<i>Peer Supervision</i>
Conduct classroom observations to observe and dialogue about the teaching & learning process	Analysis of Teaching Practices	Peer Coaching
Review artifacts of teaching	Peer observations and peer teaching	Mentoring
Monitor evidence of student learning	Analysis of students' learning	
Monitor professional goal(s)	Implementation of professional goal(s)	

Sample Artifacts: Lesson Plans, Journals, Student work, Formative and Summative Assessment data, Other Relevant data (DIBELS, MAP), Participation in grade level teams, Discipline Records, Student surveys, Communications with parents and students, Benchmark data, materials use to promote higher level thinking.

Supervision Process for Vision Academy Charter School Summative Process

<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Performance Criteria</i>	<i>Types of Data Collected</i>
Conduct classroom observations to observe and dialogue about the teaching & learning process	Instructional Planning & Preparation Classroom Environment Instructional Process	Teacher Self- Assessment
Review artifacts of teaching	Instructional Planning & Preparation Classroom Environment	
Monitor evidence of student learning	Analysis of students' learning	Benchmark Data Student Grades Student Surveys
Monitor professional goal(s)	Implementation of professional goal(s)	

Sample Artifacts: Lesson Plans, Journals, Student work, Formative and Summative Assessment data, Other Relevant data (DIBELS, MAP), Participation in grade level teams, Discipline

Records, Student surveys, Communications with parents and students, other benchmark data, materials use to promote higher level thinking.

Performance standards are based on multiple sources of data collected over time and lead to lead to both school-wide and individual professional development plans. School administrators will set annual goals related to student achievement and staff development with each faculty member, using an integrated performance management system that values the balanced synergy required to effectively educate students.

Standards for Evaluation are portfolio based and include:

Evaluation Standard 1: Student Achievement

Evaluation Tools: Active classroom participation data, formative testing data, grade-book review, PSSA scores, demonstration of individualized teaching

At the start of the school year student data is compiled and will be presented to teachers at the grade level meeting. The School Leader or Director of Instruction will meet with each grade level team as well as each individual teacher to discuss data and evidence of student success. After teacher observations, conducted by the school leader, goal setting for instruction will result. It is an expectation that student data is used to drive instruction and implement effective lessons.

Evaluation Standard 2: Content Delivery

Evaluation Tool: Use of Direct Instruction, Project Based Learning, or Flipped Classroom delivery.

The School Leader and Director of Instruction gather data regarding teacher's fidelity to content delivery systems in the classroom. In addition to content and pedagogy, Director of

Instruction conducts professional development sessions for teachers to ensure that teachers have the tools and training for effective use of technology.

Evaluation Standard 3: Professionalism and Content Expertise

Evaluation Tool: Attendance, participation in PD, completion of any assigned PD development plan work

All teachers are required to attend school wide professional development to ensure that they have the training needed to be effective in the teaching environment. The administration then conducts formal and informal observations to determine level of effectiveness and if additional support or training is needed. Documentation is provided for the teacher portfolios/folders to ensure systematic implementation of the program.

Evaluation Standard 4: Team commitment

Evaluation Tool: Participation in team meetings, completion of team projects, peer support (Teacher Mentoring)

Student needs must drive decisions related to academic achievement. To that end all teachers are expected to be fully committed to the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model. PLCs provide a resource for teachers for the exchange of effective practices that are resulting in success for students. Teachers are then required to implement suggested strategies and/or interventions in their classes, documenting student success and improvements. Evidence collected regarding the effectiveness of the meetings will include meeting minutes, team participation, team project and data regarding student and parent contact by individuals and the team.

All administrative professionals (such as the Director of Instruction, School Nurse, Special Education Coordinator) will be evaluated based on the job description presented at

employment, the academic performance of aligned areas (such as the academic performance of special education students), and evaluations from staff members as well as the school leader.

Additionally, the school administrators will be evaluated by the effective delivery of board-approved targets in the school-wide framework of operational success, as well as any state mandated evaluation tools and any School Improvement Plans.

The board will annually evaluate the school leader based on a rubric of performance scores for the school as recommended below by Charter School Tools, a non-profit organization that provides support to charter schools by sharing best practices of high performing charter schools around the country.

SCHOOL LEADER EVALUATION RUBRIC

(based on the New Leaders for New Schools evaluation model)

Five Criteria and Recommended Weighting	Best in Class	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Un-satisfactory
Academic Performance (40 points)	#1 or 2 school in market serving similar populations	Meets 100% of charter application or contract goals*	Meets 90% of charter application or contract goals*	Meets 50% of charter application or contract goals*	Fails to meet at least 50% of charter application or contract goals*
Financial Management (25 points)	Exceeds paid enrollment target by at least 3%; revenue above budget and expenses below budget; year 3 equity >10% of annual revenue (or 3%/year)	Meets paid enrollment target; revenue on or above budget and expenses on or below budget; year 3 equity >10% of annual revenue (or 3%/year)	Meets enrollment and attendance targets; net operating surplus; year 3 equity >5% of annual revenue (or 2%/year)	Short of enrollment and attendance targets; net operating deficit; reserves <2% of annual revenue; at least one instance of non-compliance identified by authorizer	Short of enrollment and attendance targets; net operating deficit; reserves <2% of annual revenue; material control weakness identified by independent auditor
Academic Program Fidelity** (20 points)	Academic program is recognized as exemplary by authorizer, state charter association, and	Academic program implementation has gone well beyond the original charter application;	Academic program meets the description in original charter application or in strategic	Academic program implementation meets some of the elements described in original charter	Academic program does not meet most of the elements described in original charter application or

Five Criteria and Recommended Weighting	Best in Class	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Un-satisfactory
	donors/investors	special program elements are infused throughout the curriculum	plan adopted by the board; all stakeholders can articulate and identify key elements of the program	application or strategic plan adopted by the board	updated strategic plan; few stakeholders can articulate key elements of the program
Parent/Teacher/Student Satisfaction (10 points)	90% of parents, students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 90% attendance at parent conferences; 90% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	80% of parents, students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 70% attendance at parent conferences; 80% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	75% of parents, students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 50% attendance at parent conferences; 75% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	50% of parents, students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 33% attendance at parent conferences; 65% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	Less than 50% of parents, students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures (or no surveys conducted); below 33% attendance at parent conferences; less than 65% teacher retention and student re-enrollment
Fundraising/Community Relations (5 points)	Organization has exceeded fundraising goals and increased number of donors and total raised every year; at least 15 positive new stories per year and at least 15 school tours or visits hosted per year	Organization has met fundraising goals and increased number of donors and total raised most years; at least 10 positive new stories per year and at least 10 school tours or visits hosted per year.	Organization has received significant cash and in-kind donations and has a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has many more positive news stories than negative and has hosted at least 5 school tours or visits	Organization has received insignificant cash and in-kind donations, does not have a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has few or generally neutral news stories; organization web site is not updated regularly	Organization has received no cash and in-kind donations, does not have a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has significant number of negative new stories

Funding from this grant will support improved PLC activities, including training on data-driven instruction, effective delivery of Core Knowledge and direct instruction, and differentiation.

Quality of Project Management Plan

The Vision Academy Board of Directors and CEO established a timeline tracker to identify key benchmarks for establishing the school and its initial opening. After the first three weeks of school, the leadership team met to identify critical components necessary for the successful delivery of the proposed school program. Based on teacher feedback, administrative observation, parent and student feedback, and input from consultative resources, the leadership team identified five key areas to target in the school's initial year of operation. Each area, while a critical stand-alone component is interdependent upon the other and essential in meeting the goals set forth by the school. The leadership team has developed a management plan for the implementation of this grant that covers five key areas:

Professional Development; Curricular Resource Development; Technology Development, Community and Parent Awareness and Marketing; and Physical Plant Improvements. Please see Appendix C for the full management plan for this project.

Quality of Charter Contract

The existence and quality of charter contract and its authorizer and how the authorized public chartering agency will provide for continued operation of the charter school once the federal grant expired; and a description of any State or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that will be waived for, or otherwise not apply to, the school.

As noted earlier, Vision Academy Charter School is authorized by the William Penn School District. The charter contract that exists was approved by the Pennsylvania Charter

School Appeals board and includes the rigorous outlined goals and objectives stated earlier in this proposal, which include student achievement based on state assessments as well as other measures of determining a quality academic program and overall school operations. The district superintendent has been kept apprised of the school development before the opening day through formal meetings with founding board members. Currently, the CEO attends regular meetings with the district and is in frequent contact with the district liaison for charter schools as questions arise on the part of either the district or the charter school. There is a collegial respect that the school provides for students in and around the district and that collaboration is the productive avenue to support student learning.

It is the policy of Vision Academy to welcome visitors from the district to attend Board of Trustee meetings, or to observe the school at any time. Representatives from the district officially are expected to visit the school.

At the conclusion of the grant, which is designated for one-time refinements to the school's existing program, the authorizer relationship will continue to serve as the primary oversight body that will evaluate success based on the charter contract and the effective delivery of the charter based on what was set forth and the state's existing charter school laws. Please see Appendix E for a copy of the school's charter.

Flexibility afforded by the SEA and Authorizing District

As a charter school in Pennsylvania, Vision Academy is given exception to state and local rules in a number of areas. Unlike many neighboring states that have limited the flexibility to charter school operations and delivery, Pennsylvania remains a very attractive state to implement innovative practice. For instance, in Maryland, charter school staff must be unionized

and in Delaware charter schools must use a state-mandated teacher evaluation system. Vision Academy is given complete autonomy in the selection of its staff, and, unlike its authorizing district is a non-union school that has an evaluation model that reviews staff efficacy on multiple measures, including student performance and parent satisfaction. The school is also given full autonomy over budgeting and facility, two areas in which the district is restricted in both funding and allocation rules, both from the local bargaining unit and state rules. Vision Academy is also given the flexibility in length of school day to focus on its unique curricular content and delivery in an extended day that supports its significant free- and reduced-lunch student population and helps in closing the achievement gap. Local and state rules for districts regulate content time allocation, school year, and other issues that make this a difficult delivery model in the district model.

Project Funding and Specific Grant Funding Uses

Funding for Vision Academy's rigorous and ambitious program is primarily based on state and local per pupil funding. Funding from this grant will be combined with other federal funds to advance curriculum and delivery to improve students' learning outcomes for high-need and disadvantaged students.

This grant will fund refinements to the Vision Academy Charter School program, including the following:

- ✓ Staff development regarding data-driven instruction, project-based instruction, differentiated instruction.
- ✓ Curriculum development and expansion in kindergarten through eighth grades.
- ✓ Technology improvements that align with school mission and identified areas of need.

- ✓ Improvements in furnishings to create an effective learning environment, especially in the sciences.

Budget Narrative and Detail

The Budget Narrative and Detail that further outlines funding uses is included in Appendix D.

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CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM ASSURANCES – NON-STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Pursuant to Section 5202(b) of the ESEA, an applicant for CSP funds that is not a State educational agency (SEA) must provide the following assurances.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant will submit the following to the Secretary:

- A. Pursuant to Section 5202(b) of the ESEA, an applicant for CSP funds that is not a State educational agency (SEA) must provide the following assurances.
- B. As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant will submit to the Secretary:
- C. All items described in the application requirements;
- D. An assurance that the eligible applicant will annually provide the Secretary such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in section 5203(b)(3)(C)(i) of the ESEA;
- E. An assurance that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;
- F. 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;
- G. Proof that the applicant has applied to an authorized public chartering authority to operate a charter school and provided to that authority adequate and timely notice, and a copy, of this application; or an assurance that this application is for a precharter planning grant and the authorized public chartering authority to which a charter school proposal will be submitted has not been determined;
- H. A copy of proof of applicant's non-profit status;
- I. The applicants' DUNS and TIN numbers;
- J. A statement as to whether or not an applicant for planning and implementation funding has previously received funding for this program either through a State subgrant or directly from the Department;
- K. Assurances that the State educational agency will (i) grant, or will obtain, waivers of State statutory or regulatory requirements; and (ii) will assist each subgrantee in the State in receiving a waiver under section 5204(e) of the ESEA.

NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

TITLE

CEO

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

DATE

10/02/2015

VISION ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL

DATE SUBMITTED

10/03/2015

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION

2012 Charter School Application

VISION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



SUBMITTED TO
WILLIAM PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 15, 2012

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

APPLICATION FACT SHEET

This application fact sheet is intended to be a “finger-tip” summary of your application. The information furnished below must be an accurate representation of the application and must correspond to the information provided in the body of the application.

Proposed Charter School Name (Must Include “Charter School” in the Title)

Vision Academy Charter School

School Location (City/Town and Zip Code) 404 Industrial Park Drive, Yeadon, PA 19050
 County: Delaware

Intermediate Unit DCIU#25

Proposed Start Date September 2013 Date of School Board Approval _____

Federal Employer Identification Number _____ Aun # _____ (Supplied by PDE)

Contact Person:

First Leslie Middle _____ Last Lewis

Organization Vision Academy Charter School

City P.O. 837, Lansdowne State PA Zip Code 19050

Telephone Fax Number E-mail

Founding Coalition	Staff: Total Number of Teachers	Projected Student Enrollment Year 1-5
Parent _____ Teachers _____ Business Partnership _____ Community Based Org. _____ Museum _____ Higher Education _____ Other Founding Group <u>X</u>	Grade Level: Opening k-4, grow k-8 Elementary/Middle: <u>10</u> , grow to 18 Secondary _____ Age of Kindergarten <u>5</u> Age of Beginners <u>6</u> Circle Appropriate Grade: <u>K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8</u> 9 10 11 12	1 st year <u>200</u> 2 nd Year <u>240</u> 3 rd Year <u>280</u> 4 th Year <u>320</u> 5 th Year <u>360</u>

Does the charter applicant have an existing retirement system? Yes _____ No X

Does the applicant group presently have access to a facility suitable for a school? Yes X No _____

In what type of community will the Charter School be located?

Urban X Suburban _____ Rural _____ Other _____

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I. SCHOOL DESIGN

I.1. MISSION STATEMENT

A. Briefly describe the core philosophy or underlying purpose of the proposed school.

The mission of Vision Academy Charter School is to prepare students in kindergarten through eighth grade to become responsible and articulate students and citizens by using a comprehensive curriculum designed to foster academic success and current technology to build self-reliance.

The core philosophy of the Vision Academy Charter School is that all students can achieve success through the fidelity of implementation of the five research-based pillars presented in this application:

- 1) Precise scope and sequence supported through quality curriculum and extended day in a small school environment to ensure mastery of content.
- 2) Calculated delivery model that is refined and improved through the use of data.
- 3) Frequent demonstration of student achievement beyond the test through project based learning and on-line learning opportunities that will lead each student toward autonomous education advocacy.
- 4) Consistent use of school-wide and individual positive behavior support systems.
- 5) Authentic parent engagement that breaks down walls of education disenfranchisement and builds strong home and school relationships.

Through the use of Act 22, the founding group believes that it will be able to create an innovative school that will serve as a valuable asset to the district's portfolio of public schools and help the district fulfill its mission that states "The William Penn School District, having high expectations and accountability for all, is committed to a continuous learning ethic that promotes student achievement and prepares students to make positive choices."

B. What is your overarching vision of the school?

Vision Academy will build from the ground up a platform for learning that:

- Gives every child access to a rich, well-rounded, and rigorous curriculum;
- Helps every child understand the value of knowledge as a tool in upward mobility;
- Provides every child the appropriate amount of time and support for mastery of content;
- Utilizes technology to foster independence in learning and ownership of outcomes;
- Creates a safe and consistent setting that allows for exploration and calls for personal responsibility; and,
- Empowers families and students to define goals and create pathways to achieve those goals.

The Learning Map that Serves as Our Guide: Core Knowledge Sequence

The Core Knowledge Sequence is a roadmap for teachers and parents that clearly defines ideas and content that will be mastered by students over the course of a school year as well as the span of their attendance at Vision Academy’s kindergarten through eighth grade program. The Core Knowledge Sequence presented in this application has been adjusted to Pennsylvania State Learning Standards and Common Core. The Sequence also benefits children in that it provides a logical progression of information that informs broadly, giving children access to information that is critical to success in high school and college.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is a research-based curriculum driver that has a long history of implementation in a variety of school settings. The Sequence has demonstrated results in urban settings, with research pointing to significant academic gains across the academic spectrum and 2012 research demonstrating efficacy in higher levels of literacy achievement.

How Teachers will Teach: Direct Instruction

Direct Instruction (DI) is a model for teaching that emphasizes well-developed and carefully planned lessons designed around small learning increments and clearly defined and prescribed teaching tasks. It is based on the theory that clear instruction eliminating misinterpretations can greatly improve and accelerate learning. Vision Academy Charter School will employ the use of Direct Instruction, which complements the road map for learning provided by the Core Knowledge Sequence.

Key to the success of Direct Instruction is achieving full school, full immersion implementation. The two tenets of Direct Instruction, acceleration and accountability will help administrators and teachers better understand their responsibilities school-wide and in the classroom.

In order to achieve acceleration, curriculum is carefully planned based on scaffolding for future grades. The scope and sequence presented in this application is aligned to this scaffolding. The Director of Instruction will require that each grade level teaching team and individual teachers present in early Fall a month-to-month (or quarterly, depending upon grade level and subject area) lesson plan for the year for review, thus ensuring that each individual teacher’s lessons align with the Core Knowledge Sequence and deliver in an efficient manner the content students need for sustained academic success.

The second key component is accountability. Vision Academy founders recognize that good intentions do not equal results. Staff will be held accountable for identifying and solving problems that prevent acceleration of student performance. To reach this level of accountability, the system must have data—both on the performance of every student and on the performance of every teacher. Vision Academy will use a variety of standardized formative and summative assessments to monitor performance. Student assessment will be gauged by classroom assignments, portfolios, content assessments, and projects as well as PSSA testing, DIBELS (at younger grades), and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing (at higher grades). Testing is one of the tools that teachers will utilize to calibrate their effectiveness in helping students master the content. Teachers will be expected to understand how to use data to improve outcomes and will participate in weekly Professional Learning Communities, where teachers will

assess their own and their peers' performance in a collegial environment and work toward systemic improvement of school performance.

How Students will Demonstrate Knowledge Beyond the Test: Project-Based Learning

While Direct Instruction is based on a highly calculated teacher-driven delivery system of content, students will also be called upon to work in groups on a project that will be presented to the broader community in regular annual "Curriculum Night" events. For some students, the presentation might delineate progress on a year-long project. For others, it may be a project accomplished over a shorter time frame. Each project will be based on the content being delivered in classes according to the Core Knowledge Sequence.

The central idea of project-based learning is that real-world problems capture students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students acquire and apply new knowledge in a problem-solving context. The teacher plays the role of facilitator, working with students to frame worthwhile questions, structuring meaningful tasks, coaching both knowledge development and social skills, and carefully assessing what students have learned from the experience. Advocates assert that project-based learning helps prepare students for the thinking and collaboration skills required in the workplace.

Curriculum Nights present an opportunity for students to take pride in their learning and develop projects that they take ownership in. While orchestrated by staff, Curriculum Night is owned by students. Their work is the star of the night and becomes a point of pride. Curriculum Night is also a way to bring parents, guardians, and family members to their children's school in a setting that is celebratory of success. Most urban parents are only called to school for conferences. Curriculum night gives parents insight into what their children are learning and how they are attaining mastery of not only academic, but life skills such as collaboration, communication, and presentation.

How Upper Grade Students Will Prepare for the Autonomy of High School: Flipped Classrooms

The flipped classroom, which will be utilized in upper grades, is a reversed teaching model that delivers instruction at home or in the Vision Academy Extended Day Program through interactive, teacher-created videos or podcasts and moves "homework" to the classroom. Moving lectures outside of the classroom allows teachers to spend more time responding to the needs of students rather than rushing to answer questions at the end of the lesson. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and work through problems with the guidance of their teachers and the support of their peers - creating a collaborative learning environment.

The goal of the flipped classroom at Vision Academy Charter School is to launch learning autonomy in students so that they may become their own education advocates. Many high school teachers have limited knowledge of most students' individual capacity or needs until well into the school year, and thus the students must become the drivers in making sure that they understand content and can form the appropriate questions if the content is not understood. The flipped classroom will require independent learning skills and will help student develop the skills

to self-assess their understanding of content and prepare questions for the upcoming day's activities. The flipped classroom also frees teachers to be more engaged in addressing specific student needs, either in small groups or individually during class time, rather than delivering a standardized lecture. Students may review a lecture as often as necessary to gain greater understanding without having to hold up the class to ask a teacher to repeat information. Finally, the flipped classroom will require students to be engaged in active learning.

How Vision Academy will Ensure Mastery and Provide Diverse Opportunities: Extended Day

Because research demonstrates that mastery for some students cannot be achieved in the hours of a standard school day, Vision Academy proposes an Extended Day Program that will not only provide supplemental time for academic improvement, but also for other opportunities such as clubs, scholastic challenges such as math and science competitions, and other activities. Because of the tremendous community support and the collaboration of local university representatives, Vision Academy projects that much of the after-school program will be volunteer-supported, with teachers paid for extended day services to supplement daily academics.

How Staff and Students Will Maintain Order and Decorum: School-wide/Individual Positive Behavior Support

When effectively and appropriately implemented, school-wide and individual positive behavior support has proven to be highly effective in improving student outcomes and school culture. Vision Academy will contract with a locally recognized expert in school-wide positive behavior support to train teachers and administrators in pre-service prior to school opening and to provide ongoing support. Vision Academy believes that extreme discipline based on punishments will not develop the culture of learning that will help students become autonomous and responsible. Research demonstrates that when student behaviors that disrupt the school day are curbed, learning increases (McCurdy, Mannella, Eldridge, 2003).

How Parents Will Be Partners in Learning: National Network of Partnership Schools

Vision Academy will join the National Network of Partnership Schools based at the Johns Hopkins University. NNPS will assist administrators and staff in establishing effective and authentic parent engagement activities. Research-based tools will be implemented that are designed to give families a true voice in addressing school quality and help them better understand that student achievement is a team effort that is best achieved when all members of the team – parents/guardians, students, and school staff -- are working toward the same goals.

I.2. MEASURABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. What are the school's measurable academic goals and objectives to promote student learning?

Vision Academy Charter School will pursue the following measurable general academic goals and objectives in order to achieve the highest levels of academic success while also complying with NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act). Having adapted an educational philosophy based on the

“all children can learn” principle, the Board of Directors expects that all students will achieve the specific academic goals and objectives that are detailed as follows:

Goal 1: Students will achieve the highest possible academic success and will meet or exceed the state’s mandated level of proficiency as defined by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA or subsequent test).

- ✓ Objective: By year two 80% of all Kindergarten through Second Grade Students will demonstrate grade level skills in reading measured by DIBELS testing.
- ✓ Objective: By year two 80% of all Kindergarten through Second Grade Students will demonstrate grade level skills in mathematics as measured by end-of-year testing in Singapore math.
- ✓ Objective: Students will sustain consistent incremental growth toward achieving the state mandated proficiency levels over the first five operational years of the charter as measured by improved standardized test scores and adequate yearly progress on the PSSA tests.
- ✓ Objective: By year four, at least 20% of all students in Third through Eighth Grade will demonstrate advanced status in state testing in reading, mathematics and writing.

Goal 2: Students at Vision Academy Charter School will exceed PSSA (or subsequent test) subgroup performance of their peers in the William Penn School District.

- ✓ Objective: By year two, special education students will exceed performance on PSSA subgroup performance of their peers in the William Penn School District.
- ✓ Objective: By year two, the learning gap will be less than 10% in all other subgroups and the aggregate of Vision Academy on PSSA.

Goal 3: Students at Vision Academy Charter School will demonstrate annual growth in academic achievement.

- ✓ Objective: 80% of all Kindergarten through Second Grade Students will demonstrate at least one year of growth in reading as measured by DIBELS testing.
- ✓ Objective: 80% of all Kindergarten through Second Grade Students will demonstrate at least one year of growth in mathematics as measured by end-of-year testing in Singapore math.
- ✓ Objective: 80% of all Third through Eight Grade Students will demonstrate at least one year of growth in reading and mathematics as measured by Measure of Academic Progress testing or by subsequent testing such as that from the Smarter Balanced Consortium or the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career.
- ✓ Objective: Teacher developed assessments aligned to the Core Knowledge Curriculum and state and common core standards will demonstrate one year of academic growth for 80% of students.

Goal 4: Students at Vision Academy Charter School will demonstrate academic inquisitiveness and independence.

- ✓ Objective: 100% of Kindergarten through Second Grade students will participate in teacher led projects related to the Core Knowledge Curriculum and demonstrate or display those projects at semi-annual school curriculum nights.
- ✓ Objective: 100% of Third through Fifth Grade Students will demonstrate or display a project with limited teacher interaction and leadership that relates to the Core Knowledge

Curriculum and is presented both in writing and orally at a semi-annual school curriculum night.

- ✓ Objective: 100% of Sixth through Eighth Grade Students will present to a group of invited guests that will include parents, professionals, and community members an independently driven project that addresses a current community issue.
- ✓ Objective 80% of Sixth through Eighth Grade Students will participate in a flipped classroom experience and successfully pass that class.

Goal 5: Students will be computer literate and will be able to utilize technology to engage in critical thinking, problem solving and effective learning experiences.

- ✓ Objective: Students will recognize and value the breadth of information available on the Internet, will be able to browse, differentiate, and selectively retrieve appropriate information.
- ✓ Objective: All students will be able to review data from a variety of sources, analyze, and evaluate data to transform it into useful knowledge in order to solve problems.
- ✓ Objective: All students will be able create and present ideas, stories and unique representations of thoughts through a variety of media by analyzing the task before him/her, the technologies available, and using the most effective media for the purpose and audience.
- ✓ Objective: All students will be able to develop sufficient technical skills to successfully locate/identify, install, set up and use computer software in the real world, in work situations, and in learning environments.
- ✓ Objective: All students will be able to use the Internet to communicate with teachers and other students.
- ✓ Objective: At least 80% of the sixth through eighth grade students will participate in a flipped classroom or blended learning experience.

Goal 6: Students will be at school and on time for classes.

- ✓ Objective: Students will meet state mandated adequately yearly progress (AYP) goals in daily attendance and participation rate in assessments
- ✓ Objective: The daily student attendance rate will be 90%
- ✓ Objective: The number of students tardy will be less than 10% daily
- ✓ Objective: The number of missed classes due to unexcused absence will be less than 3% annually

Goal 8: Beginning in the academic year 2013-2014 and continuing each year thereafter, a thorough and on-going evaluation regimen will be implemented to identify individual student needs and assist in the allocation of the appropriate resources to improve student outcomes.

- ✓ Objective: Initial evaluation of students upon entry to the school will be completed by the end of September 2013, and in following years placement will be determined by final assessment in the year prior for returning students.
- ✓ Objective: Classroom instructional plans for the year will be prepared by October 1, annually.
- ✓ Objective: Individual instruction plans for tiered students will be prepared by the end of November 2013 and by the end of the first marking period subsequently.

- ✓ Objective: Any changes to classroom instructional plans will be modified as necessary by the end of each marking period.
- ✓ Objective: PLC communities will monitor student achievement and make updates to the curriculum in accordance with the deficiencies identified through student evaluations. These changes will be finalized by the end of the first school year, July 2014 and every year subsequently.
- ✓ Objective: Students entering Vision Academy Charter School with existing IEPs will have their previously identified needs accommodated and integrated immediately.
- ✓ Objective: Prior to opening (as early as pre-academic year faculty orientation) a special education teacher will be utilized in a consultative model to work with all classroom teachers and other applicable staff members to assist with modifications and accommodations to the students' programs within the mainstream classrooms.
- Objective: By the start of classes, a Child Study Team, consisting of a minimum of a psychologist, Director of Instruction, teacher, will develop any appropriate behavior plans to be utilized throughout the day for students identified as having this need.
- Objective: At the end of the academic year, all of the students will be re-tested utilizing standardized and teacher generated tests. Evaluation of student progress based upon a comparison of initial and year-end testing will ensue.
- Objective: Special attention will be given to the identified areas of individual deficiency through the Vision Academy Response to Intervention model.

B. What are the school's measurable non-academic goals and objectives to promote student performance?

Vision Academy Charter School will demonstrate consistent accountability to the school community and will provide a safe and nurturing environment where students will be able to develop character, responsibility, autonomy, and a love for learning that will lead to social mobility and personal success. The school will involve parents and families in academic activities and school governance, instilling a long-lasting value of education. The five measurable non-academic goals and objectives are described below.

Goal 1: Vision Academy Charter School will be a safe environment that will set the stage for improved student outcomes.

- ✓ Objective: The aggregate number of out-of-school suspensions will be lower than similar grade clusters in the William Penn School District.
- ✓ Objective: The school will have fewer reportable incidents than similar grade clusters in the William Penn School District.
- ✓ Objective: 100% of staff will complete training on the school's school-wide Positive Behavior Support system.
- ✓ Objective: 100% of teachers and administrators will complete training on individual positive behavior support.
- ✓ Objective: The school will provide at least two presentations on its positive behavior support system to parents/guardians annually.

- ✓ Objective: The school will convene at minimum one Safe School Committee meeting that is open to parents, guardians, students, and staff to discuss school safety and develop annual strategies to improve safety.
- ✓ Objective: 100% of students and staff will participate in school-wide character development programming

Goal 2: Vision Academy Charter School students will appreciate education as a personal endeavor that will support their own goals in college and career.

- ✓ Objective: Students will follow the Vision Academy code of conduct (see *Appendix K*) evidenced by less than 75% of students being cited for a Code of Conduct infraction by Year 3.
- ✓ Objective: Students will learn to value education as evidenced by improved attendance rates, which will eventually reach 95%.
- ✓ Objective: Students will fulfill all coursework requirements and participate in assessments as reported by teachers, evidenced by more than 90% of the student body passing coursework requirements by Year 3.
- ✓ Objective: Student dropout rate will be lower than district dropout rate averages.

Goal 3: Vision Academy will be a school where parents/guardians are engaged in their children's education allowing them to foster and support long-range personal academic goals of their individual child and the entire student body.

- ✓ Objective: At least one parent will serve as member of the school's Board of Directors.
- ✓ Objective: 95% of parents/guardians of Vision Academy students will participate in at least one face-to-face parent (or guardian)/teacher meeting.
- ✓ Objective: 80% of parents/guardians will attend at least one curriculum night event throughout the school year.
- ✓ Objective: Surveys measuring parent satisfaction will have at least a 50% return rate
- ✓ Objective: Parent satisfaction surveys will demonstrate at least 85% of parents are highly satisfied with Vision Academy.
- ✓ Objective: By Year 4, 60% of parents/guardians will be engaged with the National Network of Partnership Schools TOPS homework program.
- ✓ Objective: Annually, the school will convene an Action Team based on the National Network of Partnership Schools research that includes parents and will produce at least two events annually designed to improve parent engagement with learning.
- ✓ Objective: The school will log parent volunteer hours and will demonstrate an annual increase in volunteer time.

Goal 3: Vision Academy will maintain a consistent staff and student body that will accelerate learning and contribute to continuity in the delivery of content and services.

- ✓ Objective: 80% of students who are enrolled in September at Vision Academy will complete the school year.
- ✓ Objective: 85% of students will be reenrolled annually by Year 4.

- ✓ Objective: By Year 4, staff retention shall be greater than 80% and shall remain at minimum an average of 80% retention over each subsequent renewal.

Goal 4: Vision Academy will be compliant with all laws and regulations applicable to charter schools in Pennsylvania thus ensuring all students and staff members receive fair and equitable treatment, assuring proper use of taxpayer funds, and supporting continuity in service to students.

- ✓ Objective: Vision Academy will submit 100% of required student and staff data on time.
- ✓ Objective: Vision Academy will submit 100% of required financial data on time.
- ✓ Objective: Vision Academy will have no major violations of compliance regarding special education services.
- ✓ Objective: Vision Academy will have no major violations of compliance regarding ELL services.

I.3. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. Describe the educational program of the school, providing an overview of the curriculum and the content in all subject areas.

The educational program for Vision Academy Charter Schools is based on the highly regarded Core Knowledge Sequence. Predicated on the widely held recognition that the ability to learn is based on the content already mastered, the Core Knowledge Sequence is a finely tuned order of learning that is aligned to state standards, anchors and approved content and ensures that students of all abilities are given the fundamental knowledge that provides the foundation for higher levels of learning. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a clear outline of content designed to improve knowledge, language, and skills by scaffolding upon previously learned content, thus ensuring that each student not only grasps the skills necessary for the subject matter, but has attained the cultural literacy that is imperative to understanding the value of the content (Hirsh, 1985). This cultural literacy, according to Hirsh, is a key contributor to the widening achievement gap between students from affluent communities and those from less means. This gap is sharply evident in Delaware County, where some of the highest performing and lowest performing schools in the state are located, and success appears to be primarily based on wealth of the community. The Core Knowledge Sequence bridges this gap through very directive content, allowing teachers to develop the “how” of delivering content to address individual student needs, freeing them from the time-consuming effort of trying to determine what content should be taught according to a state standard.

In the research of Hernandez, 2011, a longitudinal study linked students who failed to read proficiently by third grade with four times the likelihood of dropping out before high school graduation. This research identified the connection between literacy and all other learning. In 2012, the Core Knowledge Foundation released a study in collaboration with the New York City Department of Education comparing literacy performance of kindergarten through second grade students using the Core Knowledge Language Arts approach versus the district’s existing model. The foundation of the Core Knowledge Language Arts program, which differs from most traditional literacy programs, sits with two distinct strands of learning: skills (such as phonics instruction, spelling, writing) and listening and learning (content rich readalouds focused on a

specific topic to build knowledge and vocabulary). The result is that these two strands not only build the mechanics of reading, but provide the support for comprehending what is being read and the essential background knowledge for literacy. The overarching results of the study showed that students in the Core Knowledge classrooms achieved more than double the gains than their matched peers according to the Research and Policy Group of the New York City Department of Education. Thus, the literacy gains that students make using the Core Knowledge Sequence play an important role in their success in high school, college, and career.

Research further demonstrates that Core Knowledge is particularly effective with students of diverse backgrounds. In an independent study in the urban district of Oklahoma City, a computer randomly matched students in Core Knowledge classrooms with similar students in non-Core Knowledge schools. The computer matched students with the same characteristics on seven variables: grade level, sex, race/ethnicity, free-lunch eligibility, Title-I eligibility, special-education eligibility, and pre-score on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The Core Knowledge classrooms outscored the control students in seven of the eight categories on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. In reading skills, vocabulary, and social studies, Core Knowledge students' improved performance was statistically "highly significant". A follow-up study extended the evaluation to a second year, in which Core Knowledge students continued to outperform the control students, with gains not only noted in the nationally normed test, but also in the state summative test.

Finally, research demonstrates that the Core Knowledge Sequence, when implemented with fidelity, impacts students across all subject areas. McHugh, B., & Stringfield, S. (1999) conducted a study of Core Knowledge implementation and outcomes in five Baltimore city schools. Outcomes indicated that students in the Core Knowledge schools where it had been implemented with fidelity outperformed matched peers in non-Core Knowledge schools.

As mentioned, the Core Knowledge Sequence leverages curriculum toward deeper understanding of course content through integrated learning, where content from one discipline reinforces content in another discipline. This allows for fewer gaps and redundancies in curriculum due to the specific and carefully defined scope and sequence of Core Knowledge and results in increased access to essential background knowledge commonly assumed as part of our society's cultural literacy. The founders of Vision Academy Charter School recognized that a significant number of students in the district who struggle often have little exposure to the cultural literacy opportunities of their peers in wealthier districts, and that the Core Knowledge Sequence is the first step in addressing that gap.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is designed to evolve a student's understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of school subjects. Students do not encounter content in isolation. Instead, they are given consistent and cohesive exposure to the interdependency of subjects and their impact in the development of the body of knowledge that exists today. For instance, while studying the history of the Renaissance, fifth graders may read Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, study the great engineers of the time such as Michelangelo, and apply the scientific properties discovered by Galileo, and study the impact of artists like Titian. Further, Core Knowledge does not discount the arts, but in fact, uses the arts as a key tool in providing depth to content. Students will not only study the great artists and musicians, but themselves

engage in the art and the music of different eras to understand the influence of the arts on culture in general.

Another value of Core Knowledge is its ease of understanding to parents. Instead of a confusing jumble of standards, the Core Knowledge Sequence explicitly details what each child should know by the end of the school year. This information has been formatted into easily read books “What Your (K-8) Grader Should Know” that the school will purchase and lend to parents so that they are equally engaged in the learning process. These books will help teachers as they explain to parents the process of learning and the scaffolding that is essential for academic success.

There are a number of success stories in schools using the Core Knowledge Sequence. The Icahn Charter School, located in the Bronx, NY, one of seven charter schools in the US recognized for its academic performance in closing the achievement gap by the United States Department of Education. As a top performer among public schools in New York City, Icahn Charter School is a living demonstration of the efficacy of utilizing clear building blocks for learning with student groups that may be identified as at risk for academic success. In Delaware, the Newark Charter School, a Core Knowledge Demonstration School, is a consistent top performer in state testing and beyond. As a Core Knowledge school, Vision Academy Charter School staff and administrators will have broad access to peers and support to ensure fidelity to implementation that will support student achievement.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is attached in Appendix A. Alignment of the sequence to Pennsylvania State Standards and Common Core Standards are attached in Appendix B.

While the Core Knowledge Sequence details the information to be taught, the school will call upon the McGraw Hill and Singapore Math to provide the curriculum content in English Language Arts, Social Studies and Mathematics that is specifically designed for the school’s model. Both curriculum publishers are recommended by the Core Knowledge Foundation for their fidelity to the Core Knowledge Sequence and their effectiveness in delivery of Direct Instruction. Faculty will be given the autonomy for supplemental materials.

Reading

K-5: Reading Mastery Signature Edition, McGraw Hill

6-8: Read to Achieve, McGraw Hill

Supplemental: Corrective Reading, McGraw Hill
Flex Literacy, McGraw Hill

These series are aligned both with the Core Knowledge Sequence and with the pedagogy of Direct Instruction, making them uniquely effective with diverse student bodies.

Language Arts:

K-2: Language for Learning, McGraw Hill

1-3: Language for Thinking, McGraw Hill

2-5: Language for Writing, McGraw Hill

6-8: Essentials for Writing, McGraw Hill

These series are aligned both with the Core Knowledge Sequence and with the pedagogy of Direct Instruction, making them uniquely effective with diverse student bodies.

Social Studies:

K-6: Timelinks, McGraw Hill

6-8: Journey Series, McGraw Hill

Both series are aligned to the Core Knowledge Sequence

Mathematics:

K-8: Singapore Math

Recognized for its capacity to support achievement in all students by Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study results and studies by American Institutes for Research, Singapore Math uses an explicit format aligned to the Core Knowledge Sequence that fosters mastery of mathematic concepts.

Science:

Full Option Science System, Delta Education

FOSS is a research-based science curriculum for grades K–8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California at Berkeley. FOSS is also an ongoing research project dedicated to improving the learning and teaching of science. The FOSS program materials are designed to meet the challenge of providing meaningful science education for all students in diverse American classrooms and to prepare them for life in the 21st century.

Critical to the delivery of the Core Knowledge Sequence is the school’s regularly scheduled “Curriculum Night” that will support student synthesis of content and will provide an avenue for student projects to be presented to family, faculty, and friends. Curriculum Night may be a single grade, a coordination of grades touching similar subjects, or grade clusters. It is designed to allow the school community to share what is taking place and to also enhance individual student’s ability to explore ideas independently, create solutions, and present publicly on their ideas.

Curriculum Nights will be based on students’ experiences in Project Based Learning. Project Based Learning as a vehicle for Curriculum Night becomes a valuable tool in developing individual talents and interests and demonstrating knowledge beyond rote. At early grades, students will be guided by teachers in delivering their projects. As students mature, they will be given greater responsibility and teachers will become guides in projects rather than directors. The depth of content in Core Knowledge opens a wealth of opportunities to develop projects and to use acquired knowledge of the past and present to solve problems of the future.

A June 2009 literature review from the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at University of Indianapolis concluded that Project Based Learning has a positive effect on student content knowledge and the development of skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving as well as increasing student motivation and engagement (Brush & Saye, 2008; Krajcik, et al., 1998)

Finally, the founders believe that students today encounter dissonance between the current preparation in elementary and middle schools toward independent learning and the expectations of the high school setting. In the *The Learning Gap*, Stevenson and Stigler (1992) suggest that one of the greatest challenges facing teachers is students lacking the necessary grade appropriate skills or knowledge. Students frequently have limited experiences in developing autonomy in learning and often fail to understand the information they lack in order to attain higher levels of learning. The result can be students entering a higher grade with limited ability to fully access academic programming.

To that end, Vision Academy Charter School will employ a “Flipped Classroom” model that will call upon teachers to develop direct instruction lectures that will serve as homework for students, while classroom time will be devoted to what may have been traditionally homework (such as working on math problems independently) and active learning such as lab work, project work, or other active learning efforts. The flipped classroom requires students to become active learners. After watching the flipped presentation, students will need to use their critical thinking skills to develop their own questions and theories related to content. The flipped classroom encourages students toward greater autonomy in learning and helps them develop the skills of inquiry learning that are necessary for success in high school, college and career.

Bergman and Sams, 2012, widely considered the leaders in flipped classroom systems, state:

“One of the greatest benefits of flipping is that overall interaction increases: Teacher to student and student to student. Since the role of the teacher has changed from presenter of content to learning coach, we spend our time talking to kids. We are answering questions, working with small groups, and guiding the learning of each student individually.”

Because of the small school size, this method of delivery will accelerate learning for students and will provide the foundation for students to become their own advocates in learning.

Vision Academy will employ the flipped classroom at upper grades (6-8) and will ease students into the effort gradually, either with only a single class or with portions of a class. While the flipped classroom is still relatively new, substantial research related to cognition and media demonstrate its value:

“Overall, fifty years of educational research indicates that media and technology are effective in schools as phenomena to learn both *from* and *with*. Historically, the learning *from* or tutorial approaches have received the most attention and funding, but the *with* or cognitive tool approaches are the focus of more interest and investment than ever before. Media and technology have many other advantages in terms of repeatability, transportability, and increased equity of access.” (Reeves, 1998)

ESL PROGRAM STRUCTURE

There are two basic models for ESL programs: the skills-based program and the content-based program (Norden, 2001). Generally, a skills-based program devotes 5-15% of the school day (depending on the students’ grade-level) to target language learning, with the instruction

focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. These programs are mostly implemented as pull-out programs, which have been reported to be rather unsuccessful. According to the content-based model, on the other hand, an English Language Learner's (ELL) achievement in school, the classroom, and ultimately in the work world rests upon their ability to master academic language.

The SIOP model offers a content and inquiry-based framework for teachers to present concepts to ELLs in the inclusive mainstream classrooms through strategies, techniques, and accommodations that make new information comprehensible for language learners. Intended for both language and content teachers, the SIOP model offers eight research-based components that are grouped into 30 strategies essential for making content comprehensible for ELLs. These eight components, Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review/Assessment, while intended specifically to address the academic success and development of students' learning through a second language, share many features recommended for high quality academic instruction of all students, including the heritage learners.

Vision Academy Charter School, in compliance with Title 22, Chapter 4, Section 4.26 of the Curriculum Regulations requires that the charter school provide a program for every student who is limited English proficient (LEP) or an English language learner (ELL). Therefore, Vision Academy will provide a carefully articulated planned educational program for each student with limited English proficiency that allows the student to meet state academic standards and succeed in school.

Thus, Vision Academy Charter School's language program includes: standards-based English as a second language instruction supported by the SIOP model, content area instruction aligned with the corresponding standards and adapted to meet the needs of the students and assessment processes that reflect the academic standards and instruction. The language program meets a three-part test which is mandated by federal law (Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, *Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (1981)). The program is: (1) based on sound educational and language learning theory; (2) implemented with sufficient resources and staffed by appropriately prepared personnel; and (3) periodically evaluated.

Policies and Procedures

To implement an ESL or bilingual education program, the charter school must have clearly delineated procedures for enrolling students with limited English proficiency. The procedures must be written and provide guidance to school personnel and families regarding the program and services students will be provided. They should include a statement of program goals, school enrollment procedures, definition of limited English proficiency, assessment procedures and policies, program entry and exit procedures, grading policies, listing of resources including agencies and interpreters. Procedures must be disseminated and staff acquainted with the contents. When selecting an administrator to be responsible for the implementation of the program, consideration must be given to the scope of services to be provided to the students and the background knowledge required for efficient operation. To facilitate program

implementation, any forms developed for use with the program should be the same across the school and should be included with the written program procedures.

Students must have access to and should be encouraged to participate in all aspects of the academic and extracurricular opportunities available in the school. Similarly, all information disseminated to the students and their parents must be provided in a language or mode preferred by the parents. The impact of the new culture on the student and the student's culture on the school will pose a challenge for everyone. Providing orientation and factual cultural information for everyone in the school will help to alleviate the most serious of cultural clashes. Consideration of culture and how it relates to the student and the instruction provided will also serve to ease the transition for all.

Enrollment

ELLs must be enrolled upon presentation of a local address and proof of immunization. It is not appropriate to deny students access to school (telling them to stay home) for any period of time while verifying the information they present. Subjecting them to scrutiny that is not part of the normal enrollment process is discriminatory and may place the charter school at risk of legal action.

Note: Students are not required to provide social security numbers or immigration status information as a condition for enrollment and may not be denied enrollment as a result.

Student Identification and Assessment

The charter school must administer a home language survey (HLS) to all students as required by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The results of that survey must be retained in the student's permanent folder. For those students whose primary language is other than English (PHLOTE), the school must also determine the student's English language proficiency. Then, ESL instruction at the appropriate level must be provided for the limited English proficient student with local/state funds. A sample annotated 25 Home Language Survey is available on the PDE web page, www.pde.state.pa.us.

After it is determined that the student is in need of ESL instruction or bilingual education, the student's English language and native language proficiency must be determined for appropriate instructional placement. Students must also be assessed for achievement and for program exit. Due to the nature of language testing and the availability of tests in the many languages of the students, multiple measures should be used for determining placement and progress. Measures may be formal or informal and could include curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations, portfolios and standardized tests among others. Multiple criteria must be established and consideration must be given to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as academic progress. Assessment processes must reflect the academic standards and instruction.

The charter school should have in place a policy regarding participation in large-scale assessments or other standardized tests not specifically developed for English language learners. Participation in the PSSA is required for all students with limited English proficiency unless they

are eligible for a one-time exemption. Please see the current PSSA assessment update information for accommodations and recommended testing procedures.

ESL Instructional Methods and Curriculum

Planned ESL instruction includes skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing at different levels of proficiency (beginning, intermediate and advanced). The amount and type of standards-based ESL instruction provided to students will depend upon their level of language development and proficiency as determined by an appropriate English language proficiency instrument. The following are recommended amounts of daily instructional time for non-English speaking students: Beginner – 2 hours; Intermediate – 1 to 1½ hours; Advanced – 1 hour. Students who have exited the program should be carefully monitored for progress. They may require support that can be provided two to three times per week.

In order to achieve academic standards, students must be scheduled in content area classes with the understanding that they may not be able to comprehend all the instruction. Content area instruction must be aligned with the corresponding standards and adapted to meet the needs of the students. Simply placing students in content area classes does not provide them meaningful access to content if they do not understand English. Teachers must adapt courses of study to meet student needs. Adapting coursework does not mean diluting or placing in lower grades for instruction. Determining when a student is ready to proceed from one proficiency level to another or from an ESL class/program or a transitional bilingual education program is best done by the use of multiple measures that provide information on the students' listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiency.

The student's progress should be monitored for at least one year after the student has exited from the program. English language learners are expected to meet the requirements for graduation. Some students arrive without the necessary documentation of studies in other countries and could be eligible to attend school until they are 21 years of age. As with placement, curriculum-based assessments may be used to determine student proficiency and mastery of the standards and content.

B. Describe how your school will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711. Describe your projections for special education instructional programs that will be operated directly by the charter school or operated by others under contract with your charter school. List any support staff and related service providers that might be employed directly by the charter school or provided under contract, who will provide required support for students with disabilities receiving special education.

In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA 2004”), the No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), the Gaskin Settlement Agreement and Pennsylvania Codes § 711.1 and 4.28, Vision Academy Charter School is committed to providing equal opportunity,

both in formal education and in extra-curricular activities to students with disabilities by implementing their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Vision Academy Charter School intends on contracting privately or through the Intermediate Unit for related services, such as speech and language specialists, psychologists, OT/PT, or other services as deemed necessary in an individual student's IEP or 504 plan. A full-time special education coordinator/teacher will hold the day-to-day responsibilities of monitoring data input to state systems, overseeing appropriate implementation of IEP/504 plans, and working with individual teachers or teacher groups to better understand delivery and differentiation of curriculum to students with disabilities. Vision Academy will deploy team teaching as necessary to ensure that IEP/504 plans are implemented accordingly and that students are receiving services as identified in the plan. It is likely that the school will employ in the first year a number of teachers whom are dual-certified special and elementary education that may be asked to share roles as classroom teacher or as a co-teacher in a high-need classroom. It will also seek to employ at least one faculty member who is certified in elementary education and also as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. The school leader will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of special education are in compliance with state and federal law.

Vision Academy will utilize the Response to Intervention model as a primary tool for identification and referral for special education services. Vision Academy will comply with law that calls for timely evaluation if requested by parents/guardians and will follow all other procedures regarding notification, evaluation, and meetings as required by law. Vision Academy will have a Child Study Team, comprised of the Special Education Coordinator, teachers, administrators and any related services professional as deemed necessary, that will be central to reviewing and assessing concerns teachers and/or parents may have when students are having difficulty with academic achievement that may indicate a disability. This team reviews data collected by the student's teacher(s), observes the student in the learning environment, and may implement a series of interventions to be carried out by the classroom teacher, subject specialist, and Special Education Coordinator. Following documented attempts with interventions, the Child Study Team may recommend a special education evaluation.

A continuum of special education services will be provided for each identified student at Vision Academy Charter School in accordance with federal and state law. Students with disabilities will be integrated and educated with students who are not disabled. Services provided which might be separate from the general education environment would occur only when the nature or severity of the child's disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment and in a manner which fully complies with their IEPs, promotes inclusion and engagement in school activities, and fosters involvement with the entire school community. Parents of students with disabilities will be provided with procedural guidelines and safeguards. The principal of the school will maintain responsibility for assuring compliance with all laws and regulations regarding special education.

Testing:

Vision Academy will comply with all requirements of state testing related to students with disabilities. The special education coordinator will work with the curriculum director to ensure that all students who are taking PSSA's are given the appropriate accommodations allowed by law and that those students taking the PASA receive appropriate accommodations and parents are fully informed as to the scope of PASA and interpretation.

Individual Behavior Support Plans:

The Child Study Team will review students who have discipline or behavior issues, attendance concerns or other related problems which interfere with their success at Vision Academy Charter School. The team will compile strategies to implement across the curriculum to add support to a student who has been identified as "at-risk". Special education students who are identified as "at-risk" will have an IEP team meeting to revise the IEP accordingly.

C. What teaching methods will be used? How will this pedagogy enhance student learning?

Direct Instruction (DI) is a model for teaching that emphasizes well-developed and carefully planned lessons designed around small learning increments and clearly defined and prescribed teaching tasks. It is based on the theory that clear instruction eliminating misinterpretations can greatly improve and accelerate learning, especially for at-risk students. Stockard and Engelmann (2008) is among the wide body of research that demonstrates that schools implementing Direct Instruction with fidelity find significantly higher student outcomes.

Success in academic achievement through Direct Instruction is based on the premise that students must encounter both acceleration and accountability and teachers must have the capacity to use data to ensure effective delivery and collaborative teams to help improve individual teacher performance in the classroom.

To achieve acceleration, Vision Academy Charter School will have a master instructional plan that encompasses all teachers in all grades that ensures each teacher is delivering the content of Core Knowledge with appropriate scaffolding. The instructional program will be coordinated from grade to grade, so that what occurs at one grade is coordinated with what goes on in the next grade. Learning would be stifled if some teachers followed an independent agenda that is not clearly linked between subject areas and grade level expectations. This master schedule will demonstrate that teachers clearly understand what needs to be taught, and thus ensures effective pacing.

Careful attention will be given to the time-effectiveness of instructional details. Faculty will utilize data and their projected instructional plans to monitor the efficacy of their delivery and the mastery of student learning. Those areas that demonstrate weakness in time-effectiveness will be evaluated in PLC meetings and in meetings with the Director of Instruction and other administrators.

To facilitate RtI and accelerate learning, students will be organized in relatively homogeneous groups in English Language Arts and Mathematics to ensure all students, access content in a

context that permits the teaching to be referenced to their needs. Groupings will be monitored to allow for changing in groupings in each marking period.

Fluid groupings in the small school setting proposed will make it possible for improved individual student academic performance as placement will be highly individualized.

Acceleration is possible only if students spend sufficient amounts of time on task. The at-risk student has a deficit of thousands of exposures on various language-related and thinking-related activities. The school's RtI program will lead to ensuring appropriate placement and appropriate amount of time engaged in core subject material toward mastery. The school's Extended Day Program will allow students time after the official school day for further instruction in content or to engage in enjoyable activities that provide content support.

Mastery at early ages of basic skills will lead to acceleration of higher level skills in upper grades. Mastery will be evaluated consistently by the teacher and the Director of Instruction to ensure that all students are able to access curriculum appropriately.

Key to achieving acceleration is accountability. Because the Core Knowledge Sequence is very clear in the expected performance outcomes and the curricula selected has been specifically chosen because of its alignment with both Core Knowledge and Direct Instruction, solutions to both individual student and classroom achievement will be identified through data driven evaluation in a timely manner. Teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) that will provide the support to address these learning issues in a professional and accountable fashion. Fulton and Briton (2011) identified increased academic outcomes for students when teachers were engaged in PLC's that were collegial and data driven.

Through the use of PLCs, teachers will see improvement as a collegial opportunity rather than punitive. Vision Academy Charter School will support a collaborative professional culture where all members of our school community are committed to continuous improvement and thus, every person is both a teacher and a learner. Vision Academy teachers must achieve mastery in using effective techniques for presenting the material, for correcting mistakes, for motivating the students, and for assuring that students master content.

Vision Academy Charter School is committed to utilizing a train-the-trainer model (Suhrheinrich, 2011) which has demonstrated success in broadening whole school knowledge and capacity. Those who are identified as trainers will be proficient with the teaching techniques and conventions of the school and will be expected to provide pre-service to new teachers.

Because not everything can be effectively taught without the presence of students, both first-year teachers as well as those who are not new to the program will receive in-class coaching. The focus of in-class coaching is to provide additional help and support and to assure that the teacher is using the skills that have been taught. Both the School Leader and Director of Instruction will serve as in class coaches. Peers and special educators may also be called upon for coaching.

Vision Academy will ensure fidelity to its delivery model, which will be demonstrated by the stability of the various problem-identification and problem-solving procedures over time. The procedures that Vision Academy uses for content development and delivery will be

“institutionalized,” so that they endure as personnel change and as the school’s performance improves. Again, by training a core of teachers and administrators who will serve as leaders in PLCs and in subsequent pre-training, the likelihood of institutionalization is greater. The fidelity of the implementation will be revealed through data and stability in the high performance of students. Implementation quality will also be observed in teacher-performance records, showing that teachers follow the schedule, execute the details of the program correctly and make efficient use of time. Just as a high-fidelity implementation requires procedures for maintaining the school at a high level; it needs procedures for evaluating the details of the implementation and the results it is achieving.

Supplementing the highly structured Direct Instruction teaching method, teachers will also be asked to introduce project-based learning as a demonstration tool for school Curriculum Nights, which are designed to allow students to demonstrate their mastery of curriculum through expanding their own solutions to problems. The core idea of project-based learning is that real-world problems capture students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students acquire and apply new knowledge in a problem-solving context. The teacher plays the role of facilitator, working with students to frame worthwhile questions, structuring meaningful tasks, coaching both knowledge development and social skills, and carefully assessing what students have learned from the experience. Advocates assert that project-based learning helps prepare students for the thinking and collaboration skills required in the workplace.

According to the Buck Institute for Education, a driving force behind project based learning and its efficacy in helping students understand content and the broader questions it introduces, rigorous and in-depth project-based learning:

- is organized around an open-ended Driving Question or Challenge. These focus students’ work and deepen their learning by centering on significant issues, debates, questions and/or problems.
- creates a need to know essential content and skills. Typical projects (and most instruction) begin by presenting students with knowledge and concepts and then, once learned, give them the opportunity to apply them. PBL begins with the vision of an end product or presentation which requires learning specific knowledge and concepts, thus creating a context and reason to learn and understand the information and concepts.
- requires inquiry to learn and/or create something new. Not all learning has to be based on inquiry, but some should. And this inquiry should lead students to construct something new – an idea, an interpretation, a new way of displaying what they have learned.
- requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. Students need to do much more than remember information—they need to use higher-order thinking skills. They also have to learn to work as a team and contribute to a group effort. They must listen to others and make their own ideas clear when speaking, be able to read a variety of material, write or otherwise express themselves in various modes, and make effective presentations. These skills, competencies and habits of mind are often known as "21st Century Skills".
- allows some degree of student voice and choice. Students learn to work independently and take responsibility when they are asked to make choices. The opportunity to make

choices, and to express their learning in their own voice, also helps to increase students' educational engagement.

- incorporates feedback and revision. Students use peer critique to improve their work to create higher quality products.
- results in a publicly presented product or performance. What you know is demonstrated by what you do, and what you do must be open to public scrutiny and critique.

Again, Vision Academy Charter School will employ the train-the-trainer model and send a small group of teachers and/or administrators to professional development and then expect that group to disseminate training to their peers, monitor delivery, and provide suggestions and ideas for improved performance. The Director of instruction will be charged with having a depth of knowledge regarding project-based learning and serve as a resource in helping teachers implement the methodology in the classroom.

Finally, the school will implement the "flipped classroom" model in the upper grades (6-8) in some subject areas to develop students who are more independent learners and autonomous advocates in achieving personal educational goals. The flipped classroom actively transfers the responsibility and ownership of learning from the teacher to the students. Flipping the instructional process and using technology to "time-shift" direct instruction where appropriate frees up valuable class time for responding to student questions, active learning, and developing critical thinking skills.

In the Vision Academy Flipped Classrooms, there is an active and intentional transfer of some of the information delivery to outside of the classroom with the goal of freeing up time to make better use of the face-to-face interaction in school.

The Flipped Classroom takes the lecture portion of a class and through technology (such as a video or podcasting) allows that static experience to be delivered at the convenience of the student in a preferred environment at a convenient time. Teachers will have the time to ensure mastery of content during class-time, and students will develop the skills required as active and autonomous learners, such as formulating questions, monitoring content acquisition, and class preparation. Students who do not have access to the internet at home will be given priority access to computers during the school day and the Extended Day Program.

The Flipped Classroom integrates well with the Direct Instruction and Project Based Learning models, pushing both faculty and students toward competent and nimble use of technology to express ideas and acquire information.

Teachers will be given the technology to developing their online content and students will be given priority access in the extended day program to access content if there is no access to the internet at home. While Vision Academy does not expect to deploy the model until its third year of operation, by Year 6 when the school is fully enrolled in all grades, it expects that a portion of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science will be delivered in the "Flipped" model. Teachers will be called upon to develop assessments of the model to ensure fidelity to Direct Instruction and to ensure that students are maintaining mastery and accessing content in a timely and responsible manner.

D. Attach the school calendar and identify hours of the school operation, as per section 1715-A (9).

The Vision Academy Charter School school year will parallel that of William Penn School District. Daily hours of operation for students will be approximately 8:30 AM to 3:15 PM, while faculty and administration hours are somewhat longer. The Extended Day Program will end at 5:05 PM.

I.4. SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

School:

A. What methods of self-assessment or evaluation will be used to ensure that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives?

Vision Academy will utilize the framework for quality developed by the Building Charter School Quality consortium, a collaboration among legislators, educators, charter school authorizers, charter school operators, and charter school advocacy groups. At the annual meeting prior to the opening of school the Board of Vision Academy Charter School will develop targets based on the school's identified mission and goals as outlined in this application to address each of the measures and metrics in the BCSQ operational framework.

The board will publish its success in an annual report to the community regarding its targets related to the measures and metrics and will present the information at the annual meeting of the board for parents and the community to interact regarding the outcomes.

In addition to this annual report on the school's progress toward meeting quality targets identified in the BCSQ standards, the following information will be included

- The level of achievement of the mission, goals and objectives
- The status of the efficient management and governance
- The level of attainment of the Educational Standards and the status of delivery of educational programs leading to high student academic achievement
- Results of the statewide assessment programs and any local assessment results
- The degree of parental and community involvement in the school
- The efforts made to conduct public relations and outreach
- The student admissions policies and staff recruitment plan
- A comprehensive annual financial report including a balance sheet, an operational statement of revenues and expenditures and a cash flow analysis
- The annual sanitary inspection report
- The annual fire inspection certificate

- A Board resolution naming the School Leader for the charter school, with title, for the upcoming school year

For detail on the measures and metric of the Building Charter School Quality Operational Framework, please see Appendix C.

Consultants may be hired to assist with the training of the Board of Directors. Part of the preparation of the board will be addressing the needs for and the appropriate type of assessments to be conducted. A consultant may also be hired to assist in the self-assessment process, to provide neutrality and expertise, if this is found to be lacking in professional staff backgrounds after the staff has been hired.

Community involvement will be tracked through attendance at meetings of the Board of directors and committees, volunteer work including presentations at the school and invitations for students to participate in community events, financial contributions, and services rendered.

The charter school will establish a thorough and efficient record keeping system in preparation for reporting purposes. All federal and state requirements will be fulfilled. Data collected will include financial information, with records complying with GAAP accounting principles, student information including application, testing results, attendance, health, and so forth, staff information including attendance, performance, turnover, etc., and also special programs such as the nutrition program, special education, and grants. Compiled information will serve as the basis for reporting to the State as required.

B. How will teachers and administrators be evaluated? Describe your standards for teacher and staff performance.

The process for evaluating teachers at Vision Academy will be based the use of the appropriate PDE forms 426, 427, and 428 as specified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education Performance and Assessment Process defined in Chapter 49. Additionally, the foundation of the supervision, observation, evaluation, and rating process at the school follows the professional development model “The Frameworks Model” authored by Charlotte Danielson and the work on teacher evaluation by Danielson and McGreal (2000). This model defines formative supervision as serving the purpose of enhancing the instructional skills of teachers by providing constructive feedback, acknowledging exceptional practices, and giving direction for professional development. Non-certified staff will be held to the same criteria to establish internal instructional consistency throughout the organization.

School administrators will set annual goals for student achievement and staff development for each faculty member. The board will approve those goals at an annual meeting. The evaluation to identify if goals had been achieved consists of data collection through the following sources:

Formal observations

Formal observations will be prearranged (announced) observations of the teaching and learning process for an entire instructional period. Data related to student interaction, classroom

management, lesson planning and implementation, and other specific areas will be collected and shared with the teacher to promote learning-focused dialogue, feedback, and reflection. Formal observations must include both a pre-conference and a post-conference. The pre-conference will be scheduled by the supervisor, prior to the observation, for the purposes of sharing information about the planned instructional lesson and/or establishing trust and rapport. The pre-conference also provides notice of the time and date of the classroom observation.

The post-conference provides opportunities for the supervisor to share oral and possible written feedback as a part of a learning-focused dialogue. The formative purpose of the post-conference is to dialogue about the teaching and learning observed, with the intended outcome of enhancing performance and instructional effectiveness that improves students' learning. The post-conference is completed by the supervisor and teacher within three school days of a classroom observation, and preferably within 24 hours of the observation.

Informal Observations

Informal observations are observations of the teaching and learning process for at least 15 minutes in length, which must include some type of oral or written feedback. When possible, supervisors will engage teachers in a learning-focused dialogue about the observed lesson. Informal observations may be announced, but will be generally unannounced visits, at the choice of the supervisor. When a post-conference is provided, the purpose and procedures for conducting it and providing feedback are virtually the same as for a formal observation, although the length is typically briefer.

Daily Walkthroughs (Virtual Walkthroughs)

Walkthroughs are brief classroom visits where supervisors spend a short amount of time in classrooms for various purposes. The role of walkthroughs is consistent with educational research regarding the importance of visible instructional leaders. Supervisors are encouraged to complete walkthroughs on an ongoing basis to get regular “snapshots” of the teaching and learning process. Supervisors are not required to provide teacher with oral or written feedback collected during walkthroughs.

Supervision Process for Vision Academy Charter School Formative Process

<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Self- Supervision</i>	<i>Peer Supervision</i>
Conduct classroom observations to observe and dialogue about the teaching & learning process	Analysis of Teaching Practices	Peer Coaching
Review artifacts of teaching	Peer observations and peer teaching	Mentoring
Monitor evidence of student learning	Analysis of students' learning	
Monitor professional goal(s)	Implementation of professional	

	goal(s)	
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Sample Artifacts: Lesson Plans, Journals, Student work, Formative and Summative Assessment data, Other Relevant data (DIBELS, MAP), Participation in grade level teams, Discipline Records, Student surveys, Communications with parents and students, Benchmark data, materials use to promote higher level thinking.

Supervision Process for Vision Academy Charter School Summative Process

<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Performance Criteria</i>	<i>Types of Data Collected</i>
Conduct classroom observations to observe and dialogue about the teaching & learning process	Instructional Planning & Preparation Classroom Environment Instructional Process	Teacher Self-Assessment
Review artifacts of teaching	Instructional Planning & Preparation Classroom Environment	
Monitor evidence of student learning	Analysis of students' learning	Benchmark Data Student Grades Student Surveys
Monitor professional goal(s)	Implementation of professional goal(s)	

Sample Artifacts: Lesson Plans, Journals, Student work, Formative and Summative Assessment data, Other Relevant data (DIBELS, MAP), Participation in grade level teams, Discipline Records, Student surveys, Communications with parents and students, other benchmark data, materials use to promote higher level thinking.

Describe the standards for teacher and staff performance

Performance standards are based on multiple sources of data collected over time and lead to lead to both school-wide and individual professional development plans. School administrators will set annual goals related to student achievement and staff development with each faculty member, using an integrated performance management system that values the balanced synergy required to effectively educate students.

Standards for Evaluation are portfolio based and include:

Evaluation Standard 1: Student Achievement

Evaluation Tools: Active classroom participation data, formative testing data, grade-book review, PSSA scores, demonstration of individualized teaching

At the start of the school year student data is compiled and will be presented to teachers at the grade level meeting. The School Leader or Director of Instruction will meet with each grade level team as well as each individual teacher to discuss data and evidence of student success. After teacher observations, conducted by the school leader, goal setting for instruction will result. It is an expectation that student data is used to drive instruction and implement effective lessons.

Evaluation Standard 2: Content Delivery

Evaluation Tool: Use of Direct Instruction, Project Based Learning, or Flipped Classroom delivery.

The School Leader and Director of Instruction gather data regarding teacher's fidelity to content delivery systems in the classroom. In addition to content and pedagogy, Director of Instruction conducts professional development sessions for teachers to ensure that teachers have the tools and training for effective use of technology.

Evaluation Standard 3: Professionalism and Content Expertise

Evaluation Tool: Attendance, participation in PD, completion of any assigned PD development plan work

All teachers are required to attend school wide professional development to ensure that they have the training needed to be effective in the teaching environment. The administration then conducts formal and informal observations to determine level of effectiveness and if additional support or training is needed. Documentation is provided for the teacher portfolios/folders to ensure systematic implementation of the program.

Evaluation Standard 4: Team commitment

Evaluation Tool: Participation in team meetings, completion of team projects, peer support (Teacher Mentoring)

Student needs must drive decisions related to academic achievement. To that end all teachers are expected to be fully committed to the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model. PLCs provide a resource for teachers for the exchange of effective practices that are resulting in success for students. Teachers are then required to implement suggested strategies and/or interventions in their classes, documenting student success and improvements. Evidence collected regarding the effectiveness of the meetings will include meeting minutes, team participation, team project and data regarding student and parent contact by individuals and the team.

All administrative professionals (such as the Director of Instruction, School Nurse, Special Education Coordinator) will be evaluated based on the job description presented at employment, the academic performance of aligned areas (such as the academic performance of special education students), and evaluations from staff members as well as the school leader.

Additionally, the school administrators will be evaluated by the effective delivery of board-approved targets in the school-wide framework of operational success, as well as any state mandated evaluation tools and any School Improvement Plans.

The board will annually evaluate the school leader based on a rubric of performance scores for the school as recommended below by Charter School Tools, a non-profit organization that provides support to charter schools by sharing best practices of high performing charter schools around the country.

SCHOOL LEADER EVALUATION RUBRIC

(based on the New Leaders for New Schools evaluation model)

Five Criteria and Recommended Weighting	Best in Class	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Un-satisfactory
Academic Performance (40 points)	#1 or 2 school in market serving similar populations	Meets 100% of charter application or contract goals*	Meets 90% of charter application or contract goals*	Meets 50% of charter application or contract goals*	Fails to meet at least 50% of charter application or contract goals*
Financial Management (25 points)	Exceeds paid enrollment target by at least 3%; revenue above budget and expenses below budget; year 3 equity >10% of annual revenue (or 3%/year)	Meets paid enrollment target; revenue on or above budget and expenses on or below budget; year 3 equity >10% of annual revenue (or 3%/year)	Meets enrollment and attendance targets; net operating surplus; year 3 equity >5% of annual revenue (or 2%/year)	Short of enrollment and attendance targets; net operating deficit; reserves <2% of annual revenue; at least one instance of non-compliance identified by authorizer	Short of enrollment and attendance targets; net operating deficit; reserves <2% of annual revenue; material control weakness identified by independent auditor
Academic Program Fidelity** (20 points)	Academic program is recognized as exemplary by authorizer, state charter association, and donors/investors	Academic program implementation has gone well beyond the original charter application; special program elements are infused throughout the curriculum	Academic program meets the description in original charter application or in strategic plan adopted by the board; all stakeholders can articulate and identify key elements of the program	Academic program implementation meets some of the elements described in original charter application or strategic plan adopted by the board	Academic program does not meet most of the elements described in original charter application or updated strategic plan; few stakeholders can articulate key elements of the program
Parent/Teacher/Student	90% of parents, students and	80% of parents, students and	75% of parents,	50% of parents, students and	Less than 50% of parents,

Five Criteria and Recommended Weighting	Best in Class	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Un-satisfactory
Satisfaction (10 points)	teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 90% attendance at parent conferences; 90% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 70% attendance at parent conferences; 80% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 50% attendance at parent conferences; 75% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures; 33% attendance at parent conferences; 65% teacher retention and student re-enrollment	students and teachers grade the school A or B on all surveyed measures (or no surveys conducted); below 33% attendance at parent conferences; less than 65% teacher retention and student re-enrollment
Fundraising/Community Relations (5 points)	Organization has exceeded fundraising goals and increased number of donors and total raised every year; at least 15 positive new stories per year and at least 15 school tours or visits hosted per year	Organization has met fundraising goals and increased number of donors and total raised most years; at least 10 positive new stories per year and at least 10 school tours or visits hosted per year.	Organization has received significant cash and in-kind donations and has a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has many more positive news stories than negative and has hosted at least 5 school tours or visits	Organization has received insignificant cash and in-kind donations, does not have a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has few or generally neutral news stories; organization web site is not updated regularly	Organization has received no cash and in-kind donations, does not have a documented fundraising plan with annual goals; school has significant number of negative new stories

* Charter application or contract goals include, for example, proficiency (AYP), decreasing in lowest performance band, increase in highest performance band, graduation rate, attendance, teacher retention, grade promotion.

** Academic program elements include curriculum (e.g., STEM), instructional approach (e.g., direct instruction, blended learning), assessment system, and extra-curricular or wrap-around services.

C. How do you plan to hold your school accountable to the parents of the children attending your school?

Vision Academy Charter School will distribute an annual survey at the end of the school year to parents asking for their feedback regarding theirs and their children’s experience with the school.

The survey will explore their opinions regarding educational program, after school program, school facility, school safety, and teacher/staff performance. The outcome of the survey will be shared at the first board meeting following the first day of school and then will be posted on the school website.

As a participant in the National Network of Partnership Schools, Vision Academy will have an Action Team that is comprised of parents, educators and community members who will take on the role of addressing key goals identified in the parent survey or a School Improvement Plan. This group will be charged with sharing their work and the outcomes with the school community.

Finally, the school will publish on its website and in a direct letter to parents the goals set forth in the charter and then annually post its success toward those goals.

D. Discuss your plan for regular review of school budgets and financial records.

Vision Academy Charter School will prepare independent audits of the financial statements, which is conducted annually by a Pennsylvania State Certified Public Accountant contracted by the School. Annual financial audits will be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Principles (GAAP), per the US Controller General. The school's business services provider will provide required information and fill out financial forms as deemed necessary by the charter school or an accounting firm. These financial forms and reports shall be filed with the charter entity, federal government and appropriate state agencies. Upon completion, audits shall be reviewed by the School Leader and submitted to the Board for review.

The school will use independent audits to assess the effectiveness of the School's financial system. Historical data will be collected and reviewed for budget and cash flow statements. Projected budgets for new school year will use this database to minimize the errors within the system.

E. Describe your system for maintaining school records and disseminating information as required under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

As a data-driven school, effective and secure record-keeping will be paramount. All record keeping will be computerized and accessible only in administrative offices and double-locked and secured areas which meet State Regulations. Records will include: attendance, demographics, retention records, statistics needed for the violence and vandalism report, records for the state report card, and any additional reports required by State regulations. Student achievement test scores required by the state, school wide standardized tests, information pertaining to Titles I, II, IV and VI as well as bilingual, special education and scheduling information will be maintained. Performance objectives and scores will also be retained. Parents will be able to access student records upon request during regular school hours.

F. Describe your system for maintaining accurate student enrollment information as required under section 1748-A, Enrollment and Notification.

Vision Academy Charter School will follow state child accounting procedures (24 PS 13-1332). Student attendance will be continuously recorded in the school register during school hours on each day that the school is in session according to the required procedures. Attendance will be taken by the teachers in their classrooms at the start of each class. Each teacher will send a written record of all absences and tardiness to the central office, where it will be compiled within an attendance database.

The following guidelines apply to any absences other than an extended sick leave: After five absences during a school year, students and parents will be asked to come in and discuss how attendance can be improved. After ten absences during a school year, students will be put on academic probation. This means there will be a home visit by a representative from the school and a behavioral contract, agreed to by the parents, student and staff, will be documented and signed. After fifteen absences, students will receive one-on-one counseling and support from their counselors and teachers. After twenty absences, students will have to make-up the school year.

Student Evaluation:

A. Describe plans to evaluate student performance.

A diverse array of assessment tools will be used to allow for a holistic and accurate picture of both individual student learning and school-wide effectiveness in meeting the needs of the student body. The assessment tools will include both summative and formative measures designed to evaluate student mastery of a topic and the skills associated with being an effective learner. Thus, the assessment tools will allow teachers to fully understand their students' ability to articulate, present, and reflect upon learning and also to develop more effective teaching strategies. Formative assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, not an add-on at the end. The teachers will imbed assessment tools within the learning process by using observation checklists and rubrics; rubrics developed to assess specific skills, strategies, and student work; and benchmark and common assessments developed to assess the curriculum, student self-reflection, and Curriculum Night projects. Vision Academy Charter School will be compliant with all mandatory auditing, with the Special Education Coordinator responsible for day to day compliance monitoring of all plans for students with disabilities. The School Leader will be responsible for all reporting for Special Education and ELL delivery.

Vision Academy Charter School will utilize data from these evaluation tools:

State mandated assessments and screening tools (such as PSSA/PASA)

This data will provide the board, administration, and staff a snapshot of student summative performance that can be monitored from year to year, allowing for the identification of students and teachers in need of support and high performing members of the school community who may need further opportunities for personal development.

Other normed testing and screenings

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills) will be used in grades K-3 to screen students for RtI purposes, to measure growth in reading, and to give some diagnostic data for forming flexible groups.

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) will be used in grades 3-8 to measure academic progress toward grade level standard and as a tool in developing remediation or advancement.

Core Knowledge Foundation/School support

The Director of Instruction will reach out to other Core Knowledge Schools and to the Core Knowledge Foundation to refine the assessment program described in this application. Teachers will use these resources to develop effective assessments to monitor student progress towards grade level achievement and tailor instruction as necessary to improve performance. Teachers will use three basic assessment approaches:

Faculty-Created, Common Curriculum-Based Measurements

Vision Academy Charter School faculty will develop assessments as needed to support the learning in each classroom. These assessments will be aligned to the standards and the learning targets defined for each expedition or unit of instruction. These assessments may be in the form of quizzes or tests, but will also include performance tasks, writing projects, and other assessments that are integrated into students' active learning. Teachers will be trained in how to effectively use information gathered from these assessments to inform their teaching and assess where additional supports or interventions maybe needed. These assessments will also include non-standardized diagnostic assessments to measure reading skills such as concepts of print, phonemic and phonological awareness, decoding inventory, spelling stage, and sight words.

Assessments Linked to Curricular Materials

Vision Academy has selected curricula based on their alignment with state standards and with the Direct Instruction pedagogy, especially within the areas of literacy and math. Faculty will use, as appropriate, the assessments integrated in these curricula. These assessments may take the form of problem sets, quizzes or tests, but will more likely be performance tasks, games, writing projects, and other learning experiences. Teachers will be trained in how to effectively use information gathered from these assessments to inform instruction.

Assessment linked to Curriculum Night projects will evaluate students' ability to apply learned principals and concepts to larger issues. Students will be required to participate in a group and individual project that will allow teachers to assess personal learning styles and autonomy. Outcomes from Curriculum Night will give teachers an opportunity to also identify different learning styles and develop appropriate classroom opportunities for students to utilize their strengths in different intelligences to demonstrate mastery of content.

<p><i>B. How will student development towards the school's overall learning goals and objectives be measured?</i></p>
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Vision Academy faculty, administration and board will use both formal and informal evaluative measures to ensure the school is staying 'on target' in all aspects of the stated goals in this charter. Formal evaluative measures for student development toward goals will include annual state summative assessments, DIBELS assessments, MAP assessments, student conduct and

attendance reports, teacher attendance and PLC performance reports, and any individual subgroup reports as identified as important in meeting school goals.

Annually, the school will contract with an external provider for a gap analysis to ensure the school is maintaining fidelity to its mission and goals. Through this process, an independent body will examine not only student achievement, but all aspects of operational performance, using the school's actual data to identify "gaps" between the charter and actual performance. The board and staff will then develop a plan to address identified areas of need.

The Board will meet in regularly scheduled open meetings and workshops to review and discuss reports on school operations, finances and academic performance. The school leader will be expected to report monthly on student performance in areas such as attendance, academic achievement, and family engagement

C. Describe how student evaluation will be used to improve student achievement and attain the stated learning objectives.

Vision Academy will be a performance management, data driven school. Each member of the learning team will be responsible for understanding data and demonstrating exceptional capacity to use data to evaluate student development that demonstrates performance goals outlined in this charter.

The Director of Instruction will be responsible for all school-wide student assessment data, as well as for overseeing the administration and analysis of common classroom assessments. School student assessment scores will be analyzed in grade-level teams and by the school leaders throughout the school year and longitudinally to identify trends. The Director of Instruction will also ensure that all staff members have the resources necessary to use data regularly to craft and modify lesson plans to meet the needs of all students. Teachers and support specialists will collect and analyze informal and formal student assessments on a daily basis and meet monthly in grade level teams to discuss student progress.

Teachers will use student data to monitor students individually and as an aggregate in their mastery of content. Faculty members will collect informal and formal student assessments on a daily basis, ranging from quizzes, standardized diagnostic, formative or summative tests, observational information, student surveys, exit tickets, and other student work samples. These assessments will be used to inform and monitor instruction and achievement and will used to demonstrate students' progress towards meeting academic and non-academic goals. Grade-level and subject-area PLCs will also examine assessment data and student work samples regularly, checking for alignment between standards, learning targets, instruction, and assessment. These PLCs will analyze student work to evaluate the quality of instruction, individual student progress, and the effectiveness of the core curriculum. Teachers will be supported in this work by the Director of Instruction, special education teachers, and School Leader. The Director of Instruction will meet on a regular basis with all grade-level teams and will be integral to ensuring continuity in planning and assessment between those teams.

To identify trends across the school, PLC teams and school leaders will also examine diagnostic and summative assessment data collected throughout and at the beginning and end of the year. As a school community, faculty and administrators will regularly analyze student data to determine how individual teachers, resources, and the organization as a whole can better serve students. PLC meetings will be used to discuss student progress and identify and implement interventions to better support student needs.

Student reflection on data is an important aspect of data use to build mastery. Students primarily will understand their efforts toward mastery and the work ahead necessary to achieve mastery. Teachers and students will also work together to build the criteria for the rubrics used to assess projects and then apply those rubrics to exemplary models of projects so that students can learn how to evaluate their work and make revisions and improvements. Students at all levels are taught critique protocols so that they can analyze the strength of their own products and work in critical friends groups with their peers.

Finally, the board will be given the training necessary to understand what the enormous amount of data related to various assessments means in relation to student achievement and the schools' path in achieving its stated performance goals.

I.5. SCHOOL COMMUNITY

A. Describe the relationship of your school with the surrounding community.

Founding members of the Vision Academy Charter School are active members of the immediate and surrounding communities and have an expansive understanding of the community and its needs. Vision Academy founders expect to have an active relationship with the community locally and more broadly in the region, reaching out for volunteers from local universities and businesses for support in the Extended Day Program. The community will be invited to visit the school, and the school will open all professional development activities held on site to other public school faculty.

To establish a more formal relationship with the community, the Board has established a Community Advisory Committee that is the official connection between the school and its broader community. Membership to the Community Advisory Committee will include at least two members of the School's Board of Directors, but otherwise, membership and numbers are unlimited.

In public events regarding the development of the school, the founders have been able to gather feedback from parents and gain greater insight into the challenges students face and the value that this new public school opportunity will provide to parents.

Current Community Advisory Committee members are listed in Attachment M.

B. Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the school's mission.

Vision Academy Charter School recognizes parental involvement as a crucial factor in the school's success. A significant number of parents and former district parents are involved actively in founding the Vision Academy Charter School. It is these parents who have driven the mission. It is parents who will continue to drive the mission.

The educational programs and the school's small size will be appropriate for parental involvement and our school will actively seek this in all areas. Vision Academy Charter School will prepare and foster an atmosphere in which community and parents' perspectives and input are expected. Parents will be involved in the development of the school at all stages. They will be invited to attend and participate in public information seminars and other vehicles of public outreach.

Prior to school opening, parents will be contacted by the teachers and tutors to provide feedback on their children's education, increasing parental awareness and involvement with school activities enriched by technology approach. Thereafter, parents/guardians will be contacted on a monthly basis by their child's teacher for progress updates. Parents will be asked to evaluate teachers and their comments will be considered carefully while measuring teacher performances.

Parents will be encouraged to participate in the school governance through various committees. These committees will offer the parents an opportunity to provide ongoing feedback to the school community and Board of Directors. The Founding Members envision the school as a center for learning and a place for active parent, student, teacher, and community member involvement in order to facilitate a dynamic learning environment. A parent representative will also sit on the Board.

In at the end of each marking period, progress reports including copies of all report cards will be sent to the student's parents. Vision Academy Charter School will provide timely information about the success of the school to the parents via a quarterly review of the school.

Parents will also be allowed to inspect and review all of their children's educational records maintained by the charter school. Vision Academy Charter School will also provide the parents with Vision Academy Charter School' standardized test results, as well as the results of the parent satisfaction surveys.

The School will support the participation of parents in the educational process. The volunteer efforts of a parent/guardian to assist in any capacity within their means will always be welcomed. Parents will be invited to be members in various committees to provide constructive feedback that will be used to monitor school performance.

C. Describe procedures established to review complaints of parents regarding operation of the charter school.

Parents will be involved in the control and management of Vision Academy Charter School in a number of ways: by serving on the Board of Directors, by participating in the school's Action Team, or by becoming a member of the school's safety committee. The school's Action Team

will solicit the concerns of students, parents, guardians, mentors, and teachers. The School Leader will ask for written evaluations from all of these groups. Vision Academy will also administer annual parent-student surveys, which will help to gauge the opinions of students and parents and to measure the progress of students. Following is a list of how the school will facilitate the review of parents' complaints:

- Allow parents to communicate directly with the school during school hours
- Monitor students on a daily basis in order to follow up on complaints
- Contact parents whenever necessary
- Continually assess students and their Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
- Post monthly newsletters
- Remain receptive to suggestions from parents
- Post marking period report cards
- Produce semi-annual progress reports

I.6. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (ATHLETICS, PUBLICATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS):

A. Describe the program of extra-curricular activities planned for the charter school.

The purpose of the Vision Academy Charter School Extended Day (ED) Program is to provide students with educational, fun and safe after school activities throughout the school week. The Program will not only offer academic support, but it will provide students with outlets where they may extend their knowledge gained during the school day

The ED Program will be offered from 3:30- 4:30 (first session) and 4:30- 5:15 (second session) Monday- Friday, excluding all school vacations, holidays, or snow days. The ED program will not be held on early release days due to snow. Students will receive a snack before the start of the program. Two sessions will be offered each day the school is in operation. Students enrolled only in the first session must be picked up at 4:30. Students enrolled in a second session activity must select a first session activity also. Pickup will be promptly at 5:15. Transportation will not be provided for the program.

Students who do not have access to the internet after school hours will be given priority on school computers in the Extended Day Program, absolute priority on computers will be given to students in flipped classrooms who do not have home access to the internet.

Following are a sample of potential clubs. Clubs will be offered depending upon interest levels.

✓ Art

Students will gain deeper understanding of various aspects of art and develop fine motor coordination through cutting, pasting and drawing; explore sculpting and constructing with fibers. Explore art techniques, culture and history of art; learn artistic challenges in drawing, fiber arts and sculpting; develop graphic design techniques.

✓ Band

Students will participate in a weekly lesson and after school band. The combination of weekly lessons and a weekly-band team experience promotes self-confidence, teamwork, personal academic growth and develops future musicians for the middle and high schools.

✓ Book Club

Book Club participants come together each week to choose and discuss books. A variety of theme-based books are presented to club members in each division of the Book Club, who then choose one of them. The timeline for reading and topics to be discussed are also presented during the session. The club facilitator guides and encourages student interaction.

✓ Community Service Club

Members of this club will learn the benefits of volunteering individually and to the community. Periodic service projects will take place.

✓ Dance Club

Dance club is a fun and high-energy after-school program that teaches students hip hop dance. Apart from learning fun dances students gain vital skills in participating in Dance Club: creative thinking, memorization skills, performance opportunity, body awareness and coordination, and exercise.

✓ Drama Club

Drama Club is designed to create an active interest in the theatre arts. This club will enable students to have an opportunity to experience many different sides of play production. The primary goal is to give students enjoyable and interesting opportunities to learn about and participate in the world of theatre arts. Students should achieve an increased confidence, improved reading comprehension, responsibility and teamwork. Drama club will hone public speaking skills, teach students how to be a good audience, and give them a creative outlet. Most importantly, it's fun!

✓ First Lego League Club

Each team consists of up to ten children with an adult (parent) coach addressing the First Lego League (FLL) challenge. This challenge has two components: 1) the programming of an autonomous robot on a playing field performing a set of tasks; and 2) the research project to solve a new problem each year. FLL introduces younger students to real-world engineering challenges by building LEGO-based robots to complete tasks on a thematic playing surface. FLL teams, guided by their imaginations and adult coaches, discover exciting career possibilities and, through the process, learn to make positive contributions to society.

✓ Geography Bee

The Geography Club is open to students who have an interest in geography. Besides competing in the school level of the National Geographic Bee, students also participate in the National Geography Challenge and compete against other school groups. During club meetings, students play computer and Board games, complete geography puzzles, hold competitions, and conduct research.

✓ Early Elementary Club

Club leaders will work with students to enhance classroom skills through activities. Weekly clubs will emphasize visual, auditory, and kinesthetic engagement in learning.

✓ Jr. First Lego League Robotics Club

This is a great introduction to FLL Robotics. Focused on building an interest in science and engineering in children ages 6-9, Junior FIRST LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) is a hands-on program designed to capture young children's inherent curiosity and direct it toward discovering the possibilities of improving the world around them. Just like FIRST LEGO® League (FLL®), this program features a real-world challenge, to be solved by research, critical thinking and imagination. Guided by adult coaches and the Jr.FLL Core Values, students work with LEGO elements and moving parts to build ideas and concepts and present them for review.

✓ MathCounts Club

The MathCounts Club program is designed to excite and challenge upper elementary students with fun and challenging math problems geared to promote math enthusiasm! The math activities will foster a positive social atmosphere, with the students working together as a club to earn recognition and rewards. Each week, the teams will work together to provide solutions to challenging math problems. Some of the problems may include: probability, circumference, improper fractions, arithmetic means, principal square roots, x and y intercepts, line segments, Pythagorean Triple, and much more!

✓ Newspaper Club

The School's student-managed, student-staffed monthly newspaper will allow students opportunities at researching, writing, and editing stories on current events, sports, entertainment, and fashion. As they work together, students learn about group dynamics, organizational strategies, and team-building exercises.

Odyssey of the Mind

Students develop team-building skills by working in groups of as many as seven students per team. Students learn to examine problems and to identify the real challenge without limiting the possible solutions and their potential success. The creative-thinking process is nurtured and developed as a problem-solving tool.

✓ Photography Club

The Photography Club supports student interest in photography and photographers, and provides fundamentals to taking better and more interesting photos. Students will learn to develop more advanced skills, such as time and light manipulations. Students will share their ideas and visit museums that exhibit photography.

✓ Science Club

Science Club enhances the science community at PA by becoming an extension of the curriculum. Students will prepare for and participate in quiz bowl style competitions testing the students' knowledge of the natural sciences.

✓ Words with Friends/Scrabble Club

The Scrabble Club enhances students' abilities in spelling, word play, and or problem solving.

✓ Spelling Bee

The Spelling Bee is conducted every year to help students improve their spelling, increase vocabulary, and develop proper English usage. Vision Academy will work with the Scripps Company for participation in the competition. Students will be given lists of practice words and will also meet with advisors for sessions.

✓ Yearbook Club

Students will meet weekly to plan, organize and design the school yearbook. Activities will include taking photos, choosing artwork for the yearbook pages, using the computer to plan the layout of the yearbook, cross-checking student names from master lists to make sure all students are represented multiple times throughout the yearbook, and much more. Students will have much of the decision-making process for how the final product (this year's yearbook) will look before it goes to the publisher.

The formation of any club will depend on reasonable interest from students. Other clubs may be formed based upon demonstrated student interest. Athletic intermural activities will be organized on a space available, student interest basis.

B. Describe whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district.

There have not been extra-curricular activities jointly planned with the school district yet. However, Vision Academy Charter School will seek every opportunity to cooperate with William Penn School District in regards to extracurricular activities.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

II.1. STATEMENT OF NEED

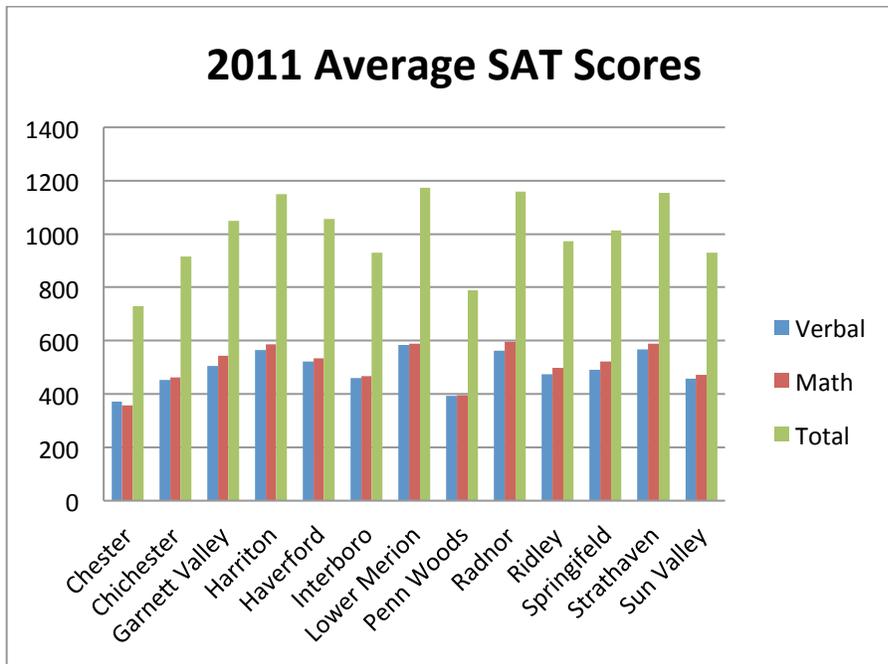
A. <i>Why is there a need for this type of school?</i>

In 1966, the National Society for the Study of Education published “The Changing American School” which traced the evolution of post-war public education and the (then) modern education reform movement in this country. Sadly, nearly 50 years have passed since this publication, and reformers are still discussing the academic disparity between students in the United States and the rest of the modern world, the gap between various subgroups of student demographics, and the lack of connectivity between the content being taught in public schools and the requirements of college and the workforce

The harsh reality is that the crisis in education today is the same as the crisis pointed out in 1966. For a number of children across the country and here, in Delaware County, there are still significant gaps in academic achievement and content still fails to prepare many students for college and the workplace, all resulting in roadblocks toward upward mobility.

However, not all children are falling behind. In fact, a number of public schools in middle class and more affluent suburbs, where parents demand – and receive – quality public education are providing the foundation for lifelong success. For these families, the reform movement has been a success. For those families in district, like William Penn School District, education reform has failed to level the playing field for their children.

Consider the following comparison of average SAT scores for the 2011 (PDE, 2011) school year for students at various high schools in Delaware County:



Graduates of Penn Woods High School, located in the William Penn School District, have average SAT scores that are nearly 400 points lower than their suburban peers from Lower Merion, Harriton, Haverford, Radnor, or Strathaven high schools. The promise of education reform of the 1960s clearly has not supported these students. It has failed them while they were students, and, worse, it will continue to fail them throughout their lives.

Unfortunately, the William Penn School District has among the lowest academic performance data in the state. According to 2011-2012 PSSA scores, the district is ranked 519 of 533 school districts in the state (SchoolDigger, 2012). Penn Wood Middle School was ranked 641 of 848 middle schools in the state (SchoolDigger, 2012), and all of the district’s elementary schools were ranked in the lowest quintile in the state for respective testing grades (SchoolDigger, 2012). While the district is encountering modest performance gains in the last few years, the founders of Vision Academy Charter School believe that the pace of improvement will still leave too many children unprepared for college and career.

In a review of the various elementary schools in the district, each seems to have its own unique focus and school culture. These eight different schools feed into a singular middle school, where all students are new to the faculty, administrators and school culture. In 2012, none of the district’s elementary schools or middle school achieved Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind federal student performance accountability standards (PDE, 2012). Six of these nine schools are in School Improvement 1 or more significant “penalty” stages of NCLB.

Additionally, the William Penn School District facilities reflect the common past practice of educating elementary students in one building, middle/junior high students in another, and high school in yet another, or in the case of the district two different high school buildings. Schwerd and West in their article *The Impact of Alternative Grade Configurations on Student Outcomes through Middle and High School* pointed to academic losses that are particularly acute in high

need communities when students are faced with school transition at critical middle school grades. The authors findings disclose that “students moving from elementary to middle school in grade 6 or 7 suffer a sharp drop in student achievement in the transition year,” The researchers further indicated that that middle school transition increases “student absences and is associated with higher grade 10 dropout rates.”

While the founders of Vision Academy Charter School respect the commitment and professionalism of each teacher and administrator in the district, they strongly believe that a refined and research-based curriculum supported by data-driven instruction in a small school infused with positive behavior support systems will accelerate learning for students. The school’s proposed kindergarten through eighth grade configuration that is unique to this district and Vision Academy’s use of technology to drive learning will help its students become autonomous learners with the capacity to advocate for their own education as they move through the next two transitions encountered at the high school level in the district.

It is through these research-based, peer reviewed practices that Vision Academy Charter School will serve as a model for improving student outcomes and provide a path toward upward mobility for families in the William Penn School District.

B. Explain why the charter school model is an appropriate vehicle to address this need.

Vision Academy Charter School will be designed from the ground up to address the defecits in learning and expectations that many children and families encounter in the current public school setting in the district. By creating a new school with new paradigms designed to close learning gaps common in the district, Vision Academy Charter School will 1) Utilize proven education scope and sequence, content, and teaching models implemented with fidelity and constantly in review through the use of data 2) Establish consistent expectations for students around learning, behavior, and civic responsibility to school and community that span nine years of enrollment 3) Authentically engage parents as active partners in education through research-based action teams and multiple opportunities for interaction with their children’s teachers and their children in the education setting. Goodwin (2000) noted that closing the achievement gap requires the very paradigm shift that Vision Academy proposes.

Vision Academy will offer a choice to families in the William Penn School District, whose only other public school opportunity is a charter school in the School District of Philadelphia. However, few families in the district have the time or the financial ability to access these public alternatives or the private alternatives. The strong community support for this school demonstrates that parents want to be engaged in their children’s education and believe that the founders and this school will be responsive to the needs of students and set a path for college and career readiness.

The charter model is particularly appropriate in that the school can select administrators with expertise in selected curricular and delivery models with the understanding of the time commitment expected to build a new school and a new team of faculty and staff. Further, those

administrators will be given the opportunity to select faculty and staff who, themselves, are committed to the curriculum and delivery system and understand that the day at Vision Academy Charter School ends when students have demonstrated mastery.

II.2. SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

A. What are the school’s enrollment projections for the first five years? What is the school’s ultimate enrollment goal? What grades will be served? What is the age of kindergarten and age of beginner students? How many students are expected to be in each grade or grouping?

Vision Academy Charter School will serve students in Kindergarten through Eighth grades. In the first year of its operation, Vision Academy will admit students in Kindergarten through Fourth Grade. In its first year of operation, Vision Academy will support two classrooms of each grade. Each grade level will have a class size of approximately 20 students. Vision Academy Charter School will admit 40 students for Kindergarten each subsequent year. Other grades will be admitted based on available openings. The student enrollment projection is shown in the table below. In the fifth year of the charter, Vision Academy will have approximately 360 students. Kindergarten/beginner students’ ages will be 5 and 6 respectively.

Grade\ Year	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	Total
2013-2014	40	40	40	40	40	-	-	-	-	200
2014-2015	40	40	40	40	40	40	-	-	-	240
2015-2016	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	-	-	280
2016-2017	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	-	220
2017-2018	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	360

B. Describe the community or region where the school will be located.

Vision Academy Charter School will be located in the William Penn School District, which serves families living in Aldan, Colwyn, Darby, East Lansdowne, Lansdowne, and Yeadon boroughs. The communities together provide a diverse mix of both owned and rented housing, large and small businesses, and broad representation of community organizations and support services. The school district which serves these communities is adjacent to Philadelphia, and a number of residents have come to the district to escape some of the travails of the city. A significant number of families in the area are economically disenfranchised, as evidenced by the significant free and reduced lunch population served by the district. The community is diverse in

makeup, with approximately 1/3 of the population Caucasian and 2/3 African American according to 2010 Census data.

C. Why was this location selected? Are there other locations suitable to the needs and focus of the school?

This location was selected because a number of the Founding Members live or work in this community and are concerned about the ability of students to be successful in college and career based on the current outcomes being demonstrated in the district. The founders believe that this district needs another public school choice to provide new opportunities for families. There are numerous locations within the district that are suitable; however the founders are committed to the current location because it meets the requirements of the school community proposed.

The address of the proposed location is 404 Industrial Park Drive, Yeadon, PA. The Founding Members have examined a number of other locations that are equally suitable, but this location presented the most viable location within the district with ease of access and egress for transportation, the ability to build out for the future, and amenities appropriate for a school. For details on the location, please see Appendix D.

D. Describe any unique demographic characteristics of the student population to be served, including primary languages spoken.

Vision Academy Charter School projects to serve a population similar to the William Penn School District. A majority of the students are likely to be African American, English-speaking, and from economically disadvantaged households. The school has designed its program to address the needs of all students, but in particular has been sensitive to adopt curriculum and delivery system that has demonstrated exceptional success with this student population.

II.3. DISTRICT RELATIONS / EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

A. What efforts have you made to notify the district(s) from which your charter school would draw students?

Vision Academy Charter School will primarily be expecting students from the William Penn School District where the application has been submitted. Leslie Lewis, Vice President of the Board contacted the superintendent of the William Penn School District, Dr. Joseph Bruni, by phone and spoke personally. The board also submitted a letter of intent to Superintendent Bruni on November 2, 2012. A copy of the letter sent to Dr. Bruni is attached in Appendix L.

Vision Academy will contact additional districts if and when there is student interest from other districts during the enrollment period.

B. What efforts will be implemented to maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts?

Vision Academy Charter School will maintain a strong collaborative relationship with the William Penn School District by periodically organizing meetings with District officials including the Superintendent, the Director of Special Education Services, Director of Transportation, Director of Food Services and Facility Manager. In these meetings, Vision Academy will inform the District officials regarding schools operation details. Vision Academy will seek every opportunity to collaborate with the School District, which the Founding Members believe will lead to an increase in student service quality.

In addition, Vision Academy will welcome all District employees, especially district teachers, to participate in curriculum training programs and professional development activities.

C. Convey the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school and its founding coalition. Document community support among teachers, parents, students, community members, institutional leaders and others, through the use of letters of support, surveys, or other tangible means

The Founding Members of the Vision Academy Charter School have conducted a variety of community outreach activities to ensure there is broad support of the charter school's proposed program. These outreach activities involved attending community events, a public presentation at the Darby Recreation Center, and promoting the fundamentals of the school on its website.

As a result of the outreach activities, the founding coalition of the Vision Academy Charter School has received pre-enrollment applications from more than 200 parents. The school's online petition has received more than 500 signatures, and the founders have received more than 100 letters of support from families and business leaders in the community. Even though, Vision Academy Charter School will provide seats for 200 students in its first year, the significant number of families that have included their names for pre-enrollment before any active marketing for enrollment has taken place demonstrates the strong community support of the school. Copies of names of families who have signed pre-enrollment forms (which are non-binding) are presented in Appendix E. Copies of letters of support and petition are also included in Appendix F.

III. DESCRIPTION OF FOUNDING / MANAGEMENT TEAM

III.1. PROFILE OF FOUNDING COALITION

A. Describe the make-up of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter, including the names of the founders, their background and experiences, and references for each.

B. Discuss how the group came together, as well as any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups.

The Founding Members of Vision Academy Charter School are a diverse group with strong backgrounds in various facets of management essential to charter school operation, including: finance, marketing, education, effective and objective use of data, students with disabilities, community engagement, and facilities. As evidenced by their success in developing an educationally sound charter, marketing the school to community members, and identifying a proper location, the board has already established its capacity to effectively work together toward the school's mission.

Following are founding members. Their full resumes and references for the group are included in Appendix G.

Alaadin Taskin, President

Mr. Taskin is a local business owner who is a graduate of Upper Darby High School and attended Delaware County Community College. Owner of three Meineke Car Care Centers, Mr. Taskin is accountable not only to a national franchise, but also to thousands of customers annually. A father of five, Mr. Taskin has expertise in business management, marketing, facility management, human resources and finance.

Leslie Lewis, Vice President

Ms. Lewis is the founder and director of Fresh Start, an after-school program for at-risk youth. A lifelong resident of the area, Ms. Lewis has expertise in working with at-risk children, program management, community relations, and education. She has worked closely with the district through her after-school program and is highly regarded as a selfless educator in the community. She has worked in the human services field for more than 10 years and has received numerous accolades for her efforts.

Gohan Sheker, Treasurer

Mr. Sheker is the manager of Martin Mainline Honda and holds a Masters in Business Administration for New York Institute of Technology with a concentration in economics. Mr. Sheker brings expertise to the board related to finance, management, human resources, and marketing.

Carletta Mason, Fundraising Chair

Ms. Mason currently works with foster care placement and will be graduating from Cabrini College with a Master's Degree in Education in May 2013. Ms. Mason graduated from Widener University with a degree in psychology and has worked as a case manager and social worker for at-risk children and children with special needs and has worked extensively in public schools. Ms. Mason brings essential knowledge of current education systems, quality delivery, data evaluation, service to diverse populations, and effective parent engagement tools to the board.

Dr. Ertugrul Cubukcu, Education Chair

In addition to a bachelor and master's degrees in physics, Dr. Cubukcu holds a PhD in applied physics, awarded by Harvard University. Dr. Cubukcu is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania and is leading a team on nanotechnology innovations. In addition to having a deep commitment to education, Dr. Cubukcu brings university connections to the school to will help advance its Education Advisory Committee, staff, and after school programming. Dr. Cubukcu is an expert at data evaluation, program management, and research and will be effective at evaluating the efficacy of school operations related to educational outcomes.

Linwood Morris, Outreach Committee Chair

Mr. Morris is a long-time community member who worked as a mechanic until his retirement in 2004. Currently the manager of his own automobile racing program, Mr. Morris brings expertise in marketing and community outreach to the board and has been essential in sharing the vision of the school with parents and other community members.

Chrissy Calkap, Facility Committee Chair

Ms. Calkap is employed by FRI Properties, a major commercial property firm in the Philadelphia region. She has served a property manager and is currently working as a bookkeeper for the company. She brings expertise in facilities, leasing, and property management to the board. Ms. Calkap is a parent of two young children.

Terry McGirth, Member

Mr. McGirth, a graduate of Boston State College, is local business owner and community leader who has served on the Yeadon Borough Council and a number of other non-profit organizations, including several serving local youth. As a specialist in collections and training, Mr. McGirth brings expertise in business, finance, human resources, governance, and community relations to the founding board.

Halil Erol, Member

Mr. Erol is a research scientist with expertise in data evaluation. Mr. Erol brings understanding of goal setting, goal achievement, and evaluation of operational standards to the board.

Frank Thornton, Member

Mr. Thornton is a tenured professor at Temple University in the Mathematics Department. He has taught a number of undergraduate courses and well as served in leadership roles in organizations serving faculty and students. Mr. Thornton provides expertise in education, governance, and evaluation.

The group came together through personal connections and commitment to education. Mr. Taskin, a business owner in the community began discussing the possibility of establishing a charter school as an alternative to the current public school options with several friends and business colleagues. A small group began meeting regularly to discuss the opportunity, and that group grew into the current Founding Coalition. The group has reached out to a number of community organizations and community leaders. It has toured Newark Charter School, a Core Knowledge Demonstration School, and intends on working to create a more defined collaborative relationship with Newark Charter School upon approval, as well as other Core Knowledge schools in the Mid-Atlantic region

C. Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

The current Founding Members will be members of the Vision Academy Charter School Board for the first term. The founding members will propose/consider potential Board candidates from the community with relevant backgrounds and maintain and review a list of interested candidates in order to achieve a diverse Board. The Board will sit a nominating committee that will be charged with encouraging candidates to participate in school activities prior to appointment and recruiting parent participation in the board, as outlined in the school's bylaws.

D. Provide information on the manner in which community groups are involved in the charter school planning process.

The concept of Vision Academy Charter School is the direct result of community leaders who identified an urgent need for a school that will improve student outcomes in the William Penn School District. In order to ensure that the community plays an important role in the development and implementation of this school, the Board has formally identified in its by-laws that there will be a Community Advisory Committee that will provide support to the board.

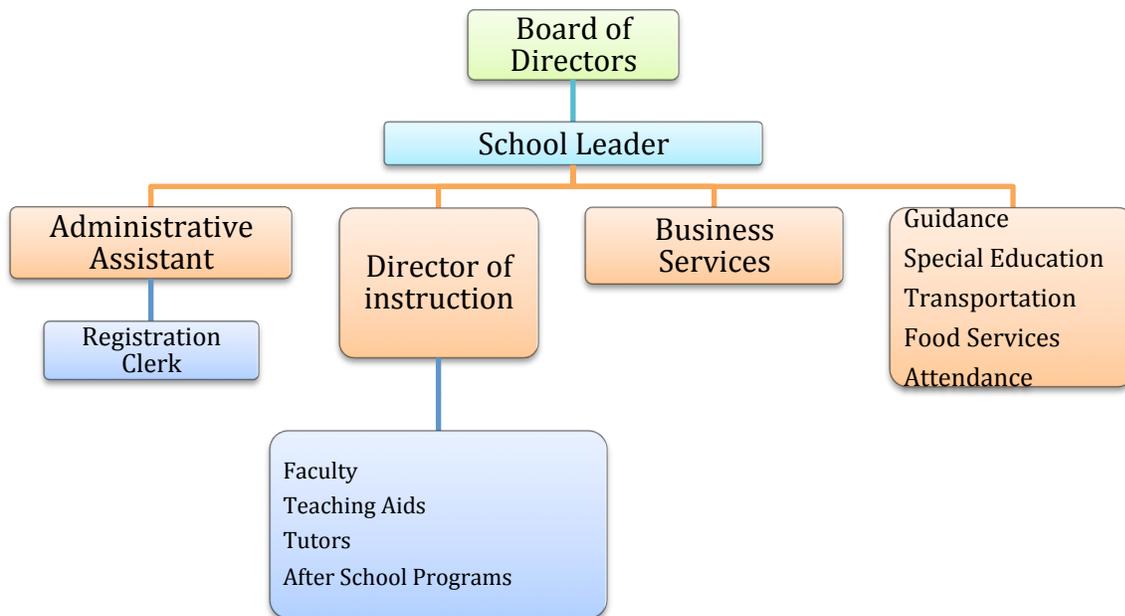
II.2. GOVERNANCE

A. Describe the proposed management organization of the school:

Each Founding Board Member is fully committed to the mission of the school and brings to the table a unique and valuable perspective on building a school and implementing management structures that will sustain success. The Board of Directors believes so strongly in the governing structure and the mission of the school, it will take precautions to ensure that

the first Board of Directors of the Vision Academy Charter School and all Boards to follow will have a clear understanding of the mission and vision of the school. To that end, the Founders will ensure that the future Board Members understand the mission of the school by requiring the Board Members to actively participate in the School community.

The organizational structure of the School is shown below:



B. How will the Board of Directors be selected?

The number of Board of Directors of the Vision Academy Charter School will be not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11). The Board will fix the exact number of members, within these limits, by Board resolution. The Board will elect the members of Board of Directors by the vote of a majority of the members then in office, whether or not the number of Board of Directors in office is sufficient to constitute a quorum, or by the sole remaining members. The Board may elect as a member any person who in its discretion it believes will serve the interests of the Vision Academy Charter School faithfully and effectively. Within three months of opening, if there is no current Parent/Guardian seated on the Board, the Board Nominating Committee will recruit and nominate a Parent/Guardian to the board.

C. What steps will be taken to maintain continuity between the founding coalition’s vision and the Board of Directors?

To ensure that continuity in vision is maintained throughout operation, the Founding Board will have a rigorous orientation process for a new board member that includes:

- Providing each new board member with a complete charter

- Shadow day at the school with the school leader, curriculum director, and various staff.
- Orientation on the school's annual goals as set forth in the charter, on laws and regulations regarding the charter, and the school's operational targets as identified in its Building Charter School Quality performance management plan.
- Financial training that provides accurate information on how to read charter school financials and the various funding streams for the school.
- Data training that ensures that board members are able to understand data to drive decision making.

A formal orientation program at the beginning of each new term will also serve as a forum for Founders to articulate their vision to the Board while allowing an opportunity for new and old Board Members to merge into an effective team.

After the first year, the Board will also develop a strategic plan to set forth goals and define the Board's course of action over a time period of several years. In addition to providing more organization for the Board, the strategic plan will allow for greater continuity as Board members leave and new Board members are added.

<i>D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Board.</i>
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The generality of the roles and responsibilities of to the Board are described in the Bylaws (*Appendix H*). The Board has all the roles and responsibilities enumerated in the Bylaws and the following specific roles and responsibilities:

- To elect and remove Directors, subject to Article III, Paragraphs (C)(2) and (D) of the Bylaws;
- To select and remove Officers, agents and employees of the Vision Academy, to prescribe powers and duties for them and to fix their compensation;
- To conduct, manage and control the affairs and activities of the Vision Academy and to make rules and regulations;
- To enter into contracts, leases and other agreements which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary or desirable in obtaining the purposes of promoting the interests of the Vision Academy;
- To carry on the business of operating a charter school and apply any surplus that results from the business activity to any activity in which Vision Academy may engage;
- To act as trustee under any trust incidental to the Vision Academy Charter School's purposes, and to receive, hold, administer, exchange and expend funds and property subject to such a trust;
- To acquire real or personal property, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise, and to hold, improve, lease, sublease, mortgage, transfer in trust, encumber, convey or otherwise dispose of such property;

- To borrow money, incur debt, and to execute and deliver promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations and other evidences of debt and securities;
- To lend money received only from private sources and to accept conditional or unconditional promissory notes therefore, whether interest or non-interest bearing, or secured or unsecured; and
- To indemnify and maintain insurance on behalf of any of its Directors, Officers, employees or agents for liability asserted against or incurred by such person in such capacity or arising out of such person's status as such, subject to the provisions of the Pennsylvania Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and the limitations noted in these Bylaws.

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board of Directors of the charter school, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, shall be used in order to take action on the following subjects: To enter into contracts with and making appropriations to an Intermediate Unit, school district or Area Vocational/Technical School for the charter's proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

Board of Directors members will be selected in July for every two years. The School Leader of the School will be a nonvoting, ex-officio member of the Board. A student representative to the Board, to be elected by the student body annually, may attend Board meetings in a nonvoting capacity to address issues directly related to students. A faculty representative to the Board, to be elected by the teaching staff, will attend Board meetings in a nonvoting capacity.

The founders of the Charter School understand that the Board of Directors must maintain ultimate authority to manage and control the charter school, including, but not limited to its educational philosophy, budgeting, curriculum, staffing, and operating procedures. Among the broader roles and responsibilities of Board of Directors are:

- Ensure the charter school's mission and purpose is maintained and updated
- Support the charter school administrator and review his or her performance
- Ensure effective organizational planning
- Determine and monitor the charter school's programs and services
- Enhance the charter school's public image
- Assess School's and Board's its own performance

E. What steps will be taken to facilitate a productive relationship between administrators and teachers?

Vision Academy Charter School will ultimately be responsible to the William Penn School District and the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Board of Directors will govern all operations of the school, delegating day-to-day management functions to the administrative staff and establishing a reporting relationship between the Board and the administrative staff. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that the school is run in compliance with the charter application and all applicable laws and for ensuring the

school's sustained financial viability. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Charter School's Board of Directors will be required to take action on any item.

To ensure a productive relationship, a teacher representative will be selected by the staff to attend all board meetings. Additionally, teachers will evaluate administrators annually to provide a full range of input on the relationships between administrators and teachers and to foster greater collaboration.

At the conclusion of Year 2, teachers will be asked for input on the school's teacher evaluation system, the overall educational systems, and their PLCs to foster school-wide improvement and create a culture of collaboration and support.

F. Discuss the nature of parental and student involvement in decision-making matters where appropriate.

Vision Academy Charter School recognizes parental involvement as a crucial factor in the school's success. As previously discussed, the Core Knowledge Sequence is a parent-friendly model in helping parents understand the content being taught and the value that our model adds to the educational experience. Parents will have multiple opportunities to be a part of their children's educational journey, not only through scheduled conferences that directly reference student achievement, but also through Curriculum Nights where students demonstrate higher order skills of Bloom's Taxonomy. Both meetings and events will be scheduled with parents' schedules in mind, and parents who are unable to attend school due to transportation issues will either receive home visits or will be invited to ride share with other parents or staff to attend school events.

Prior to admissions, there will be orientations and workshops for parents, which provide information about the school and its programs. During orientation, parents will be invited to become a member of various committees established to maintain and constantly improve the school. These committees will offer the parents an opportunity to provide ongoing feedback to the school community and Board of Directors. It is the Founding Member's belief that once parents recognize the benefits intrinsic to involvement in their children's education, parent volunteers will become a part of the regular school learning community culture. The Founding Members envision the school as a center for learning and a place for active parent, student, teacher, and community member involvement in order to facilitate a dynamic learning environment.

The School will also establish a Parents' Association to seek active involvement from parents. All parents are eligible to participate voluntarily. The parent members will contribute to developing their own bylaws and elect officers. The Parents' Association will work closely with the administration and provide recommendations and feedback concerning school matters prior to Board Meetings.

Parental Involvement in decision-making matters will be achieved by:

- At least one parent will serve on the Board of Directors, starting by the fourth quarter of the school year, as a voting member, ensuring a significant voice in the operations of the school according to the Vision Academy Charter School by-laws and membership guidelines.
- An Action Team will be established during the first month of school. This team will provide continuous input to school administration, as reflected in school policy and meeting schedules.
- A School Safety Committee of the Board that will have parent representation.
- A Parent Association will be established by parents within the first 6 months of school operation. The Association will work with the Action Team to ensure parent engagement and input in all critical areas of operation.
- Teachers will be required to regularly contact parents in order to discuss each student’s progress in academic and non-academic areas and use data to demonstrate student achievement.

G. Submit copies of the school’s by-laws, contracts and other documents required by pending charter school legislation or applicable law.

Bylaws are provided in *Appendix H*.

H. Submit Board members’ names, address, phone numbers and resumes

Resumes of the Founding Members are presented in *Appendix G*.

Name	Address	Phone Number	Email
Chrissy Calkap	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Dr. Ertugrul Cubukcu	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Halil Erol	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Leslie Lewis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Carletta Mason	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Terry McGirth	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Linwood Morris	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Gokhan Seker	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Alaadin Taskin	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Frank Thornton	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

IV. FINANCE AND FACILITY

IV.1. FINANCING

A. Develop a preliminary startup and operating budget.

The Vision Academy Charter School start-up and operating budgets were developed by Michael Whisman, CPA, of Charter Choices, Inc. This firm works with nearly 30 charter schools in Pennsylvania (www.charterchoices.com), 222 Keswick Avenue, Glenside, PA 19038, 215-481-9777).

The School's start up and operating budgets are attached to this application as Appendix I. Included in these forms are:

- Operating Budget for Fiscal Years Ending 2013-2014 through 2017- 2018
- Cash Flow Projection for Fiscal Years Ending 2013-2014.

The following projected budget lists the revenues by source and include state general-purpose aid, state and federal program revenues, grants, earned income, charitable contributions, and other sources of revenue. Expected expenditures such as expenditures on salaries, benefits, books, rents and utilities are listed by their use. The primary source of the Vision Academy Charter School's revenue calculates the Estimated State Aid (ESA) based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA) based upon William Penn School District's 2012-2013 budget.

Other sources of Vision Academy Charter School revenue will include state general-purpose aid programs, state transportation aid program, federal funds for child nutrition, grants from the Federal Government's charter school grant program and grants and donations from local charitable foundations.

As circumstances change and when actual figures become available, a subcommittee including several board members and School Leader, the school's treasurer, and its business services provider will prepare regular updates prior to school opening for the Board of Directors of Vision Academy Charter School, ensuring that the proposed budget is adjusted to actual budget figures.

B. Develop a purchasing procedure that addresses a competitive way to purchase goods and services.

Note: For additional financing procedures see Section 1725-A of the Charter School Law.

The purchasing procedures of Vision Academy Charter School will comply with Section 1725-A of Charter School legislation. The goal of the financial procedures will be to provide flexibility while maintaining adequate controls and oversight. The Board of Trustees will approve the financial budget and financial procedures. The School anticipates engaging an independent Business Manager to provide the School with "back office" and fiscal management services. The Business Manager will oversee the school's financial system and ensure that budgets are

itemized according to the Board's requirements.

The school administration will be authorized to spend up to \$500 for any single transaction. Expenditures from \$500 to \$5,000 will be permitted when allocated funds are available in the budget category and the school administration and Business Manager will sign off on these expenditures. The Board Treasurer will check to ensure that competitive bids have been entertained where appropriate. Expenditures over \$5,000 must receive prior Board or Executive Committee approval. The Business Manager or school administration will report on the financial status to the Board of Trustees at each meeting of the Board. The Board will develop additional procedures as the need arises.

C. What fund raising efforts have occurred and/or are planned to generate capital or to supplement the per pupil allocations?

Since the inception of the collaborative effort to start the charter school, the founding members have brainstormed ways to raise funds for the initial planning costs. Examples of efforts will be fundraising events and application to the federal implementation grant. For budgetary purposes, we have budgeted zero for both.

D. Describe the implementation of required financial procedures:

The Business Manager shall settle his/her accounts annually with the Board of Trustees for each year.

An annual audit shall be conducted according to the requirements of Article 24 of the School Code of 1949. Charter School Boards of Trustees are required to follow the requirements set forth for School Boards in this section.

The Vision Academy Charter School is planning to implement the policies and procedures defined above. Specifically, the following are examples of the proposed financial procedures that the school will follow:

Budgets

No later than 90 days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1), the Business Manager and the School's administration will prepare and submit together to the Board of Trustees a proposed budget ("Proposed Operating Budget") for the operation of the School during the ensuing school year. Each Proposed Operating Budget will set forth all of the revenues that the School anticipates receiving, a proposed schedule of fees and charges for services, and all of the expenditures anticipated to be necessary for the operation of the School, both (1) during the ensuing school year and (2) during the succeeding two school years. Each Proposed Operating Budget will further set forth each category of expense, the sources and uses of funds, fund accounting income statement, cash flow, capital expenditures and any other appropriate items, for the ensuing year and for the succeeding two years. Each Proposed Operating Budget will reflect the School's administration and Business Manager's view of the most economical,

reasonable methods of operating and maintaining the School during the years to which that Proposed Operating Budget relates.

The Board of Trustees will, after reviewing and analyzing the Proposed Operating Budget, communicate to the Business Manager and the administration any changes, additions or deletions it believes should be made in such Proposed Operating Budget. After making such changes, the Board of Trustees will then approve the Proposed Operating Budget.

It is understood, however, that each operating budget will be an estimate only, and that unforeseen circumstances such as, but not limited to, the costs of labor, material, services and supplies, casualty, operation of law, or economic and market conditions may make adherence to the operating budget impracticable; and departures, therefore, may be required due to causes of the foregoing nature or for other business reasons. Accordingly, if revenues of the school for any year are less than budget or if the school will require any expense category to exceed the corresponding amount in the budget in any year, then the Board of Trustees, school administration, and the Business Manager will meet promptly to determine if an adjustment to the operating budget is necessary.

Financial Statements

The Business Manager will report to the School's Board of Trustees in writing monthly, for the preceding month, with monthly balance sheets, statements of income and sources and uses of funds with respect to the School for such month and cumulatively for the fiscal year-to-date, as well as any recommended changes to the then-current approved operating budget that the Business Manager or administration considers necessary or appropriate. The Board of Trustees and the administrators will examine the monthly financial statements to ensure that the School is meeting the annual approved budget for the fiscal year. The financial statements will be used as a tool to assist the Board of Trustees and the School's administration in making decisions that ensure the School's financial viability while meeting the School's mission.

Audit

The Board Treasurer, or the Finance Committee, in consultation with the Business Manager and School administrators, will engage an independent accounting firm or other appropriate third party to perform an audit of the books and records maintained for the School in accordance with applicable regulations. This appointment will have to be approved by the Board of Trustees. The audit is to be completed and a report to be furnished within 90 days after the end of the School's fiscal year (June 30). The annual School audit will be conducted according to the requirements of Article 24 of the School Code of 1949, using the requirements set forth for school boards.

Operating Account

The Business Manager will establish, on an agency basis for the School, one or more bank accounts, with mutually acceptable financial institutions (the "Operating Accounts"). The Business Manager will cause all gross revenues to be deposited into the Operating Accounts and cause all operating expenses (including, without limitation, payments of operating expenses, payroll, and payroll taxes) to be paid out of the Operating Accounts for and on behalf of the school. The Operating Accounts shall be used exclusively in connection with the operation of the School.

Working Capital

The Business Manager's personnel shall provide assistance to the School to seek a line of credit facility with a financial institution to be utilized to fund seasonal or other cash flow deficiencies.

Payroll

The Business Manager will provide "back office" accounting services for the School, including the following:

- Payroll services, including processing all payroll payments to employees, issuing W-2 statements and maintaining payroll records, payment of all Federal, State, and local payroll taxes, and all employee benefit expenditures
- Accounts payable services (including, but not limited to, the processing thereof)
- Accounts receivable services
- Maintaining accounting system records and reports
- Petty cash management
- Tracking of expenditures for furniture, fixtures and equipment

The School will employ appropriate on-site record keepers as necessary to provide the Business Manager with operational data.

IV.2. FACILITY

A. Provide descriptions of and addresses for the physical facilities under consideration and the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements.

Vision Academy Charter School proposed to lease property at 404 Industrial Park Drive, Yeadon, PA . Please see Appendix D for intent to lease forms which include the lease arrangements and other description of the facility.

B. Explain how this site(s) would be a suitable facility for the proposed school. Consider the necessity of renovation to the facility and compliance with applicable building codes and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Describe the services of the facility including heating, ventilating, lighting, sanitary conditions and water supply.

The building will fully comply with all ADA and state and federal safety regulations.

The school is fully committed to meeting all building code, life safety and accessibility requirements and has taken the necessary preliminary steps to gain an idea of the scope and cost of the work that will be necessary to bring the building up to code and to ensure the safety of all of the students. The School will take any additional measures above and beyond those required by code as requested to ensure the safety and welfare of all building occupants.

School and site owners will execute a lease with options for renewal. The site owners will provide all of the finances and will do any fit-out required during the term of the lease. This will be repaid by the School on a monthly basis during the first 5 year period. This projected amount has been included in the attached five-year proforma budget.

C. Discuss the plan for maintaining the facility on a daily basis (custodial) and extended basis (facility maintenance).

Funds for facility maintenance are included in the attached budget. At the very least, the facility will be maintained on a daily basis by contracting with community custodial services. Extended facility maintenance will be contracted out to local businesses on an as-needed basis. Additionally, the school community will participate in the general upkeep of the facility; students will help with daily chores, and parent/volunteer teams help once a month.

D. Discuss any progress, partnership developments or other future steps towards acquisition of a facility/land.

The Board Facility Committee is consulting with a number of individuals who are providing ongoing services in the area of facility planning/funding. Please see Appendix D for intent to lease forms which include the lease arrangements.

E. Describe facility financing plans.

Under the LOI, the School and site owners are going to execute a lease with options for renewal. The site owners will provide all of the finances and will do any fit-out required during the term of the lease. This will be repaid by the School on a monthly basis during the first five year period.

All of these projected amounts have been included in the attached five-year proforma budget.

IV.3. LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

A. Describe your school's insurance coverage plans, including health, general liability (including school operation, extra-curricular activities and parent volunteer activities), property, and School Leader and Officer's liability coverage (see Section 1727-A of the charter school legislation).

The Vision Academy Charter School will obtain all necessary insurance either through a broker or through direct placement with a provider. It will obtain the best rates through competitive bidding or by allowing the broker to shop rates consistent with the quality of coverage or through joining a consortium of charter schools that have already obtained competitive premiums.

General liability insurance (including coverage for after-school and field trip activities) with errors and omissions coverage, directors and officers liability, employee liability, property insurance and Worker's Compensation, umbrella coverage, auto liability (in the event that staff uses their own vehicles on charter school business), professional liability, fire theft and vandalism on building and contents, workers' compensation and appropriate riders will be obtained through a broker when a Board is established, assets are acquired, employees hired, etc.

All coverage will be provided by an insurance company that has a rating of “A” or better and a financial size category of “VII” or better, according to A.M. Best Co. Copies of appropriate certificates of insurance will be provided to the School District prior to the opening of the school. The following chart provides a more detailed view of the types of insurance and limits the School will secure:

Type of Insurance	Limit
Business Personal Property	500,000
General Liability	3,000,000 general aggregate
Products – completed operations	Included
Personal Injury	1,000,000 per occurrence
Advertising Injury	1,000,000 per occurrence
Damage to Premises Rented	100,000 per occurrence
Medical Expense	5,000 per occurrence
Sexual Abuse Occurrence Limit	1,000,000
Defense Expense – Each Sexual Abuse Occurrence	1,000,000
Defense Expense – Aggregate Limit	3,000,000
Employee Theft	100,000
Commercial Automobile (School buses)	1,000,000
Workers Compensation Insurance and Employers Liability	Per Law
Student Accident	25,000 per person
Accidental Death, Dismemberment, or Loss of Sight	20,000 per person
School Leaders Errors and Omissions	2,000,000
Umbrella-Excess Liability Coverage	1,000,000

Medical Insurance Coverage

The representatives of Vision Academy Charter School understand the requirement to provide medical insurance coverage for employees that are the same as those provided to employees in the School District. It also understands the need to protect the Board and employees in the conduct of their work.

Medical insurance coverage will be limited to a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) or an HMO; indemnity coverage will be provided if it can be obtained and if the employee will pay a share of the premiums similar to that paid by school district employees in the. Prescription, dental and vision plans will be as similar to plans offered to the staff in these school districts as providers will offer.

IV.4. CHILD ACCOUNTING

A. Describe your school enrollment and attendance procedures.

Enrollment

In accordance with the Vision Academy Charter School Code of Conduct, students will be expected to attend school daily. The School will implement a system for maintaining student enrollment information as required under 1730-A of the Charter School Law (Act 22 of 1997).

Specifically, the Vision Academy Charter School will collect all of the necessary data for each student and will file all forms required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (i.e. PDE-3059CS Instructional Time Summary, PDE-30262C Annual Attendance Membership Report, PDE-3002CS Summary Report of Aggregate Days Membership) and the participating school districts. Additionally, the Vision Academy Charter School will use a student information software system, such as Administrators Plus or Power School, to track enrollment data to ensure that the enrollment figures are always current, reflecting new students and any withdrawals.

Attendance

Students will be expected to attend school every day. If a student is absent, every attempt will be made to contact that student's parent or guardian to inquire about the reason for his or her absence. The school will follow the attendance guidelines set forth in the Public School Code regarding unexcused absences.

When absences occur, it is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to provide a written note regarding the reason for the absence. In the case of frequent absences or absences not accompanied by a note, the counselor or designated staff member will contact the student's parent or guardian to determine the cause of the absence(s), and appropriate action will be taken, if needed.

The student information software system mentioned above will also be used to track attendance quickly and accurately, allowing for seamless communication between the teachers and the administration and the administration and the parents.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

V.1. RECRUITING AND MARKETING PLAN

A. Demonstrate how you will publicize the school to attract a sufficient pool of eligible applicants

Information about the Vision Academy Charter School and the admissions process will be disseminated throughout the various boroughs in the district via flyers, bulletins, media, mailings, internet website and workshops at schools and other public institutions. This process will also include outreach to parents, teachers, pediatricians, counselors, social service agencies, and other youth advocates. At open houses held between now and spring (see “Outreach,” below), prospective students and their parents or guardians will hear a comprehensive presentation about the school. Discussions will include the school's academic program, the schedule for an extended school day and year, and expectations for student behavior and parental involvement. Also discussed will be any other community programs that exist to support the operations or mission of the school.

Interested parents and guardians who did not attend one of the school's spring open houses will be provided with a packet of written materials covering all the topics formally discussed at the open houses, and a meeting will be scheduled with appropriate school staff for interested parties to verbally review all the materials and answer any questions.

After the first year, prospective students and their parents or guardians will also be encouraged to spend a day visiting the school and sitting-in on classrooms.

It is important that the school ensure that students and parents/guardians understand the values of the school and its academic and social expectations before they are asked to make a decision to enroll their children. The school will take whatever additional steps are deemed necessary to make sure that parents/guardians are aware of this important information.

B. What type of outreach will be made to potential students and their families?

The purpose of the open houses, which will be held in January-March, 2013, upon charter approval, is noted above. Invitations to “open houses” will be widely distributed to parents and students throughout the local school district. The Vision Academy Charter School will vigorously get these announcements to the public through as many available routes as is practical, including (but not limited to):

- Community organizations of all kinds,
- Direct mailings,
- Public and private elementary schools,
- Afterschool programs,

- Youth and community centers,
- Businesses and civic organizations, and
- Flyers posted and distributed in various communities.

These methods will help ensure that the invitation to hear directly about the opportunities offered to children by the charter school gets widely circulated.

Printed information about the charter school and the application process and its time frame will be widely distributed in a similar manner, affording families who do not attend one of these “open houses” the opportunity to learn about the charter school and to apply for admission for their children.

V.2. ADMISSIONS POLICY

A. Describe the admission methods and eligibility criteria you will use to select students. Explain administrative procedures to ensure compliance with laws pertaining to Special Education.

Interested parents/guardians will be required to complete and submit an application form, which will be made available at the Vision Academy Charter School and at open houses at accessible locations throughout the community. The application will be simple, requesting basic biographical information (name, age, etc.), contact information, and other important facts (e.g., school currently attended).

The school will make staff available to any parent or guardian who needs help completing the application.

Completed applications will be required to be submitted to the school by April. The Vision Academy Charter School may extend the application submission period if the need exists and may hold a supplemental summer enrollment period if desired or needed.

Vision Academy Charter School will be open to all students and will not specifically target students at risk of academic failure, nor will it have an admission preference for such students. However, the Vision Academy Charter School program will enormously benefit students at risk of academic failure in a number of important ways as stated below, such as individual attention, extensive tutoring, participation in competitions, and personal education plans.

When a student is identified as "at-risk" of not completing their education based on factors such as poor school performance, poor attendance, behavioral difficulties, or economic or environmental disadvantage, they will be referred to the Child Study Team, which will be appointed by the School Leader. The Child Study Team will recommend additions to the student's personal education plan, which will be specifically designed to provide appropriate interventions, such as, but not limited to, the following: tutoring, counseling, mentoring, apprenticeship programs, and family outreach. Family

involvement is recognized as a crucial factor in school success. Vision Academy Charter School will try to provide financial resources that will allow for creative, individualized approaches to meeting the needs of the at-risk population. A counselor will be available to students and their families to provide appropriate services. Referrals to outside resources will be made on an as-needed basis to address more complex and difficult issues.

Special Education Admission

The Vision Academy Charter School will comply with the federal Child Find requirements (34 CFR 300.111), which require schools to have in place a process for identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities. Vision Academy Charter School will conduct awareness activities to inform the public of its special education services and programs and the manner in which to request services and programs. Written information will be published in the school handbook and school web site. Students enrolling for the first time in a public school in the School District will be screened by a team of teachers (including both regular and special education teachers) to identify any possible indication that the child may need a specialized or intensive education program, or referral to the student's home district. Other students will be brought to the attention of the team if they are demonstrating any problems within the regular classroom environment. Strategies will then be implemented to address any identified special needs of the student.

B. Describe the timetable to be used for admitting students, including a plan for the admission lottery for students from both within and outside the district.

If the number of eligible applications for admission exceeds the spaces available for students, a random lottery will be held. Such a lottery will be open to the public, and attended and/or audited by a representative of a disinterested outside organization. The enrollment preferences will be as follows: first preference will be given to students returning to the charter school (in Year 2); second preference will be given to siblings of students enrolled in the charter school; third preference will be given to children of the founding group, and fourth preference is to students residing in the William Penn School District. A member of the founding group is defined as a person who has volunteered at least 30 hours toward the school prior to the close of applications.

Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level in the event that vacancies occur. The random lottery process used for student admission also will serve to place students in preferential order on these waiting lists.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during the course of that school year, the school will contact the parent or guardian of the student next on the appropriate waiting list. Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the family of the student on the top of the waiting list and get confirmation of whether the student is still interested in enrolling at the charter school

before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents/guardians are unsuccessful, the school may remove that student from the waiting list. Documentation of the attempts made to contact the parents/guardians of any student removed from the waiting list shall be maintained by the school. Waiting lists will be carried over from year to year. Each year, the school will send a new enrollment application directly to the parents/guardians of each child on the prior year's waiting list.

C. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory fashion

Admission to Vision Academy Charter School shall not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or on any other ground that would be unlawful.

All children who would be eligible for enrollment in public schools in Pennsylvania in the available grades will be eligible to enroll in the charter school, subject to availability and the process set forth above. The enrollment policy further supports the school's mission of improving educational outcomes for families that select and students that attend the school from the district first, and the greater area second.

Vision Academy Charter School will admit each eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the student's requested grade level or of the school building.

V.3. HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION

A. Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process of teachers, administrators, and other school staff

The Board of Directors will be actively engaged in hiring the School Leader; however, Board members may serve on a recruitment committee to support the School Leader in hiring staff at the discretion of the School Leader. The School Leader will establish a recruitment committee in order to design and administer a thorough, standardized, and well-publicized process to recruit qualified applicants. All applicants will provide a letter detailing their qualifications and educational philosophy, as well as a résumé and names of three references.

The recruitment committee as a whole will select from the pool of respondents a list of candidates who meet the job requirements. The recruitment committee may also recruit specific individuals who come to their attention and who possess experience or expertise considered especially valuable to the school. The School Leader may establish an interview committee. The interview committee will call candidates and arrange for initial interviews. The interviews will access different aspects of the applications

qualifications including their knowledge on the subjects, interpersonal skills and teaching skills. The interview committee may ask a group of children to attend the teaching skill evaluation. The committee will provide their findings to the recruitment committee and nominate their choice for Board approval at a meeting.

The School may choose to implement some of the following in attracting and retaining prospective staff members;

- Establishing school-university partnerships.
- Hiring young, motivated and successful new teachers.
- Hiring new teachers under temporary, emergency, or provisional licenses.
- Offering salary schedule credit for higher education experience.
- Placing high-demand teachers above entry level on the salary scale.
- Offering support to beginning teachers.
- Involving teachers in decision making.
- Providing financial and non-financial rewards to successful teachers.
- Implementing scheduling changes that allow common planning time for same-grade or same-subject teachers.
 - Implementing team or interdisciplinary teaching.
 - Increasing compensation based on their performance evaluation results, knowledge and skills.
 - Creating career ladders for teachers involving greater responsibility for increased compensation.
 - Improve the climate for teaching and learning by building communities between new and veteran teachers.
 - Extend the preparation period of novice teachers through their crucial first few years upon the job so that they continue to develop as proficient, knowledgeable, and successful teachers.

B. What is the targeted staff size and teacher/student ratio?

In Year 1, Vision Academy will have 27 staff members, including:

- 1- School Leader
- 1- Director of Instruction
- 1- Nurse
- 10 - Classroom Teachers
- 12 - Specialized Faculty (Special Education, Guidance/Family Support, Art, Music, etc).
- 5 - Administrative, custodial, or teachers' aides

Staffing will eventually grow to include a full-time Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, and additional staff to ensure the projected 15:1 student to teacher ratio.

C. What professional development opportunities will be available to teachers and other staff?

The School will provide development opportunities to teachers and other staff. Staff members can advise the Board, the School Leader and sub-committees to improve the school's daily administration and education including the content of the curriculum. Staff is also responsible for improving the achievement level of each student by preparing materials for the implementation of each student's individual learning plan.

Prior to the opening of school, all teachers will attend workshops where the mission of the school, school practices and procedures, performance goals, expectations and codes of conduct will be clearly defined. Workshop "Intensives" will take place on the Core Knowledge Sequence, curriculum, and implementation of Direct Instruction, led by either the School Leader, Director of Instruction, or appropriate consultant. Teachers will form Professional Learning Communities. At pre-service, PLCs will review principals and strategies of effective classroom management and be introduced to assessment tools the school plans to use. The School, from time to time, may choose to contract experts in the field to train staff in specific educational areas including curriculum, instruction methods, special education and other programs.

The school will adjust teacher's timetables to allow them to meet on a regular basis to achieve weekly professional development and effectively implement the PLC model. During that time teachers will focus on modifying individualized plans, sharing problem-solving ideas and improving learning for the students in their care. The School will hold monthly faculty meetings to find collective ideas developed by the staff members.

Vision Academy Charter School is committed to the personalized professional growth of every staff member. Each staff member will develop professional growth goals and this growth will be assessed by the Director of Instruction and the School Leader.

The school will encourage the staff members to attend workshops and courses given outside of school, especially conferences related to Core Knowledge or Direct Instruction, and the authorized expenses will be reimbursed within the limits of the budget. Alternatively, teams of teachers may request to use the funds to invite presenters to give workshops or courses at the school. Teachers will also be encouraged to become instructional leaders on the state and national level by attending and participating in state and national subject matter conferences, e.g., state reading, science and/or math conferences and/or National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), National Science Teachers Association (NCTA), National Council to Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of Mathematics (PCTM), Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), etc.

The Vision Academy Charter School will employ its university and community and business connections in organizing workshops that will enrich staff experience. This will include the exposure to innovative, research-proven instructional and assessment strategies. Current professional magazines, books, and films regarding innovative educational methods will be made available to faculty and staff. Faculty and staff will also be given opportunities to study, travel, attend workshops and conferences, and to

participate in exchange teaching and to take sabbatical leaves. The School will encourage all teachers working for the school to have Master Degrees in their teaching field and will actively seek teachers with dual certifications, especially in special education, subject specific education, and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Tuition reimbursement will be awarded to select members of the faculty based on their academic achievements when funds are available.

There is a strong relationship between teachers' performance and the quality of the education. The educational professionals will constantly collaborate to help children to reach their full potential. The strategies mentioned above are implicit in our School's mission and educational goals and objectives

D. Human Resource policies, governing salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, sick and other leave, and benefits.

It is the policy of the Vision Academy Charter School to seek and employ the best-qualified academic and administrative personnel without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, marital status, or disability. The school policies ensure equal opportunity for the advancement of staff members and equal treatment in the areas of training, promotion, transfer, layoff, and termination.

The salary scale is included in the proposed budget in Appendix I.

The School and its employees will sign a contract with the terms of employment for the teaching, administrative, and other positions negotiated within the parameters of relevant Pennsylvania statutes. The faculty and staff will be required to enter into individual term employment agreements resembling those used in business, but explicitly stating that all requirements of the Charter Law are incorporated into the agreement. Teaching staff may be obligated to provide services or in service-days, during the school academic year, or during the entire year depending upon their role in the school. The agreement affirms that any materials created by staff members for use by the School, or produced using the staff or resources of the school, are works-for-hire and all intellectual property rights are vested in the school.

Upon selecting candidates for hiring, the recruitment committee will present their recommendations to the Board for approval. The Board will offer the approved candidate an employment contract.

A majority vote of the Board shall be required to terminate the employment of any Vision Academy Charter School faculty or staff member. Any dismissal is also subject to applicable Pennsylvania Charter School Law provisions. (Please see *Appendix J* for detailed discussions in Personnel Policy Manual.)

Vision Academy Charter School strongly believes that the quality of the professional staff is an important factor in determining the quality of education offered in the school.

It is the responsibility of the school administration to locate and recruit the best-qualified candidates to meet the school's educational needs. The School will search for certified personnel for all positions. However, in case of shortage of certified candidates or for any other reason, uncertified candidates with required qualifications will be considered.

Staff selection shall be based on strong academic preparation, professional competence, intellectual rigor, emotional maturity, enthusiastic professional attitude, knowledge of instructional practices, and ability to contribute to the advancement of the school's educational goals. Among other factors, emphasis will be placed on the candidate's academic record and his/her previous relevant experience. Staff must be willing and able to provide the educational support that a diverse student population requires in the school. Vision Academy Charter School's teaching staff members must fulfill their individual responsibilities and work in concert with the other members of the teaching team.

E. Identify the proposed faculty

School Leader

Qualifications: Advanced course-work, minimum three years outstanding experience in an education leadership position, superior written and oral communications skills, demonstrated leadership in educational and preferably community activities, exemplary human relations skills, and experience with at risk students.

The School Leader supervises all school staff both teaching, administrative, and students. The School Leader provides school leadership to ensure excellence in teaching and learning, community support, and efficiency in operation.

Some of his/her responsibilities are:

- Demonstrate successful leadership in education and administrative positions;
- Have strong academic goals and share vision of Vision Academy Charter School's mission and educational philosophy;
- Show demonstrated success in parental involvement;
- Provides instructional leadership and excellent student achievement results through focus on the four basic element of curriculum, instruction, performance, and evaluation;
- Share responsibility for development and implementation of the school's strategic plan;
- Communicate Board Actions to staff, students, and parents;
- Develop policy recommendations for the Board's consideration and action;
- File required reports with local, state and federal education agencies, Board of directors;

- Maintain administrative records according to the Pennsylvania Public School Code;
- Implement school budget, analyze and control expenditures with an understanding of the relationship between the instructional program and the budget process, and rely on cost benefit analyses for budgetary decisions;
- Prepare schedules, assign staff, set job performance standards, and evaluate staff;
- Generate public support for the school's program and education in general as the public information officer of the school and supervisor of the overall public relations program;
- Further refine attached Code of Student Conduct which defines responsibilities of administrators, teachers, parents, and students and which creates a safe, secure school for learning;
- Help students develop a positive behavior through a student discipline management system;
- Represent the Charter School at local, state, and national events;
- Develop effective staff and professional development programs that match school goals and individual goals to improve performance and model continuous professional improvement;
- Use technology effectively for administrative, instructional, and communications functions;
- Schedule the use of time to protect academic subject blocks from disruptions to ensure effective and efficient use of time;
- Know Charter School law, including the implications on the educational program and on liability, keeps abreast of developments and consults with the Board members in times of uncertainty;
- Carry out marketing plans to attract students to the School;
- Participate in local and state Principals' associations;
- Provide ethical leadership within the intellectual, cultural, economic, political, and governmental context in which the school.
- Serve as a role model who acknowledges through actions and behaviors, the critical value of human relationships to the satisfaction of personal and professional goals and to the achievement of organizational purpose.

Director of Instruction

Qualifications: Working knowledge of charter operations; Exceptional organizational, communication and interpersonal skills; Capable of coordinating school's academic operations; Working knowledge about Core Knowledge, Direct Instruction Practices, Project Based Learning; Expertise in technology, curriculum alignment, data-driven decision making; At least 3 years of teaching experience.

The Director of Instruction assists the School Leader in instructional program administration and school level operations.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- Assist in planning and assessing the educational programs;
- Encourage planning of innovative education programs, review for accuracy all teacher classroom plans, assist teachers in implementing such efforts when appropriate;
- Encourage the use of technology in the instructional process.
- Encourage a constructive, thoughtful climate for learning;
- Promote fairness of students and staff from all cultural backgrounds;
- Communicate with students and staff in an effective manner.
- Assist in organization of school improvement plan with staff, parents and community members;
- Help School Leader to design, manage and implement information systems to manage and track progress on school goals and academic excellence indicators.
- Hold employee evaluation conferences based on records of performance evaluation;
- Assist School Leader in interviewing, selecting new employees and their orientation;
- Oversee school's operations in School Leader's absence;
- Assist in scheduling student activities by participating in the development of class schedules, teacher assignments, and extracurricular activity schedules;
- Oversee student attendance records and assist the Administrative Assistant on truancy issues;
- Document school's academic progress in order to compile yearly Annual Report with school administrators and staff;
- Abide by all federal and state laws that apply to charter schools, and charter policy.
- Provide for supervision of students during non-instructional hours;
- Provide for uniform enforcement of school rules and oversee appropriate and reasonable student discipline
- Hold parent/teacher/student conferences in regard to student and school issues.
- Enrich job skills through professional development; School and Community Responsibilities;
- Convey the school's mission to the public and encourage support in accomplishing the mission;
- Illustrate understanding of school and community needs and begin activities to meet those needs;
- Demonstrate use of productive and efficient skills to raise community and parent involvement.
- Share supervisory duties for school professional staff with School Leader
- Oversee teachers, custodians, paraprofessionals, clerical personnel and others as assigned.

Teachers

Qualifications: Academic excellence in their specific area of expertise, competence in all areas of classroom management, good verbal and written expression, and strong interpersonal skills, a life-long learner, some expertise in computer technology.

All teachers supervise volunteers, assign support staff, and students and report to the School Leader and are expected to have a contribution in improving student behavior. Teachers strive to enable each student to make continuous progress at or above state and national standards in all areas.

Some of the responsibilities/skills of the School Teachers are listed below: (Some excerpts are taken from “Outline of Duties of the Teacher” by Scriven.)

- Have knowledge of subject matter;
- An undergraduate major or minor or graduate degree in the subject they will teach, or direct subject-area teaching experience
- In the fields of special competence
- In across-the-curriculum subjects
- Instructional Skills
- Communication skills
- Course construction and improvement skills;
- Course planning
- Selection and creation of materials
- Use of available resources (local, media, specialists)
- Evaluation of course, teaching, materials, curriculum
- Management skills;
- Management of process
- Management of progress
- Management of emergencies
- Assessment Skills
- Knowledge about student assessment
- Test construction/administration skills
- Grading/ranking/scoring practices, processes, results
- Reporting student achievement;
- Knowledge about reporting achievement
- Reporting practices (to students, administrators, parents, others)
- Other General Skills
- Professionalism , professional ethic, and attitude;
- Service to the profession; knowledge about the profession, helping beginners and peers, work for professional organizations, and research on teaching;
- Knowledge of duties;
- Knowledge of the school and its context;
- Strong work ethics;
- Ability to work with multi-age groupings;
- Experience in constructive education, child-directed learning, project-based learning and/or portfolio assessment;

- Demonstrated ability to engage the interest of young children;
- Flexibility and sense of humor;
- Ability to work with children from diverse backgrounds, including those special needs;
- Teaching experience in a public or private school, preferably in an urban settings;
- Ability to work well with parents and contribute effectively as a team member
- Pennsylvania state teaching certificate;
- A supervisory certificate for special education for a special education coordinator
- Certification for all special-education teachers;
- Certification will be required for at least one teacher in ESL

Teaching Assistants

Qualifications; Teacher’s assistants will preferably hold a College Degree and as a minimum, will have an Associate degree. Assistants must have ability to work with multi-age groupings and to help facilitate interaction with the school-wide community as well as the outside community

V.4. CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure that an environment is created where teaching and student learning can flourish, Vision Academy Charter School has developed a Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code that addresses proper student behavior, maintenance of order within the school and during school activities, and a statement of student rights and responsibilities.

School staff will ensure that parents and students are well informed about these policies, both before enrollment and at the time student’s sign up for entry into the charter school both verbally and in writing. Upon receipt of enrollment application, parents/guardians will be sent a copy of the Vision Academy Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code (either electronically or in print form) to ensure that parents/guardians are aware of school policies. As a result of this information about school policies, students will not be surprised about what type of behavior is expected from them and parents will be reassured about the type of classroom environment that will be maintained in the charter school.

A. Discuss any rules or guidelines governing student behavior

Please see Student Disciplinary Code in the Student/Parent Handbook
(Appendix K),

B. Describe your school’s policies regarding student expulsion and suspension, including students with disabilities

Please see Student/Parent Handbook (**Appendix K**),

C. Describe your school's mandatory student attendance plan and its fit with the code of conduct.

Vision Academy Charter School will require students to arrive and stay at the school during designated regular school times. Teachers will track student attendance with an online Student Information System. Any student who has a low attendance rate will be referred initially to the School Leader, and then to the Child Study Team, if deemed appropriate. Vision Academy Charter School will excuse an absence only for illness, family emergency, death of a family member, medical or dental appointments, school activities and educational travel with prior approval.

Vision Academy Charter School will require parents to provide the student's teacher or School Leader with a note explaining the absence. The school will provide parents with a packet of prepared forms to make absence notes more complete and easier to document. Please see **Appendix K** for student rights and responsibilities included in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Existing student discipline policies from many public school districts were examined in developing this code, and components of those district policies are evident throughout the discipline code of Vision Academy Charter School.

V.5. TRANSPORTATION

A. Describe your transportation program, including transportation for Special Education students and suggestions for improvement

The Vision Academy Charter School will make arrangements with the William Penn School District for the transportation of its students. Resident students will be transported under the same condition as students attending public schools located along or near established district bus routes.

The Vision Academy Charter School will be in contact with other districts within 10 miles of the school when students from those districts are enrolled to identify the appropriate and available choices and fully explain those options to parents of special education students.

B. What arrangements will be made to transport students, if you plan to implement an extended-day or extended-year program that requires transportation beyond that which the district provides?

Vision Academy may ask parents to provide transportation for extended day. The Vision Academy Charter School also may consider providing students transportation through a private educational provider, which meets all applicable safety and

transportation standards with funds allocated by the State for student transportation if it is needed.

C. What plans are being made for the coordination of transportation of students who live outside the local district to be transported to the school? The school district of student residence must provide transportation to a charter school up to ten miles from its border.

Vision Academy Charter School will contact with the school district of student residence, which must provide transportation to a charter school up to ten miles from its border. It is also expected that parents will provide individual transportation on an as needed basis.

V.6. FOOD SERVICE

A. Describe the food service plan of the school

Vision Academy Charter School will first attempt to coordinate with William Penn School District for food services. If needed, a contractor food company will be contracted for the first year of operation. Vision Academy Charter School currently projects it will have access to a small kitchen for warming and delivering food. Absent these facilities, however, the school will ensure that contractual arrangements provide food services to students directly in the classroom, or in other suitable common areas.

At Vision Academy Charter School, lunch will be available for the full purchase price or less for all the students. The price of meals will not include any service charges. In addition, students will also be allowed to bring their own lunch and/or breakfast to school.

Vision Academy Charter School will work with local food service businesses that provide food which comply with state and federal regulations with affordable price.

B. What are the plans for free or reduced lunch or breakfast? State regulations for student participation in such a program must be followed (24 PS 13-1337).

The School will participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Priced breakfast, lunch, and other programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Vision Academy Charter School will adhere to all applicable requirements including, but not limited to meal pricing, determination of eligibility, nutritional value, and reporting requirements. Any and all food service subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs shall be used exclusively for the purpose of providing meals to eligible students, and not for any prohibited purposes. Meanwhile, students who do not qualify

for free meals will pay up to the limit on reduced price meals and others will pay the full price.

Expenses for subsidized meals will be met by subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs. Expenses for full price meals will be met by sales charges. Therefore, food service related revenues have been equalized to the related expenses in the budget.

V.7. TIMETABLE

November 2012 – December 2012

- Prepare for charter school hearing.
- Attend charter school hearing
- Submit any additional materials required

January 2013 – March 2013

- Complete the selection of candidates for the board of directors (less the parental representative positions to be filled)
 - Constitute first board of directors and conduct first meeting
 - Elect officers
 - Approve by-laws
 - File for certificate of incorporation
 - Apply for employer identification number (EIN)
 - File for nonprofit incorporation status 501(c)(3)
 - Establish checking account
 - Establish financial controls
 - Identify an auditor/preparer
 - Begin initial recruitment period
 - Conduct seminars/open houses
 - Complete enrollment of first application period
 - Prepare job descriptions and submit to county superintendent for approval
 - Advertise and disseminate recruiting materials for soliciting staff
 - Begin staff hiring interviews
 - Design and produce all forms necessary for processing and maintaining administrative documentation
 - Negotiate and sign conditional lease for facility
 - Establish resources for furnishings and equipment
 - Notify William Penn School District board of education identifying need for transportation services
 - Begin the process of obtaining all necessary insurances
 - Develop fundraising strategies
 - Perform local outreach efforts

April 2013 – June 2013

- Conclude second application/enrollment period for admission if needed
- (April 15)**
- Forward enrollment form to district(s)
 - Request student records from district(s)

- Conclude first application period (may 15)
- Conduct lottery if needed (march 18)
- Establish filing system/database for student records
- Recruit parents to fill represent board positions
- Develop informational materials for parents to encourage their participation
- Mail out enrollment information packets to parents with all appropriate forms for transportation and registration
 - Submit completed forms to the district for determining routes and transportation methods
 - Submit identification of facility including a description of and address for the physical facility to the Pennsylvania Department Education (PDE)
 - Submit to PDE on a document prepared by the commissioner for the purpose of determining the actual amount of State, local and Federal aid, a report for the forthcoming school year of enrolled students, based on signed registration forms **(June 5)**
 - Submit this same documentation to the school district
 - Send out letters of intent to hire for teaching staff
 - Secure contracts with hired staff **(June 30)**
 - Submit certification of classroom teachers and professional staff to PDE
 - Make arrangements for special support services/staff
 - Identify educational resources
 - Develop professional development plans (pdps) for staff
 - Compose staff handbook
 - Submit to the PDE the Equity Statement of Assurances (July 1)

July 2013 – September 2013

- Begin staff orientation and training
- Complete all construction and renovations
- Order furnishings and equipment
- Set up classrooms and other spaces
- Receive final inspections
- Confirm receipt of notification to parents/guardians and the charter school from the district regarding routes and methods of transportation
 - Submit copies of certificate of occupancy to appropriate agencies
 - Submit copies of sanitary inspection report to appropriate agencies
 - Submit copies of fire inspection certificates to appropriate agencies
 - Curriculum documented in written form
 - Form risk management team
 - Form advisory grievance committee

V.8. SAFETY

<i>A. Submit written documentation of intent to comply with all applicable safety requirements</i>

Vision Academy Charter School will comply with all applicable safety requirements including the following to demonstrate the safety and structural soundness of the school:

- Inspection by a local building inspector.
- Inspection by a local fire department.
- Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school.
- Compliance with all other federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations

V.9. SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Vision Academy Charter School will be prepared to comply with all state required health service for the students. A full time or part time nurse will be hired to handle all required health service. Along with the School Leader, the school nurse will also be contact with school district and hospitals to bring necessary medical service for the students as it is needed. Each student will receive a hearing test, vision test, and tuberculosis test at requested interval as it is stated \$14-1402 by the school nurse or an appropriate medical technician. Measurement of height and weight of students will also be updated regularly and be part of health record. All children of school age, upon original entry into the school, in the third grade, and while in the seventh grade, will be given a dental examination by a dentist. Vision Academy Charter School will also maintain a comprehensive health record of each student in soft-copy and hardcopy format and update it regularly. These records will be given to parents to supply to their children's physicians at the time medical examination as it is required. Part of the job responsibility of school nurse is also to monitor students' health and take proper action in case of any unusual behavior , change in physical appearance or any sign that my indicate a problem in student health. The school nurse will also work with individual student's parents/guardians to monitor at school care treatment, such as asthma inhalers or prescribed medication during the school time. Vision Academy Charter School will take all necessary steps to comply with all requirements in Pennsylvania Public School Code P.S. 24.1 \$14-1401.

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Community Advisory Committee Members

Linwood Morris, Board Member
Terry McGirth, Board Member
Renee Morrow, Retired Principal
Former State Representative Ronald G. Waters
Niakeia Ball
Frances Ball
Sharon Caldwell
Cheryl D. Champaign
Alicia Coulter
Danyiell Davi
Ayanna Hanna
Kelly Jessamy
Erika Robinson
Fatima Sillah
Debi Rice Thompson
Fatou Toure
Rosalynn Williams
Patricia Kumah

Vision Academy Project Management Plan

Complete;
In Progress
%
Complete,
Lagging

Owners: CEO, Director of Instruction (DoI), Guid/Sped (G/S)
Reviewers: CEO/Board

FOCUS AREA 1: Staff Development

OVERALL TASKS FOCUS AREA ONE	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Identify Lead Teachers	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Review School Schedule for PLC time	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Identify potential risks to full implementation	CEO/DoI	Q1			

Strategy 1: Provide ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development through PLCs

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Review PLC process and activities	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Develop grade level/subject level PLC structures and strategies for year	DoI	Q1			
Identify support necessary to improve data-driven instruction	DoI	Q1			
Develop and release RFP for support related to data evaluation	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Evaluate responses and select support	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Introduce PLC structures/strategies to lead teachers	CEO/DoI	Q1			
PLC preservice training	DoI	Q1			
PLC embedded data training	DoI	Q1-Q4			
PLC implementation	DoI	Q1-Q4			
PLC evaluation model developed	CEO/DoI	Q2			
PLC evaluation	CEO/DoI	Q2-Q4			

Strategy 2: Improve understanding of Core Knowledge Sequence and Direct Instruction

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Evaluate current instructional practice	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Identify key implementation classrooms for training	DoI	Q1			
Develop long-term pd and implementation timeline	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Develop RFP based on needs	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Evaluate responses and select support	CEO/DoI	Q1			
With support, develop training/implementation/evaluation schedule	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Identify community partnerships to support learning	DoI	Q1			
Develop and deliver parent training regarding CK/DI	DoI/G/S	Q2			
Implement first semester schedule	DoI	Q1-2			
Evaluate efficacy of program and modify as needed	CEO/DoI	Q2			
Implement second semester schedule	DoI	Q3-4			
Evaluate efficacy of program and modify as needed	CEO/DoI	Q4			

Strategy 3: Implement effective supportive services for all grades

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Develop preservice on remedial curriculum support	DoI/G/S	Q1			
Evaluate all students in need of support	DoI/G/S	Q1			
Develop preservice on advanced curriculum support	DoI/G/S	Q1			
Deliver preservice PD on remedial support programs	DoI/G/S	Q1			
Classroom observations on differentiation	CEO/DoI/G/S	Q1-4			
Develop PD for daylong training in reflection of observation	DoI/G/S	Q2			
Review individual student progress and adjust model as needed	DoI/G/S	Q2-4			

FOCUS AREA 2: Curriculum Resource Development

OVERALL TASKS FOCUS AREA ONE	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Identify key curricular needs in new grades	CEO/DoI	Q1-3			
Identify expendibles needed	DoI/S	Q1-2			

Strategy 1: Implement curriculum for differentiation

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Purchase curriculum for differentiation in new grades	CEO	Q1			
Identify PD necessary for implementation	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Identify consultative support as necessary for implementation	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Develop advanced curriculum as identified	DoI/S	Q1			
Implement differentiation and adjust as needed	DoI/S	Q2-4			

Strategy 2: Refine existing curriculum and expand curriculum to new grades

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Expand curriculum materials for classrooms	CEO/DoI	Q1-4			
Purchase additional curriculum materials for 6-8th grades	CEO	Q1-4			
Identify necessary staff development related to curriculum for additional grades	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Develop PD schedule around state standards and curriculum	DoI	Q1			
Develop evaluation tools for curriculum k-8	CEO/DoI	Q2			
Implement evaluation tools	DoI	Q3-4			

FOCUS AREA 3: Technology Development

OVERALL TASKS FOCUS AREA ONE	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Identify staffing needs for technology	CEO/DoI	Q1			
Identify community partners for training	CEO	Q1-4			
Develop schedule and structures to training	CEO/DoI	Q1-2			

Strategy 1: Address technology needs as related to curriculum and delivery

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Identify synergies in technology and existing competencies and develop master technology plan	CEO	Q1-2			
Create technology task list	CEO	Q1-2			
Identify software/hardware opportunities aligned to curriculum and instruction	CEO/DoI	Q2			
Create curriculum companion and online resource database	DoI/G/S	Q1-4			
Purchase technology aligned with project needs	CEO	Q1-4			

Strategy 2: Create universal technology comfort with all staff

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Establish comprehensive collaborative team training system	DoI/G/S	Q1-2			
Create feedback teams to review online content	DoI	Q2			
Train staff in using and creating online content	CEO/DoI	Q2			
Implement first year training plan	DoI	Q2-4			

Strategy 3: Increase computer access

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Develop RFP for computer purchases	CEO	Q1			
Implement and award RFP	CEO	Q1			
Develop PD and training for new computer usage	CEO/DoI/S	Q1			
Install computers in classrooms	CEO	Q2-4			

Strategy 4: Increase smartboard access

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Develop RFP for smartboard purchases	CEO	Q1			
Implement and award RFP	CEO	Q1			
Develop PD and training for new smartboard usage	CEO/DoI/S	Q1			
Install smartboards in classrooms	CEO	Q2-4			

Strategy 5: Improve IT overall

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Review all IT needs related to wired and wireless connectivity	CEO	Q1			

Address IT needs related to administration	CEO	Q2
Address IT needs related to classrooms	CEO	Q2-4
Address IT needs related to Extended Day programs	CEO	Q2-4

FOCUS AREA 4: Community and Parent Awareness and Marketing

OVERALL TASKS FOCUS AREA ONE	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Expand Community Advisory Panel	CEO/Board	Q1			
Improve website with multi-lingual tools and 504 compliance	CEO	Q1			
Standardize all marketing materials to improve school recognition	CEO/Board	Q1-4			

Strategy 1: Create multi-channel marketing and awareness materials

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Establish spotlight on students/families/staff	CEO	Q1			
Develop media kit and media contacts	CEO	Q1-2			
Create and maintain social media with regular "spotlight" info	CEO	Q2			
Develop print materials for distribution	CEO	Q2-4			

Strategy 2: Create "Share our Strengths" community awareness team

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Identify parent and community leaders in school and establish team	CEO/Board	Q1			
Identify speaking engagement and community event opportunities for	CEO/Board	Q1			
Create monthly newsletter for team to share	CEO/Board	Q2-4			
Create annual report for team to share	CEO/Board	Q2-4			

FOCUS AREA 5: Improve Physical Plant

OVERALL TASKS FOCUS AREA ONE	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Create facility improvement plan	CEO/Board	Q1			
Identify potential donors/discounted furnishing options	CEO/Board	Q1-4			

Strategy 1: Improve classroom settings

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Review individual classrooms for needed furnishings	CEO	Q1			
Create need vs. want list for current classrooms	CEO	Q1-2			
Create need vs. want list for expanded grade classrooms	CEO	Q2			
Develop purchase strategy	CEO	Q2-4			
Implement purchase strategy	CEO	Q4			

Strategy 1: Improve overall school settings

Activity:	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS	PROGRESS NOTES	REVIEW FEEDBACK
Review school settings (admin, cafe, etc) for needed furnishings	CEO	Q1			
Create need vs. want list	CEO	Q1-2			
Develop purchase strategy	CEO	Q2-4			
Implement purchase strategy	CEO	Q4			

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER**

**to operate a public school known as the
Vision Academy Charter School - West**

Pursuant to the authority granted to me as chair of the State Charter School Appeal Board under section 1717-A(i)(9) of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and because of the failure of the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District to grant the charter within ten (10) days of receiving notice of the State Charter School Appeal Board's November 13, 2014 decision in CAB #2013-05, the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School is hereby granted a Charter by operation of law to operate a public charter school to be located within the William Penn School District for the period commencing on or after July 1, 2015, and ending on June 30, 2020. The grant of this charter was approved by vote of the State Charter School Appeal Board of October 28, 2014, and by way of the Board's findings, conclusions and decision issued on November 13, 2014 was deemed approved by the aforementioned inaction of the Board of School Directors.

It is specifically understood and agreed between the signatories hereto that:

- 1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the charter school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter School Law, 24 P.S. §§17-1701-A *et seq.*, and any applicable amendments thereto enacted during the term of this charter and any regulations or standards applicable to charter schools;
- 2) the granting of this charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the charter school in conformity with the terms of the application submitted by the Board of Trustees to the Board of School Directors on November 15, 2012 and approved by the State Charter School Appeal Board. Said application is attached hereto as Appendix A and is incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth;
- 3) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement between the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District and the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School for the term set forth above, and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this charter;
- 4) this charter may be renewed for additional periods of five (5) years duration, and upon any such renewal, a new charter shall be executed between the Board of School Directors and the Board of Trustees; and
- 5) this charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

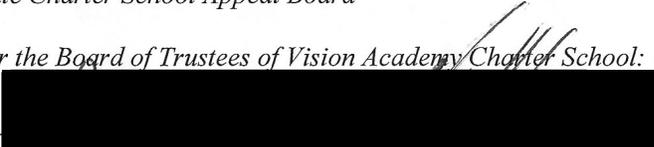
WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this _____ day of **December**, 2014:

For the State Charter School Appeal Board:



State Charter School Appeal Board

For the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School:



Board President/vice President

Board Secretary



A Framework for Academic Quality

A Report from the National Consensus Panel on Charter School Academic Quality



**National Alliance for
Public Charter Schools**



**COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS**
focus on achievement

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

Acknowledgements

The convening partners of the Charter School Quality Consortium express appreciation to all the members of the National Consensus Panel who contributed their time, perspectives, and shared passion for quality education to this initiative. We also thank project advisors Paul Hill and Andy Smarick. This work was conducted as part of a larger three-year project, “Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations, and Funders,” made possible by a National Leadership Activities grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Charter Schools Program.

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Introduction

Building Charter School Quality: Achieving the Promise

The charter school idea is based on a simple, compelling bargain: greater autonomy in exchange for greater accountability for student achievement. Sixteen years after the nation's first charter school opened in Minnesota, there are 4,300 charter schools serving 1.2 million students in 40 states and the District of Columbia. Yet the quality of these schools across the country varies greatly, ranging from those that rank among the nation's finest schools to some that serve their students poorly and improve little over time. Thus, the powerful potential of the charter movement – to increase quality public school options for all children, particularly for the minority and disadvantaged students “left behind” in traditional school systems – is compromised.

A key challenge that has limited the charter movement's success to date is the broad misalignment in expectations among charter operators, authorizers, funders and other stakeholders about how to measure and judge school quality. Indeed, many believe that the vast diversity in charter school missions, educational models, and student populations -- as well as differences in state accountability requirements and individual authorizer expectations – makes it impossible to establish common standards and measures of quality that are applicable and meaningful to all kinds of charter schools. The charter sector today has no basic, universal measures of school quality other than those shared with other public schools under the No Child Left Behind Act. It is no wonder that judgments about the performance of charter schools are so frequently ill-informed.

Of course, this weakness in performance evaluation is not confined to charter schools; it afflicts public education as whole, greatly hobbling and constraining efforts to improve schools. Too often, current approaches to evaluating school performance rely on data that are seriously limited and misleading, unhelpful to schools, and inappropriate for high-stakes judgments. To fulfill the promise of the charter school movement and maximize its success and impact, the charter sector nationwide needs to clarify and commit to a common set of basic quality expectations and performance measures to define and assess charter school success. This report responds to this strong need. At the same time, the framework shared in this report can help to advance standards-setting and performance evaluation for all public schools.

The Charter School Quality Consortium and Consensus Panel

This report is the product of a national consensus process conducted as part of Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations, and Funders

(BCSQ), a three-year National Leadership Activities Project funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools Program. The following four organizations have collaborated in spearheading this project:

- The Colorado League of Charter Schools
- CREDO at Stanford University
- The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
- The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)

These four organizations are the initial convening partners for the Charter School Quality Consortium, an emerging entity that, when fully developed, will be a force for improving the quality of charter schools nationwide. The consortium's purposes are to:

1. Establish consensus among national leaders and organizations working to bring quality educational options to underserved families regarding academic and operational performance measures and practices that define quality charter schools; and
2. Disseminate information on these necessary measures and practices so they can inform and improve charter school performance nationwide, particularly for schools in need of improvement and in high-need communities – thereby benefiting students who are most at risk of educational failure.¹

The Quality Consortium will be an engine for monitoring outcomes from the implementation of these performance measures and practices, providing an empirical base to inform ongoing work to strengthen the charter school sector.

As the first step in developing the national consensus described above, NACSA and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools co-convened the Consensus Panel on Charter School Academic Quality, a national working group consisting of leaders and key stakeholders in the charter school sector – including charter operators, authorizers, charter school support organizations, policy leaders, researchers, and charter school funders and lenders. The Consensus Panel has launched a grassroots, quality standards-setting initiative to strengthen and advance the charter school sector. This effort will continue and

¹“Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations and Funders,” Proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, pp. 9-10. In addition to the Quality Consortium, other major national goals of the BCSQ Project are to: 1) create and launch a Performance Management Institute for charter school operators and authorizers; 2) demonstrate and implement Student Growth-to-Standard Performance Measures in four pilot states (Arizona, Colorado, Florida and Ohio); and 3) develop a National Charter School Data Warehouse.

be broadened through the future work of the Charter School Quality Consortium. (The consensus process conducted over the past year is described in Appendix A; Consensus Panel participants are listed in Appendix B.)

The Consensus Panel has focused on three key tasks:

1. Examining and agreeing on a “common core” of academic quality indicators, measures, metrics and benchmark comparisons (defined in this report) that are nationally applicable and useful for all charter schools and authorizers to employ;
2. Ensuring that this core framework supports school-level decisions (internal accountability) while meeting the needs of external stakeholders (external accountability); and
3. Suggesting the best uses of this framework.

The deliberations of the Consensus Panel over the past year have been characterized by intense discussions and spirited, often passionate debates, producing a broad initial consensus on the Framework for Academic Quality set forth in this report. The Quality Consortium convening partners offer this to the charter school community nationwide as a resource – a practical tool and foundation to guide and begin evaluation of school quality, to increase accountability for student learning, and to strengthen performance management among charter schools and authorizers alike.

An Initial Consensus and Foundation for Future Work

Readers should bear in mind that the following Framework represents simply an initial consensus, intended to serve as a foundation and starting point for assessing academic quality in charter schools across the nation. The consensus represented in this Framework is necessarily broad, in order to apply to – and be meaningful for – every kind of school marching under the highly diverse charter banner.

The Consensus Panel seriously considered and debated a number of measures and metrics that the full Panel ultimately did not agree to include in this initial Framework, for a variety of reasons including shortcomings or barriers in any of the following areas:

- data availability
- data quality
- construct validity
- reliability
- administrative feasibility
- alignment with current accountability mandates
- applicability to the wide diversity of charter schools nationwide
- prohibitive costs of implementation.

At the same time, the Panel agreed that those measures and metrics that were discussed and set aside for now may merit future consideration by the Quality Consortium, as the circumstances that justified the Panel’s decisions may change over time. In addition, as laboratories for educational innovation, charter schools are already demonstrating changes in educational structures and delivery (ranging from various forms of non-classroom-based schooling to changes in the traditional K-12 grade structure) that may require new ways of judging quality and performance. Accordingly, the entire set of measures and metrics considered by the Panel will be archived and forwarded to the Quality Consortium, which will periodically revisit and consider revising the Framework as circumstances merit.

The performance measures and metrics set forth here are not the only ones that schools and authorizers should consider. Indeed, there are certainly other measures that thoughtful authorizers and charter schools should consider in developing their own performance contracts or accountability agreements.

This Framework is intended to facilitate – not supplant – the work required of schools and authorizers to negotiate and establish a variety of performance measures, metrics and targets that are meaningful for each school’s mission and design, and aligned with federal, state and authorizer expectations. The Consensus Panel recommends the current Framework as an essential foundation on which to build – while acknowledging that, in the spirit of continuous improvement, the Framework itself is subject to ongoing development and refinement through the forthcoming work of the Quality Consortium.

We acknowledge that this is not the first or only effort in this arena. Since the advent of charter schools, charter authorizers across the country have established performance measures and accountability systems for the schools they oversee – though authorizer practices and oversight systems are as wide-ranging in quality as charter schools themselves. Major national charter school funders such as the Walton Family Foundation, New Schools Venture Fund, and Charter School Growth Fund have advanced the pursuit of quality-measurement systems for charter schools. On the research front, the National Charter School Research Project’s Charter School Achievement Consensus Panel has focused on finding appropriate growth measures and techniques to enhance school research, as well as offering a model for creating consensus around their work.

The Charter School Quality Consortium builds upon these efforts, advancing the charter school sector by building capacity for performance management and by aligning performance incentives for schools to strengthen learning outcomes for all students. Specifically, we hope to:

- Build knowledge about sound performance measures and associated practices among leaders and key stakeholders in the charter school movement nationwide.
- Strengthen school performance management practices to support school quality and both internal and external accountability.
- Improve charter school authorizing and oversight, particularly by improving the performance measures that form the basis for high-stakes decisions about school quality.
- Build the capacity of charter school support organizations to understand and report on school performance and help schools to improve.
- Support charter school funder and lender portfolio management by providing a common, nationally applicable framework for assessing school performance.
- Enlighten and improve state and federal policy concerning school quality judgments.
- Enable schools to better identify the needs of various types of students (e.g., Special Education, Free/Reduced-Price Lunch, English Language Learners) and individual learners through disaggregated data analysis, thereby helping to close achievement gaps and meet the needs of all students.

How to Use the Framework

This Framework for Academic Quality is built around four essential indicators of academic quality and associated measures, metrics, and benchmark comparisons. It is intended as a practical tool to spur and guide improvement throughout the charter sector, regardless of a given school's particular mission or student population. Key groups within the charter community can use the Framework in the following ways:

- **SCHOOL OPERATORS** to help guide school accountability planning and ongoing performance management, and to demonstrate academic performance to external parties.
- **CHARTER AUTHORIZERS, FUNDERS AND LENDERS** to provide a common core of quality indicators, measures, metrics and benchmarks to guide evaluation of all the charter schools in their portfolio.
- **CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS** to illuminate areas of strength and areas for improvement across all the charter schools they support.

To use the Framework appropriately, readers should note the following:

USE THE ENTIRE FRAMEWORK. This Framework outlines a core body of evidence that charter schools, authorizers and other stakeholders should seek as a foundation for school evaluation. Parties using this Framework for school evaluation and particularly for high-stakes judgments should use it in its entirety (subject to obvious grade-level limitations for certain elements), not selectively. It would not be appropriate to use only some measures in the Framework while ignoring others applicable to the same grade levels. Likewise, no single source of data or benchmark comparison in this Framework should be the sole basis for high-stakes judgments concerning a school.

DISAGGREGATE DATA THOROUGHLY. All data collected and analyzed pursuant to this Framework should be disaggregated to the greatest extent possible (by grade, class, and student groups and subgroups) to clarify student achievement and needs.

Framework for Academic Quality:

Key Elements

Key elements of this Framework for Academic Quality include (from the most general to the most specific):

Indicators > Measures > Metrics > Targets

In addition, Benchmark comparisons are a fifth essential element of this framework. Benchmark comparisons can be employed for both Metrics and Targets.

Following is an overview of these elements and key terms as used in the Framework:

INDICATORS. Indicators represent general dimensions of academic quality or achievement, such as “Postsecondary Readiness and Success,” that the Consensus Panel has identified as essential. The four key academic quality indicators set forth in this Framework are accompanied by measures, metrics and benchmarks that the Consensus Panel recommends for widespread adoption and use by charter schools and authorizers.

MEASURES. Measures are general instruments or means to assess performance in each area defined by an indicator. Measures require the application of specific metrics or calculation methods (see below). For example, a measure of postsecondary readiness is high school completion.

METRICS. Metrics specify a quantification, calculation method or formula for a given measure. For example, the typical high school completion metric is a graduation rate, such as “the percentage of ninth-graders graduating in four years.”

TARGETS. Taking metrics a step further, targets are specific, quantifiable objectives that set expectations or define what will constitute success on particular measures within a certain period of time. For example, a graduation-rate target might be “90% of ninth-graders graduating within four years.” Likewise, state-mandated performance levels are common targets. Having well-conceived and well-defined performance targets is important to achieve and evaluate school success. *However, targets should be set by schools, authorizers, and state and federal policy – so the Framework set forth below does not specify targets for each recommended measure and metric.*

² CREDO at Stanford University, one of the Quality Consortium convening partners, will serve as a resource for schools and authorizers seeking appropriate benchmark comparisons. Using national and state-by-state school performance data collected for CREDO’s national school performance database, CREDO has the capacity to identify appropriate national and state benchmarks (as defined herein) for charter schools, and will produce examples for the four states that are partners in the BCSQ grant.

³ For purposes of this Framework, individual academic histories reflect the students’ baseline achievement or academic starting points upon enrolling in the school.

BENCHMARK COMPARISONS. Benchmarks compare the performance of an organization to that of exemplars in its field or industry. The benchmark comparisons recommended in this Framework identify two types of meaningful comparison groups for any charter school, based on obtainable data: ²

1. The best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation – defined as those demonstrating the highest sustained achievement and/or the highest sustained student growth, without adjusting for student race or socioeconomic status; and
2. The best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation – defined as those demonstrating the highest sustained achievement and/or the highest sustained student growth among schools with equivalent individual student academic histories, without adjusting for race or socioeconomic status.³

Charter schools, authorizers and other parties using this Framework for school evaluation should consistently apply both of these benchmark comparisons for all applicable measures to obtain broad and clear perspective on a school’s performance.

Indicators

The Consensus Panel recommends four essential indicators of academic quality:

1. **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL (STATUS)** – This indicator shows how students have performed at a single point in time on particular assessments (typically including, but not necessarily limited to state standardized tests). In other words, it is a “snapshot” of student performance at that point in time.
2. **STUDENT PROGRESS OVER TIME (GROWTH)** – This indicator examines how individual students have improved over time on particular assessments.
3. **POSTSECONDARY READINESS AND SUCCESS (FOR HIGH SCHOOLS)** – This indicator focuses on student preparation for postsecondary education, training, workforce participation or military service.
4. **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT** – This indicator focuses on basic, objective measures of student engagement in schooling, such as attendance and continuous enrollment.

The following pages set forth the Framework for Academic Quality, built around four essential indicators and associated measures, metrics, and benchmark comparisons.

Indicator #1: Student Achievement Level (Status)

Measures	Metrics	Benchmark Comparisons
<p>Proficiency Levels on State Assessments by Grade and Subject</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students scoring at proficiency • Percentage of students scoring at each state performance level (e.g., Advanced, Proficient, Below Proficient) • Attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>College Entrance Exam (e.g., ACT or SAT) Composite and Subtest Scores</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students reaching score predictive of college success on exam (as determined by the test publisher) • Median score • Percentage of students taking college entrance exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>High School Exit Exam (if applicable)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students passing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation

Notes:

- 1. TESTING CYCLES.** While acknowledging that state accountability systems are generally based on Spring-to-Spring or Fall-to-Fall test results, the Consensus Panel recommends Fall-to-Spring testing (as a complement to the state testing schedule, if necessary) in order to assess each school's impact on student learning during the academic year, as well as to avoid the effects of "summer loss."
- 2. INCENTIVES CREATED BY STATUS MEASURES.** The Consensus Panel discussed concerns about metrics that focus simply on proficiency attainment, such as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as currently deployed. The chief concern is that when such metrics are the sole focus of high-stakes school accountability, they may create incentives and pressure for schools to concentrate attention and resources on students who are "on the cusp" of proficiency or the next-closest performance level, while diminishing incentives to meet the needs of students who are furthest behind as well as those who are already proficient. The use of measures that assess student growth over time, as discussed in the next section of this Framework, partially remedies this problem.
- 3. VARIATION IN STATE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS.** The Consensus Panel acknowledges serious concerns about wide variation across the states in setting proficiency standards for student learning, which makes it difficult to judge school or student achievement across state lines. This Framework therefore includes numerous metrics that are independent of state proficiency standards. In addition, the Panel expressed interest in using the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) to benchmark school performance on state assessments.
- 4. SUBJECTS TESTED.** State assessment programs generally exclude some subjects from annual testing (commonly testing only Reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics), thereby providing a limited perspective on student learning. Schools and authorizers may wish to use national or other valid, reliable assessments in order to assess student learning in subjects not covered by state assessments.
- 5. EXIT STANDARDS, END-OF-COURSE ASSESSMENTS, AND GATEWAY EXAMS.** The Consensus Panel discussed the pervasive problem of students being passed along through every stage of K-12 schooling without meaningful promotion or graduation standards, ultimately graduating from high school without knowledge and skills necessary for higher education or for joining the workforce. The Panel encourages the use of promotion and exit standards, end-of-course assessments, and/or gateway exams, while recognizing these as decisions for states, districts, or individual schools.

Indicator #2: Student Progress over Time (Growth)

Measures	Metrics	Benchmark Comparisons
<p>Annual Gains for Same (Matched) Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students achieving or exceeding targeted gains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>Longitudinal Growth Based on Similar Starting Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical or average growth rate • Percentage of students achieving or exceeding typical or average growth rate • Percentage of students making or exceeding target growth rate • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>Criterion-Referenced Longitudinal Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students making adequate growth to reach or maintain proficiency during a certain period of time • Percentage of students already proficient or advanced who maintain or improve their performance level • Percentage of students moving to a higher performance level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation

Notes:

1. NEED FOR QUALITY STUDENT-LEVEL LONGITUDINAL

DATA. Rigorous analysis of student-level longitudinal data is imperative to reveal and assess individual student academic needs and growth over time. This kind of data examination is critical for schools to diagnose and meet every student's learning needs; for effective strategic decisionmaking for external accountability; and for well-informed evaluation of school performance. Charter schools and authorizers that currently are not collecting, analyzing and reporting student-level longitudinal data should make this a top priority for improving their assessment systems.

2. DIFFERENCES IN METHODOLOGIES. To select and implement assessment systems that will produce quality longitudinal data, it is important for schools and authorizers to have a basic understanding of common methods of growth analysis and their respective advantages, limitations and appropriate (or inappropriate) uses.

- “Gain-score analysis” is the simplest way to measure growth, using a simple subtraction method. That is, one year's score is subtracted from the prior year's score, with the difference referred to as the “gain score.” While simple to understand and replicate, this measure requires a cross-grade achievement scale (i.e., a vertical scale) and is often contaminated by floor and ceiling effects of the particular assessment, making it difficult to infer students' “pure learning” and thus presenting serious problems if used in high-stakes decisions.
- In contrast, value-added analysis or modeling (VAM) is a refined longitudinal growth analysis technique that uses deviations from expected growth of students as a basis for inferring school, teacher, or program effectiveness. VAMs are most appropriate when assessing effectiveness across a large number of schools.

3. OPTIONS FOR ANALYZING STUDENT GROWTH. Not all state education agencies conduct longitudinal growth analyses. To understand individual student progress in states that do not provide growth analysis, charter schools, authorizers and/or charter support organizations can obtain and analyze state assessment data themselves; or charter schools can administer national assessments that readily provide student growth data and analysis.

4. GRADE LEVELS TESTED ANNUALLY. Most state assessment programs do not test high school students annually. To understand student academic growth in grade levels not annually tested by the state assessment, schools should consider administering national assessments that readily provide student growth data and analysis.

5. SUBJECTS TESTED. State assessment programs generally exclude some subjects from annual testing (commonly limiting testing to Reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics). Schools and authorizers may wish to use national or other valid, reliable assessments to assess student academic growth in subjects not covered by state assessments.

Indicator #3: Postsecondary Readiness and Success (for High Schools)

Measures	Metrics	Benchmark Comparisons
<p>Postsecondary Access & Opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students enrolled in a college-prep curriculum (based on state high school standards or admission standards for in-state public 4-year colleges) • Percentage of graduates submitting applications to postsecondary institutions, by type of program (4-year and 2-year colleges, trade and apprentice programs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>High School Completion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation rate calculated as recommended by the National Governors Association⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>Postsecondary Admission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students gaining admission to postsecondary institutions (4-year and 2-year colleges, trade and apprentice programs) • Percentage of students submitting a complete Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) • Percentage of Free/Reduced-Price Lunch students admitted to postsecondary institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
<p>Postsecondary Enrollment or Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of graduates, by cohort, enrolled in postsecondary institutions (college, trade and apprentice programs) by February of Year 1 after graduating from high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation

Indicator #3: (continued)

Measures	Metrics	Benchmark Comparisons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students submitting a complete Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) • Percentage of Free/Reduced-Price Lunch students admitted to postsecondary institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation

Notes:

1. **DEFINING “POSTSECONDARY READINESS.”** The Consensus Panel debated how to define postsecondary readiness, given the diversity of postsecondary paths that students may take – including college, the workforce, military service, and trade schools – as well as the fact that a great number of charter schools cater to students who are at high risk of dropping out of high school. For purposes of this Framework, the Panel agreed that an appropriate definition of postsecondary readiness would be “readiness to earn a competitive wage and preparation for economic self-sufficiency” – a broad definition to urge data collection and reporting on all postsecondary paths that students may take.

2. **RIGOR OF COLLEGE PREP CURRICULA.** The Consensus Panel expressed concern about high variation in the (largely self-reported) rigor of college prep courses offered by high schools. While not reaching agreement at this time on a national measure for college prep curricular rigor, the Panel has identified this as a priority task for the next phase of the Quality Consortium’s work.

3. **SHARING OF DATA.** To enable charter schools to track students more easily after graduation, the Consensus Panel recommends that organizations that collect postsecondary enrollment data (i.e., postsecondary institutions, state education departments and other agencies) share such data with secondary schools.

Likewise, the Panel recommends that federal and state agencies that collect employment and military service data share such data with secondary schools.

4. **QUALITATIVE MEASURES.** The Consensus Panel discussed the use of qualitative measures for postsecondary readiness, including surveys or other instruments to assess factors such as student motivation or life skills. The Panel did not agree to include such measures in the present Framework, because the measures discussed were either not outcomes-focused or currently not comparable across all schools. While no consensus was achieved about qualitative outcome metrics or any single instrument to be used for these areas of interest, the Panel urges schools to explore and adopt rigorous qualitative measures to further illuminate and demonstrate their students’ postsecondary preparedness, if desired. The Panel believes that there are a variety of surveys and instruments that serve this purpose.

⁴The NGA graduation rate formula divides the number of graduates in a particular year by the number of students entering the ninth grade for the first time four years before, plus the difference between the number of students who transfer in and out over the same four years. That is: $[On\text{-}time\ graduates\ in\ Year\ X] / [(first\text{-}time\ entering\ ninth\text{-}graders\ in\ Year\ X - 4) + (transfers\ in - transfers\ out\ over\ the\ 4\text{-}year\ period)]$. *Graduation Counts: A Compact on State High School Graduation Data*, National Governors Association, 2005.

Indicator #4: Student Engagement

Measures	Metrics	Benchmark Comparisons
Student Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Daily Attendance rate • Percentage of students attending a target percentage of days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction and state • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction and state
Continuous Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students continuously enrolled throughout the year • Percentage of students re-enrolled from one year to the next • Percentage of students continuously enrolled for multiple years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction, state, and nation
Truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students exceeding a particular number of truancies in a given period of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-performing nonselective public schools in the chartering jurisdiction and state • Best-performing comparable schools in the chartering jurisdiction and state

Notes:

- 1. SHOULD “STUDENT ENGAGEMENT” BE AN INDICATOR?** While student engagement is not a traditional academic outcome like the other indicators above, the Consensus Panel identified it as an “interim outcome” – a precondition essential for achieving other educational outcomes, and thus meriting attention in this Framework.
- 2. OTHER MEASURES POSSIBLE AT SCHOOL LEVEL.** The Panel engaged in a spirited discussion over how to measure student engagement. Student engagement is often demonstrated by affective qualities – e.g., student motivation, attitudes or psychosocial development – that are not readily or reliably measured or universally applicable to the diverse charter schools across the country. In addition, some measures relevant to student engagement may create incentives to under-report data (e.g., student violence or suspensions) if used to inform high-stakes judgments of school quality. The Consensus Panel discussed a number of possible measures for student engagement including climate surveys and qualitative instruments, and the Panel recognizes that such measures, which may capture student engagement more completely, can be valuable for individual schools. For the purposes of this Framework, however, the Panel selected the above limited set of easily quantifiable measures that can reflect student engagement at a basic, objective level across the wide diversity of charter schools nationwide.
- 3. CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT.** A common measure related to student engagement is student attrition, which may be due to a number of factors including choosing another school, moving away, dropping out, or expulsion. Continuous enrollment – the percentage of students who stay enrolled in a school over time – is the inverse of student attrition, and the metrics above capture continuous enrollment over various periods of time, from one year to multiple years. The Panel agreed that as a measure of student engagement, continuous enrollment would be more broadly informative than attrition – capturing the percentage of students who stay in the school over time while simultaneously reflecting the percentage who leave for various reasons.
- 4. STATE-SPECIFIC DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS.** The Panel recognizes that states vary in how they define or approach the above measures. For example, formulas for calculating ADA vary from state to state, and some states have different definitions for ADA for homebound and pre-school students. Thus, the definitions and formulas used by charter schools and authorizers will depend on their state.

General Areas for Further Development

The Consensus Panel identified two general areas for further development as the Quality Consortium continues its work:

1. MORE MEASURES FOR K-8 SUCCESS. Several of the measures in this Framework focus on the ultimate results of K-12 public education that occur at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The Consensus Panel recognizes the need to develop additional valid measures of success for K-8 schools, particularly given that the majority of charter schools serve grades K-8.

2. NON-TRADITIONAL AND MISSION-SPECIFIC MEASURES. The Consensus Panel recognizes that standardized tests and other readily quantifiable measures (e.g., attendance rates) do not completely capture all dimensions of school performance and quality that may be vital to a school and its stakeholders. The Panel discussed and recognized the importance (for some schools more than others, depending on each school's mission and design) of establishing valid, reliable measures of academic quality beyond standardized tests and traditional measures.

Non-traditional performance measures are often necessary to assess and demonstrate a school's achievement of its unique mission and educational promises. These might pertain, for example, to the arts, technology, entrepreneurship or environmental education; or to character development, service learning, leadership skills, or foreign-language proficiency.

In light of the wide diversity of charter school missions and designs across the country, as well as the technical challenges of establishing validity and reliability for non-traditional performance measures, the Consensus Panel did not reach agreement on the role and usage of such measures for purposes of this Framework. The Panel agreed that non-traditional measures can be valuable if well-developed, and that schools and authorizers should work to develop and use valid, reliable measures and metrics for dimensions of school achievement not captured by standardized tests or other traditional means. In addition, the Panel flagged this topic for further attention and development in the continuing work of the Quality Consortium.

Next Steps for the Quality Consortium

Key next steps for the Quality Consortium include:

- 1. IMPLEMENTATION:** The Quality Consortium seeks to have charter school operators, authorizers and funders nationwide adopt and employ the indicators, measures, metrics, and benchmark comparisons set forth in the above Framework for Academic Quality to refine and enhance their performance management practices. The Quality Consortium will emphasize longitudinal growth measures and benchmarking in Building Charter School Quality Project pilot states (Arizona, Colorado, Florida and Ohio).
- 2. ONGOING DISCUSSION VIA WEBSITE:** As an extension to convened meetings and development of the measures and metrics, the Quality Consortium now hosts a website (www.bcsq.org) as a forum for leaders and stakeholders in the charter movement to discuss and respond to the Consensus Panel's draft documents. This forum will further the refinement of the proposed measures, metrics and benchmarks as well as encourage stakeholder learning.
- 3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE:** To complement the work of the Consensus Panel, the Quality Consortium will launch the Performance Management Institute in 2008, incorporating the above Framework for Academic Quality into the Institute curriculum.
- 4. DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE QUALITY:** By the end of 2008, a second Consensus Panel will reach consensus on a framework for evaluating the quality of charter school operations and governance. This second set of indicators, measures, metrics and benchmarks will complement the Framework for Academic Quality and is likewise intended for broad adoption by the charter school sector.

Consensus Panel Process Notes

Role & Charge of the Panel

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools co-convoked a national working group representing key stakeholders in the charter school movement – including charter operators, authorizers, state associations, policy leaders, researchers, lenders and funders. The charge of this working group – the Consensus Panel on Charter School Academic Quality – was to establish consensus regarding a core set of academic performance measures that define quality charter schools, and to disseminate information on these necessary measures so they can inform and improve charter school performance nationwide.

The expected results of this consensus process included:

- Consistency across like organizations in the charter school sector
- A solid basis for policy discussions
- Clear expectations for measurement
- Knowledge transfer and capacity-building among all types of organizations

The Consensus Process

On June 6-7, 2007, the Consensus Panel met for the first time in Snowbird, Utah to begin forging a consensus on a core set of academic indicators, measures and metrics that define quality charter schools. In this first meeting, the Panel determined a set of key indicators and established a draft set of measures and metrics. Over the summer, smaller work groups (indicator committees) continued to refine the measures and metrics for each indicator.

On September 17 -18, 2007, the Consensus Panel met again at Stanford University. At this meeting, indicator committees offered final drafts of measures and metrics for the full Panel's consideration and discussion. The decisions and discussions resulting from this meeting were summarized in the first draft Consensus Compact Working Document, released for review and comment to the Consensus Panel and selected other leaders in the national charter school community in early November 2007.

Since then, the Building Charter School Quality Project team has solicited, reviewed and extensively discussed comments from numerous Panel participants and has worked to incorporate practical suggestions into the second draft Consensus Report, released for comment at the end of February 2008.

Decision Rules of the Consensus Panel

The charge to the Panel was to achieve consensus on the indicators, measures, and metrics contained in the above Framework. If consensus was not reached on particular points, Panel participants then identified areas of disagreement, opposing arguments, and any necessary conditions for future consensus. Key areas of non-consensus are noted at the end of the section for the relevant indicator in the above Framework.

APPENDIX B.

Consensus Panel & Staff

Consensus Panel

Christopher Barbic, YES Prep Public Schools

John Chubb, Edison Schools

Stephen Hinson, Charter School Growth Fund

Dean Kern, U.S. Department of Education

Robin Lake, Center on Reinventing Public Education

Erin Lanoue, Chicago Charter School Foundation

Rene Lewis, Florida Consortium of Charter Schools

Trinita Logue, IFF

Cathy Lund, Walton Family Foundation

Bruno Manno, Annie E. Casey Foundation

Isis Randolph-McCree, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Ron Miller, SUNY Charter Schools Institute

Lynn Norman-Teck, Florida Consortium of Charter Schools

Mukta Pandit, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Jim Peyser, NewSchools Venture Fund

Lory Pilchik, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Mike Ronan, Lighthouse Academies

Sheree Speakman, Walton Family Foundation

Ting Sun, Natomas Charter School

Leslie Talbot, Talbot Consulting

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Building Charter School Quality

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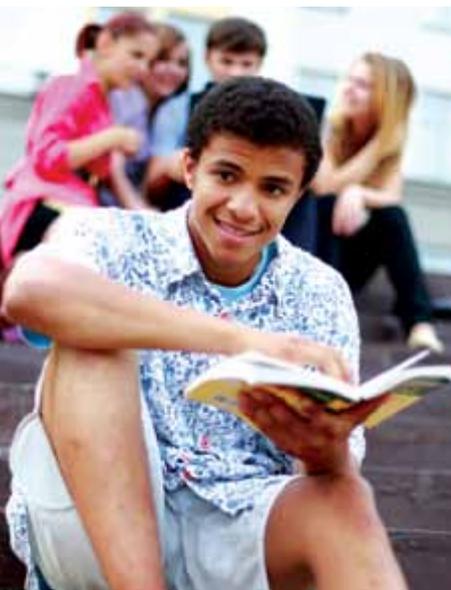
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A REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL CONSENSUS
PANEL ON CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATIONAL QUALITY

A Framework for Operational Quality

May 2009



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The convening partners of the Charter School Quality Consortium express appreciation to all the members of the National Consensus Panel and working groups who contributed their time, perspectives, and shared passion for quality education to this initiative. This work was conducted as part of a larger four-year project, “Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations, and Funders,” made possible by a National Leadership Activities grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Charter Schools Program.



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Foreword

Successful charter schools are more than a collection of great teachers and an effective curriculum. They are also nonprofit corporations that must operate with maximum efficiency in order to produce strong results despite funding disparities and facilities challenges unique to charter schools. They are multi-million-dollar startup enterprises whose stakeholders are parents, taxpayers, and public authorities. Because they are public schools, charters are publicly accountable not just for academic results, but also for sound stewardship of public dollars. And as schools of choice, charter schools must satisfy families and students to earn their re-enrollment each year.

That's why the convening partners of the Charter School Quality Consortium have produced this report, *A Framework for Operational Quality*, as a companion to *A Framework for Academic Quality* released in June 2008.

The Charter School Quality Consortium is a federally-funded initiative spearheaded by four collaborating organizations:

- Colorado League of Charter Schools
- CREDO at Stanford University
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)

While these four organizations play different roles in the charter movement, they share a common commitment to building and strengthening the movement through quality schooling.

Although charter schools succeed and sustain themselves at a far greater rate than commercial startups, they do sometimes falter—most often,

because of deficiencies in finance, governance, and other operational domains. One recent report notes that two-thirds of mid-term charter revocations have occurred for reasons other than academic performance¹—perhaps because financial or organizational failures are often more clearcut and evident earlier than academic shortcomings.

Achieving consensus on essential indicators, measures, and metrics for charter school academic quality—the focus of our first report—was a long and difficult task, in part because charter schools serve every kind of population from pre-K to adults, and from college-bound teens to adjudicated youth. For this new report on operational quality, the task was somewhat clearer at the outset. No matter what kind of curriculum a school offers, no matter its mission or the background of its students, every charter school must be well-managed and capably governed. Its governing board must oversee the school responsibly and with fiduciary care. The school's books must earn clean audits, and student records must stand up to authorizer scrutiny.

With gratitude to the numerous experts and practitioners who served on the National Consensus Panel and in related working groups, we present *A Framework for Operational Quality*. We hope this framework and report will be a useful tool for charter schools, authorizers, and funders—working in tandem with our previous *A Framework for Academic Quality*² to help produce high performance, by many measures, across an ever-strengthening charter school sector.

— Nelson Smith
President & CEO
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

1 Gau, R., "Trends in Charter Authorizing," Thomas B. Fordham Institute (2006), p.10.

2 "A Framework for Academic Quality," (2008), www.charterschoolquality.org.



Introduction: Building Charter School Quality

The charter school idea is based on a simple, compelling bargain: greater autonomy in exchange for greater accountability for student achievement. Seventeen years after the nation’s first charter school opened in Minnesota, there are almost 4,700 charter schools serving 1.4 million students in 40 states and the District of Columbia. Yet the quality of these schools across the country varies greatly, ranging from some of the nation’s finest schools to others that serve their students poorly and improve little over time. Thus, the powerful potential of the charter movement—to increase quality public school options for all children, particularly for the minority and disadvantaged students “left behind” in traditional school systems—is too often unrealized.

This report and its earlier-published companion, *A Framework for Academic Quality*³, are the products of a national initiative focused on turning high potential into high performance across the charter school sector.

The Charter School Quality Consortium and Consensus Panels

This report is the second product of a national consensus process conducted as part of *Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations, and Funders (BCSQ)*, a four-year National Leadership Activities Project funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Charter Schools Program. The following four organizations have collaborated in spearheading this project:

- Colorado League of Charter Schools
- CREDO at Stanford University
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)

These four organizations are the convening partners for the **Charter School Quality Consortium**, an emerging entity that, when fully developed, will be a force for improving the quality of charter schools nationwide. The Consortium’s purposes are to:

1. **ESTABLISH CONSENSUS**, among national leaders and organizations working to bring quality educational options to underserved families, regarding academic and operational performance measures and practices that are hallmarks of quality charter schools.
2. **DISSEMINATE INFORMATION** on these necessary measures and practices so they can inform and improve charter school performance nationwide, particularly for schools in need of improvement and in high-need communities— thereby benefiting students who are most at risk of educational failure.⁴

³ “A Framework for Academic Quality,” (2008), www.charterschoolquality.org.

⁴ “Building Charter School Quality: Strengthening Performance Management among Schools, Authorizers, State Charter Support Organizations and Funders,” Proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, p. 9-10.



To carry out this grassroots, standards-setting initiative, the Quality Consortium partners have convened two national Consensus Panels over the past two years. The first focused on charter school **academic quality**, while the second focused on **operational quality**. The panels have drawn from a variety of leaders and key stakeholders in the charter school sector—including charter operators, authorizers, charter school support organizations, policy leaders, researchers, and charter school funders and lenders. The product of the first Consensus Panel was *A Framework for Academic Quality*, released in June 2008 and now available at www.charterschoolquality.org. The product of the second Consensus Panel—*A Framework for Operational Quality* presented herein—complements the first report with a different focus and purpose.

The Quality Consortium partners have featured *A Framework for Academic Quality* as a centerpiece for training charter school operators and authorizers in the Performance Management Institute (PMI), a professional development program launched by the BCSQ project. Participants to date have attested to the impact of *A Framework for Academic Quality* and the PMI in strengthening their work. In 2008, the PMI trained charter operators and authorizers from Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, New Mexico, Ohio, and Texas. Participants widely reported that the PMI solidified their commitment to performance measurement and the use of well-chosen performance metrics. The impact has been both significant and lasting; a follow-up survey sent six months after participants attended the PMI showed their commitment continued to be strong. In addition, participants noted that the PMI training spurred their organizations to adopt specific performance measures and metrics set forth in *A Framework for Academic Quality*, such as those focusing on student academic growth over time and post-secondary success.

A Framework for Operational Quality: Purpose and Uses

A Framework for Charter School Operational Quality is built around three essential indicators of operational quality and associated measures and metrics. It is intended as a practical tool to spur and guide improvement throughout the charter sector by offering standards of practice applicable to any kind of charter school, anywhere. Key groups within the charter community can use this Framework in the following ways:

- **SCHOOL OPERATORS**—to guide the establishment of essential operating standards and a foundation for institutionalized practices to achieve and sustain school success.
- **CHARTER AUTHORIZERS, FUNDERS AND LENDERS**—to guide schools in establishing these basic operating standards and practices, and to inform ongoing monitoring of charters in their portfolio.
- **CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS**—to illuminate areas of strength and areas for improvement across all the charter schools they support, and to train or assist schools in establishing operating practices fundamental for success.

Readers should use this Framework in conjunction with the previously published *A Framework for Academic Quality*, while keeping in mind the complementary purposes of the two frameworks. *A Framework for Operational Quality* outlines basic operational standards, systems, and practices that are conditions for achieving and sustaining charter school success. It is primarily a tool for school planning, monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement. Because *A Framework for Operational Quality* focuses on a variety of sound practices or “inputs”—rather than clearly measurable school performance outcomes—it is not intended to serve as the basis for high-stakes judgments of charter school performance. The Consensus Panel recommends using *A Framework for Operational Quality* to help schools establish basic conditions for success—while using *A Framework for Academic Quality* as a foundation for structuring evaluations of school performance.



KEY ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Key elements of *A Framework for Operational Quality* include (from the most general to the most specific):

INDICATORS > MEASURES > METRICS > TARGETS

Following is an overview of these elements and key terms as used in the Framework:

INDICATORS. Indicators represent general dimensions of school operational quality, such as Financial Performance and Sustainability, that the Consensus Panel has identified as essential. The three key operational quality indicators set forth in this Framework are accompanied by measures and metrics that the Consensus Panel recommends for widespread use by charter schools and entities that monitor their performance.

MEASURES. Measures are general instruments or means to assess performance in each area defined by an indicator. Measures require the application of specific metrics or calculation methods (see below). For example, a measure of financial performance and sustainability is liquidity.

METRICS. Metrics specify a quantification, calculation method or formula for a given measure. For example, a metric for expressing an organization's liquidity is a ratio such as:

$$\frac{(\text{Current assets} - \text{Current liabilities})}{\text{Total expenses}}$$

TARGETS. Taking metrics a step further, targets are specific, quantifiable objectives that set expectations or define what will constitute success on particular measures within a certain period of time. Having well-conceived and well-defined performance targets is important to achieve and evaluate school success. However, targets should be set by schools in light of relevant federal, state or authorizer requirements—so the Framework set forth in the following pages does not specify targets for each recommended measure and metric.



A Framework for Operational Quality

The Consensus Panel recommends three essential indicators of charter school operational quality:

1. Financial Performance and Sustainability
2. Board Performance and Stewardship
3. Parent and Community Engagement

Following is *A Framework for Operational Quality*, built around these essential indicators and associated measures and metrics. Note: The explanatory notes in each section address or clarify substantive points considered by the Consensus Panel and are important for full understanding and appropriate use of the Framework.



Indicator #1: Financial Performance & Sustainability

MEASURES	METRICS
Student Enrollment	Actual student enrollment, per statutorily required reported count(s)/ Budgeted student enrollment
Liquidity	$\frac{\text{Current assets} - \text{Current liabilities}}{\text{Total expenses}}$
Sustainability	$\frac{\text{Total unrestricted net assets}}{\text{Average monthly expenses}}$
Occupancy Expense	$\frac{\text{Total occupancy costs (lease or mortgage)}}{\text{Total revenues}}$
Annual Audit	Absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audit by qualified independent auditor

NOTES:

1. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. The Consensus Panel believes that a sound financial infrastructure requires establishing and following adequate financial policies and procedures that are clearly set forth in a board-approved manual. Such policies and procedures should establish clear operating standards for financial management of the school; lay a foundation for consistent, institutionalized practice in the event of leadership or staff turnover; and help to overcome any internal resistance to viewing the school as a business.

2. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM. To lay the groundwork for solid financial analysis, a school must adhere to sound and consistent methods for collecting and organizing financial data. The Consensus Panel recognizes that many states require a specific chart of accounts for organizing school financial data, and believes that this suffices for charter schools in those states. For charter schools in states that do not prescribe a uniform chart of accounts, the Consensus Panel recommends that schools, authorizers, and other users of charter school financial data employ a common structure. A sample uniform chart of accounts is provided in Appendix A.



NOTES: (CONTINUED)

3. FINANCIAL EXPERTISE. The expertise needed for charter schools to perform well financially requires both management and board-level skill. Each is necessary but is not in itself sufficient. The Consensus Panel debated what constitutes “financial expertise,” ultimately agreeing that this should be determined locally.

4. ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDITS. The Consensus Panel agrees that charter schools should undergo annual financial audits by a qualified and independent external auditor (which may be a state auditor, as required in some states). Periodic financial reviews conducted by the authorizer can complement, but do not supplant the need for comprehensive annual audits by qualified financial auditors.

5. REVENUE MANAGEMENT. The Consensus Panel discussed the need for schools to ensure that they manage incoming revenue so that they can operate at the desired level of performance. Some Panel members expressed concern that some schools neglect or choose not to pursue funds that could help their programs. Other members noted that this could be a rational and strategic decision for schools that wish to avoid attached strings or time-consuming reporting requirements for some funding sources. The Panel agreed that schools should understand the cost of pursuing additional dollars in relation to the additional dollars that they actually receive.

6. CASH RESERVES. There is always the possibility of unexpected costs in operating a charter school. The Consensus Panel discussed the need for schools to maintain a cash reserve for unexpected expenses. Some states as well as authorizers provide guidance or require a certain percentage of revenue or expense to be held in reserve. The Panel agreed that maintaining a reserve should be a goal for all charter schools, while the appropriate amount for individual schools will vary based on school needs. Schools should be aware of any state or authorizer requirements pertaining to cash reserves. Absent such a requirement, it would be prudent to maintain a minimum of 30 days’ cash on hand—a minimum that charter school lenders like to see. (In many industries, maintaining 90-180 days of cash on hand is the norm, but given the variety of ways charters are funded, this may not be not realistic.)

7. CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITY PLANNING AND DEBT BURDEN. The Consensus Panel does not recommend one particular facility approach—either facility purchase or lease—over the other for all charter schools. The best approach will depend on the specific circumstances of each school. The Panel does recommend, however, that all charter schools have a facility plan providing for either facility ownership or a long-term lease by the time the school reaches full enrollment. The Panel declined to specify a recommended range for charter school facility costs, as such costs are heavily driven by local markets, but the Panel agrees that schools should take care to ensure that facility costs (mortgage or lease payments and debt burden) do not impair their ability to provide a high-quality academic program.



8. STUDENT ENROLLMENT. Student enrollment is the major driver of charter school revenues, and projected enrollment is a key assumption underlying financial decisions by charter school boards and leaders. Under-enrollment can lead to devastating financial consequences for charter schools. Many schools maintain a waitlist that helps them manage attrition and fill student spaces throughout the school year. The Consensus Panel believes it is necessary to measure the demand for every charter school to ensure that it can operate as planned. (Measuring demand is discussed under Indicator #3: Parent & Community Engagement.)

9. SCHOOL-LEVEL FINANCIAL AND ACADEMIC REPORTING. Financial performance and impacts are fully transparent only when charter schools (or Charter Management Organizations (CMOs)/ Education Management Organizations (EMOs)) report both academic and financial information at the individual school level. The Panel recognizes that some CMOs, EMOs or school networks are organized as quasi-districts that provide centralized administrative support while the schools or campuses manage independent academic programs. Under such structures, it is common for financial information to be reported centrally. If finances are reported only centrally, however, individual school boards (if different from the managing entity's board) cannot see how their resource allocations compare to those of other schools in the network. Nor is it possible for external stakeholders—such as authorizers, funders or lenders—to see how resources are allocated to individual schools, or to assess the impact of resource allocation on school performance. Do better-performing schools receive more resources—or do they use fewer resources, or use them differently? Such questions cannot be answered when financial reporting is generalized across multiple schools. Accordingly, the Consensus Panel strongly recommends that both academic and financial information be clearly reported and analyzed at the individual school level.

10. ACCOUNTING FOR IN-KIND SERVICES. Charter schools often receive in-kind resources such as transportation, special-education support, facilities, or legal and financial services that may not appear in their financial records. It is difficult to capture accurately the dollar value of in-kind support provided to schools by CMO/EMOs, foundations, school districts or other entities, because charter schools may not know the exact monetary value of the in-kind services or resources they receive, and do not record such transactions on their books. Because of this, the Consensus Panel has not developed measures or metrics concerning in-kind services, but does suggest that schools recognize and record them in their financial reporting.



Indicator #2: Board Performance & Stewardship

MEASURES	METRICS
Board Member Skills, Knowledge and Commitment	Collective years of board member experience in each of the following critical areas, at a minimum: Finance, Legal, Education, and Board Leadership/Governance Percentage of board members who attend more than 80% of board meetings
Setting Expectations	Percentage of short- and long-term, board-approved academic and operating performance goals (for external accountability) that are SMART, i.e.: S pecific M easurable A mbitious R ealistic, with Responsibility Assigned T ime-specific with Target Date Short- and long-term, board-approved, SMART performance goals, including at least one goal for each of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement (status or absolute performance) • Student academic growth over time • Financial health • Operational efficiency • Organizational development
Ethical Conduct	Absence of violations of authorizer-approved board policy governing ethical matters including conflicts of interest
Regulatory and Reporting Compliance	Percentage of all required filings that are complete, accurate and on time Absence of violations of any regulatory or reporting requirements
Leadership Oversight and Evaluation	Clear lines of authority, responsibility, and reporting Board monitoring of school/CMO leadership performance throughout the year Annual evaluation of school/CMO leadership performance against established performance expectations (SMART goals)
Contract Management and Oversight	Fulfillment of terms of charter contract Effective management and oversight of all service contracts, including any contracts for education/management services, as evidenced by, at a minimum: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clear, sound contracts that articulate roles and responsibilities; academic and operational (as applicable) performance goals, measures, timelines and terms; and consequences for inadequate performance b) Oversight that focuses on contractually-agreed performance outcomes and quality service
Public Accountability and Transparency	Clear, accurate, regular communication by the school on its academic and operating performance to key constituencies and the public through a variety of means that maximize access and understanding
Securing the Future/Continuous Improvement	Documented board and leadership attention to significant changes in the school's environment including authorizing changes and legislative, regulatory and policy activity Formal annual board review of performance and improvement against annual targets and long-term academic and operating performance goals Measurable improvement in the school's academic and operating performance over time, aligned with the school's performance contract goals



NOTES:

1. BOARD MEMBER SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND COMMITMENT. This measure aims to ensure that every charter school board collectively possesses the diverse expertise and capacities needed to execute the board’s fiduciary duties in governing a public school, non-profit corporation, and multi-million-dollar enterprise, and to carry out the board’s policymaking and strategic decisionmaking roles for the long-term success of the school.

2. LEADERSHIP OVERSIGHT AND EVALUATION. The Consensus Panel agrees that a charter school board’s chief responsibilities with respect to school leadership are to:

- A)** Hire a strong, capable leader.
- B)** Monitor and evaluate the leader against established performance expectations based on SMART goals.
- C)** Support the leader in achieving goals and securing long-term success, while respecting the distinct roles of governance vs. management.

In most states, charter management organization (CMO) or other school-network boards bear these essential responsibilities for each school or campus they oversee.

3. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT. This measure focuses on ensuring appropriate stewardship over all contracts executed by a charter school governing board, including the charter contract itself as well as any service or management contracts with third parties. All such contracts should delineate the roles and responsibilities of the parties and articulate performance goals, timelines and terms, including consequences for inadequate performance or service.

4. PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY. This measure emphasizes the public stewardship responsibility of charter school governing boards. As educational trustees of the state, charter boards are called upon to be responsive to diverse, complex and often conflicting constituencies. Key principles underlying this measure include:

- A)** Charter school boards govern on behalf of and are accountable to the broader public, not merely their own school’s internal community.
- B)** Charter school boards must serve the public interest and uphold the public trust. This central commitment should guide all board policymaking and decisionmaking.



Indicator #3: Parent & Community Engagement

MEASURES	METRICS
Satisfied Students and Parents	<p>Percentage of students and parents who give the school a high (A or B) rating on satisfaction surveys, with response rates of at least 75% from parents and at least 80% from currently enrolled students broadly representative of the student population (For internal, school improvement purposes only; minimum response rates recommended for validity)</p> <p>Re-enrollment ratio: School's rate of student re-enrollment from year to year, compared to district average and/or the school's prior-year re-enrollment rate (using statutorily required method for tracking enrollment)</p>
Excess Student and Parent Demand	$\frac{\text{(Enrollment + Valid Excess Demand)}}{\text{School's Current Enrollment Capacity}}$ <p>(for validity, the demand figure should be annually updated and confirmed)</p>

NOTES:

1. SATISFACTION SURVEYS—QUALITY AND CONTEXT.

The Consensus Panel recognizes that not all satisfaction surveys are valid or reliable instruments, but agrees that it is important for schools to assess parent and student satisfaction (as well as needs and desires) for internal, continuous school improvement. To strengthen the quality of satisfaction surveys and the validity of their results, the Panel agrees that satisfaction surveys should reflect strong response rates from parents and from currently enrolled students who broadly reflect the student population's grade levels and demographics.

Though there is no "scientific" standard establishing a response rate sufficient to ensure validity of school satisfaction surveys, the Panel believes that in the context of charter schools—which are self-selective communities—response rates should be significantly higher than might be accepted in other survey contexts (e.g., public-opinion research, academic research, or any random-sampling survey). This is because a) a charter school satisfaction survey is administered to a selective—not random—group of desired respondents; and b) engagement of that group is one of the very purposes of the survey itself. The Panel believes that a school that is committed to engaging its students and parents and actively seeks

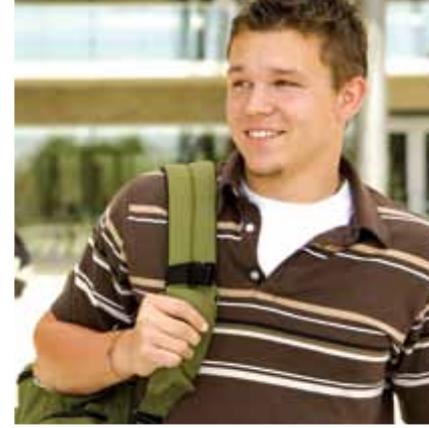
their feedback should be able to achieve response rates of at least 80% for students and 75% of parents on satisfaction surveys, if the purpose is to assess and demonstrate broad, school-wide satisfaction.

In addition, the Panel considered recent research showing that stakeholders, particularly parents, often have broader expectations of established charter schools than of brand-new schools. According to the research conducted by Wohlstetter et al., some elements of a school are important to parents and students regardless of the school's age—such as academic programs, school culture and environment, teachers and administrators, and school support services. In contrast, there are other elements or features that stakeholders tend to expect to improve or develop as a school becomes more established, such as facilities, extracurricular activities, parent groups, and community partnerships.⁵

Accordingly, the Panel agreed that student and parent satisfaction surveys might appropriately contain different questions for charter schools at different stages of development, such as for:

- A)** New schools (0-2 years old).
- B)** Emerging schools (3-4 years old).
- C)** Mature schools (5 years or older).

⁵ See Wohlstetter, P., Nayfack, M. & Mora-Flores, E., "Charter Schools and 'Customer' Satisfaction: Lessons from Field Testing a Parent Survey," *Journal of School Choice* 2:1 (2008), 66-84.



NOTES: (CONTINUED)

2. FAMILY MEANS. The Panel considered but did not agree to include parent volunteerism or financial contributions as a metric for parent satisfaction for all charter schools. The Panel recognizes that not all families have the means or capacity to contribute volunteer time or money to their school, so such metrics could be particularly misleading in assessing parent satisfaction with schools that serve predominantly low-income students.

3. NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHY STUDENTS LEAVE. The Consensus Panel strongly believes that all charter schools should track, document, and report on why students leave their school, by administering and documenting the results of exit interviews whenever students leave. While recognizing the time and resources this requires, the Panel agrees it is vital for schools to document—for self-improvement as well as for reporting to authorizers and other stakeholders—the extent to which students are leaving for logistical reasons (e.g., commuting distance too far, or moving away) versus dissatisfaction with some aspect of the school.

4. STANDARD FORMULA FOR CALCULATING DEMAND (ANNUALLY RECALCULATED). Though many charter schools maintain waitlists, the Consensus Panel agrees that the length of a school's waitlist alone may not necessarily be a valid or informative calculation of demand for the school, because of differences in enrollment capacity as well as schools' methods for constructing or maintaining waitlists. A school's enrollment capacity is an important consideration—a waitlist of 500 may indicate something entirely different for a school with 250 seats compared to a school with 1,500 seats. In addition, schools should avoid calculations or practices that might artificially inflate their waitlists in various ways—such as continuing to recruit students even after all seats are filled and the waitlist is sufficient to ensure a full enrollment, or keeping students on a waitlist year after year even if those students are no longer interested or eligible.

To obtain clearer perspective on student/parent demand—and to ensure validity and comparability of school waiting lists—the Panel recommends the following standard formula for calculating a ratio of demand to capacity for any charter school:

$$\frac{(\text{Enrolled Students} + \text{Valid Excess Demand})}{\text{School's Current Enrollment Capacity}}$$

This formula takes into account each school's planned enrollment capacity for the current year, which may increase each year for schools that are growing or adding grades. The result indicates the strength of demand, and values greater than 1.0 represent a measure of financial security, since full enrollment is assured. The Consensus Panel agrees that this ratio should be calculated and reported every year to monitor a school's demand trends as well as its status (or single-year snapshot). Likewise, authorizers should verify that each charter school is properly calculating and annually updating its waitlist to ensure the validity of its reported excess demand.



Appendix A: Sample Uniform Chart of Accounts

FUNCTION	SUBFUNCTION	DETAIL FUNCTION
Instruction	Classroom Teaching	Instructional Teachers
		Instructional Para-professionals
		Substitutes
	Classroom Materials	Pupil-Use Technology & Software
		Non-Employee Instructional Materials
Instructional Support	Non-Instructional Pupil Support	Guidance & Counseling
		Library & Media
		Extracurricular
		Student Health & Services
	Teacher Support	Curriculum Development
		In-Service, Staff Development & Support
	Program Support	Program Management
		Therapists, Psychologists & Social Workers
Facilities Expenses	Building Management	Building Operations, Utilities & Maintenance
	Capital	Capital Projects/Capital Leases
		Debt Services
Administrative Expenses	School Management	Principals & Assistant Principals
		School Office
	Business Management	Data Processing
		Business Operations
	Program/Operations Management	Deputies, Senior Administrators & Researchers
	District Management (if applicable)	Superintendent & School Board
		Legal
Legal	Claims & Settlements	
Other	Non-Instructional Pupil Services	Transportation
		Food Service
		Safety



Appendix B: Consensus Process Notes

The Consensus Process

As the initial step in establishing a national peer consensus on a framework for charter school operational quality, the Building Charter School Quality (BCSQ) leadership team convened three national, geographically diverse working groups with broad expertise in the content areas of charter school Governance, Finance, and Parent & Community Engagement, respectively. Each working group convened three times by webinar in Spring 2008 to discuss potential core indicators, measures and in some cases, metrics necessary to ensure charter school operational quality in their particular areas of focus. The working group leaders distilled these discussions into background briefings to initiate and inform the Consensus Panel's deliberations.

On June 5-6, 2008, the Consensus Panel met in Austin, Texas to discuss and draft indicators, measures and metrics for charter school operational quality. With discussion facilitated by the working-group leaders, the Consensus Panel carefully considered the suggestions and ideas of the working groups, identifying areas of overlap as well as areas requiring clarification, and laying the groundwork for *A Framework for Operational Quality*. The BCSQ project team then used the discussion notes from the Consensus Panel meeting to develop multiple drafts of the Framework, with the final draft subject to review and comment by the Panel and working groups, and the final Framework representing broad consensus by the Panel.

Decision Rules of the Consensus Panel

The charge to the Panel was to achieve consensus on the indicators, measures, and metrics contained in the Framework. If consensus was not reached on particular points, Panel participants then identified areas of disagreement, opposing arguments, and any necessary conditions for future consensus.



Appendix C: Consensus Panel, Working Groups & Project Staff

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 Lisa Grover, *New Mexico Coalition of Charter Schools*
 Alex Medler, *Colorado Children's Campaign*

Convening Partners and Project Staff

Colorado League of Charter Schools

Jim Griffin, President
 Jody Ernst, Director of Research and Evaluation

CREDO at Stanford University

Macke Raymond, Director
 Ken Surratt, Assistant Director
 Meg Cotter-Mazzola, Manager of Federal Projects

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

Nelson Smith, President
 Anna Nicotera, Research & Evaluation Director
 Margaret Lin, Of Counsel & Senior Editor

National Association of Charter School Authorizers

Greg Richmond, President & CEO
 Susan Miller Barker,
 Vice President for Research and Evaluation
 Sally Bacher, Director of Knowledge Resources



ERTUGRUL CUBUKCU

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Pennsylvania Department of Material Science and Engineering	Assistant Professor (2011-Present)
University of California, Berkeley Department of Mechanical Engineering	Postdoctoral Researcher (2009-2011)

EDUCATION

Harvard University	Ph.D. in Applied Physics (2008)
Bilkent University	M.S. in Physics (2003) B.S. in Physics (2001)

HONORS AND AWARDS

MIT Technology Review: Top 10 Technologies (TR10) of 2007	2007
DEAS PhD fellowship awarded by Harvard University	2003-2004
Full scholarship awarded by Bilkent University for graduate study	2001-2003
Full scholarship awarded by Bilkent University for undergraduate program	1997-2001

NEWS COVERAGE OF OUR SCHOLARY WORK

- "A library on a disc", **Newsweek**
- "How to Burn a Three Terabyte CD", **MIT Technology Review**
- "New Lasers Peer into Cells", **MIT Technology Review**
- "Optical antenna helps QC laser hit the spot", **EETimes.com**,
- "Optical antennas for sensing", **Nature Photonics** News&Views,
- "New Possibilities Through Negative Refraction", **Optics and Photonics News**

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 1) **Reviewer** for Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences, Nature Communications, Physical Review Letters, Nano Letters, Applied Physics Letters, IEEE Journal of Selected Topics in Quantum Electronics, IEEE Journal of Quantum Electronics, Physical Review B, Optics Letters, Optics Express, Optics Communications, Journal of Optical Society of America A, Materials Science and Engineering B
- 2) **Member** of Optical Society of America, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, IEEE Lasers & Electro-Optics Society , Material Research Society

Adem Oksuz

EDUCATION

8/2012- December 2013

Master of Education in Educational Leadership - Teacher Leadership program at Penn State University

8/2000-7/2002

Courses taken in Master of Business Administration at Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Development in Kolkata/India but an MBA degree was not earned.

1992-1997

Bachelor of Science in Science Education (Program in Physics) at Bosphorus University in Istanbul/Turkey

CERTIFICATION

Pennsylvania Department of Education Certification

Type: Administrative I, Principal Certification is pending for approval.

WORK EXPERIENCE

December 2014- Present

Federal Programs Auditor/Monitor for Pennsylvania Department of Education

On behalf of Pennsylvania Department of Education, I visit district and public charter schools to monitor Title I, II, III programs, Priority/Focus Schools Programs, and SIG (school improvement grant) Schools. I review consolidated plans, comprehensive plans, budgets, personnel requirement, academic Intervention and remediation programs all Title I/II/III, Priority/Focus Schools, and SIG Schools and then prepare a report.

July 1, 2013- Present

Independent Educational Consultant

Developing systems to support schools in four key areas – curriculum, instruction, capacity, and assessment. Developing school review process to determine areas of strength and need to ensure charter renewals. Writing and developing curriculum aligned with Common Core Standards. Meeting with school leaders to plan types of support. Providing professional development activities based on the needs. Leading team of educators to develop comprehensive school improvement plan and monitoring implementation. Leading team of professionals to write federal and corporate grants. Working with Charter School Boards to develop board policies related to academics, fiscal, e.t.c. Developing

Adem Oksuz

comprehensive/consolidated plans, budgets, and educational programs to apply and secure federal grants (e.g. Title Grants, priority/focus school grants, and implementation grants). Writing charter proposals.

In addition, I help schools in their human resources needs and facility financing needs.

03/2012- June 2013

Regional Director

Apple Educational Services, Inc.
250 Moonachie Road 2nd Floor, Moonachie NJ 07074 USA

Provided educational services including School Improvement, Grant Writing (e.g. Federal, State, and Corporate grants), Professional Development, Program Evaluation, Data Analysis, and New School Design to several public charter schools and start-up schools.

Grant Reviewer for US Education Department

Reviewed Implementation Grant Applications for US Department of Education.

08/2011 – 02/2012

Chief Executive Officer

Accord Institute for Education Research
13950 Milton Ave #200A Westminster, CA 92683

Developed an educational model in collaboration with several higher education institutes for K-12 schools to inspire students to choose career paths in science and engineering. Now there are more than 30 public charter schools using the model developed under my leadership.

I also worked with thirteen schools, those are designated as schoolwide Title I, to develop comprehensive plans for their title grants and monitored them during their implementation phase.

08/2010 –07/2011

Educational Administrator

Daisy Education Corporation
District of 10 Sonoran Science Academy Schools
14647 S 50th Street, Suite 175, Phoenix, AZ 85044

Adem Oksuz

Educational Administrator in charge of liaison with educational curriculum partner, the Accord Institute for Education Research, Inc.

I was in charge of leading the team of professionals composed of curriculum experts in science, math, technology, and English language arts to develop, and pilot the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Curriculum I was in charge of writing grant proposals (Federal Implementation, and I3 grants) and monitoring implementations.

7/2006-8/2010

Superintendent

Daisy Education Corporation,
District of 10 Sonoran Science Academy Schools,
14647 S 50th Street, Suite 175, Phoenix, AZ 85044

Replicated Sonoran schools in AZ

Was in charge of all the campuses serving Grades Pre K- 12 with over 200 staff. Was in charge of all federal programs including comprehensive planning, budget development and program evaluation.

Was awarded and managed Tax-Exempt bond in the amount of \$15 Million for the schools to acquire land and build new facilities.

Got awarded with state, federal and corporate grants in million dollars.

Schools got Excelling Labels -the top rating in AZ- many years in a row since 2004

01/2007-12/2008

Member

I served on Arizona Charter Schools Association Advisory Council

7/2004-7/2006

Principal

Sonoran Science Academy Tucson

I was in charge of both elementary and secondary schools serving grades K-12 with 70+ staff.

The school got excelling label during my tenure, which is the top rating in AZ

Focused on achieving the mission and vision set by the board of the Charter School. Developed plan for high academic achievement, safe and supportive schools, and professional growth for all staff. Created policies, procedures, and systems for the school. Collaborated with board, administrative team, higher education institutes, and staff to ensure school continues to grow and develop. Supervised and evaluated staff on Danielson Framework.

9/2003-7/2004

Adem Oksuz

Science Teacher, Academic Enrichment Coordinator, and Business Manager
Sonoran Science Academy Tucson

Taught 8th Grade Science.

Coordinated enrichment activities during after school time, some of which funded by Title grants. School received multiple awards in local and/or regional science, math, robotics, art, music, and foreign language competitions

Was in charge of all federal programs including comprehensive planning, budget development and program evaluation.

Was in charge of all account receivables, payables, and budget projections, and preparation of the books for annual fiscal audit.

06/1997-08/2003

Director, IMPEX LLC.

I worked in India to represent many European Companies dealing in educational software and technology.

REFERENCES

Available upon request.

ISAAC DURMUS

Administrator

Highly skilled and overtly student-focused educational leader possessing a strong commitment to the development of students, staff and providing a stimulating safe and motivating learning environment. Trustworthy professional with superior communication skills to develop strong and lasting relationships with all members of the school community.

Experience in:

- Curriculum design and development
- School scheduling
- Program management and coordination
- After school program development (21st CCLC programs, STEM programs, academic competitions)
- Program evaluation and assessment
- Classroom evaluation
- Creation and Implementation of Disciplinary Protocols
- ELL program development
- STEM Education
- Gifted and talented program development
- School security and safety
- Multicultural awareness
- Testing techniques and prep
- Blended Learning: 1:1 Chromebook/Laptop initiative
- Technology Integration (Google education products, chromebooks, Pearson digital curriculum materials, CPS, response pads, Examview, Smartboard, Renaissance Learning Products, Naviance)
- Experience in Start UP Charter Schools

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATES

Bachelor of Science and Literature, Major: Biology –Fatih University, Istanbul/Turkey (2003)

Master of Science Educational Leadership, Western Governors University (2014)

Principal PK-12, Administrative I, Pennsylvania

Biological Science Teacher, Standard Certificate, New Jersey

Computer skills: Renaissance Learning Products, Naviance, MS Word, Excel, Power Point, Corel Draw, Adobe Photoshop, CPS, Moodle, Examview, ASC timetable, Google Drive, Google education technology, Utilizing Android Tablets, Ipads and Chrome Books as educational technology, Pearson Digital Curriculum

TEACHING/ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

NAHCIVAN HIGH SCHOOL, AZERBAIJAN

9/2003 – 7/2006

Department Head/Biology Teacher

Achievements

- Created and Implemented new curricula
- Introduced school to international science competitions

- Began school's first professional development program

Responsibilities

- Taught 7th through 11th-grade biology classes
- Managed Faculty and Staff of three buildings
- Headed Professional Development Programs
- Conducted Teacher Training
- Recruitment and Hiring of New Teachers
- Conducted Staff Meetings
- Communication with parents
- Assessments of students
- Provide Individual assistance and counseling to students
- Senior Class Advisor

Extra-Curricular Contributions

- Awarded with "Certificate of Recognition" for encouraging gold medalist researchers at 13th INEPO (International Environmental Project Olympiad) held in Istanbul/Turkey.
- Launched Ecology Club to increase students' enthusiasm for learning about their environment and living things
- Held meetings to develop ecology-learning techniques and inspire students to conceive of new ideas about ecology
- Helped plan and organize statewide Science Fair, selected and invited participating schools after viewing applications and proposals
- Integrated technology into curriculum, supplementing class lectures and developing students' evaluation, interpretation and research skills; utilized internet for resources on current improvements on science, biology and genetics to complement learning activities prior mainstream internet use in the country;
- Collaborated with students to publish a writing magazine that includes essays of students about science, artworks of students, literature essays from literature class, and various things that students interested, resulting in a delightful collection of outstanding student work.
- Establish and maintain positive relationship with students, parents, and colleagues, fostering an environment of open communication and support
- Identified need for an after-school program to serve senior students preparing for college acceptance exams covering all subjects

LONG ISLAND AMITY SCHOOL, BAY SHORE, NY

4/2007 – 9/2007

Long Term Substitute Science Teacher

- Taught 4th through 8th grade science classes

PATERSON CHARTER SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, PATERSON, NJ

9/2007– 8/31/2010

Department Chair / Science Teacher

Achievements

- Implemented programs and protocols which lead to an increase of students' NJASK Science scores of 30 percent
- Began Audit Programs to assess and improve department efficiency and effectiveness

Responsibilities

- Taught 6th and 8th-grade science classes

- Facilitated grade level planning and assessment.
- Planned and facilitated student activities to support instructional practice.
- Coordinated data gathering and analysis and reporting the results of self-study for the purpose of developing an action plan.
- Facilitated biweekly meetings with teachers and other department heads.
- Integrated technology into curriculum, supplementing class lectures and developing students' evaluation, interpretation and research skills.
- Utilize internet for resources on current improvements on science, biology and genetics to complement learning activities.
- Utilize CPS response clickers, examview pro, smartboard technologies and vernier probe labs as a teaching tool to improve student learning with one on one attention to students and immediate feedback on classroom assessments.

Extra-Curricular Contributions

- Organize science fair and establishing science team to participate statewide and nationwide competitions. Facilitate duties about these activities and help teachers to conduct labs and activities in their classroom.
- Collaborated with students to publish a writing magazine that includes essays of students about science, artworks of students, literature essays from literature class, and various things that students interested, resulting in a delightful collection of outstanding student work.
- Launched an Outdoor Club to increase student's enthusiasm on learning their environment and living things in this environment. Held meetings to develop strategies on protecting environment and teaching them basic survival skills.
- Coached PCSST mountain bike team, participated races in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, conducted weekly trainings on different trails in New Jersey.
- Delivered a workshop about utilizing CPS and Examview.

PIONEER ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, CLIFTON, NJ

9/2010-6/2012

Vice Principal / Science Teacher

Achievements

- Designed and developed ELL program
- Designed an instructional program promoting higher level thinking and problem solving (UBD and project-based learning oriented)

Responsibilities

- Supervised a team of professionals including para-professionals, nurses, and support staff
- Oversaw student body of approximately 225 learners
- Interviewing and Hiring of Faculty and Staff
- Negotiations with Service Providers
- Communication with government officials to implement programs for ELL, State Funding, Special Services
- Supervision and Mentoring of Teachers and Professional Development
- Devised and coordinated scheduling, staff duties
- Implemented Safety and Security Provisions
- Liaise with cafeteria, custodians, and maintenance staff on a daily basis
- Facilitated data collection and analysis to determine educational strengths and weaknesses
- Evaluate instructional effectiveness and develop action plans to address needs
- Designed school wide discipline plan resulting in positive student behavior to enhance learning environment
- Serve as test coordinator to ensure data integrity

- Design and implement gifted and talented program
- Facilitate Science Olympiad and academic competition programs
- Organize remedial programs and pull outs
- Establish and maintain rapport with staff, students, and parents;
- Mentor and lead new teachers and interns
- Contributed to the academic and social tone of school through the consistent demonstration of professionalism and enthusiasm of the school community; upheld a commitment to educational excellence, establishing and promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- Develop a solid cohesive educational team by setting high expectations and encouraging team approach; established committees to address school issues and goals, promoting creativity and career development to all staff, allowing ideas and opinions to be shared.

Extra-Curricular Contributions

- Organize and run PTO meetings
- Introduced and facilitated after-school programs

ROCHESTER ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL, ROCHESTER, NY

8/2012-6/2014

Principal of Middle School

Achievements

- Designed and developed CRP(College Readiness Program) which serves students 8-12 to prepare them to top colleges academically and emotionally
- Started affiliation with local community college.
- Started STEP (Science Technology Entry Program) to prepare underrepresented students to go STEM majors at college.

Responsibilities

- Supervised a team of professionals including para-professionals, nurses, and support staff
- Oversaw student body of approximately 120 learners
- Interviewing and Hiring of Faculty and Staff
- Supervision and Mentoring of Teachers and Professional Development
- Devised and coordinated scheduling, staff duties
- Implemented Safety and Security Provisions
- Liaise with cafeteria, custodians, and maintenance staff on a daily basis
- Facilitated data collection and analysis to determine educational strengths and weaknesses
- Evaluate instructional effectiveness and develop action plans to address needs
- Designed school wide discipline plan resulting in positive student behavior to enhance learning environment
- Organize remedial programs and pull outs
- Establish and maintain rapport with staff, students, and parents;
- Mentor and lead new teachers and interns

Extra-Curricular Contributions

- Introduced and facilitated after-school programs
-

TRUEBRIGHT SCIENCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL, PHILADELPHIA, PA

7/2014-CURRENT

Dean of Academics

Achievements

- Developed and implemented 21st CCRP/CRP(College Readiness Program) which serves students 8-10 to prepare them to top colleges academically and emotionally

- Developed the school improvement plan based on multiple means of data that covers various aspects of school management.
- Developed a program for 21st Century CCLC grant and actively involved in grant application that was approved for the amount of \$400,000 per year for three years. Initiated the after school enrichment program with three main components, enrichment tutorials, physical fitness activities and clubs.

Responsibilities

- Supervised a team of professionals including para-professionals, and support staff
- Interviewing and Hiring of Faculty and Staff
- Supervision and Mentoring of Teachers and Professional Development
- Facilitated data collection and analysis to determine educational strengths and weaknesses
- Evaluate instructional effectiveness and develop action plans to address needs
- Organize remedial programs and pull outs
- Mentor and lead new teachers and interns

Extra-Curricular Contributions

- Introduced and facilitated after-school programs including swimming, fitness, basketball programs and clubs.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

CPS workshop (2008)

Exam view workshop (2008)

Middle school science labs workshop (2008)

Project Based Learning (2010)

New Teacher Evaluation System (2011)

BOCES Mobile Learning and educational technology (2012)

UBD Pre-Conference Workshop at ASCD Conference (2013)

Sherry F. Hales



EDUCATION

Neumann University: Aston, PA 2003-2005
Master's Education

Neumann University: Aston, PA 2000-2002
Bachelor's Liberal Studies

CERTIFICATES: (PA Department of Education-License #156867)

TEACHING: 2012-Lifetime
Elementary Education K-6
Special Education N-12

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Educational Consultant-LS Teacher 2014-2015
Agency: Kaleidoscope - Bryn Mawr, PA

Taught small groups and individual students in Math, Reading, and Social Skills. Provided push-in and pull-out services. Modified general education curriculum to meet individual needs. Coordinated IEP meetings and developed IEP's. Developed Positive Behavior Support plans and provided progress monitoring. Maintained accurate student records and Special Education files for caseload of students.

Special Education Teacher: 2007-2011
(Philadelphia School District, Philadelphia, PA)

Provided Life-skills education to students with significant multiple-disabilities. Coordinated IEP meetings and developed IEP's for students. Maintained accurate student records, provided testing and progress monitoring.

(Sherry F. Hales, cont.)

Parent Educator: 2004-2007

(Elwyn Inc., Chester, PA)

Provided parent training to parents in compliance with state mandated parent training.

Taught a wide array of meaningful and essential parenting skills to include childhood development, household safety, lead poison awareness, immunizations information, etc.

Maintained a caseload of up to 20 parents. Provided monthly reports, progress monitoring and case-file management.

Assistant Manager:

2001-2003

(Franklin Mint Credit Union, Broomall, PA)

Assisted Branch manager with the daily running of a financial institution. Opened and closed branch, managed employees, and provided customer service to credit union members.

Awards & Honors/Skills: National Deans List 2002, Who's Who 2004, Author/Poet, Jewelry designer/maker (using recycled paper).

References: Furnished upon request

ANDREA SIMPSON

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a position in a challenging environment that will utilize my ability to be flexible, goal- oriented, and hard-working.

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALFITICATIONS

Ability to develop good relationships with clients.
Know-how to keep sensitive information confidential.
Ability to handle pressure and work independently.

EDUCATION

Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA 2005

Master of Arts, Counseling Psychology
Certified Elementary School Counselor
Licensed Behavior Specialist Consultant

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 2003

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology

WORK EXPERIENCE

Chester Community Charter School, Chester, PA 2005- 2008

Elementary School Guidance Counselor

- Counseled students classified with emotional disturbance using cognitive behavioral, reality, and person-centered approaches, to address depression, assertiveness issues, self-esteem, and poor academic performance.
- Provided individual and small group counseling on various topics such as school behavior, grief, and anger management.
- Implemented guidance lessons on topics of conflict resolution, career development and bullying.

William Penn School District

East Lansdowne Elementary School, East Lansdowne, PA 2008- 2012

Elementary School Guidance Counselor

- Provided individual and small group counseling on various topics such as school behavior, grief, and anger management.

- Consulted and collaborated with teachers, parents, administrators and community agencies to develop and implement strategies to help students become success.
- Provided training to staff on various child psychological disorders.

Staffing Plus, Haverford, PA

2012- 2014

Behavior Specialist Consultant/ Mobile Therapist

- Provided individual assessment, treatment planning and psychotherapy services to clients up to the age of 18 years old diagnosed with behavioral disorders.
- Developed individualized behavior management treatment plans and monitors the implementation of the plan.
- Provided clinical consultation and supervision to the therapeutic support staff and ensures appropriate implementations of the treatment plan.

Holcomb Behavioral Health Systems, Upper Darby PA

2013- Present

Behavior Specialist Consultant/ Mobile Therapist

- Provides individual assessment, treatment planning and psychotherapy services to clients up to the age of 18 years old diagnosed with behavioral disorders.
- Develops individualized behavior management treatment plans and monitors the implementation of the plan.
- Provides clinical consultation and supervision to the therapeutic support staff and ensures appropriate implementations of the treatment plan.

Other Attachment File(s)

* **Mandatory Other Attachment Filename:**

To add more "Other Attachment" attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER
to operate a public school known as the
Vision Academy Charter School - West

Pursuant to the authority granted to me as chair of the State Charter School Appeal Board under section 1717-A(i)(9) of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and because of the failure of the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District to grant the charter within ten (10) days of receiving notice of the State Charter School Appeal Board's November 13, 2014 decision in CAB #2013-05, the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School is hereby granted a Charter by operation of law to operate a public charter school to be located within the William Penn School District for the period commencing on or after July 1, 2015, and ending on June 30, 2020. The grant of this charter was approved by vote of the State Charter School Appeal Board of October 28, 2014, and by way of the Board's findings, conclusions and decision issued on November 13, 2014 was deemed approved by the aforementioned inaction of the Board of School Directors.

It is specifically understood and agreed between the signatories hereto that:

- 1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the charter school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter School Law, 24 P.S. §§17-1701-A *et seq.*, and any applicable amendments thereto enacted during the term of this charter and any regulations or standards applicable to charter schools;
- 2) the granting of this charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the charter school in conformity with the terms of the application submitted by the Board of Trustees to the Board of School Directors on November 15, 2012 and approved by the State Charter School Appeal Board. Said application is attached hereto as Appendix A and is incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth;
- 3) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement between the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District and the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School for the term set forth above, and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this charter;
- 4) this charter may be renewed for additional periods of five (5) years duration, and upon any such renewal, a new charter shall be executed between the Board of School Directors and the Board of Trustees; and
- 5) this charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this _____ day of **December**, 2014:

For the State Charter School Appeal Board:


For the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School:

Board President/vice President

Board Secretary

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER**

***to operate a public school known as the
Vision Academy Charter School - West***

Pursuant to the authority granted to me as chair of the State Charter School Appeal Board under section 1717-A(i)(9) of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and because of the failure of the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District to grant the charter within ten (10) days of receiving notice of the State Charter School Appeal Board's November 13, 2014 decision in CAB #2013-05, the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School is hereby granted a Charter by operation of law to operate a public charter school to be located within the William Penn School District for the period commencing on or after July 1, 2015, and ending on June 30, 2020. The grant of this charter was approved by vote of the State Charter School Appeal Board of October 28, 2014, and by way of the Board's findings, conclusions and decision issued on November 13, 2014 was deemed approved by the aforementioned inaction of the Board of School Directors.

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- 1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the charter school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter School Law, 24 P.S. §§17-1701-A *et seq.*, and any applicable amendments thereto enacted during the term of this charter and any regulations or standards applicable to charter schools;
- 2) the granting of this charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the charter school in conformity with the terms of the application submitted by the Board of Trustees to the Board of School Directors on November 15, 2012 and approved by the State Charter School Appeal Board. Said application is attached hereto as Appendix A and is incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth;
- 3) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement between the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District and the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School for the term set forth above, and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this charter;
- 4) this charter may be renewed for additional periods of five (5) years duration, and upon any such renewal, a new charter shall be executed between the Board of School Directors and the Board of Trustees; and
- 5) this charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this _____ day of **December**, 2014:

For the State Charter School Appeal Board:

[Redacted signature]

State Charter School Appeal Board

For the Board of Trustees of Vision Academy Charter School:

[Redacted signature]

Board President/vice President

Board Secretary

M. BURR KEIM COMPANY
COUNTER PICK-UP

503934

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION-DOMESTIC NONPROFIT CORPORATION

DSCB: 15-5306 (Rev 91)

In compliance with the requirements of 15 Pa.C.S. § 5306 (relating to articles of incorporation), the undersigned desiring to incorporate a nonprofit corporation, hereby state(s) that:

1. The name of the corporation is:

VISION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

2. The address of this corporation's initial registered office in this Commonwealth is:

101 Lindenwood Drive, Suite 160
Malvern, PA 19355 County of Chester

3. The corporation is incorporated under the Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988 for the following purpose or purposes:

Operate a Charter School and any supporting or affiliating programs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, literary, scientific, religious and educational purposes provided for under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit, incidental or otherwise.

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its trustees, officers or other private persons except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the preparation or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. The corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION-NON-PROFIT 3 Page(s)



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2014 NOV -6 AM 9:40

PR/Award # U282B16001

Page e212

PA. DEPT. OF STATE

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

4. The corporation is organized upon a nonstock basis.
5. The corporation shall have no members.
6. The name and address, including street and number, if any, of each incorporator is:

R. W. Worthington, Jr.
2021 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Date: November 04, 2014


R. W. Worthington, Jr.

IRS DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0023

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VISION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
101 LINDENWOOD DR STE 160
MALVERN PA 19355

000807

Date of this notice: 11-10-2014

Employer Identification Number:
47-2256408

Form: SS-4

Number of this notice: CP 575 A

For assistance you may call us at:
1-800-829-4933

IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE
STUB OF THIS NOTICE.

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 47-2256408. This EIN will identify you, your business accounts, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

When filing tax documents, payments, and related correspondence, it is very important that you use your EIN and complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information is not correct as shown above, please make the correction using the attached tear-off stub and return it to us.

Based on the information received from you or your representative, you must file the following form(s) by the date(s) shown.

Form 941	10/31/2015
Form 940	01/31/2016

If you have questions about the form(s) or the due dates(s) shown, you can call us at the phone number or write to us at the address shown at the top of this notice. If you need help in determining your annual accounting period (tax year), see Publication 538, Accounting Periods and Methods.

We assigned you a tax classification based on information obtained from you or your representative. It is not a legal determination of your tax classification and is not binding on the IRS. If you want a legal determination of your tax classification, you may request a private letter ruling from the IRS under the guidelines in Revenue Procedure 2004-1, 2004-1 I.R.B. 1 (or superseding Revenue Procedure for the year at issue). Note: Certain tax classification elections can be requested by filing Form 8832, Entity Classification Election. See Form 8832 and its instructions for additional information.

CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM ASSURANCES – NON-STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Pursuant to Section 5202(b) of the ESEA, an applicant for CSP funds that is not a State educational agency (SEA) must provide the following assurances.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant will submit the following to the Secretary:

- A. Pursuant to Section 5202(b) of the ESEA, an applicant for CSP funds that is not a State educational agency (SEA) must provide the following assurances.
- B. As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant will submit to the Secretary:
- C. All items described in the application requirements;
- D. An assurance that the eligible applicant will annually provide the Secretary such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in section 5203(b)(3)(C)(i) of the ESEA;
- E. An assurance that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;
- F. 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;
- G. Proof that the applicant has applied to an authorized public chartering authority to operate a charter school and provided to that authority adequate and timely notice, and a copy, of this application; or an assurance that this application is for a precharter planning grant and the authorized public chartering authority to which a charter school proposal will be submitted has not been determined;
- H. A copy of proof of applicant's non-profit status;
- I. The applicants' DUNS and TIN numbers;
- J. A statement as to whether or not an applicant for planning and implementation funding has previously received funding for this program either through a State subgrant or directly from the Department;
- K. Assurances that the State educational agency will (i) grant, or will obtain, waivers of State statutory or regulatory requirements; and (ii) will assist each subgrantee in the State in receiving a waiver under section 5204(e) of the ESEA.

NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

TITLE

CEO

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

DATE

10/02/2015

VISION ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL

DATE SUBMITTED

10/03/2015

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION

Budget Narrative File(s)

* **Mandatory Budget Narrative Filename:**

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

VISION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Three Year Budget Narrative

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Personnel	Project Director			
	Total Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fringe benefits		\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total Fringe benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	Project Directors Meeting in DC			
	1 person x130 miles (Road Travel) @0.56 cents/mile + 2 days per diem @\$80+2day nights lodging @ \$250	\$808	\$808	\$808
	Pennsylvania Charter School Conference			
	Year 2, 3: 4 Person x \$250 (600 miles @~0.45 per mile= ~\$250) +4 x 2 days per diem \$80+ 2 rooms for 2 nights Lodging @ \$100		\$3,240	\$3,240
	National Charter School Conference			
	2 person x 400 (air travel) + 4 days per diem @\$80+3 day nights lodging @ \$150	\$1,890	\$1,890	\$1,890
	Registration 2 @ \$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	National Science Teachers Area Conference			
	Year 2, and 3: 2 person x 400 (air travel) + 4 days per diem @\$80+5day nights lodging @ \$100		\$1,940	\$1,940
	Registration 2 @ 160		\$320	\$321
	National Math Teachers Area Conference			
	Year 2, and 3: 2 person x 400 (air travel) + 4 days per diem @\$80+5day nights lodging @ \$100		\$1,940	\$1,940
	Registration 2 @ 160		\$320	\$320
	National Council of Teachers of English			
	<i>A professional Association of Educators in English Studies, Literacy, and Language Arts</i>			
	Year 2, and 3: 2 person x 400 (air travel) + 4		\$1,940	\$1,940

	days per diem @\$80+5day nights lodging @ \$100 Registration 2 @ 160		\$320	\$320
	National Network of Partnership Schools Johns Hopkins University Conference in Baltimore Maryland (October)			
	Year 1, 2, 3: 2 person x 240 miles @ 0.57 cents/mile (road travel) + 3 days per diem @\$80+ 2 day nights lodging @ \$200	\$1,154	\$1,154	\$1,154
	Registration 1 @ 300	\$600	\$600	\$600
	Annual Membership Fee for the JHU National Network of Partnership Schools	\$400	\$400	\$400
	Total: Travel	\$5,852	\$15,872	\$15,873
Equipment	Furniture			
	Year 1: 200 Student Desks and chairs @ \$300 each	\$60,000		
	Year 1: 16 Teachers Desk @ \$800 and Chairs @ \$100	\$10,800		
	44 Student Desks and chairs @ \$300 each		\$13,200	
	60 Student Desks and chairs @ \$300 each			\$18,000
	Technology Equipment			
	Year 1: 16 teachers and administrators Laptop computers, and software upgrade @ \$1200 each,	\$19,200		
	12 Classroom Projectors @ \$1200	\$14,400		
	120 Chromebooks for students use for blended/Flipped classroom @ \$200 each	\$24,000		
	Software: Office, FrontPage, etc. \$6,000	\$6,000		
	Connectivity wireless and server \$8,000	\$8,000		
	Year 2: 2 desktop computers in each classroom (12 classrooms) for blended/flipped instruction, 24 computers @ \$500,		\$12,000	
	Year 2: 80 iPads for Kindergarten and First Grade @ \$800 each		\$64,000	
	Year 2: 40 Chromebooks for students use for blended/Flipped classroom @ 250 each		\$10,000	
	Year 2: 2 Classroom Projectors @ \$1200		\$2,400	
	Year 2: 6 additional teachers and administrators Laptop computers, and software upgrade @ \$1200,		\$7,200	
	Year 3: 40 Chromebooks for students use for blended/Flipped classroom @ 250 each			\$10,000

	Year 3: 2 Classroom Projectors @ \$1200			\$2,400
	Year 3: 16 Smart Boards SBX-880 - Smartboard SBX880 MultiTouch w/ SMART Meeting Pro-77 @\$500 each with installation			\$60,000
	Year 3: 2 additional teachers and administrators Laptop computers, and software upgrade @1500,			\$3,000
	Year 3: 2 Classroom Projectors @ \$1200			\$2,400
	Science Lab Equipment			
	Year 3: Science lab basic equipment: Bunsen burners, pipits, bio kits, Portable lab equipment			\$8,000
	Total Equipment	\$142,400	\$108,800	\$103,800
Supplies	Marketing materials			
	Year 1: Brochures 1,000 @ \$3, Student & Parents Handbooks 250 @ 5, flyers 20000 @ .15, (English and Spanish)	\$7,250		
	Year 2: Brochures 1,000 @ \$3, Student & Parents Handbooks 300 @ 5, flyers 20000 @ .15, (English and Spanish)		\$7,250	
	Year 2 : Brochures 1,000 @ \$3, Student & Parents Handbooks 300 @ 5, flyers 20000 @ .15, (English and Spanish)			\$7,250
	Total: Supplies	\$7,250	\$7,250	\$7,250
Contractual	Year 1, 2, 3: Community Outreach Liaison	████████	████████	████████
	Year 1, 2, 3: External Evaluation	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Year 1, 2, 3: In-house curriculum in-services (Curriculum Mapping and development etc.)	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
	COREKNOWLEDGE SQUENCE TRAINING from CORE KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION, INC.			

Year 1 :(Onsite training for 10-19 participants for 5 days @ \$11,853)

Anchor PD: Getting Started workshop

After Training:

1. Review/modify/share your school-wide curriculum plan with stakeholders
2. Continue to create domain maps for history and science topics and review these with your teachers, discussing how these tools guide instruction in each domain—a good goal is to have at least 3 maps completed by Year 1, but some staff are able to complete more
3. Check with teachers to be sure that pacing is on track and reflect any changes to the pacing on your curriculum plan
4. If your teachers created committees and/or action plans regarding resources, technology, parent/community involvement, etc., you might also check their progress regarding the goals that were set during Day 2 of the Getting Started workshop

\$11,853

Year 2: (School Diagnostic Visit for 9-15 classrooms for 2 days @ \$2600

Workshop Follow-up for 9-15 Classrooms for 2 days @ \$2600

Analysis of Curriculum and Practices for 9-15 classrooms for 2 days @ \$7,155)

Anchor PD: Meaningful Instruction workshop— if new staff is hired, also consider using the New Teacher Orientation In-Service Training as a way to bring folks up-to-speed regarding your school’s use of the CK Sequence

After Training:

1. Engage each grade-level/team in several lesson studies at different points during the year
2. Teachers might showcase a particular lesson and demonstrate how they applied the principle of alignment as well as other practices that are modeled/discussed through the Meaningful Instruction workshop
3. Consider providing time for teachers to complete additional domain maps and/or for teachers of different grades to meet around shared domains (e.g., Grades K, 1, 3, and 6 might meet to discuss their vertical progression of knowledge around the astronomy domain,

\$12,355

which is shared by these grade levels)

Year 3: (School Diagnostic Visit for 9-15 classrooms for 2 days @ \$2600
Workshop Follow-up for 9-15 Classrooms for 2 days @ \$2600
Analysis of Curriculum and Practices for 9-15 classrooms for 2 days @ \$7,155):
Anchor PD: Domain-based Unit Writing workshop
After Training:
1. Engage each grade-level/team in a full unit study
2. Teachers might showcase the flow of an entire unit, demonstrating a read-aloud story and how they facilitate knowledge, language, and vocabulary learning through questioning, discussion, and extension activities—these are modeled/discussed through the Domain-based Units workshop
3. Again, consider providing time for teachers to review previous learning/training, such as reviewing domain maps, updating the curriculum plan, and/or completing lesson studies

\$12,355

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DIRECT INSTRUCTION (NIFDI)

Year 2: Initial assessment of student performance -- \$5,175.00
 (NIFDI will provide training in administering and scoring the Direct Instruction placement tests to a team of testers at Vision Academy this summer. The Vision Academy testing team will administer the built-in placement tests that are part of the Reading Mastery Signature Edition and Corrective Reading programs to all students enrolled in the school. The NIFDI trainer will remain on site for a total of two days at the school to provide assessment assistance and quality control to testers as they administer the tests to each student. During placement testing, the school's testing team will have access to NIFDI's proprietary on-line assessment tracking tool (DI Placement Pro) to use when recording students' responses. With NIFDI's assistance, the Academy will form initial instructional groupings composed of students that place into the same starting points in the Direct Instruction curricula. (Read more about NIFDI assessment training at <http://www.nifdi.org/services/training/assessment-training.>))

\$5,175

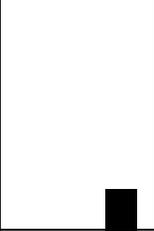
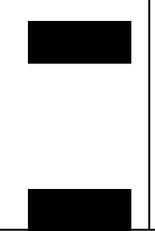
Year 2, 3: Pre-service training -- \$26,000.00
 (NIFDI will send four trainers experienced in the effective use of Reading Mastery Signature Edition, reading and language tracks and Corrective Reading for a 4-day pre-service training before the start of school in the fall. The use of four trainers will ensure that each participant receives sufficient attention from their trainer. Separate sessions will be devoted to the different levels of the programs to ensure participant mastery in program delivery and correction techniques. The pre-service training will focus on the direct application of DI techniques through simulated practice of the specific exercises that participants will use with their students. (Read more about NIFDI pre-service training at <http://nifdi.org/services/training/preservice->

\$16,000

\$10,000

		training.))		
		<p>Year 2: Routines and expectations training -- \$1,000.00 (One of the NIFDI trainers will remain on site for an extra day to provide training to all teaching staff on routines and expectations associated with the Direct Instruction programs (for 5 days total of initial training). One of the features of a successful implementation of DI is a common, clear set of routines, procedures, and expectations for student behaviors. This training will provide a framework for teaching these procedures systematically to students as well as monitoring student compliance and motivating students to cooperate.)</p> <p>Year 2 and 3: Singapore Math Training from Marshall Cavendish Education for 3 days / year and \$2000 per day</p>	\$1,000	
		Total: Contractual	\$36,853	\$73,030
				\$68,355
Other	TEXT BOOKS, AND RTI TOOL AND CURRICULUM			
	Year 1, 2, 3:NWEA MAP Assessment for Benchmark testing and Individualized Learning Plans, and training @\$32.5/student	\$6,500	\$7,800	\$9,100
	Year 1: Reading Mastery and Corrective Reading, and Flex Reading Curriculum (200 students per classroom) @ 250 each	\$50,000		
	Year 2: Reading Mastery and Corrective Reading, and Flex Reading Curriculum for 40 students additional students in 2nd year @ 250 each		\$10,000	
	Year 3: Reading Mastery and Corrective Reading, and Flex Reading Curriculum for 40			\$10,000

additional students in 3rd year @ 250 each			
Year 1 and Year 2 and Year 3: Student DATABASE with a testing module @ \$40/student	\$8,000	\$9,600	\$11,200
Year 1: Singapore Math Curriculum (digital and Textbooks) \$100 each for 200 students	\$20,000		
Year 2: Singapore Math Curriculum (digital and Textbooks) \$100 each for 40 additional students in year 2		\$4,000	
Year 3: Singapore Math Curriculum (digital and Textbooks) \$100 each for 40 additional students in year 3			\$4,000
Year 2: KIT FOSS for students in K-5 (Kindergarten: KIT) FOSS ANIMALS 2X2 NEXT GEN Kit \$ 7 84.00 2 \$ 1,568.00 Kindergarten: LM CARDS ANIMALS TWO BY TWO 3RD ED S/5 LM \$ 1 52.20 2 \$ 304.40 Kindergarten: KIT FOSS TREES+WEATHER NG-Kit \$ 9 99.00 2 \$ 1,998.00 Kindergarten: KIT FOSS MTLs Kit \$ 9 44.00 2 \$ 1,888.00 Grade 1: KIT FOSS PLANTS + ANIMALS NEXT GEN Kit \$ 8 14.00 2 \$ 1,628.00 Grade 1: LM FOSS 25 PILLBGS.25 SOWBGS.1 CARD LM \$ 3 9.05 2 \$ 78.10 Grade 1: KIT FOSS AIR+WEATHER NEXT GEN Kit \$ 7 89.00 2 \$ 1,578.00 Grade 1: KIT FOSS SOUND + LIGHT NEXT GEN Kit \$ 9 69.00 2 \$ 1,938.00 Grade 2: KIT FOSS INSECTS + PLANTS NEXT GEN Kit \$ 8 69.00 2 \$ 1,738.00 Grade 2: LM CARDS INSECTS AND PLANTS 3RD ED SET/4 LM \$ 1 33.20 2 \$ 266.40 Grade 2: KIT FOSS PEBS, SAND, AND SILT NEXT GEN Kit \$ 9 34.00 2 \$ 1,868.00 Grade 2: KIT FOSS SOLIDS + LIQUIDS NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1 ,079.00 2 \$ 2,158.00 Grade 3: KIT FOSS STRUCTURES OF LIFE NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1 ,104.00 2 \$ 2,208.00 Grade 3: LM FOSS STRUC OF LIFE CRAYFISH+ELODEA/EA LM \$ 6 5.05 2 \$ 130.10 Grade 3: KIT FOSS WATER + CLIMATE NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1,114.00 2 \$ 2,228.00 Grade 3: KIT FOSS MOTION + MATTER		\$38,400	

	<p>NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1,074.00 2 \$ 2,148.00 Grade 4: KIT FOSS ENVIRONMENTS NEXT GEN Kit 1,214.00 \$ 2 \$ 2,428.00 Grade 4: LM CARDS ENVIRONMENTS 3RD ED SET/6 LM \$ 126.05 2 \$ 252.10 Grade 4: KIT FOSS SOILS RCKS + LNDFRMS NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1,234.00 2 \$ 2,468.00 Grade 4: KIT FOSS ENERGY NEXT GEN Kit \$ 1,589.00 2 \$ 3,178.00)</p> <p>Year 3: KIT FOSS for students in 6th grade Year 2, and 3: Social Studies Curriculum from McGraw-Hill Education for 240 students @\$55 each</p> <p>Total: Books and educational materials</p>			
				\$6,400
			\$13,200	\$2,200
		\$84,500	\$31,400	\$34,300
Total Direct costs		\$276,855	\$236,352	\$229,578
Training Stipends				
Total costs		\$276,855	\$255,552	\$250,698

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

1. Project Director:

Prefix: Mr .	First Name: Adem	Middle Name:	Last Name: Oksuz	Suffix:
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Address:

Street1:	41 E Baltimore Ave
Street2:	
City:	Lansdowne
County:	
State:	PA: Pennsylvania
Zip Code:	19050
Country:	USA: UNITED STATES

Phone Number (give area code)	Fax Number (give area code)
484 4662124	484 4411366

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) #: 1 2 3 4 5 6

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.

	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

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

Name of Institution/Organization

Vision Academy Charter School

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	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
3. Travel	5,852.00	15,872.00	15,872.00			37,596.00
4. Equipment	142,400.00	108,800.00	103,800.00			355,000.00
5. Supplies	7,250.00	7,250.00	7,250.00			21,750.00
6. Contractual	36,853.00	73,030.00	68,355.00			178,238.00
7. Construction	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
8. Other	84,500.00	31,400.00	34,300.00			150,200.00
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	276,855.00	236,352.00	229,577.00			742,784.00
10. Indirect Costs*						
11. Training Stipends	0.00					
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	276,855.00	255,552.00	250,697.00			783,104.00

***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 Vision Academy Charter School	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)