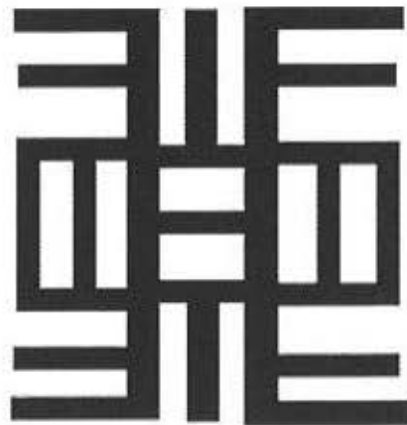**Organizing an Urban Revolution through education Leadership Academy PCS**

O.U.R. Leadership Academy PCS 2013

"he who does not know, can know from learning"

APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

Request for Approval
This application is a request to establish and operate a public charter school as provided in the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995, as amended.

Name of Proposed Charter School: **Organizing an Urban Revolution through education (O.U.R.) Leadership Academy PCS**

Name of Entity Applying for Charter Status in DC: N/A

Contact Person: Maia Shanklin Roberts
Address: 1620 Fort Dupont ST SE Washington DC 20020
Daytime Telephone: 2029047479
Fax: N/A

Name of Person Authorized to Negotiate: Maia Shanklin Roberts
E-mail: maia@maiangelllc.com

(Must be member of local founding group and not serving as a consultant or affiliated with an educational service provider.)

Authorized Signature: _____

Proposed Start Date: September 3, 2014   Proposed Year 1 Budget: $2,488,966

Start Up Information
First-Year Enrollment: From age/grade:15/9 to age/grade:10/18 Number of students:100

Enrollment at Capacity: From age/grade:15/9 to age/grade:21/12 Number of students:200

Location of school (address or area of city): Ward 5 or Ward 6, specifically neighborhoods near the Navy Yard

Names of Organizations Involved in Planning (if applicable): N/A

Name of Educational Service Provider (if applicable): N/A

Type of Application (Check One)
□ Conversion of Existing Public School   □ Conversion of Existing Private School   X New School

If conversion, name the school being converted: _____

If conversion, do you wish to retain the existing school site? □ Yes   □ No

LEA Status: Will the school elect to be treated as a Local Education Agency (LEA) for purposes of Part B of the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973?   X Yes   □ No

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Organizing an Urban Revolution through education (O.U.R.) Leadership Academy Public Charter School grew over the last six years from a vision to reduce the incarceration of high- risk youth in the District into a dynamic non-traditional high school preparing disconnected youth for college and careers. While working with these youth in the community, schools and detention centers, the founders became frustrated by the pattern of recidivism and low educational attainment amongst court-involved youth. O.U.R. Leadership Academy PCS will address the academic and social barriers that have kept disconnected youth from traditional education in an attempt to re-engage and educate them. The Academy will deconstruct the "Street Code", a mentality that normalizes violence, delinquency and promotes loyalty to one's neighborhood, and replace it with a social justice ideology intended to promote individualized college and career pursuits. This school will address the educational disparities faced by disconnected youth in the city.

The Academy plans to open in school year 2014-2015 with 100 students and expand within five years to its capacity of 200 students. The Academy will maintain small class sizes, connections with the surrounding community and organizations, familial involvement and rigorous, relevant course material. It is the goal of O.U.R. Academy to shatter the notion that disconnected youth cannot achieve at high levels and that all hope is lost for reengagement. To ensure this, students will be given ample school and community- based support to aid in the development of the entire student. The Academy also asserts that its success must be measured by the capacity to simultaneously challenge both the nonacademic and academic barriers experienced by the students. Increasing capacity in key content areas will only occur after the students build self-efficacy. The process will be unique for each of the students and will be guided by a defined system of individualized interventions and supports.

The O.U.R. Leadership Academy student has experienced educational failures; that are related to a myriad of factors, including an inability of educational institutions to fully harness and stimulate these students' intellectual capital. As such, the major goal of The Academy will be to build the infrastructure to successfully mitigate the students' social, economic and psychological barriers and produce young adults ready for college and careers. Particularly for those students who are funneled into the school to prison pipeline, The Academy will be transformative; it will ensure high academic performance, a strong sense of 'self,' and a clear plan for a positive, productive future. Defeating the school-to-prison pipeline is community work. The Academy will be the lynchpin to its destruction.

As native Washingtonians educated in DC Public Schools, the co-founders believe in public schools. It is their intention to give back to the system that is the academic foundation of their present success.

A. Educational Plan

1. Mission and Purpose of the Proposed Public Charter School

a. Mission and Philosophy

Mission
O.U.R. Leadership Academy Public Charter School (Organizing an Urban Revolution through education) will be an innovative high school that challenges the school-to-prison-pipeline by preparing disconnected youth for post-secondary success, self-sufficiency and participation in a global community through the use of a rigorous and culturally relevant curriculum.

Philosophy
"Our kids get only one chance at an education, and we need to get it right. Of course, getting it right requires more than just transforming our lowest-performing schools. It requires giving students who are behind in school a chance to catch up and a path to a diploma." - President Barack Obama, March 1, 2010.

The founders of O.U.R. Leadership Academy (The Academy) believe that disconnected youth have the capacity to achieve at high levels, attend college, and pursue productive careers. The students' experienced educational failures; are related to a myriad of factors, including an inability of educational institutions to fully harness and stimulate these students' intellectual capital. As such, the major goal of The Academy will be to build the infrastructure to successfully mitigate the students' social, economic and psychological barriers and produce young adults ready for college and careers.

College and Career Readiness
Through the development of culturally competent staff and use of culturally relevant curricula, The Academy will deconstruct the "Street Code", a mentality that normalizes violence, delinquency and promotes loyalty to one's neighborhood, and replace it with a social justice ideology intended to promote individualized college and career pursuits. The Academy defines college and career ready not by the school's college acceptance rate or vocational offerings, but by the real ability of the students to demonstrate higher thinking and the aptitude and skills to engage in higher education and the workplace.

Social and Emotional Development
The Academy also asserts that its success must be measured by the capacity to simultaneously challenge both the nonacademic and academic barriers experienced by the students. Increasing capacity in key content areas will only occur after the students build self-efficacy. The process will be unique for each of the students and will be guided by a defined system of individualized interventions and supports.

The Academy as a Community School

The Academy must be a community school -- one that has a strong connection with the community in which it lives. This is a vital aspect of The Academy's mission and plan, both in terms of enhancing student retention and obtaining the buy-in needed to create positive change. To remain sustainable and thriving, strong connections between staff, students, their families, and community will be developed and maintained. The school will adopt an aggressive community outreach and school culture strategy to ensure that truancy and delinquency do not inhibit student productivity. Defeating the school-to-prison pipeline is community work. The Academy will be the lynchpin to its destruction.

b. Educational Needs of the Target Student Population

O.U.R. Leadership Academy Public Charter School will be a nontraditional high school designed to meet the needs of youth historically unsuccessful in traditional public schools. At capacity it will serve 200 students in grades 9-12. The Academy will prepare its students for college and careers.

O.U.R. Leadership Academy will support the needs of disconnected youth, who are disengaged from education and/or have become marginalized within their current educational setting. These are disproportionally "children and youth of color who currently have, or have experienced, a host of risk factors that are associated with poor academic achievement, delinquency, recidivism, substance abuse, and mental health issues"[1] and are consequently funneled into the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.

Educational Attainment and Delinquency: The Link

Research demonstrates that there is a strong link between low educational attainment, race, poverty, and delinquency.[2] For example, a 2008 study on male juvenile delinquency and education found that a large percentage of the study's incarcerated youth had been suspended from school (80% of participants), retained a grade (60%), and/or expelled from school (50%) prior to their incarceration.[3] Researchers reported similar findings in a comparable study of 273 girls from the same state. Specifically, researchers found that a large percentage of the incarcerated girls had been suspended from school (80%), retained a grade (55%), and/or expelled from school (46%) prior to incarceration.[4] Studies also have confirmed a disproportionate amount of youth in the juvenile justice system have a history of emotional and learning disabilities.[5] Additionally, almost 31% of the study's learning disabled youth was

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[1] Peter Leone and Lois Weinberg, "Addressing the Unmet Educational Needs of Children and Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems," (May 2010):9.
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid: 12.
[4] Ibid: 12.
[5] Ibid: 12.

arrested within three to five years of leaving school.[6] Taken together, the literature briefly summarized above speaks to the national crisis facing the targeted youth, and highlights the inextricable and substantial link between poor educational attainment and negative life outcomes (i.e., incarceration). These negative outcomes disproportionately impact the target population for the proposed charter (i.e., persons of color from impoverished, inner city communities).

Education Attainment and Incarceration: Washington DC
The above trends also are evident at the local level, particularly with respect to at risk populations in Washington DC. Notably, the overall educational attainment of District residents is relatively high. According to the 2005-2006 American Community Survey, 86% of all District residents have at least a high school diploma or higher and 47% have a bachelor's degree or higher. However, a closer look at these data reveals that the city's apparent educational attainment is equally distributed; similar to national trends, the educational attainment of city's poorest residents (those in Wards 5, 7, and 8) is consistently and significantly lower than the overall figures.[7]
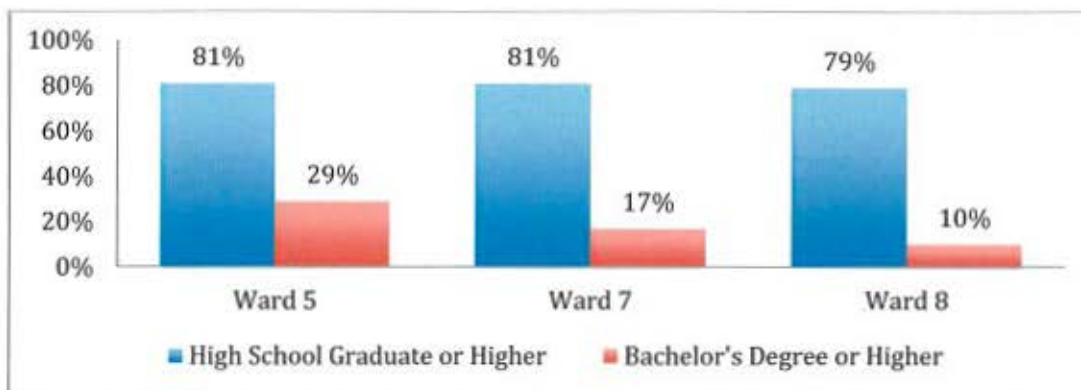
Correspondingly these Wards also experience the highest proportion of youth incarceration. That is, a disproportionate representation of youth from Wards 5, 7, and 8 in the juvenile justice system. In 2011 the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services reported that 62% of all of the youth under its supervision lived in Wards 5, 7 and 8, with half residing in wards 7 and 8 alone.[8] This correlation between low educational attainment and high involvement in the juvenile justice system for persons in Wards 5, 7, and 8 provides evidence of the need for a local solution to reducing the target population's risk of participating in the criminal justice system and disengaging from high school and higher levels of educational attainment.

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[6] Ibid: 12.
[7] Joy Phillips, *2005-2009 American Community Survey – Key Demographic Indicators* (Washington, D.C.: D.C. State Data Center, 2011)
[8] Paul Ashton. "The Education of D.C.: How Washington D.C.'s investments in education can help increase public safety," (Justice Policy Institute): 6.

Additional data on DC's most vulnerable youth, those in the care of the State, further demonstrates the inability of the current school system offerings to substantively address the education gap for impoverished children with histories abuse and neglect--particularly as it relates to the very real "school to prison pipeline" for these children. In 2009, the Child and Family Service Agency reported that only 40% of the youth in their care graduated from high school and about 10% were enrolled in college.[9] In 2010, the Department of Youth and Rehabilitative Services reported the following about the youth in its care prior to educational reforms instituted in 2005:

> ... the average student committed to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) is 16 years old, has completed a fraction of the school credits they would need to graduate, and their reading, writing and math skills are at a 4th or 5th grade level. Half of the young people ... [have] special education needs. [And] despite these deep educational needs ... school attendance for youth at Oak Hill was actually under 50 percent... and the system kept no data on whether or not these young people were returning to school upon release.[10]

Looking more broadly, substantial numbers of youth in the District continue to exit the K-12 system without a diploma. For example, almost half (48%) of the 7,846 youth enrolled in DC Public High Schools during the 2009-2010 school year were reported as truant.[11] These data are especially troublesome for students residing in Wards 5, 7, and 8, where the high school truancy rates are well above the city average.

Ward 5		Ward 7	Ward 8	
Dunbar SHS	Spingarn SHS	Woodson SHS	Ballou SHS	Anacostia SHS
67%	65%	55%	58%	62%

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) data on graduation rates provide additional insight on the number of youth who disengage from school from the point of enrollment in the 9th grade to graduation in the 12th. OSSE reports that there were 4,953 students in the 2012 graduation cohort. However only 3,010 (61%) these students graduated. Of the 1,943 students who did not graduate, OSSE reports that 877 were still enrolled. Of the 1,943 students who did not graduate, OSSE reports that 877 were still enrolled.[12] These data suggest that there are over 1,000 high school aged youth who are presently disconnected from the DC public school system and thus at significant risk for judicial involvement (the school-to-prison pipeline). This is a staggering figure especially when considering that these figures are

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[9] Young Women's Project, *Fact Sheet: The Status of Foster Youth in Education, Aging Out, and Congregate* Care, http://www.youngwomensproject.org/node/50
[10] DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services. "Educating D.C.'s Young People: How D.C.'s juvenile justice system helps young people get the schooling they need," http://dyrs.dc.gov/DC/DYRS/Publication%20Files/Educating%20DCs%20Young%20People.pdf (June 9, 2010).
[11] Martha Ross. "Strengthening Educational and Career Pathways for D.C. Youth," (Brookings: October 2011):9.
[12] *2012 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate*, http://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayor/release_content/attachments/AdjustedCohortGraduationRatesSchoolb ySchool20112012.pdf, (Office of the State Superintended of Education).

from only *one* student cohort *(2012)*, and therefore underestimates the full scope of the problem. Consequently, The Academy will aggressively recruit students who are truant and/or have dropped out. Furthermore, the school plans to be centrally located to attract youth across wards.

The Need for a Non-traditional Public Charter High School in DC

The problem of the school to prison pipeline is further exacerbated by the lack of appropriate educational placements for youth who want to re-engage in school and receive a high school diploma. The US Department of Education (DOE) promotes alternative education as a viable option for students who have been unsuccessful in traditional schools. They define alternative education as a "public elementary/secondary school, that addresses needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school, provides nontraditional education, serves as an adjunct to a regular school, or falls outside of the category of regular, special education or vocational education."[13] Research, further supports the argument that these students require interventions and supports that are either in short supply or unavailable in the traditional school setting.[14] Specifically, these youth need settings that develop and/or support their resiliency.[15]

In the District there are only five non-evening diploma granting "alternative" high schools - Luke C. Moore Senior High School; Washington Metropolitan Senior High School; MAYA Angelou PCS Upper School (Evans Campus); St. Colleta Special Education Public Charter School[16] and Options Public Charter School. Presently, four of these schools are at capacity and have a combined waitlist of 230 youth.

School	# Of Students on the Waitlist
Luke C. Moore	160[17]
Washington Metropolitan	(At capacity)[18]
Maya Angelou Upper School	50[19]
Options PCS	30[20]
Total	230

The waitlist figures independently demonstrate the need for another non-evening alternative high school to support youth at risk of engaging in the school to prison pipeline. With more and

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13 Laudan Y. Aron. "An Overview of Alternative Education," (The Urban Institute, January 2006):3.

[14] Ibid: 11-15, 18-19, 23.

[15] Peter Leone and Lois Weinberg:10.

[16] St. Colleta Special Education Public Charter School is not a comparable because it only serves students with intellectual disabilities. It will not be reflected in the discussion of alternative education schools in the District of Columbia. http://www.stcoletta.org/.

[17] Luke C. Moore Senior High School, phone interview, January 2013.

[18] Washington Metropolitan Senior High School, phone interview, January 2013.

[19] Maya Angelou PCS Upper School, phone interview, January 2013.

[20] Options Public Charter School, phone interview, January 2013.

more at risk youth joining these ranks each year, it is clear that immediate action is required to increased the city's capacity attract, re-engage, and successfully educate this city's educationally disengaged youth--before they fully engage on the path to prison and other negative life outcomes.

Above all, academic data for students enrolled in the District's existing "alternative" public schools suggests that many of these students continue to fall short of national and state standards in terms of academic preparedness (in Math and Reading), graduation, and college entry. The following data table presents recent (2012) graduation, college enrollment, and academic achievement figures for student's enrolled DC "alternative" public schools.

| School | 2012 Graduation Rate (State average 61%) | 2012 College Enrollment/ 2011 College Acceptance Rate | 2012 DC CAS Proficiency/Advanced Percent (Grade 10) | |
			Reading (State average 44%)	Math (State average 44%)
Luke C. Moore	36%	13% (enrollment)	22%	8%
Washington Metropolitan	34%	N/A	10%	8%
Maya Angelou (Upper School) PCS	62%	90% (acceptance)	19%	10%
Options PCS	57%	31% (acceptance)	7%	7%[21]

Specific to educational attainment, the above data strongly suggests that the city's existing alternative high school programming is insufficient in its current capacity and unlikely to significantly curtail the problem of student disengagement and poor academic outcomes. Only one of the high schools has exceeded the state average for graduation, while two of the four schools are more than 25% percentage points below the state average.

DC CAS scores however, further reflect that DC's alternative high schools have not been successful in promoting academic achievement. For all of the schools, the number of students who score at proficiency or above in reading or math is well below the state average.

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[21] Data Sources: "2011 Charter School Performance Reports," (District of Columbia Public Charter School Board: December 2011); *Luke C. Moore High School: Scorecard,* http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/Luke+C.+Moore+High+School, (DC Public Schools); (*Washington Metropolitan High School: Scorecard,* http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/Washington+Metropolitan+High+School, (DC Public Schools).

In sum, extant research and demographic data on risk and educational outcomes for the proposed The Academy target population strongly indicate that there is a need in Washington, DC for a dynamic, nontraditional high school designed to reconnect disconnected youth and place them on a path to college and careers. Particularly for the most vulnerable youth, the academic program must be multifaceted. The program must contain a dynamic system of social, psychological, academic and professional supports. These students require a nontraditional high school with the necessary and specific academic and non-academic systems to ensure high academic performance, a strong sense of 'self,' and a clear plan for a positive, productive future.

School Location

The goal is to make O.U.R Leadership Academy a haven for student development and expression. As such, neutrality in its location is key. There is a need to identify a gang/crew neutral site for the O.U.R Leadership Academy in order to provide a safe space with minimal risk for gang/crew-based violence. The territorial conflicts impose boundaries on the youth population that could disrupt the strength of the foundation and create avoidable limitations.

O.U.R Leadership Academy intends to find a location that is centrally located and is accessible to students from across the city. Recognizing that securing a facility is a difficult task and that the school size further impacts the ability to secure the ideal location, The Academy will remain open to varying location possibilities that will meet the school's budget and facility needs. The Academy, however, hopes to be located in either Ward 5 or Ward 6, with a specific focus on the Navy Yard area. The Academy is in partnership with Building Hope who provides support to charter schools in securing facilities either through their incubator program or real estate advisory program.

School's Impact on the Surrounding Community

The Academy plans to have close ties to the community in which it lives as well as throughout the city. Recognizing that the students will come from all four quadrants of DC, The Academy defines the community more broadly than the surroundings of the physical building. The youth are not merely members of a nuclear household, but they engage with a variety of resources and supports. There must be a symbiosis between The Academy, the student's support systems and the resources that enhance the social and economic capital of the school's community. The Academy expects the community to serve as volunteers, teachers and mentors to the students.

The Academy will in turn serve as a hub for the community. The community that immediately surrounds will be encouraged to embrace the school as a value-added resource. The school will provide space and resources to fill needed gaps and engage in community efforts.

c. Educational Focus

"Every child in America deserves a world-class education. We must ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career." – President Barack Obama

The educational focus of O.U.R. Leadership Academy is to provide a high quality, enriching academic experience that prepares students for college and careers through meaningful civic engagement and culturally responsive instruction. The Academy will be a place where young people's individual talents are nurtured and their deficits are strengthened.

Successful educational attainment for the target populations is based on the ability to implement innovative and culturally responsive practice to restore a belief in personal efficacy and create scholars who are college and career ready. The Academy believes that every student should possess the necessary academic, social and cognitive skills to pursue and succeed in the post-secondary academic program of their choice. Likewise, The Academy also believes that every student should possess the requisite knowledge and technical skills needed to gain meaningful employment in their desired career field.

The Academy has adopted a more comprehensive measure to evaluate the students' competency and competitiveness for post-secondary success by adopting a model developed by the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) for determining postsecondary preparation. This model will serve as the anchor of the educational program. This model outlines college and career readiness upon the development of skills in four areas.[22]

- Habits of the Mind – Habits of the mind are patterns of intellectual behavior that lead to the development of cognitive strategies and capabilities necessary for college-level work. The habits of the mind most closely related to postsecondary success are intellectual openness; inquisitiveness; analysis; reasoning, argumentation, and proof; interpretation; precision and accuracy; and problem solving. The Academy will develop all elements of the habits of the mind associated with postsecondary success.

- Key Content – Key content are the structures, concepts, and knowledge of core academic subjects. Key content areas are Math; Science; Social Studies; English; Art and World Languages. Embedded in the mastery of key content is also the development of strong writing and research skills. The Academy's graduation requirements will ensure that all its students are exposed to key content and gain a proficiency in writing and research.

- Academic Readiness –Academic readiness encompasses a range of behaviors that reflect greater student self-awareness, personal efficacy, self-monitoring, and self-control of a

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[22] Dr. David Conley. "Toward A More Comprehensive Conception of College Readiness," (Education Policy Improvement Center, 2007).

series of processes and behaviors necessary for academic success. The behaviors most aligned to academic readiness are self-monitoring and study skills.

- Contextual Skills and Awareness – Contextual skills and awareness is the systemic understanding of the post-secondary educational system combined with specific knowledge of the norms, values, and conventions of interactions in that context; it also encompasses the human relations skills necessary to cope even if it is very different from the community the student has just left. For many of The Academy's students, the idea of college and careers is incompatible with their current view of themselves and circumstances. As such the students will develop contextual skills and awareness through a social justice lens – exposure to college and careers through the discussion of advocacy and human rights.
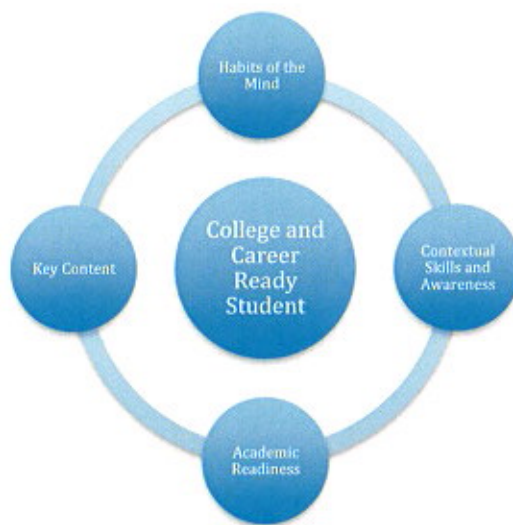
As demonstrated in the figure above, in practice these various components are not mutually exclusive or perfectly nested. They interact with one another extensively. Yet they provide a clear picture of the overarching skills that students will develop by graduation.

2. Goals

The Academy will adopt the current PMF policy currently in public comment as its goals and student academic achievement expectations.

The Academy will also accomplish three additional mission specific goals as a measurement of the school's success. The three additional goals include a special education goal, a teacher retention goal, and a restorative justice goal.

Special Education Goal: *A minimum of 90% of the special education population will master all of their IEP goals.*

The Academy will progress toward this goal through five specific tactics. First, the special education coordinator will review previously drafted IEPs to determine the feasibility and quality of the goals in order to align them with the current academic status of the students. Second, the goals will be rewritten as necessary to establish a realistic, yet accelerated annual growth target for the students. Third, along with general education students, special education students will be identified for their appropriate placement on the Response to Intervention continuum. Fourth, special education teachers will co-teach with general education teachers to ensure that all lessons include the appropriate accommodations and modifications as mandated by the students' IEPs. The Academy will also ensure that general education teachers receive the professional development required to appropriately accommodate for their special education students' needs. Fifth, the special education coordinator will conduct bi-weekly progress monitoring of students' achievement to evaluate students' progression toward their goals.

When a lack of progression has been identified, the coordinator will meet with the special and general education teachers, licensed clinical social worker and school psychologist to evaluate and modify instructional practices and delivery of adequate student supports in accordance with The Academy's Response to Intervention program.

Teacher Retention Goal: *Annually, 75% of teachers rated as effective will return to teach at The Academy.*

The Academy will evaluate its teachers throughout the year in accordance with the evaluation protocol discussed in the Operations Plan. Those teachers deemed effective will be invited to return the subsequent school year. The Academy's goal is to retain 75% of its teachers rated effective.

The Academy has adopted six practices, proven effective in retaining teachers in "hard to staff schools" – increased planning time; grade-level teamwork; shared leadership and teacher input into key decisions; school-level flexibility; supports for struggling students; and technology supports.[23] In addition to measuring the number of effective teachers that return to the Academy, the school has developed benchmarks to measure progress toward achieving the adopted teacher retention practices.

- Increased planning time
  - Instructional staff will have six hours and fifteen minutes per week of planning and a four-day intersession period between each five-week advisory for teachers to have independent planning and processing time.
- Grade-level and content area teamwork
  - A minimum of 50% of all grade-level and content area collaborative planning

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[23] Dale DeCesare, Jennifer Kramer-Wine and John Augenblick. "Methods to Attract and Retain Teachers in Hard to Staff Schools: A Report to Aurora, Denver and Jefferson County Public Schools," (May, 2008).

meetings will be teacher-led.

- o Teachers will meet for 3 hours per advisory[24] on grade level to design interdisciplinary experiential or didactic learning activities.
- o Teachers will meet for 2 hours per advisory, per content area to identify vertical alignment in achieving standards of learning.
- o Teachers will spend 1.5 hour per month observing one another and will share constructive feedback, using an approved protocol.
- Shared leadership and teacher input into key decisions
  - o Teachers will lead a minimum of 50% of all professional development.
  - o At least one teacher will participate in the hiring of all staff.
  - o At least one teacher representative will serve on the Family Teacher Student Community Association.
- School-level flexibility
  - o Teachers will have 1/3 of the decision- making power in appropriating funding for instructional resources and materials.
- Supports for struggling students
  - o 2 hours and thirty minutes per week of office hours to engage individual or small groups of struggling students.
  - o Maintain a 2:15 teacher-student ratio for small groups, differentiation and individual learning style accommodation.
  - o 100% of all teacher-made referrals for behavioral interventions will be addressed within one school day.
  - o At least one teacher will participate in all RtI, restorative justice and special education meetings and interventions.
- Technology Supports
  - o 100% wireless or T-1 Internet connection for all teachers, in every classroom.
  - o 100% of all teachers will have access to a comprehensive student information system to support with data management and reporting.
  - o 100% of all teachers will have access to a cloud- based system that allows remote access to shared files.
  - o 100% of all teachers will be issued a laptop.

The Academy will also ask teachers to participate in an annual teacher survey that measures job satisfaction with the intention of improving school policies that contribute to meeting the teacher retention goal. Specifically, the survey will measure teacher attitudes and perceptions in relation to the practices outlined above.

Restorative Justice Goal: The Academy will have no more than 2% of all behavioral incidents referred for suspension or expulsion.

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[24] An advisory is a five-week term.

The Academy will measure the effectiveness of its restorative justice responses through assessing the rate of referral for suspension and/or expulsion against the total number of incidents. A fully activated restorative justice culture should diffuse most conflicts after mediation and conferencing. Therefore, the rate of suspension and expulsion should be minimal. The Academy will measure this goal based on the total number of incidents, not by the individual. The school acknowledges that this requires a substantial degree of specificity and sophistication in tracking the development of conflict. Yet, restorative justice focuses on the harm and not the individual. Therefore, the data must also reflect the school's focus on the root cause of the disciplinary actions and not just the persons involved.

As a sub-goal, The Academy will have no more than 6% of all incidents referred for in-school suspension. A restorative justice approach also aims to keep students in class. Therefore measuring the rate of in-school suspensions will provide a comprehensive measure of the effectiveness of the restorative justice approach.

4. Charter School Curriculum

a. Student Learning Standards

The Academy is founded on the core belief that disconnected youth have the capacity to achieve at high levels. Hence, the student learning standards adopted by The Academy will serve to reconnect the youth by providing authentic learning experiences founded upon College and Career Readiness Standards for Literacy and Mathematics; The National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies; The National Science Standards; The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (1999); The Universal Intellectual Standards and the National Technology Standards. The Academy asserts that in adopting these standards, the students will develop proficiency in college and career readiness as defined by Educational Policy Improvement Center Postsecondary Readiness Model and articulated through the 21st Century Learning Skills Framework.

ELA/Literacy Standards and Literacy Standards for History, Science and Technical Subjects
The National Governor's Association (NGA) published the Common Core college and career readiness state standard (CCSS) for literacy in 2009. To date, 46 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the standards. The Academy proposes to employ these standards for the literacy curriculum because they align with the educational focus.

The CCSS are internationally benchmarked standards. This ensures that students who perform at or above the level of the standards are prepared for post-secondary success. Additionally, given the unknown work demands of the 21st century, The Academy's graduates will be prepared for global citizenry at a level equal to their international peers. The CCSS are also rigorous. To be specific, rigor is the goal of helping students develop the capacity to understand

content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative and personally/emotionally challenging.[25] The CCSS will serve to ensure that students are academically challenged, improve their engagement with school and increase their likelihood of academic success.

The ELA/Literacy standards address the academic and non-academic goals of the school. The standards address reading informational text, reading literature, writing, speaking and listening, and language. The non-academic goals are more readily addressed via the speaking and listening (S&L) standards. The S&L standards provide students with the opportunity to develop their ability to engage in structured dialogue, critically analyze multimedia and acquire knowledge using technology. These skills serve The Academy's goal of developing self-sufficient youth who are capable of participating in a global community.

Mathematics Standards
The Common Core initiative of the NGA also produced standards for mathematical practice and standards for mathematical content. The mathematical content standards fall under algebra, functions, modeling, geometry and standards and probability. The Academy proposes to employ these standards. As indicated in the Common Core document,

> The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students. These practices rest on important "processes and proficiencies" with longstanding importance in mathematics education. The first of these are the NCTM process standards of problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, representation, and connections. The second are the strands of mathematical proficiency specified in the National Research Council's report *Adding It Up*: adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding (comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations and relations), procedural fluency (skill in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently and appropriately), and productive disposition (habitual inclination to see mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile, coupled with a belief in diligence and one's own efficacy).[26]

For these reasons - college and career readiness, development of expertise, improved problem solving, reasoning and communication skills, The Academy has embraced the Common Core for math standards.

Social Studies Standards
Social Science courses in college require students to be ready to think analytically and critically and to apply literacy skills, particularly for writing and research. The Academy is adopting CCSS Literacy Standards for History along with the Curriculum Standards for Social Studies from the

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[25] Richard W. Strong, Harvey F. Silver and Matthew J. Perini. *"Teaching What Matters Most: Standards and Strategies for Raising Student Achievement,"* (ASCD, 2001).
[26] Common Core State Standards Initiative, Mathematics » Mathematics » Standards for Mathematical Practice, http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Practice (2012).

National Council for the Social Studies (2011). The standards were designed to accomplish the following:

- Foster individual and cultural identity along with understanding societal forces;
- Include observation of and participation in the school and community;
- Address critical issues in the world;
- Prepare students to make decision based on democratic principles; and
- Lead to citizen participation in public affairs.

The national standards fall under ten themes. The Ten Themes are organizing strands for social studies programs are the following:

1. Culture
2. Time, continuity and change
3. People, places and environments
4. Individual development and identity
5. Individuals, groups and institutions
6. Power, authority and governance
7. Production, distribution and consumption
8. Science, technology society
9. Global connections
10. Civic ideals and principles

The national standards for Social Studies combined with the CCSS literacy standards support the school's goal of promoting a culturally relevant practice that fosters a social justice ideology. Furthermore, reliance on nationally vetted standards ensures college and career readiness.

Science Standards

In order to participate as global citizens, 21st century high school graduates must be able to apply the principles of scientific thinking as they interact with peers to solve problems democratically. As aligned with The Academy's goals, the students must be able to think in an interdisciplinary fashion in order to make effective contributions to their local and global community. Because of this, the school has adopted the Next Generation Science Standards. These standards are designed to correlate with the CCSS standards for science and were also designed to develop students who are college and career ready at the time of high school graduation.

Foreign Language

In order to participate in the global economic marketplace, The Academy will provide foreign language instruction. Foreign language skills have been found to promote higher performance on standardized test and in college and increase employment competiveness.[27] Understanding the increased interconnected of diverse people foreign language instructs aids in developing an appreciation cultural diversity and the necessity of multi-lingual communication. The Academy

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[27] State Scholars Initiative, http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/SSI/foreignLanguageBrief.pdf, (September 2008).

has chosen Spanish because it is the second highest spoken in the District. Over the past decade the Latino population in DC has increased by over 21%.[28] The Academy will adopt the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (1999), known as "The 5 C's". The standards promote:

1. Communication;
2. Culture;
3. Connections;
4. Comparisons; and
5. Communities.

The Academy will blend these standards with the CCSS for English Language Arts for the above stated reasons.

Technology Standards
In order to ensure that students are prepared to learn and engage in their environment as 21st century students, The Academy has decided to adopt the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) and the CCSS for Technical Subjects. The six organizing themes for these standards are the following:
1. Creativity and innovation
2. Communication and collaboration
3. Research and information fluency
4. Critical thinking problem solving and decision making
5. Digital citizenship
6. Technology operations and concepts

These standards will be woven into the scope and sequence of the core subjects as they support much of the standards discussed above.

Universal Intellectual Standards
The Critical Thinking Foundation's (CTF) Intellectual Standards will be adopted to support the habits of the mind component of the educational focus. The Foundation developed the standards to serve as a guide for excellent thinking by establishing a method for keeping thinking on tract, help mirror what is in the minds with reality, reveal the truth in situations and help improve decision making abilities.[29] There are nine categories of standards and they are described below.
1   Clarity - understandable, the meaning can be grasped
2   Accuracy - free from errors or distortions, true
3   Precision - exact to the necessary level of detail

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[28]Elahe Izadi, "Why D.C.'s Latino Population is Up When It's", *DC Centric*, http://dcentric.wamu.org/2011/09/why-d-c-s-latino-population-is-up-when-its-black-population-is-down/index.html, (September 1, 2011)..
[29] Linda Elder and Richard Paul. *Universal Intellectual Standards*, http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/universal-intellectual-standards/527,(2008).

4   Relevance - relating to the matter at hand
5   Depth - containing complexities and multiple interrelationships
6   Breadth - encompassing multiple viewpoints
7   Logic - the parts make sense together, no contradictions
8   Significance - focusing on the important, not trivial
9   Fairness - Justifiable, not self-serving or one-sided

The CTF's Intellectual Standards are purported as the mental abilities required for college and career readiness.[30] Furthermore, the Common Core and the national standards described above all require that students are able to successfully execute these mental behaviors. As such, these standards will be woven into the scope and sequence of the core subjects as they support much of the standards discussed above.

b. Resources and Instructional Materials

The purpose of the materials chosen by The Academy is to identify and offer a set of learning experiences for students so they can develop and demonstrate their learning and "show what they know." To this end, curriculum at The Academy, explores, respects and responds to the race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender-identity, religious beliefs, class, physical and mental ability, language, nation of origin, and physical appearance of all those who interact within the school community.

English Language Arts
English 9: Experiencing Literature: Literature and the Language Arts, EMC Publishers (2001). This textbook is designed for all readers, including those who struggle with literacy. The textbook includes literature selections from authors representing a variety of cultural and ethnic viewpoints. There are intensive reading strategies embedded in the text to ensure reading comprehension. Writing skill development is also integrated within the literature. The textbook comes with a parent and community involvement handbook to help parents assists students with their studies.

English 10, 11, and 12: The Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Compact Edition, Volume 2, by Paul Davis; Garry Harrison; David M. Johnson; John F. Crawford (2009). This textbook covers literature written from 1650 to the present. The anthology covers common works of Western Literature and "important" non-traditional Western selections.

Supplemental Reading: Writing and Grammar by Prentice Hall (2009). This textbook develops and reinforces skills through three focus areas: writing, grammar usage and mechanics, and academic and workplace skills.

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[30] D. T. Conley. "College Knowledge: What it Really Takes for Students to Succeed and What We Can Do to Get Them Ready", http://www.avid.org/dl/res_research/research_collegeknowledge.pdf, (2005).

The Academy will also use the following websites and text as resources to supplement the English courses and the core content to develop authentic assignments and assessments for the Critical English course, in lieu of textbooks:

- The University of Missouri's e themes website (http://ethemes.missouri.edu/themes/1900) as a resource for teaching multicultural literature. The site includes book lists, the historical background of multicultural literature, and informational articles about multicultural literature, author interviews and book trailers.
- Pearson Suggested Reading for High School (http://www.phschool.com/curriculum_support/reading_list/high_school.html)
- 2013 Black History Month Recommended Reading List (www.justreadflorida.com)
- Readability tools to check for reading levels, reading assessments and reading grade levels (http://readabilityformulas.com/)
- *National Geographic "In The USA"*. This program engages students with authentic activities to develop basic language and vocabulary skills.
- The Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas, by Dorothy Kauffman (2000) is a program designed to build both social and academic vocabulary and language skills.

The Academy also plans to use Lexia Reading or similar software to support acceleration in literacy. Lexia Reading is a technology-based system that accelerates reading skill development, predicts students' year-end performance and provides teachers data-driven action plans to help differentiate instruction.[31]

Math

Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II: Mathematics: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II: Common Core Edition. The mathematics series offers blended instruction, technology integration and leveled resources. The program focuses on thinking, reasoning and problem solving and allows students multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. The program offers online instruction, presentation and assessment. It is aligned to the common core state standards.

Supplemental Math: The Academy will also use Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org) as the resource to supplement math courses and as the content to develop authentic assignments and assessments for the supplemental math course, in lieu of textbooks. The Critical Math course, targeting accelerated students, will use curriculum materials from The Algebra Project to augment its curriculum.[32]

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[31] Lexia, http://www.lexialearning.com/product.
[32] The Algebra Project. http://www.algebra.org/curriculum/unit/Road-Coloring-and-Functions-Version-for-Use-in-Function-Studies/

The Academy also plans to use Fast Math or similar software to support acceleration in Math. Fastt Math is a research based math intervention that uses math games to close student deficits on different math skills.[33]

Science

Environmental Science: Environmental Science: Your World, Your Turn?, is a program authored by Jay Withgott, published by Pearson (2012). This environmental science program is described as a "next-generation high school program (9-12) that uses real case studies, current data, and hands-on/minds-on activities to make environmental science intriguing, personal and actionable".[34] The program allows for online assessment and differentiation. It was developed using "backwards design" which begins with the end in mind.

Biology: Biology: Exploring Life by Neil Campbell, Brad Williamson and Robin Heyden, published by Pearson (April 30, 2006). This program integrates textbook, Web and labs to support instruction. The labs can be guided by a Lab Manual or through interactive online activities.

Chemistry: Chemistry: Foundation Edition by Prentice Hall (2012). This edition of Pearson's chemistry curriculum targets struggling math and reading students. The program offers problem solving, math support and proven reading strategies. The program also allows for technology integration to assess and monitor student progress online.

Physics: Conceptual Physics by Prentice Hall (2009). This program utilizes a "concepts before computation approach" which enhances student success by first building a conceptual understanding of physics. This program has a three step learning approach to make physics accessible: exploration, concept development and application.

Social Studies

US History: The African American Experience: A History by Prentice Hall. This textbook uses compelling personal stories to provide insight into historical American events.

The Academy will use US history.org (http://www.ushistory.org/) and Khan Academy as supplemental materials.

World History I and II: World History: People & Nations: Modern World (2000) published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. This textbook frames world history through the lens of notable historic figures and the nations they represent.

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[33] Fastt Math. http://teacher.scholastic.com/math-fact-fluency/fastt-math-next-g eneration/about

[34] Pearson. *Environmental Science: Your World Your Turn*, http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZoS4&PMDbSiteId=2781&PMDbSolutionId=6724&PMDbSubSolutionId= &PMDbCategoryId=814&PMDbSubCategoryId=24827&PMDbSubjectAreaId=&PMDbProgramId=67721.

Government: Magruder's American Government by William McClenaghan (2009),. The textbook offers blended instruction through on-line assignments and assessments on-line and is accompanied by a resource library disc. The textbook was written using "backward design".

DC History: Very Washington DC: A Celebration of the History and Culture of America's Capitol City, by Diana Hollingsworth Gessler (2009). The book acts as a travel guide that offers the history and culture of the District of Columbia.

Foreign Language

Spanish I and II: Spanish is Fun, Book 1 and 2 by Heywood Wald. Amsco School Publications, Inc., 2000 and 2005. These texts are introductory programs designed to help students gain proficiency in four basic skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Cultural Responsive Pedagogy

The Academy has developed a reading list to ensure the culturally responsive implementation of the aforementioned resources and instructional materials:

- Keeping Black Boys Out of Special Education by Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu (2005).
- Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools by Glenn E. Singleton and Curtis W. Linton (2005).
- The Skillful Teacher: Building Your Teaching Skills by Jon Saphier (2008).
- The Code of the Streets: Decency, Violence and the Moral Life of the Inner City by Elijah Anderson, (2000).
- Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys by Michael Thompson (2000).
- What the Best College Teachers Do by Ken Bain (2004).
- Talkin' Back: Raising and Educating Resilient Black Girls by Diedra Paul (2003).
- Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College, by Doug Lemov and Norman Atkins (2010).
- Dignity for All: Safeguarding LGBT Students by Peter DeWitt (2012).
- How to Teach Math to Black Students by Shahid Muhammad (2003).
- The Dream Keepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children by Gloria Ladson-Billings (2004).

Restorative Justice

The Academy will purchase Restorative Justice Today: Practical Applications by Katherine S. van Wormer and Lorenn Walker (2012) and The Little Book of Restorative Disciple for Schools: Teaching Responsibility; Creating Caring Climates by Lorraine Amstutz and Judy Mullet (1969). These books will support the teachers in understanding and implementing restorative justice practices.

c. Methods of Instruction

The Academy believes that all learners are capable of excelling academically and personally through developmentally appropriate and relevant educational experiences and has decided to align the belief with a model of culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Gay indicates that CRT can be defined as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them".[35] The Academy has chosen to embrace the concept of CRT because it ensures rigor and supports the premise that with rightly aligned instruction the dormant potential of the students can be ignited to achieve academic excellence. To further the point, CRT "is an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes".[36] Hence the CRT approach encourages rigor instruction while building the infrastructure to successfully mitigate the students' economic and psychological barriers ultimately making them college and career ready young adults.

Culturally responsive classrooms demonstrate observable behaviors that will be evidenced in each classroom. They are the following:
- Active teaching methods
- Teacher as facilitator
- Culturally mediated instruction
- Student controlled classroom discourse
- Small group instruction/academic related dialogue
- Reshaping the curriculum
- Cultural sensitivity
- Positive perspectives of families of culturally and linguistically diverse students
- Communications of high expectations

The Academy recognizes that instructional methods are determined by the purpose of instruction. There are 3 main purposes: 1) acquisition and integration of new knowledge; 2) extension and refinement of knowledge; and 3) meaningful real-world use of knowledge. Below is a brief description of The Academy's primary instructional methodologies based on the purpose for learning along with their benefits are outlined below as described by Tomlinson, Kaplan, et al.

Purpose for Learning: Acquisition and Integration of New Knowledge
Active Lecture: A deductive teaching approach that consists of a carefully sequenced, illustrated oral presentation of content that is interspersed with opportunities for reflection,

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[35] Geneva Gay. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice, Teachers College Press; 2 edition (May 1, 2010):31.
[36] Gloria Ladson-Billings. The Dream Keepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (1994):18.

clarification and sense making. The benefits include efficient acquisition of new content knowledge.

Socratic Questioning: An instructional strategy in which the teacher poses a carefully constructed sequence of questions to students in order to help them improve their logical reasoning and critical thinking about their position on an issue. This can be used as a technique to bridge students' current level of understanding with new knowledge students need to acquire. The benefits include the acquisition of content related to social issues, and enhanced ability to think issues through logically.

Extension and Refinement of Knowledge
Inquiry-based Learning: An inductive teaching approach in which the teacher poses a task, problem, or intriguing situation and students explore the situation across small changes in the data set and generate insights about the problem and/or solutions. The benefits include increased self-awareness, awareness of different points of view, enhanced curiosity, understanding concepts and principles and enhanced ability to solve problems.

Simulations: An inductive teaching method in which students assume roles of people engaged in real life pursuits. The benefits include increased likelihood that concepts and principles induced from the simulation will be transferred and applied to the real world.

Cooperative Learning: A teaching activity in which the teacher purposefully uses small group interaction to forward new learning and accomplish academic and social tasks. The benefits include collaboration among students, deeper thinking and understanding, and enhanced feelings of empathy for others.

Purpose for Learning: Meaningful Real-World Use of Knowledge
Problem-based Learning: An inductive teaching method in which the teacher presents an ill-structured, novel and/or complex problem for students to investigate and solve collaboratively with teacher guidance and coaching. The benefits include acquisition of new knowledge, concepts, and principles and enhanced problem solving ability.

Mentorships: A teaching method in which a student spends a period of time under the tutelage of an expert in the field in order to learn the content, methodology, and day-to-day activities of the practicing professional. The benefits include enhanced content area knowledge, increased ability to use the tools and methodology of the discipline, increased understanding of the life of the practicing professional, a deepening of awareness about the fit between a learner's profile and the targeted field or discipline.

All Purposes of Instruction
Reflection: An approach to teaching that requires students to look back on errors, misconceptions and learning growth over the course of a class or specific period of time. The benefits included improved metacognition, increased self-efficacy and deepening of learning.

The Academy's leaders recognize that additional teaching methods must be employed when appropriate such as direct instruction, strategy-based instruction and coaching; however the main methodologies described above will be employed regularly by teachers to align with the school's overall goals.

d. Students with Disabilities

The Academy will provide students with disabilities with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) possible in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The Academy will comply with all regulatory special education requirements of IDEIA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Likewise, the school will fully comply with additional regulations and policies in accordance with the D.C. Municipal Regulations. The Academy will operate as a Local Education Agency (LEA) and will not contract with the D.C. Public School System for special needs services. The Academy will submit an annual report to the DCPCSB and the Office of the State Superintendent for Education detailing the number of students with disabilities it serves, the nature of each student's disability, and each student's educational placement and setting.

The Academy expects that it will serve a high percentage of students with high-incidence disabilities. The school expects that about 30% of the school's population will require special education services. [37] This number is slightly higher than the average of similar DCPS and charter high schools in DC, but is in line with schools serving similar populations. The educational framework was chosen with this fact in mind. The academic curriculum is based upon the notion that all students shall progress at a pace that is individually appropriate. This philosophy is the underpinning of IDEA.

In order to serve as an LEA for providing special education services, The Academy has identified specific resources in the community for technical assistance in the implementation of systems and training for all administrative and teaching faculty, particularly in regards to meeting the needs of students with high-incidence disabilities. These resources include: (1) Special Education Cooperative; and (2) End to End Solutions for Special Education in D.C. Such organizations will allow The Academy to access to additional special education service providers such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and counselors as needed.

The Academy will employ a Special Education Coordinator to manage the special education processes of the school. Their responsibilities will include but not be limited to: scheduling and

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[37] High Schools serving similar populations report the following percentages with high-incidence disabilities: Ballou SHS 28%; Maya Angelou PCS – Evans High School, 28%; and Options PCS, 64%: Washington Metropolitan SHS, 15%. Source: Great Schools.org

providing notice of eligibility conferences and IEP meetings, engaging parents and maintaining all SPED records. Experienced and certified special education teachers will be employed to ensure that the unique needs and learning styles of all students are being met. The Special Education team will be comprised of the coordinator, special education teachers and the licensed clinical social worker/dean of students. Students with IEP's will have annual review meetings in addition to their IDP meetings and be re-evaluated every 3 years. The team will also be responsible for ensuring that students with disabilities receive the necessary services and accommodations.

Identifying Students with Disabilities
Upon enrollment, The Academy will begin collecting a comprehensive catalog of the students' academic records, IEP's and all relevant academic and psychological evaluations. This initial review of enrollment documents will serve as the initial mechanism to identify and place students with disabilities. Those students with IEPs will then be provided with the required special education, related and transition services in accordance with their IEP.

Throughout the school year, The Academy's proactive Response to Intervention (RtI) program will provide an efficient means to measure student progress and identify students who are struggling academically. The Academy's RtI team will consist of the special education coordinator, school psychologist, a general education math and reading teacher, a social worker, and a special education teacher. Diagnostic assessments (e.g. Scantron Performance Series, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress) will be used to determine each student's skill level in reading and mathematics. Based upon the initial assessments, students will be flagged along the RtI continuum. The Academy will use Institutes to describe student's placement on the RtI continuum. All students will have an institute designation. It is expected that students will matriculate through institutes as they receive the appropriate academic and behavioral interventions. Given the target population, The Academy has assumed that the majority of its students require intensive, individualized interventions, thus inverting the traditional RtI tiers.[38] In addition, The Academy has developed five distinct tiers within the continuum, Institutes One through Five, to better serve the wide range of academic, social and behavioral needs of its students.

Institute 1: The students who test below grade level by five or more grades will be flagged under Institute I. Institute I interventions will be more intensive and individualized that at any other level. In order to promote college and career readiness, emphasis will be placed on strengthening Habits of the Mind and Key Content. For example, students will receive intensive reading and math remediation through the Supplemental Reading and Math courses, in addition to participating in pull out sessions. Another intervention may be that these students will receive designated time to check-in with counselors and clinicians to address their social

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[38] SERC, Response to Intervention: Essential Components – Fidelity of Implementation, http://ctserc.org/s/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=319%3Aresponse-to-intervention-essential-components&catid=112%3Asrbi&Itemid=110&limitstart=2&2fa6f942252db2ec6c621fe255459617=00629fd11ce5e25a972a2b7 de3f99a05&2fa6f942252db2ec6c621fe255459617=00629fd11ce5e25a972a2b7de3f99a05

and emotional issues. The RtI team monitors student progress weekly. Interventions will be implemented in five-week intervals.

Institute II: The students who test below grade level by 3 to 4 grades will be flagged under Institute II. These students will receive a lower frequency of individualized interventions. Greater emphasis will be placed on the delivery of social, behavioral and academic interventions in small groups and through specific in-class instruction. These students will also work most on developing their skills and competencies related to Habits of the Mind and Key Content. The RtI team monitors student progress weekly. Interventions will be implemented in five-week intervals.

Institute III: Students who test below grade level by one to two grade levels will be flagged under Institute III. Students will receive academic, social and behavioral interventions in the classroom through small groups and peer-based supports. It is expected that these students will require academic interventions most related to enhancing proficiency in Academic Readiness and Key Content. As a result, these students will also meet individually and in small groups with the guidance counselor who will design a program of strategies around developing academic skills. The program will include, but not limited to, the following: study skills, time management, organizational strategies, note-taking strategies, test-taking strategies, personal development, self-esteem, stress and anxiety and self-advocacy. Classroom teachers monitor progress weekly. When students demonstrate minimal or no progress, the classroom teacher will make a referral to the RtI team to consider eligibility for Institute II. Interventions will be implemented in five-week intervals.

Institute IV: Students who enter The Academy on grade level will be flagged under Institute IV. Students will receive all interventions in the classroom. Interventions for Institute IV students will be aligned with researched based classroom instruction using validated practices traditionally offered universally.[39] These interventions will be preventative and proactive. Particular focus will be placed on supporting these students master skills related to Key Content and Academic Readiness.

Institute V: Students who test above grade level will be placed in Institute V. These students will be provided with interventions to begin strengthening skills and competencies related to Contextual Skills and Awareness and the mastery of Key Content in preparation for advanced placemen and college-level courses. The classroom teachers monitor progress bi-weekly. When students demonstrate minimal or no progress, the classroom teacher will make a referral to the RtI team to consider eligibility for Institute I. Interventions will be implemented in ten-week intervals.

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[39] George Sugai, Phd. "School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and Response to Intervention", RTI Action Network, http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/behavior-supports/schoolwidebehavior.

Frequent progress monitoring will allow students who are struggling with the course material to be identified quickly. If a student is not making sufficient academic progress, the RtI team, identify appropriate interventions and supports, such as tutoring and varying instructional strategies. The effectiveness of the interventions on the student's progress will be carefully monitored, according to a student's placement on the RtI continuum. If a student is referred for special education services, other information will be gathered to determine if a student may have a disability, such as parent questionnaires, classroom observations, analysis of work samples, and teachers' anecdotal data. Parents will be notified of their child's participation in the RtI process in accordance with IDEIA.

Evaluating Students with Disabilities
If the student is not progressing academically, socially or behaviorally after interventions have been in place, and classroom teachers or special education faculty believe a disability may exist, the student will be referred, in writing, to the Special Education Coordinator for individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services. Any professional faculty member of the school may make referrals. A copy of such referral along with the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504 will be sent to the student's parents. The Special Education Coordinator will convene a meeting with the student's parents to discuss the option of psycho-educational testing to determine the child's special education eligibility and to secure written parental consent to conduct such testing. The Academy will then conduct such testing, either in-house or via the services of an expert consultant. Once the tests have been conducted and the results are received, an eligibility meeting will be reconvened with the parents, the Special Education Coordinator, and other appropriate faculty. At that time, a decision will be made as to the student's eligibility for special education services. If the student is eligible for special education services, an IEP for that student will be developed. All IEPs will be evaluated and revised as needed at least annually. All assessments and evaluations will be repeated at least once every three years.

Students who are not eligible for special education under IDEA, but are disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will be provided with the necessary accommodations to ensure their access to education and that they are not discriminated against on the basis of their disability.

The Academy will also ensure that its disciplinary procedures do not discriminate against students with disabilities. Restorative justice principles emphasize accepting responsibility and attending to the individual needs of the victim and offender instead of punishment.
The Academy will also ensure that the staff is trained to fully support students with disabilities. Professional development workshops and trainings on differentiation - incorporating different learning modalities and progress monitoring will be developed to fully support the implementation of the IEP and the academic success of the student in the classroom.

e. English Language Learners

The Academy's support for English Language learners will be similar to the approaches taken to support students who need additional academic support. The school's individualized program is conducive to ensuring that ELL students acquire proficient oral and written English skills. The Academy will specifically address the needs of ELLs by following the process outlined by the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights: enrollment; identification of potential ELLs; assessment to determine need for ELL services; provision of appropriate services; transition from ELL services; and monitoring ability to participate meaningfully.

Enrollment: The Academy will not discriminate based on English language proficiency or immigration status. The school is committed to having a diverse student population. It ultimately enhances the educational experience of all students. The Academy will ensure that all communication to ELL students and their families is sent in English and their home language, to the extent possible. The school will contract with translation services so that families can fully participate in all facets of their student's education.

Identification: The Academy will use a home language survey to assist in identifying ELLs. The Academy's IDP process will include the review of the Home Language Survey in order to ensure that all ELLs are identified.

Assessment: Identified students will be screened using the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test in accordance with the administration guidelines outlined by the test publishers.

Provision of Appropriate Services: The Academy's goal for ELL students is to aid them develop the academic skills as well as an understanding of the cultural nuances of the English language. All ELL students' IDPs will incorporate individualized language goals and support services. The Academy will use an ESL pullout and inclusion program to support ELL students to promote oral and written English proficiency. ELL staff will use direct language instruction to build basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The ESL program will adopt the same learning standards as the general education program. The ELL program will emphasize writing, reading, listening and speaking in the ESL program. The ESL program will remain rigorous so that its students can participate in the regular classroom and become independent learners.

Where possible, the ELL program will maintain the ELLs' proficiency in their first language. The Academy will offer Spanish as a foreign language. As such instruction will be differentiated for native Spanish speakers to increase fluency and literacy.

Transition from ELL services: Students who receive ELL services will be assessed by the ACCESS assessment annually. Additionally the students' ELL goals, as written in the IDP, will be reviewed every 90 days. Once students achieve English proficiency, they will no longer receive ELL services.

Monitoring: The Academy understands that all its students have academic and/or nonacademic barriers that can inhibit their academic and socio-emotional development. As such, the IDP process makes sure that all students' needs are identified and that staff is aware of each student's needs. As applied to ELL students, the academic program will also make sure that language is not a barrier the holistic development of students. Specifically, the school will implement the following strategies to ensure that ELLs participate:

- Ongoing Professional Development around the second language acquisition process
- Addressing diversity head on and the challenges associated with a multi-cultural environment.
- Infusing students' culture of origin into the language curriculum in a thought-provoking and planned manner
- Provision of explicit instruction on verbal and nonverbal communication; and differentiation between conversational and academic language.
- Engagement of students' families to support in reinforcing English language development.

f. Strategies for Providing Intensive Academic Support

The Academy assumes that all of its students will require academic and nonacademic interventions. The target population is students whose education has been interrupted because of their involvement in the juvenile justice system or who have been marginalized in traditional schools, yet are highly functioning with the capacity to excel academically. In order to highlight the individual strengths and weaknesses of each student, The Academy will develop Individual Development Plans. The Academy will create Individual Learning Plans (IDPs) for all students. The IDP process will evaluate various academic and psychosocial factors and create a plan for each student with individualized learning goals. The IDP will be developed from academic records, evaluations and assessments that give quantitative and qualitative information on the student's skills, behaviors and background. Students will also be interviewed within 30 days of their enrollment. Once developed, all students will meet to review their IDP plan every 90 days. Students requiring intensive academic support will review their IDP plans every 30 days.

The Academy will use the Scantron Performance Series or the Northwest Evaluation Assessment MAP assessment to determine student skill level upon enrollment. The assessments will be used to determine student placement in one of the five Institutes under the school's Response to Intervention program. As interventions are applied, student progress is monitored through informal assessments, classwork, tests, quizzes, and projects.

Goal Setting: Intervention planning begins by determining a goal directly related to the identified problem. The Academy will develop the academic goals, adaptations and interventions that target specific skills. The goals will be set according to standards and

benchmarks that are research-based. These standards help define the levels at which students need to perform in order to be successful in their current grade and be prepared for the next.

Effective Intervention Plans: The proactive RtI Team will focus considerable attention, time, and effort identifying appropriate intervention strategies. It is crucial that all interventions be directly related to the identified skill deficit(s), and that teachers have buy-in to the planned intervention(s). The role of the team is to help teachers find effective intervention strategies and provide the support necessary to implement the interventions. Across Institutes the problem solving method will be used to match instructional resources to educational need. The problem-solving method is as follows:

1. **Define** the problem by determining the discrepancy between what is expected and what is occurring. Ask, "What's the problem?"
2. **Analyze** the problem using data to determine why the discrepancy is occurring. Ask, "Why is it taking place?"
3. **Establish** a student performance goal, develop an intervention plan to address the goal, and delineate how the student's progress will be monitored
4. **Implementation** integrity will be ensured. Ask, "What are we going to do about it?"
5. Use progress-monitoring data to **evaluate** the effectiveness of the intervention plan based on the student's response to the intervention. Ask, "Is it working?" If not, how will the intervention plan be adjusted to better support the student's progress?

Progress Monitoring: Students, teachers, and the Leadership Team will monitor student progress. Benchmark assessments are administered quarterly and data will be reviewed bi-weekly to assess progress and determine fidelity to the interventions. Decisions about changing intervention instruction for individual students are reviewed at nine-week intervals, and progress is reported to students and parents.

During the initial meeting the team will decide upon the resources needed for implementation and the following questions will be answered below

- Identify who will conduct the intervention?
- Where will it occur?
- How long will it take?
- Who will monitor the progress?
- Who will help assure that the intervention is carried out as planned?
- When will the team meet again to discuss the progress?

Data-Driven Decisions: When data indicate that a change should be made in a student's intervention plan, a data review is held at the scheduled Leadership RtI meeting. Data on students' progress within the Institutes will be reviewed a bi-weekly initially and may be adjusted according to need as the school year progresses. Throughout the school year the RtI team members will meet with teachers track the progress. The teachers will provide work samples, attendance, test scores, class work, and homework to document progress.

Strategies for Intervention: The Academy has developed the following programs to support students in need of intensive academic support. The Academy will continue to develop specific intervention strategies during the Planning Year. The intervention strategies will be research based and data driven.

Double Down - Double Down is a mechanism to provide remediation in math and reading while concurrently teaching grade appropriate content. All students will take their grade level equivalent Reading and Math class. However, for the 9th and 10th grades all students would also be required to take an intensive Math and Reading supplemental course as their elective. In this course, students would work in small groups according to their entry levels on the Reading and Math entry assessments. In the reading class, students would read books on their instructional level. The teacher would provide students with reading strategies that match the band level characteristics of their next leveled book. In Math, students would be grouped according to skill deficit as evidenced by their Math entry assessment. In the Math "Double Down" block students would receive instruction necessary to close their academic math deficits.

Computer Learning Lab – Students flagged under Institute I and Institute II will have specific instruction in the Computer Learning Lab. During Computer Lab, students will use software programs designed to close deficits in literacy and numeracy (e.g. Lexia, Fast Math and Accelerated Reader). The Academy will schedule students to receive guided instruction in the Computer Learning Lab at least two-three times a week. Students will be able to use the lab independently during their lunch. Students will also be provided with access at home in order to provide students the ability to engage with math and reading programs during out-of school time.

Office Hours - Three days out of the week, academic staff will block time during the lunch period to meet with individual students and groups to review course work and key content. During this time, teachers will provide instruction around core subject areas, academic readiness skills or general life skills.

RTI Institutes: The RTI process is not static. As new academic challenges arise, students' Institute placement and/or set of interventions can change. Institute placement will be decided upon enrollment and re-evaluated every five or ten weeks or at either an IDP or IEP meeting. The students will exert their agency in recommending themselves to participate in additional interventions to strengthen their academic, social and behavioral capacities. Placement in any Institute is not permanent.

Beyond the Institutes, teachers will be required to establish in class interventions. All teachers will be access to students IDP plans and recommendations made by the RtI team, special education staff, social worker or school psychologist. Teachers will be required to use this information to modify interventions and classroom differentiation. Lesson plans will provide academic bridges for students that are performing below grade level in order to help them access the grade level standards. In addition, lesson plans will provide academic bridges to ensure that students that are above grade level are given the opportunity to continue their

accelerated academic progress. Teachers will be required to plan at least two small groups per academic block. In those groups teachers will scaffold each standard in order to ensure access and academic rigor. The Special Education Coordinator and Director of Curriculum and Instruction will provide feedback on lesson plans to ensure fidelity of implementation to the RtI and special education strategies and processes.

g. Strategies for Meeting the Needs of Accelerated Learners

Students who are performing above grade level in both reading and math will be placed in Institute V. Institute V students will be expected to strengthen their skills in Key Content and Contextual Skills and Awareness. These students will be required within their 11th or 12th grade years to develop a final project in their elective or College Level or Career Preparatory Course,

The Academy has developed two elective courses that accelerated learners can take in the 11th or 12th grades:

- **Critical English Course**: This class will focus on the study of literature, with the study of several novels highlighted in the course. The course will also engage students in critical conversations about race, gender, and social justice. Students will be required to write a short stories about their lived experiences as young people of color growing up in Washington DC, as their final project. The class will balance independent study with seminar-like class structure.

- **Critical Math**: This class will use The Algebra Project curriculum as the basis for instruction. The curriculum seeks to use algebra to analyze the world through the lens of social justice. Students will be required to design and implement a social Justice project in which quantitative analysis will be used to examine racial, gender and economic inequality in Washington DC

In the 11th and/or 12th grades, these students can take college-level courses as their electives or an Advanced Placement course. The Academy will select AP courses that align with the Critical Identity and Math courses.

5. Graduation/Promotion Requirements

The Academy's students will be required to complete the following courses to receive a high school diploma. The courses are listed sequentially by course type.

English
English 9: This course focuses on the study of fiction and non-fiction/informational reading materials, including novels, short stories, plays, essays, poetry, and informational documents. There is an emphasis on the writing process, the development of listening and speaking skills, and vocabulary development. The students are introduced to and taught the skills necessary to

work collaboratively and a lot of the learning is done in groups. Writing assignments and group projects take on a major importance in the student's grade at this level.

English 10: This course builds upon the literary knowledge and language skills covered in English 9. Students will read, discuss, and write about multicultural novels, short stories, dramas, poetry, essays, and biographies. Students are also challenged to better understand themselves and where they fit into a diverse and ever-changing world.

English 11: This course builds upon the literary knowledge and language skills covered in English 10. Students will read, discuss, and write about multicultural classical and contemporary literature with an emphasis on American and African American works. Social communication skills will be further developed during peer interactions to complete class assignments. The critical analysis of the literature focuses on identifying and understanding the values and beliefs of cultures throughout the world.

English 12: This course builds upon the literary knowledge and language skills covered in English 11. Students will read, discuss, and write about multicultural and world classical and contemporary works. Students will write well-developed persuasive and expository essays, book and media reviews, and a documented paper.

Math
Algebra 1: Symbolic reasoning and calculations with symbols are central in algebra. Through the study of algebra, a student develops an understanding of the symbolic language of mathematics and the sciences. In addition, algebraic skills and concepts are developed and used in a wide variety of problem-solving situations.

Geometry: Geometry focuses on skills and concepts that are useful to all students. In addition to learning geometry skills and concepts, students will develop their ability to construct formal, logical arguments and proofs in geometric settings and problems. Students will use area, volume, geometric probability, and geometric relationships to solve real-life problems.

Algebra II: Algebra 2 complements and expands the mathematical concepts of Algebra I and Geometry. Students gain experience with algebraic solutions of problems including the solution of systems of quadratic equations, logarithmic and exponential functions, the binomial theorem and the complex number system.

Statistics: The emphasis during the first half of the course is on probability. Classical probability topics, including applications of the counting theory, are covered. Special topics include simulation of probability models using current technology, analysis of games of chance, reliability theory, decision theory, applications of Bayes theorem, and distribution theory.

Science
Environmental Science: Science course which provides students with the scientific principles, concepts, methodologies and experiences required to understand the interrelationships of the

natural world, identify and analyze both natural and man-made environmental problems, evaluate risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing these problems. Emphasis is placed on the student's role in environmental management.

Biology: This course is designed to develop and enhance students' comprehension and appreciation of life and take the student through a general study of living matter. Students will be introduced to the diversity of Earth's living organisms, explore major biological principles and learn how to think scientifically with an emphasis on problem solving.

Chemistry: This course involves the study of matter and energy. Students deal with the characteristics of elements, their changes and their behavior under various conditions. Laboratory investigation is emphasized. Students investigate the course material through lab work, problem sets, projects and demonstrations. Students will be exposed to practical applications of scientific concepts.

Physics: The course focuses on mathematical models and laboratory study of the principles of motion, forces, energy, heat, sound, light, and electricity and magnetism. This course will allow students to examine the relationship between matter and energy and how they interact. Students explore physics concepts through an inquiry approach.

Social Studies
US History: United States History examines the history of the United States from 1865 to the present. The course focuses on key themes and turning points in American history in the 19th and 20th centuries, including ideological origins, economic, political and social change, civil rights, and domestic and foreign policy. Also, social studies research, analysis and writing skills are emphasized.

World History: The course focuses on events such as: Industrial Revolution, Imperialism, Colonialism, Nationalism, Totalitarianism, and World War I and II from the African American perspective. The Five Themes of Geography (location, movement, region, place, and human-environmental interaction) are woven into all the units, with emphasis on how geography affected the development of these civilizations. Students will learn about related careers in history/social science.

DC History: Students will examine the major events of Washington, D.C.'s history, particularly in relationship to the student's experiences living in the city. This course will be extended outside the classroom to allow students to tour and explore while conducting research and field studies.

US Government: U.S. Government is a study of the institutions of American government. The course focuses on the executive, judicial and legislative branches of the federal government, the election process, and political parties. There is an emphasis on the concepts of constitutionalism, representative democracy, separation of powers, checks and balances, and

federalism.

Foreign Language

Spanish: This course is designed to give students an understanding of the culture(s) of the Spanish-speaking world. Communicative competence is divided into three modes: speaking and writing as an interactive process, reading and listening as a receptive process and speaking and writing in a presentational context. Basic grammar is integrated into instruction according to the vocabulary and structures needed in the various situations in which students are required to function. An important component of language class is the use of Spanish beyond the classroom in order to apply knowledge of the language in the real world.

Art: Enables students to develop an appreciation of different cultures through their art; explore various media and techniques; gain understanding of the elements and principles of design; improve their powers of observation; establish familiarity with local museum collections and architecture, and appreciate art as a critical means to understand a culture.

Music: This course is designed to enhance and encourage the aesthetic appreciation of music in students. With emphasis on the affective elements of music, students will develop competencies in discriminatory listening, form analysis, and cross/cultural comparisons. It will begin with music from the period of Bach and continue up to the present contemporary trends, including rap music.

Physical Education: This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of sports and physical activities. The Physical Education program focuses on students being introduced to and developing skills in various physical activities, increasing self-confidence, cooperating within group settings, and acquiring lifetime health and fitness skills and knowledge.

Health: This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of activities that will build a foundation for making appropriate choices for physical well-being and fitness.

Electives

Double Down English: This English language arts workshop is designed to assist students strengthen reading skills and strategies. This elective course is a supplement to an English language arts course, which addresses the basics of reading and key literacy concepts.

Double Down Math: This course is designed to strengthen basic math skills. Topics include properties, rounding, estimating, comparing, converting, and computing whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Students will learn to perform basic computations and solve relevant mathematical problems.

Critical English Course: This class will focus on the study of literature, with the study of several novels highlighted in the course. The course will also engage students in critical conversations about race, gender, and social justice. Students will be required to write a short stories about their lived experiences as young people of color growing up in Washington DC, as their final project. The class will balance independent study with seminar-like class structure.

Critical Math: This class will use The Algebra Project curriculum as the basis for instruction. The curriculum seeks to use algebra to analyze the world through the lens of social justice. Students will be required to design and implement a social Justice project in which quantitative analysis will be used to examine racial, gender and economic inequality in Washington DC.

College Level or Career Preparatory Courses: College Level or Career Preparatory courses are courses that are designed to expose students to college and careers. The courses will range from vocational courses taken off-site (e.g. Information Technology, Construction, Health Care) to seminars that introduce professional skills and concepts (e.g. business, law, photography). Students can also elect to earn credit through participating in an internship. Courses can also support students prepare for the SAT/ACT and build skills to enhance their college and career readiness.

Portfolio: The portfolio is a living document designed to facilitate student reflection about his or her learning; portfolios are designed as a means for students to demonstrate their progress, and as a showcase for their academic growth. The portfolios are cumulative, such that the students add additional content every year. Portfolios also serve as a formative assessment for teachers to monitor and assess student progress. Students will be required to create and present their portfolio in order to be promoted from one grade to the next.

Community Service: The Academy students will be required to complete 100 hours of community service.

6. Support for Learning

a. Family Involvement

Family engagement contributes to a range of positive student outcomes, including improved student achievement, decreased disciplinary issues, and improved family-student and teacher-student relationships. Family engagement can have important benefits for the inner-functioning of schools, including school staff having higher expectations for students, more shared ownership and trust across their faculty, and, ultimately, stronger school performance.

Many students will come from untraditional settings or may have strained familial relationships. Thus, The Academy will develop an intensive family involvement strategy. The Academy will also allow students to define family and will not limit the definition to parents or blood relatives. This will assist each student in being able to comfortably create his or her own support network, without the pressure of labels (such as "parent").

Home Visits
The Academy's home visit program will be the pillar of the family involvement strategy. The school's approach will be tiered in order to ensure that families are engaged and that interventions are strategic and effective. The Academy will build capacity in staff members,

both instructionally and non-instructionally, by using home visits as an instrument for student achievement.

Tier I: Tier I home visits are intended to provide a direct and immediate impact. (Impact is defined as a response by the student and family to mitigate any challenges that are impeding academic success.) Prior to all Tier I home visits, the home visit teams will meet. Home visit teams will be made up of academic and school culture support staff. The Academy will conduct home visits for all students enrolled at the school. Students with significant attendance, behavior or academic issues and flagged for Institute I will be scheduled first. During the home visit, students and parents are asked several general demographic questions that are focused on data collection. After these initial questions are asked and answered, a series of academic, behavior, and attendance questions are asked to attempt to understand the causes of the various challenges. Questions that may be asked during the home visit are:

1. How would you describe a typical day for this student?
2. If you had to teach this student a new skill, like cleaning the house, how would you do that?
3. Describe a typical time when the child did not follow a rule. How does this student comply with your requests and demands? When the student does not follow family rules what type of discipline do you use? How does the student respond to this?
4. Have you seen any signs that the child is feeling grief or loss, or is traumatized by the events in his/her life? What are they? How have you tried to help the child handle this? Have the behaviors/emotions gotten better or worse?[40]

Once these questions are asked and answered, the home visit team creates a working action plan with the parent and student that focus on addressing the immediate concern(s). The working action plan is then brought back to the school and discussed at a team meeting and the IDP will be updated to reflect modified goals. If the student meets the benchmarks of the action plan, then the student will be promoted to a Tier II home visit. If the student fails to reach the benchmarks, then another Tier I home visit.

Tier II: Tier II home visits are intended to provide leverage. (Leverage is defined by using the relationship building between the teacher and the family to achieve student academic success.) Prior to a Tier II home visit, home visit teams meet to discuss any quantitative and qualitative data on the student. During the visit the family, the student and the home visit team will review the IDP and new goals may or may not be developed. However, the goal of a Tier II visit is to encourage communication around academic and non-academic performance. If the team believes there is a need to develop new interventions for newly defined issues, the home visit process will schedule a Tier I visit. The Academy expects that as the students progress through the school that the cycle of Tier I and Tier II visits will repeat itself.

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[40] "35.1 Sample Questions for Worker/Child Visits", Child Welfare Manual.
http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/section7/ch35/sec7ch35sub1.htm (January 29, 2010).

Engagement Activities, Meetings, and Ceremonies
Additionally, The Academy will also use engagement activities, meetings, and ceremonies as a means to have families demonstrate their support of their child's efforts and accomplishments. The school will maintain an active Family, Teacher, Student and Community Association (FTSCA) to ensure full inclusion of stakeholders in the operations and growth of the school; host community-based events that meet the needs of the students and families; and provide home visits to ensure open lines of communication between students, families and school staff. Family representatives will also serve on the Board of Directors and will also have a voice in the annual school-wide evaluations.

Family Workshops
The third component of the family involvement strategy is family workshops. Community partners, families and staff will lead workshops. The workshops will be held bi-monthly during weekday evenings or weekends depending on the need of the parent community. Some of the workshops will be centered on:
- Goal setting and attainment
- Building strong familial relationships
- Parenting
- Understanding your child's academic challenges
- The importance of attendance

Understanding that a large portion of students will be a parent themselves, it will be extremely important to provide opportunities to grow and develop familial relationships.

Other efforts that will be implemented to foster family engagement are:
- Put a culturally relevant "Question of the Week" on the school website and social media sites to encourage communication between students and their families.
- Encourage teachers to assign homework that requires talking with someone at home or in their family.
- Create a "Wall of Fame" to highlight family volunteers.
- Host a "Take Your Family to School Week" with special activities throughout the week.
- Organize a "community scavenger hunt" for families to get to know local resources.
- Have "The Academy in your neighborhood" meetings where school leadership and staff host events and meetings where students live.

The Academy will send copies of correspondence and reports to the student and the contact persons identified by the student on the enrollment form. The materials to be provided are: reports of the student's academic progress; reports of the student's emotional and physical health; notices of school initiated family-teacher conferences; notices of major school sponsored events; and copies of the school calendar. The Academy will also develop correspondence to inform families of the school's performance on the PCSB's Performance Management Framework and the State's accountability index.

b. Community Participation

The Academy will partner with community-based organizations to enhance the educational focus of the school. Specifically the Academy will seek partnerships that enhance the academic and operational infrastructure and school culture. The Board of Directors will also develop strong public and private partnerships and investment in the school.

Academic Infrastructure: The Academy will create partnerships with area businesses and organizations to aid in making the curriculum come to life. Community partners will teach elective courses in order to provide students with a nuanced and current perspective on the issues being addressed in the classroom. The school plans to partner with UDC to provide accelerated students access to college level courses and advisors for their course-work. The Academy also plans to bridge gaps internationally, with exposure to other students across the globe. Preparing the students to be 21st century scholars, also means aiding students appreciate diversity and understand the importance of global citizenship.

The Academy also wants to ensure that students are college and career ready and connected to opportunities for internships that will also provide mentorship around postsecondary planning. Internship/mentorship opportunities will be posted as they become available and students will apply and interview for the positions.

Community Partner	Activity	How it Builds Capacity
Free Minds *	Writing and Literacy Elective	Reinforces curriculum objectives through the use of creative writing.
American University	Constitutional Law Elective	Provides students with an introduction to constitutional law.
Dreams Work Inc. *	Drama Elective	Students are able to engage in interactive dramatic and artistic experiences related to relevant life occurrences and appropriate reactions
Howard University	Advisors to accelerated students in Institute V	Provides students with the opportunity to engage in a supervised, multi-year writing project in an area of their choosing.
DC Lawyers for Youth *	Social Justice Initiative	Links students to community members that teach them how to influence policy impacting juvenile justice
UDC CC	Elective Courses	Provides students college experience and exposure
Public Allies*	Skills development through public service apprenticeships.	Provides post-secondary options for students interested in certain fields of study

Operational Infrastructure: The Academy will join organizations like the Special Education Collaborative and Charter Board Partners and maintain the founding group's ties with Building Hope*, FOCUS, and EdOps in order to remain connected to the local charter community and receive the technical support required to properly implement the charter school.

In addition, The Academy will foster relationships with municipal agencies and public institutions to leverage the school's capacity to enroll and retain the targeted students and recruit highly qualified staff.

Community Partner	Activity	How it Builds Capacity
Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services	Referring agency for students	Leverages governmental agency to build and sustain enrollment
Public Defender Service	Referring agency for students	Utilizing city resources to build and sustain enrollment
Local College and Universities -Education Department	Teacher Aide	Assists with tutoring and in class academic support

School Culture: In order to enhance the school's culture, The Academy will seek community partners to build the Restorative Justice program; mitigate the non-academic barriers confronting the school's students and bridge gaps between the school and families/community.

Community Partner	Activity	How it Builds Capacity
Department of Parks and Recreation	Community Space for family engagement meetings and activities	Leverages governmental resources to enhance familial involvement
Department of Mental Heath	Training and Professional Development around Mental Health issues related to the target population	Addresses the developmental and psychosocial needs of the students
The Deloren Foundation*	Adult Education League – Basketball League for students ineligible for DCIAA	Provides recreational opportunity for students
Howard University School Psychology Training Program*	Placement of 2-3 graduate psychology practicum students per year and at least one advanced level psychology intern	Increases capacity to provide psychological supports to the students
The Social Justice Project, Inc.*	Training and Professional Development around special education and the target population	Addresses the need for continued education related to FAPE and IDEA

- Letters of support are included in the appendix.

c. School Organization and Culture

O.U.R Leadership Academy will provide a holistic education. The school culture philosophy is based on the premise that promoting academic achievement for this target population requires developing the entire person. The school must mitigate the risk factors that cause underachievement and disengagement and promote student success. The Academy will use culturally response practices to ensure that the school culture improves student self-motivation, classroom instruction and learning for all students. Culturally responsive pedagogy is defined as the ability of schools and teachers to draw on the cultural and language strengths of their students to mitigate the discontinuity between the school and low-income students and students of color.[41]

Building a culturally responsive school has five key components: Innovative and Interactive classrooms; Emotionally Intelligent Leadership; Strong Student Voice; a Restorative Justice Code of Conduct; and an Engaging Physical Space and Aesthetic.

Innovative and Interactive Classrooms: The Academy expects that classrooms are highly innovative and interactive spaces. Classes will be full of positive energy and reciprocal communication. Instruction will be current and relevant to the lives the students. Demonstration of contextual skills and awareness will be the ultimate goal of all discussions and assignments. The Academy's tailored curriculum allows for the integration of multimedia and field experiences that link competencies to standards and utilize Bloom's Taxonomy to target varied learning styles. The staff therefore, must not only have mastery in a subject matter but must have the desire to go above and beyond to create dynamic spaces for learning. The Academy seeks to take students beyond the classroom and experience learning in ways that are influenced by students and teachers. For example:

- A lesson in history may include intergenerational conversations with seniors at local nursing homes and community centers in which students get first-hand accounts of prior events and defining moments in history.

- A math lesson could include working with culinary staff to devise a menu of pastries and snacks to be sold in a school wide bake sale. Students will raise money for an event or cause that the students choose. Students will have to measure and bake as well as budget when spending and pricing items.

Teachers, staff and students will be pushed to think creatively and with the specific student population in mind. Professional learning communities and staff development will serve as the forum to reinforce effective teaching practices and the ethos necessary to transform the students and sustain innovative and interactive classrooms.

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[41] Geneva Gay. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice, Teachers College Press; 2 edition (May 1, 2010).

Emotionally Intelligent Leadership: Second in the process of ensuring a positive school culture is to cultivate the school leader's emotional intelligence (EI). Dr. Shanklin describes the relationship between school leaders and emotional intelligence as follows:

> When school leaders exert emotional intelligence competencies associated within the four domains of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management they have the capacity to be catalysts for change. Leaders who are confident will confront issues that impede the adoption of effective practices and will initiate approaches that are consistent with common values, will be attentive to others' views, and will inspire everyone to collaborate in teams.[42]

Strong Student Voice: Developing the students' voice is another component of the culturally responsive school culture. Students should have agency in both the academic and non-academic programs at the school. The Academy's Student Government Association (SGA) will be the conduit for that voice. The input from students will aid in keeping the school culture current and effectual.

The Academy will be a student-centered school. The Academy will create a student space that will allow for peer interaction and engagement. The Academy aims to create a community college like environment, where students are expected to be independent learners and use their peers as resources.

Students' vision will be displayed on the school's walls and throughout the school's policies and procedures.

Restorative Justice Code of Conduct: The Academy will fully develop a restorative justice culture. This culture will be developed through the implementation of restorative practices, incorporated within a whole-school, proactive approach of building a school community grounded in collaborative relationships amongst and between students, school staff and their surrounding community. Other hallmarks of the restorative justice culture include cooperation, reciprocated respect and mutual understanding. Restorative justice practice provides the framework for student accountability – with specific steps in a process for managing behavior. Students are fully accountable for their actions, but held respectfully in a nurturing environment.

Restorative practices have been successfully implemented in several countries in addition to the United States (Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Singapore and Canada). Data from place to place vary, but the overall outcome of implementation has been the same: students gain skills in positive and effective communication, conflict resolution, critical thinking and problem solving. Most importantly, these skills can be applied readily in both the higher

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[42] Sharia Shanklin, "Professional learning communities: People Leading Change" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2009).

education learning environment and the workplace. The Academy's students will graduate with an additional set of transferable skills that can support their continued learning and capacity to be functional and effective in their career of choice.

The Academy's restorative justice practices and policies will be used as an alternative to other more punitive responses traditionally used by schools. Handling conflict and misbehavior in a restorative way allows students and staff to cooperatively address behavior, and to utilize the strength of the collaborative relationship to guide steps towards minimizing – and hopefully eradicating – the negative actions previously taken by students. The consistent attention to restorative practices in schools can promote positive feelings, rather than resentment and alienation within the school setting.[43]

Engaging Physical Space and Aesthetic: The Academy will maintain a physical space and aesthetic that serves as a conduit for educational achievement and interpersonal connectivity - an aesthetic that provides architectural experiences for the senses in its proportions, scale, rhythm, light, materials, odors and colors, and appeals to senses of the body and the emotional life. Ensuring that the aforementioned conditions are sought, created and maintained is a critical contributor to the school's climate and culture. This aesthetic also includes the demand of sustainability and a good indoor climate.

The Academy will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's student culture both through informal feedback from students, parents, teachers and community partners but also through an annual satisfaction survey. Attendance and student/staff retention will also be important indicators of the school's capacity to build a positive learning environment.

Acculturating Students Mid-Year
Students who enter mid-year will have both their IDP developed and IEP reviewed within the first week of enrollment. The student will be placed in the appropriate grade based upon a review of their transcript. Students will also be placed in the appropriate RTI Institute given their performance on the Performance Series/NWEA MEA Assessment.

The Guidance Counselor or Licensed Clinical Social Worker will ensure that new students are properly acculturated. Upon enrollment, all new students and their families will be required to participate in an orientation session. After the orientation, the student will be guided to his/or her first class and provided a tour of the school. Within 24 hours, all teachers will be informed that a new student has enrolled, in order to increase awareness of the new student's presence. In addition, the Academy will implement the following processes to further acculturate the new students:

- Teachers will call the student's family after the first day to 'check in';

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[43] "Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools",
http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/BARJ/SCHOOL%20BARJ%20GUIDEBOOOK.pdf.

- For the first week, the counselor will check in with the student during lunch each day to establish enhance rapport; and
- Match the new student with a buddy, possibly the most recent 'new student'.

Students who have disengaged from The Academy and want to enroll may also re-enroll at any point, if space permits. A conference will be had with the students' supports, relevant stakeholders, the Dean of Students, Counselors and the Special Education team to review and renew the IDP; IEP (as needed); and RtI Institute Placement.

d. Extracurricular Activities

The Academy will develop a Student Government Association (SGA) that will be responsible for surveying students and assessing student interest. The results of the data they collect will be used to guide the development of clubs, sports, recreation and extracurricular activities that focus on the development of leadership skills, healthy lifestyle habits, and entrance into the work force.

e. Safety, Order, and Student Discipline

The Code of Conduct will be a cornerstone of The Academy learning environment. The Code will define behavioral expectations and discipline policies, focusing on behavioral traits that are keys to success in school and life, e.g., responsibility, perseverance, respect, kindness, honesty, citizenship, courage, self-discipline and fairness. Expectations for appropriate conduct will be taught by relating student actions to character virtues as found in history, literature, performing and visual arts and other disciplines. All families/guardians and students will have to agree to abide by the code before acceptance to The Academy. The code will be based in a Restorative Justice Framework.

A restorative approach in a school shifts the emphasis from managing behavior to focusing on the building, nurturing and repairing of relationships. Schools need relationship management policies, which consider everyone's needs and responsibilities towards each other, rather than behavior management policies.[44] Behavior management policies tend to focus only on the behavior of young people and the imposition of sanctions has the potential to harm the crucial adult/student relationships on which good teaching and learning depend.

Traditionally the response to conflicts between students or to unacceptable behavior has been:
- What happened?
- Who is to blame?
- What is the appropriate response to deter and possibly punish those at fault, so they will not do the same thing again?

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[44] J. Braithwaite. "Youth Development Circle", Oxford Review of Education, 27(2) (2001): pp239-252.

This approach (a) does not take into account the needs of those who have been harmed or distressed by the wrongdoing (b) does not take into account the desirability of repairing relationships between people who are still likely to be seeing each other regularly in their community and at school and (c) focuses on punishment instead of restoration.[45]

The Academy intends to use a restorative approach to address conflict or wrongdoing at the school. A restorative approach involves asking four key questions:

- Who has been affected by what has happened?
- What can be done to make things better for all concerned?
- How can we ensure that everyone involved gets a chance to tell their side of the story and hear everyone' else's perspective?
- What can be learnt so something like this can be avoided in the future?[46]

This approach is based on the notion that people need to take responsibility for the impact of their behavior on other people and that the consequences of harmful (i.e. upsetting/distressing/disruptive/destructive) behavior are damaged relationships and disconnected people. Emerging research emphasizes the importance of connectedness for young people and how it can be a major factor in preventing destructive and anti-social behavior. Restorative responses are focused on healing the disconnections between people wherever possible.[47]

An important restorative belief is that the people best placed to resolve a conflict or a problem are the people involved, and that imposed solutions are less effective, less educative and possibly less likely to be honored. Engaging in a restorative approach to conflict often requires certain attitudes and skills:

- A willingness to listen to others' perspectives on a situation and suspend the notion that there is only one way of looking at something.
- An ability to listen to the feelings and needs behind others' words, especially if these words are offensive, hurtful or accusatory.
- An ability to be in touch with one's own feelings and needs so that these can be expressed in a way that gets heard and understood by others.
- A commitment to giving everyone a voice and to respecting the contributions made even though this is a time consuming process.
- A belief that hearing all sides is a worthwhile and ultimately a time saving approach as people gradually learns these processes for themselves.[48]

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[45] Francis Cullen, Betsy Fulton, Sharon Levrant and John Wozniak. "Reconsidering Restorative Justice: The Corruption of Benevolence Revisited?", *Crime and Delinquency, 45* (January 1999).

[46] Francis Cullen, Betsy Fulton, Sharon Levrant and John Wozniak

[47] Ibid.

[48] Howard Zehr. "Fundamental Concepts of Restorative Justice", Mennonite Central Committee, http://www.doc.state.mn.us/rj/documents/FundamentalConceptsofRJ.pdf (1997).

This approach will be especially beneficial in helping students own their responsibilities and reintegrate with the community.

The Code of Conduct aims to curtail suspensions and expulsions. Instead of criminalizing behaviors and trying to place blame or guilt, the goal is to correct behavior to prevent it in the future. The Academy has adopted two restorative responses to problematic behavior: Circles and Mediation and Conferencing. An intervention should be initiated within 24 hours or 1 school day of the occurrence of the infraction. In the interim, students will be placed on in school suspension in order to avoid having students lose instructional time. During in-school suspension students will stay in school, separated from their classmates, while school administrators coordinate the appropriate intervention. In school-suspensions will also be a forum to reiterate restorative justice practices, and allow students to reflect on the harm caused to those affected individuals.

Circles - Circles, or peacemaking circles, bring people together to talk about issues and resolve conflict. A trained facilitator, often called the "circle keeper," encourages willing participants to share information, points of view, and personal feelings. The facilitator may use a talking piece, an object that allows the person in possession the opportunity to speak without interruption. Others in the circle are encouraged to remain silent and listen to what is being shared. By offering opportunities for safe and open communication, circles help resolve conflict, strengthen relationships between participants, emphasize respect and understanding, and empower all parties involved. Circle facilitators, with the permission of school administrators, can also invite family and community members to participate.

Mediation and Conferencing - Mediation in schools typically resolves disputes between two students, while conferencing opens the process to other students, staff, and teachers. Peer mediation involves trained student mediators who assist their peers in settling disputes. Students are trained in mediation strategies and apply restorative problem-solving techniques. Mediation can help keep many minor incidents from escalating into more serious incidents. More importantly, peer mediation gives students a set of skills that can be applied to future conflicts.

The Academy will use suspension and expulsion as a response to behaviors that infringe upon the school's ability to maintain a nurturing and safe community for all of the students. Suspension and expulsion disconnect students from school, the antithesis of restorative justice practice. Understanding that some behaviors require student removal from school, The Academy's code of conduct will specifically define those behaviors that require permanent or long-term removal from the school. The Academy will incorporate circles, mediation and conferencing and restorative discipline techniques to curtail behavior before it escalates and requires student removal from school. When such interventions and all other means of guidance have been exhausted, a student who continues to exhibit seriously inappropriate or dangerous behaviors may be suspended or expelled from school. Prior to suspension or expulsion, The Academy will conference with the family and student(s) involved, in attempt to repair the harm and restore the relationship between the involved parties. Suspension and

expulsion may or may not be contingent upon resolution of the conflict. The terms of reinstatement will be in accordance with restorative justice practice and discussed at the conference.

The Academy's restorative justice practices will be explained to all students and their families upon enrollment. Orientation and the enrollment contract will reiterate the purpose of the Restorative Justice program and the responses to problematic behavior. The student policies and procedures will also outline the code of conduct.

f. Professional Development for Teachers, Administrators and Other School Staff

The professional development that will be provided to teachers, administrators and staff to implement the 21st Century Framework and meet proposed post secondary goals is connected to the theoretical concepts associated with cultivating a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where The Academy staff exerts emotional intelligence competencies as the mechanism for engaging authentic human relationships and executing culturally responsive practices.

The Academy will adopt the professional development framework as defined by Dr. Sharia Shanklin in "Professional Learning Communities: People Leading Change":

> The organizational structure defined by a PLC clearly identifies systematic and consistent approaches that focus everyone on increasing effective teaching and learning outcomes. PLCs are characterized by teachers' and administrators' shared values and vision, collective collaboration within an inquiry stance that explicitly evaluates initiatives for improved student learning, professional development aligned for continual learning toward attainable time-bound goals, collegiality fostered through mutual respect, and a climate of trust.
>
> PLCs can potentially provide a lasting alternative for overall school improvement and increase student learning and achievement. Because people, not products, drive attributes of professional learning communities, the curriculum and other resources used for instructing students become secondary to the systematic social approaches that support learning. People are at the heart of professional learning communities. A PLC is created when adults in the school begin to explore their values, beliefs, and assumptions about learning; openly confront ineffective behaviors; and coalesce around a collective consciousness of consistent collaboration and shared decision making. PLCs serve the intentions of early thinkers in education and address the critical demands pervasive in public education today.[49]

Dr. Shanklin identifies six attributes of PLCs that enable members of these communities to become more flexible as they shift from privatized practice to collaboration, and they are more

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[49] Sharia Shanklin, "Professional learning communities: People Leading Change" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2009).

open to divergent perspectives when decisions focus on common ends and yield desired results.[50]

- *Supportive and Shared Leadership* relates to school leaders and teachers participating democratically in power, authority, and decision-making. This attribute fosters leadership among staff.
- *Shared Values and Vision* focuses on student learning and school improvement. The school leader and staff support norms that guide undeviating behaviors and decisions about teaching and learning.
- *Collective Learning and Application* involves staff at all levels sharing information and working collaboratively to plan, solve problems, and enhance learning opportunities. New knowledge, skills and strategies are implemented into practice.
- *Shared Personal Practice* includes peers visiting each other's classrooms to observe and offer encouragement and providing feedback on instructional practices that assist in student achievement and increase individual and organizational capacity.
- *Supportive Conditions-Relationship* promotes collegiality, trust, and respect, norms of critical inquiry and improvement, and positive caring relationships among students, teachers, and school leaders.
- *Supportive Conditions-Structures* includes systems that enable colleagues to share common plans through master scheduling options, to monitor student-enrollment-size-to-personnel ratio, to ensure the proximity of staff to one another, and to develop effective mechanisms for communication.[51]

Enhancing the school's teachers' and staffs' emotional intelligence will be necessary to facilitate authentic human relationships and execute culturally responsive practices. The school expects the staff to hold themselves to a higher standard, because their actions affect more than just themselves – they affect the students. The school's staff has the responsibility to teach many skills and concepts and model effective human relations for developing human beings.

Emotional Intelligence is observed when a person demonstrates the competencies that constitute self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and social skills at appropriate times and ways in sufficient frequency to be effective in the situation.[52]
- *Self Awareness* is observed when a person exhibits deep understanding about his or her own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and motives.
- *Self-Management* is observed when a person exhibits self-control, mental clarity, and concentrated energy that contributes to positive feelings in others and crafts an environment of trust, comfort, and fairness.

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[50] Ibid.

[51] The six attributes of professional learning communities are adapted from: R. DuFour and R.E. Eaker. "Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement", (Bloomington, Id: National Education Services, ASCD 1998).

[52] Sharia Shanklin.

- *Social Awareness* is observed when a person listens, empathizes with other people's perspectives, is optimistic, thoughtful, and attuned to historical issues, informal structures, or unspoken rules in the organization.
- *Relationship Management* is observed when a person exhibits persuasive skills, manages conflicts, and encourages consistent cooperative collaboration. [53]

School Leadership Development

The Academy's leadership will use emotional intelligence competencies to create conditions that promote effective PLC's. In a school setting, the work involved in teaching and learning is a human endeavor, "but the organizational conditions sometimes blunt or wear down educators' good intentions and actually prevent the use of effective practices".[54] This condition makes the emotional task of the school's leader paramount. The Academy's administrators have maximal power to sway everyone's emotions. If people's emotions are pushed toward the range of enthusiasm, performance can soar; if people are driven toward rancor and anxiety, they will be thrown off stride.[55]

Hence, The Academy will work diligently to support its leaders develop strong practices – rituals and routines, that enhance interpersonal relationships between leaders and the staff. Specifically The Academy will support school leader's become thoughtful about behaviors while executing professional related tasks, understanding that responsibility to those tasks are connected to students' learning and achievement.[56]

Because learning is an essential quality for human growth, The Academy's PLCs will engage staff that work in the school to behave with common purpose to maximize human capacity will facilitate learning in the school community.[57] When staffs' values align with expected behavior, their motivation to perform, especially to teach and learn, is enhanced. In order to motivate individuals to exhibit behaviors consistent with the common purpose, "the person you want to influence must perceive that his or her values will be best served if he or she behaves in the manner you want".[58] Shared values and vision are attributes in PLCs that focus members on the behavioral norms that guide a host of effective practices. The Academy's school leaders will have the responsibility to influence others to coalesce around common values. Through demonstrating emotional intelligence competencies, attuned to how they manage self and others, the Academy's leader will create a climate that enhances learning outcomes for students, professional growth for teachers, increases in parent partnerships, and harness community partners as added social capital.[59]

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[53] The four emotional intelligence domains are adapted from: D. Goleman, R Boyatzis, and A McKee, Primal Leadership Realizing the Power of Emotional intelligence (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press 2002).
[54] K.A. Leithwood and R. Steinbach. "Changing Leadership for Changing Times", (Philadelphia, PA 2004): 9.
[55] Sharia Shanklin.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] C, Dwyer, "Managing People", (Philadelphia, PA: Charles Dwyer 1993).
[59] R. Boyatzis and A. McKee. Resonant Leadership, (Boston Massachusetts: Harvard Business Press 2005).

Administrator development will include but not be limited to building the following skills:
- Collaborating with stakeholders in the school improvement process
- Sharing student achievement data with all stakeholders
- Providing time for collaborative problem solving
- Demonstrating effective group-process and consensus-building skills in school improvement efforts
- Communicating the school vision, school goals and ongoing progress toward attainment of goals to staff, families, students, and community members
- Recognizing and celebrating the contributions of school community members to school improvement efforts
- Nurturing and developing the leadership capabilities of others
- Evaluating the collaborative skills of staff and supports needs with staff development

Academic Staff Development

The Academy believes that quality professional development for the academic staff has the power to increase educators' knowledge of academic content and teaching skills while changing what educators believe about student learning and how they interact with students. It is the school's intent to provide positive, powerful and consistent professional development to create a paradigm shift in schools via teachers understanding of the social, emotional, cognitive component of a whole student. All adults and students will be engaged in learning.

All members of the Academy will participate and contribute to professional development. Collaboration builds a sense of collegiality, belonging, learning culture, and self-respect.[60] When planning and implementation is thoughtful, professional development can have a significant positive impact on teachers' classroom performance[61] and classroom management.[62]

As such, The Academy will institute high quality, professional development to increase educators' knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs so that the staff enables all students to learn at high levels. The Academy's professional development will be results-oriented, data driven, constructivist in nature and job embedded.

The Academy is committed to providing on-going professional development for its academic staff to include but not be limited to following areas:
- Multiple intelligence
- Differentiation
- Designing formative and summative assessments
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

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[60] H. K. Wong. "Induction Programs that Keep New Teachers Teaching and Improving", *NASSP Bulletin*, 48(638) (2004).

[61] Linda Darling-Hammond. "Teacher Quality and Student Achievement", *Education Policy Analysis*, (8) (2000).

[62] Clea A. McNeely, James Nonnemaker, Robert Blum. "Promoting School Connectedness: Evidence from National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health", *Journal School Health*, (72)(4) (2002).

- Backward Design Process (Lesson Planning and Unit Planning)
- Effective Utilization of Data
- Effective Youth Development
- Integrating literacy development throughout all subject matter content
- Special Education
- Social Emotional Development

PLC Organizational Structure

The Academy will create the organizational structure that aligns with PLC attributes in order to implement its professional development for teachers, administrators and staff. The following structures will facilitate PD:

PLC Attribute	Structure	Who	Purpose
• Collective Learning and Application • Supportive Conditions – Structures • Shared Values and Vision	Collaborative Meeting Times (CMT)	Administrators and Academic Staff and Student Support Staff	The Academy staff will engage in CMT from 8:45am – 9:45am daily. The purpose of CMT is to focus on the various attributes of the PLC that propels teaching and learning.
• Shared Personal Practice	Individual and Collaborative Planning	Academic Staff	The Academy staff will engage in individual and collaborative planning to develop subject-based unit and lessons plans and assessments.
• Supportive and Shared Leadership	Head of School Conferences	Teachers, Staff and Administrator	These conferences will aid in maintaining effective communication around internal and external stakeholder interactions and decision-making.
• Collective Learning and Application • Shared Values and Vision	Professional Development Days	All Staff	Full and partial day staff development associated with reinforcing best practices.
• Supportive Conditions - Relationships	Staff Socialization Experiences	All Staff	Informal events to facilitate staff bonding and interpersonal enjoyment.

	Staff Cool Out Sessions	All Staff	An opportunity for The Academy staff to decompress and increase awareness about the overwhelming issues that converge in educating the target population.
• Supportive Conditions - Relationships			

g. Structure of the School Day and Year

See the following page for the draft school calendar.

August 2014

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2014

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2014

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2014

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2014
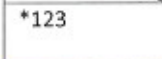
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 3 Classes begin

SY 2014-2015 Total School Days= 195

Legend:

Color	Description
	School-wide assessment (interims, midterms, finals)
Closed	Holiday observance: Closed for staff and students
	Half Day for students
*123	Parent-Teacher Conference
	Professional Development
	Intersession
BREAK	Summer Break

February 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

B. Business Plan

1. Planning and Establishment

a. Profile of the Founding Group

Founding Group
O.U.R. Leadership Academy (Organizing an Urban Revolution through education) has both a founding group and an advisory board:

Founding Group
Maia Shanklin Roberts – For the past five years, Ms. Shanklin Roberts has managed the financial growth and strategic development of local organizations supporting high-risk youth. In 2009, she co-founded MaiAngel LLC where she co-directed the development and implementation of an educational advocacy and adult education program for court-involved and disconnected youth in Washington, DC, serving over 75 youth ages 14-24. Prior to co-founding MaiAngel LLC, Ms. Shanklin Roberts served on the executive team of a three-year violence prevention initiative sponsored by the DC Youth Investment Trust. The executive team directed and managed the investment of over $3M in high-crime communities in Washington, DC. Under that Initiative, Ms. Shanklin Roberts developed the Ward 5/6 Violence Intervention Partnership (VIP) that supported seven nonprofit organizations in their efforts to cultivate partnerships and strategic relationships with local community based organizations and government agencies, improve service delivery, realize strategic goals and develop data-management and reporting systems. Ms. Shanklin Roberts received her Bachelors degree in Urban Studies from Stanford University. She is a JD candidate at American University Washington College of Law. In 2010, she was awarded the Smart CEO Brava Women's Achievement in Business Award.

Angel Anderson – Angel Anderson has over seven years of experience working with high-risk youth in both community-based organizations and schools. From 2006-2008, she taught math and science at Maya Angelou Academy Public Charter School at Oak Hill and New Beginnings Youth Detention Centers. Ms. Anderson co-founded MaiAngel LLC in 2009. While at MaiAngel LLC, she oversaw the academic and student support programs and assisted in the development of a GED curriculum with a specific focus on numeracy and literacy acceleration. She also built partnerships with community-based organizations to enhance the experiential learning opportunities for the students. Ms. Anderson has developed and implemented programs for several other local community-based organizations, including Facilitating Leadership in Youth, Young Women's Project and Peaceoholics. Ms. Anderson also served as an Outreach and Response Manager for the Citywide Coordinating Council on Youth Violence Prevention, a citywide violence prevention initiative, from 2009-2010. Through this effort, she was responsible for connecting community members, government agencies and non-profits to create a coordinated response to youth violence in Wards five, six, seven and eight. Ms.

Anderson received her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology at Howard University, where she also received her Bachelors of Science in Psychology.

David Heiber, Ed. D. – Dr. Heiber is an educator and entrepreneur who brings experience serving both as a public school principal and as the executive director of a non-profit organization specializing in helping schools effectively provide wrap-around services to urban student populations. In 2010, Dr. Heiber founded Concentric Educational Solutions, Inc. (CES) with a grant from NewSchools Venture Fund. CES is a national organization that provides student support services in the areas of student attendance, school culture, parent engagement, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, and special education. In this capacity, Dr. Heiber has worked with schools to reduce suspensions, redesign the student code of conduct, increase special education compliance, and improve access to mental health services for students and families. Locally, he has worked with such schools as Friendship Collegiate Public Charter School, Anacostia Public School, Hospitality Public Charter School, Paul Public Charter School, and Center City Public Charter School. Currently, Dr. Heiber is working to redesign the academic framework and continuum of intervention services for three alternative high schools in Newark, NJ.

From 2007-2010, Dr. Heiber served as the Senior Director of Student Support Services at Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools in Washington, D.C. During his tenure, Dr. Heiber reduced out-of-school suspensions from 4600 cumulative days to 1500. He also increased special education compliance for annual reviews from 23% to 100%. Dr. Heiber co-created a student attendance policy that was adopted by many DC Public Charter Schools. Prior to joining Chavez, Dr. Heiber served as an administrator for six years in the Baltimore City Public Schools System. From 2004-2006, he served as Principal of Southwestern High School, a comprehensive neighborhood high school. The school served 2100 students, 98% of the students qualified for free and reduced lunch and 24% were special needs.

Dr. Heiber is a trained mediator through the Alternatives to Violence Project, a certified public toastmaster, a fellow in the Institute of Educational Policy leadership program, and has advised and led organizations in organizational leadership and development.

Jennifer Smith, Ed.D. – Dr. Smith is the Senior Director of Sustainability and Growth at the Flamboyan Foundation. Her work at Flamboyan focuses on the sustainability of the Foundation's current programs and scaffolding long-term program growth. Dr. Smith manages relationships with key partners, including school principals, community-based organizations, district leaders and local and national funders. From 2010-2012, Dr. Smith served as the Chief Transformation Officer at the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE). In this role, Dr. Smith lead the Office of Transformation, a newly established office created by Commissioner Deborah Gist to introduce and advance innovative approaches to schooling. In that roll, she provided technical support to the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools, developed quality

controls to strengthen state-wide charter school programming, and established an academy focused on developing transformational leaders equipped to create instructionally effective academic experiences for all Rhode Island learners. Prior to joining the staff at RIDE, Dr. Smith worked as a professional consultant, providing individual and team coaching to principals and leadership teams at schools in the District of Columbia. She served as Executive Director of the District of Columbia's Principal Leadership Institute, Principal of the Capitol Hill Cluster School (a three campus system in the District) for eight years, Associate Principal at William Henry Middle School in Dover, Delaware, and as an elementary and middle school classroom teacher.

She has also consulted, facilitated and taught as adjunct professor – most recently with George Mason University's School of Education Leadership. Dr. Smith was a member of the Aspen Institute's "Commission on No Child Left Behind" - convened to gather information and make recommendations for potential reauthorization of the law.

Dr. Sheron Brown, Ph.D. – Dr. Brown has been an educator for over 16 years. Dr. Brown has served as a reading teacher, School Improvement Resource Coordinator, and the Founding Principal of an elementary school in Prince George's County, Maryland. In her previous roles she has improved reading scores up to 20 percentage points and led instructional initiatives to transition schools from "Needs Improvement" status to meeting Adequate Yearly Progress.

Dr. Brown is currently the Chief Performance Strategist for EdSolutions by Design, Inc. In her capacity as Chief Performance Strategist, Dr. Brown works to improve school performance for charter schools in Washington, DC and Newark, New Jersey. Dr. Brown has also served as the Director of Performance Improvement for the Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy. During her tenure, she orchestrated the design of a Common Core based curriculum, created a strategic plan framework for the school, designed professional development for all levels of the organization and coached key leaders.

Natalie Gordon- Natalie Gordon has over 18 years of experience in urban education, with a particular expertise in school start-ups. Ms. Gordon began her education career in New York City, as a middle school teacher with Teach for America (TFA). Also, she was a fellow with New Leaders for New Schools, a year-long program designed to develop outstanding leaders for service in urban schools. Currently, Ms. Gordon is the Principal of the newly-established Jefferson Academy, a DCPS International Baccalaureate middle school. She was also the Founding Principal of Friendship Tech Prep, and both Principal and AP at DC Prep's Edgewood Campus.

Beyond school leadership, Ms. Gordon has worked with TFA as an advisor to corps members, a summer institute faculty director and a regional recruiter. She also has extensive experience in the non-profit sector as both the Education Director and Executive Director of DC SCORES, a consultant with the New Teacher Project. Ms.

Gordon also served as the individual leading administrator recruitment in DC Public Schools and the manager of the DC Teaching Fellows Program. Ms. Gordon graduated from Washington University in St. Louis and is currently enrolled in the Executive Masters in Leadership Program at Georgetown University.

Kenneth Wright- Kenneth Wright currently serves as the Special Education Director for Cesar Chavez Public Charter School (Parkside Campus) in Washington, DC. Mr. Wright has seven years experience as a special education teacher, compliance consultant and special education administrator. As an administrator, Mr. Wright has helped the school reduce the suspension rates for students with disabilities as well as increase special education compliance to over 90%. He has specialized in providing instruction for middle and high school students with learning and emotional disabilities. Mr. Wright is a PhD candidate and serves as an adjunct graduate professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Maryland College Park. Mr. Wright also served on the Founding Group of Achievement Prep!. Mr. Wright holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from University of Maryland Baltimore County and a Masters degree in Special Education from The George Washington University.

Raqiyyah Pippens, J.D. - Raqiyyah Pippins is an associate attorney in Kelley Drye's Washington, D.C. office. She focuses her practice on food and drug law and consumer law. Ms. Pippens received her JD from the University of Virginia School of Law in 2006. She received her Bachelors in Arts from Stanford University in 2003. Ms. Pippens is barred in the District of Columbia.

Sharia Shanklin, Ed.D. – Dr. Shanklin is currently the Community Services and Programs Officer for the DC Department of Parks and Recreation. In, this capacity she is responsible for the negotiation, development, planning, administration and operation of the agency's $3.5 million recreation budget. Dr. Shanklin has been an educator within the DCPS system for over 20 years where she has served as classroom teacher, school psychologist and administrator. She received her Ed.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in Educational and Organizational Leadership. In 2009, Dr. Shanklin's dissertation, entitled "Professional Learning Communities, People Leading Change," was published by The University of Pennsylvania, UMI Dissertations Publishing. Through her research, Dr. Shanklin investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence competencies and principals' ability to create and sustain professional learning communities as a mechanism for transforming the school's culture to improve learning and achievement.

Suriya Douglas Williams –From 2007 to the present, Ms. Douglas Williams has served as the Assistant Principal and middle school Campus Leader for the Capitol Hill Cluster Schools. During her tenure, she has helped the school consistently achieve its academic benchmarks with 13% gains in reading and 30% in math from 2007-2009 across grades 3-8; moreover, from 2011 to 2012, there were 15% and 22% subgroup gains in math across grades 3-5. Her expertise in promoting data-driven instruction and differentiation

was honed while servicing as the Resident Principal for Hugh Brown Junior High School. Ms. Douglas Williams also has two years of experience in instructional recruitment. She works extensively with school improvement planning, differentiated learning, capacity-building, and improving communication and collaboration skills.

Gregory Reed, Ph.D. – From 2008 to the present, Dr. Reed has been an associate professor of School Psychology at Howard University and coordinator of the school's Lab for Testing and Assessment. Dr. Reed is also the Associate Dean of the School of Education. In addition to his assessment expertise, Dr. Reed is a licensed School Psychologist and Board Certified Behavioral Analyst. Additionally, Dr. Reed has served on the Editorial Board of the prestigious *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* and on the Executive Board of the Maryland School Psychology Association.

Advisory Group
David Domenici, J.D. - David Domenici is a co-founder of the See Forever Foundation. He now serves as chair of the See Forever Board of Directors and is a founding board member of the Maya Angelou Public Charter School Board. He recently transitioned out of serving as the Principal at the Oak Hill School, DC's secure facility for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent. Currently, Mr. Domenici is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress. He is also the Director of the Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings, located at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Dr. Melissa Kim, Ed.D. - Melissa Kim is the Director of the Instructional Improvement Initiative at NewSchools Venture Fund and is responsible for leading the DC Pilot for the DC Schools Fund. Prior to joining the NewSchools team, Dr. Kim served as the principal of Alice Deal Middle School, the highest-performing and largest public middle school in the District of Columbia. During her seven years as principal, Dr. Kim transitioned the school from a traditional junior high serving 700 students in grades 7-9 to a team-based middle school serving more than 1,000 students in grades 6-8. She also led the successful effort by Alice Deal to become certified as the first International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program in DC Public Schools. She has served as an assistant principal in Washington, DC, as well as in Arlington, VA. Melissa holds a BS from Colby College, an MS from Trinity College, and an Ed.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Her dissertation focused on practices that close both the academic achievement and social engagement gaps in schools.

Myron Long – Myron Long is currently the Assistant Principal for grades 6-8 at E.L. Haynes Public Charter School. He began his work at Haynes in 2010 as a resident in the New Leaders for New Schools school-leader preparation program. Before entering into the New Leaders Program, Myron taught American and World History at Drew Freeman Middle School and Kipp DC: Aim Academy. While at Aim, he served as the grade level chair for seventh grade as well as the Director of Saturday School. He was selected to lead several professional development sessions for teachers on building relationships

and the impact of race and gender on education. He was the recipient of the "KIPP DC Board Award" award from KIPP DC's Board of Directors for excellent teaching.

Dr. Jamie Ballard III, Ph.D. - Dr. Ballard III has extensive experience as a clinical psychologist working with urban children, youth, and families. For twenty-two years, Dr. Ballard III has provided therapy, counseling, and professional development in-service trainings and seminars on cultural competence, sensitivity, and inclusion psycho-educational training to psychology students and clinicians. He has conducted numerous clinical psychological and psycho-educational assessments and has conducted research on racial socialization and its impact on the expression of delinquent behaviors amongst African and American and Jamaican adolescent males.

Rachel Crouch- Ms. Crouch has seven years of experience in education as an administrator and teacher. She currently serves as an Assistant Principal with Center City Public Charter Schools. From 2010-2012 she was the Academic Dean and Director of Instruction for Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools. She provided instructional leadership and coached math and science teachers to meet their annual growth targets.

Daphne Ward – Ms. Ward has twenty-eight years of elementary education teaching and Special Education Coordination experience with the DC Public Schools System. Ms. Ward received her Bachelor's of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling from California State University Los Angeles. Ms. Ward is a Master Teacher and certified Special Education Teacher.

Rema Reynolds, Ph.D. – Dr. Reynolds' research examines issues of parent engagement as they relate to Black families and student achievement. Her work also examines the effectiveness of culturally responsive pedagogy in strengthening instructional practice and engaging administrators in the school's community. Dr. Reynolds has worked as a consultant for a number of school districts across the country assisting teachers and administrators in increasing community involvement and stakeholder participation. Dr. Reynolds is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of California Los Angeles and Azusa Pacific University, where she teaches aspiring school counselors and school psychologists. Dr. Reynolds is also a former teacher, counselor, and administrator.

Stephanie Fauntleroy –Mrs. Fauntleroy is the owner and Director of the Washington, DC based firm, Baker's Tax and Accounting Services, Inc. For eight years, she has been providing tax and accounting services to small business and individuals.

b. Planning Process

For founding group members Maia Shanklin-Roberts and Angel Anderson, O.U.R. Leadership Academy has grown over the last six years from a vision to reduce the incarceration of high risk youth in the District into a dynamic non-traditional high school

preparing disconnected youth for college and careers. While working together at MaiAngel LLC and Peaceoholics, they became frustrated by the pattern of recidivism and low educational attainment amongst court-involved youth. Servicing 16-year-old high school dropouts or youth who were truant by more than 90 days was the norm. At MaiAngel LLC, they served over 75 youth who experienced significant academic challenges. Their GED program attempted to use its limited resources to remediate and accelerate its students but lacked the capacity to serve all the youth that entered their doors. Only those youth who could "pass the GED", a CASAS score reflecting 9th grade functioning and maturity to study independently, could remain in the program. These were not the attributes of the majority. Many of their prospective students suffered from a range of social and emotional issues, which poverty, incarceration, and related trauma complicated.

Educational advocacy then became the mechanism to find appropriate educational placements for the youth who were not GED-ready. Yet the demand often exceeded the supply. There were not enough public schools that could or would serve the social, emotional, and academic needs of these youth, so they remained neglected or disconnected from school. As educational advocates, Maia and Angel realized that the current public school system lacked the capacity to adequately support disconnected youth in enrolling and graduating from high school. O.U.R. Leadership Academy Public Charter School grew from this desire to push the system and create a viable non-traditional high school option.

As native Washingtonians educated in DC Public Schools, Maia and Angel believe in public schools. It is their intention to give back to the system that is the academic foundation of their present success. They want to help DC's public school system provide a non-traditional school conducive to addressing the educational disparities faced by disconnected youth in the city, as discussed in section on the Educational Needs of the Target Population.

Through The Academy, disconnected youth will be reconnected to education and placed on a path of college and careers. Particularly for those students who are funneled into the school to prison pipeline, The Academy will be transformative. It will ensure high academic performance, a strong sense of 'self,' and a clear plan for a positive, productive future.

Planning Process: Youth, Families, and Community Input
O.U.R. Leadership Academy benefited from input from MaiAngel LLC's former clients and their families during the planning process for the school. They provided substantive input that informed the development of school and application. This school was not designed as a response to a theoretical need. It has grown out of interaction with its actual target population. These youth have shared their educational histories and explained why traditional education was ineffective. MaiAngel LLC's former GED program has enabled us to evaluate the inputs that cultivate the desire to learn.

Families of former MaiAngel LLC clients have served as a sounding board for the best ways to engage the student's entire support system. For example, discussing The Academy with non-parent guardians who felt ignored by schools because they were not the biological parents was an important lesson for the founders. As a result, The Academy has adopted a comprehensive definition of parent. Family members also expressed how important it was for the school to engage in the community and into the homes of its students in order to increase engagement and enhance accountability.

The community of juvenile justice advocates has also been instrumental in the design of the school. The Founding Group has met with the Executive Directors of Latin American Youth Center, DC Lawyers for Youth, Mentoring Today, East of the River Police Community Partnership and Columbia Heights Family Strengthening Collaborative to name a few. Maia and Angel have also drawn upon the knowledge gained during their community-based work to refine The Academy's mission and educational philosophy.

Beyond the interaction with former MaiAngel LLC clients, their families and community stakeholders, the founding group has visited two alternative schools in Baltimore operated by Diploma Plus and the Maya Angelou School in the New Beginnings facility here in Washington D.C. Both Diploma Plus and Maya Angelou have been recognized nationally for helping disconnected youth achieve in non-traditional academic environments. The founding group has also met with the leadership of Ballou Senior High School, Cesar Chavez Public Charter School's Parkside Campus, and Building for the Future Academy to better understand how to effectively engage and teach youth with significant academic challenges. Dr. Heiber has been instrumental in sharing lesson learned from like-minded school leaders in other areas such as Detroit, Michigan, Montgomery County, MD and Newark, New Jersey.

More generally, the substantial professional experience of The Academy's founding group has contributed significantly to the application. They serve on the founding group of other charter schools, educational consultants to area public schools and are leaders of District Agencies providing wraparound services to the target population. Their knowledge and experiences have been invaluable to the development of a strong application.

Implementation: Community Involvement
As described in the Education Plan, The Academy plans to build a strong relationship with its surrounding community and the broader community that supports its target population.

The Academy will request that organizations and community members that want to aid in implementing the charter join the school's Family, Teacher, Community and Student Association (FTSCA). As its name implies, the FTSCA is not just a typical PTA. It includes families, teachers, students, and community. The FTSCA will serve as a sounding board

and mechanism to fill gaps in the school's academic and operational programs. Teachers and students will have a strong voice in creating school policies and procedures in order to ensure high-performance and meet the school's commitment to providing culturally responsive instruction. Families will also be encouraged to become partners with the school. Through the election of parent representatives to the Board of Directors and actual community-based engagement with the student's families, The Academy will ensure family engagement in the school's implementation.

The Academy also anticipates maintaining a strong Advisory Board comprising educators and community members who can provide ongoing support and guidance for the school. Currently, there are seven persons that have agreed to provide continued guidance around the academic and operational functions of the school.

The Academy will join organizations like the Special Education Collaborative and maintain the founding group's ties with Building Hope, FOCUS, and EdOps in order to remain connected to the local charter community and receive the technical support required to properly implement the charter school.

Implementation: Board of Director and School Leadership Recruitment
The Academy's Founding Group and Advisory Board comprise professionals who study, teach, and develop programming for youth. The Group also consists of partners who have operational and organizational-leadership strengths. Eight of the eleven founding group members have managed budgets in excess of $1M and six have managed staffs of 50 or more. Their expertise in developmental outcomes and best practices has shaped the original vision and construction of the mission and philosophy of the school.

Members of the current Founding Group will serve on the board. In addition, the Group will seek persons with expertise in finance, real estate, and fund development. These particular perspectives will strengthen the board's capacity to develop a comprehensive plan for operation and growth. Upon receipt of the charter, The Academy plans to seek the support of Charter Board Partners in filling these and other Board needs.

The Academy is also in the process of recruiting a Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The Academy has developed a job announcement that is in circulation among the personal networks of the founding group. The Academy has received and is reviewing two applications. Interviews will be scheduled upon receipt of the Charter. The Academy's goal is to have the position filled by June 30, 2013.

c. Corporate Structure and Nonprofit Status of the School

O.U.R. Leadership Academy Public Charter School has been incorporated as a non-profit in the District of Columbia. Articles of Incorporation can be found in Section J; draft bylaws are also in Section J.

O.U.R. Leadership Academy Public Charter School will apply for its tax-exempt status in May 2013.

2. Governance and Management

a. Board of Directors

The Founding Group will manage the development of a Board of Directors that meets the requirements specified in the School Reform Act. The Academy's Board of Directors will be composed of an odd number of members not to exceed fifteen. Two of the members will be parents of current students, and the majority will be residents of the District of Columbia.

Board of Directors – Selection Process
Members of The Academy's Founding Group will be the primary group from which the initial Board of Directors will be selected. When considering additional candidates, the board will identify its current needs with regard to professional background, personal skills, and individual talents. In addition, the board will seek new Directors with expertise in education, nonprofit management, law, real estate, fund development, marketing and communications, and the juvenile justice system. The board's Executive Committee will seek new candidates from a variety of sources, including individuals with past service to the school community and individuals currently serving the school.

The Executive Committee will ensure that all members of the board possess the following qualifications:
1. Belief that all children can achieve the highest levels of academic excellence regardless of the circumstances into which they are born.
2. Availability to participate meaningfully in the governance of the school.
3. Expertise in law, real estate, financial management, governance, marketing, fund raising, community organizing /outreach, education or strategic planning.
4. Personal experience with entrepreneurship and working in diverse teams.
5. Willingness to leverage personal and professional networks on behalf of the school.
6. A deep commitment to improving the quality of education for District of Columbia children and the quality of life for the citizens of the District of Columbia.

Selection of Parent Members to the Board of Directors
Two seats of the Board of Directors will be reserved for family representatives. The two family representatives will be appointed to the board through an application process. The Board of Directors will review applications, interview applicants who pass preliminary review and come to a consensus about the final selection of the two parent representatives to serve on the board. The selection of these members will include input from the Family Teachers, Students, and Community Association, the Academy's PTA equivalent. Family representatives will participate in the same orientation as all other Directors.

Succession Planning for the Board and Leadership

The Academy will engage in emergency leadership planning, departure-defined succession planning, and strategic leadership development to ensure leadership continuity within the board and the School. Succession planning will be the responsibility of the board's Executive Committee. The Committee will develop three documents to address unplanned and planned departure of the board and the school's leadership.

- The Emergency Succession Plan will outline the procedures for the immediate replacement of the school's administration and members of the board.
- The Departure-Defined Succession Plan will outline the process for the future planned replacement or permanent exit of the school's leadership and members of the board. In addition to the Departure-Defined Succession Plan, the board's terms will be staggered so that no more than 1/3 of the board is up for election in any year, unless a vacancy needs to be filled.
- The Capacity-building Plan will be a three-year strategic plan that ensures the creation of an internal pool of leadership candidates for the continuous execution of necessary operational, programmatic and administrative responsibilities.

Board of Directors - Organization

The board will be organized into four committees in order to manage and provide strategic direction for The Academy. The committees are the Finance, Executive, Academic Excellence and Development Committees. The Academy has chosen a committee structure because it enhances efficiency by tasking persons with specific expertise to develop well-informed recommendations to the full board. The committees will be empowered to create task forces where needed to address specific and finite needs of the school. The board will have at least one staff liaison to communicate with around strategic planning and policy development.

- The Executive Committee is chaired by the board Chair. The Executive Committee oversees the annual evaluation of the Principal and tracks the progress of all committee action plans, monitors the effectiveness of the board as a whole, nominates candidates to the Board of Directors, and ensures best practices in non-profit governance are followed. The Executive Committee will also evaluate the officers of the board. The Principal serves as the liaison to the Executive Committee.
- The Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer. Its purpose is to provide appropriate board oversight of school finances, make recommendations to the full Board regarding the selection of an audit firm, ensure accurate and comprehensive financial reporting to the board and raise strategic financial issues for board discussion. The Operations Manager and the Principal will serve as the school's liaisons.
- The Academic Excellence Committee monitors educational performance, evaluates compliance measures, and assesses the alignment of general school policies with the mission. It reports findings to the board. The Academic Excellence Committee monitors and reports to the board on the school's educational performance and monitors the school's compliance with laws and regulations as well as general school policies that promote and align with the school's mission. The Principal and Director of Curriculum

and Instruction will serve as the school's liaisons.

- The Development Committee will develop and implement a fund development strategy to promote the school's organizational and academic goals. The Principal will serve as the liaison to the Development Committee.

The Board of Directors will have four officer positions: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officer positions will ensure that the board is effective and productive in its governance of the school. The Executive Committee will make nominations for each officer position. The full board will select each officer through voting. The Chair of the board will work closely with the Principal to set meeting agendas and guide and support the board.

Board of Directors – Accountability
The board will hold the charter and use strategic planning and evaluation to hold leadership accountable for meeting the goals set forth in the Charter, holding students to high learning outcomes, and ensuring that there is a demand for the proposed school.

Strategic Planning
A strategic plan will be developed annually. The strategic plan will be a four to five page document that can be understood by all stakeholders including families and community members. The completed plan will contain the vision and mission statements, the school's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis), annual and long- term objectives, functional strategies, individual responsibilities, and status toward meeting goals.

The board is responsible for leading the strategic planning process with substantial input from staff and other key stakeholders. After the board has formally set the goals, the school staff will focus on implementation. Long-range goals are broken down into annual objectives. The leadership team then selects the functional strategies the school will employ to reach the objectives. These steps may include training, new school-level policies, new instructional materials and other purchases, or staff changes. The strategic plan will be finalized in advance of the start of a new school year.

Evaluating Administrator Performance
The board will annually evaluate the performance of the Principal to identify opportunities for professional growth and acknowledge areas of excellence. The board will create a corrective action plan for areas in need of improvement that includes long-range goals and interim benchmarks. The board will also publicly acknowledge the administration's achievements or create a reward/bonus plan.

Evaluating School Performance
The board will participate in the annual performance evaluation of the overall school and school culture. The outcome of the school performance evaluation will determine areas of strength and weakness in order to inform the annual strategic planning process for the school.

Providing Continuous Support ⏎

The board will ensure that a positive relationship exists between itself and the school to enhance accountability. The board will show confidence in the discernment and abilities of the Principal by staying out of the day-to-day operations of the school. The board will also include the school's administrators in the strategic planning process and provide sufficient time to meet the board's requests, heightening awareness of expectations and feasibility of proposed goals. The Board will also provide professional development and coaching to ensure that the administration can effectively implement the strategic plan and promote the high performance of the students and the school.

<u>Board of Directors - Relationship to the school's administrators, staff, parents and students</u>
The Board of Directors will work to establish a highly effective relationship between the Academy's administrators, staff, parents and students. The board will rely on input from these stakeholders to guide the direction of the school. The board will use the FTSCA as the primary conduit for communication between itself and the school's stakeholders. The feedback received from the FTSCA, will inform the board's decisions; ensure delivery of the school's mission and vision and development of the strategic plan.

Parents, students or Academy staff will have access to the board to review unresolved grievances, once all avenues have been exhausted. The Board's Executive Committee will establish protocols for handling grievances.

The Board of Directors will use its meetings as a mechanism to increase transparency and accountability. During the planning year and in Year 1, the board will meet monthly. The schedule, once finalized, will be made available to the FTSCA as well as the school administrators and staff. Any decisions reached during board meetings, will be made known to the FTSCA, administrators and staff within a timely manner. The board will reserve the right to hold executive sessions as necessary.

While the board is not to be involved in the day- to- day matters of the school, it will have an active presence in the school community. For example, "Board visit days" will be an opportunity for staff, faculty and students to informally interact with the board to ask questions, listen to reports, and provide input into important decisions. The Board will also attend events and activities of the school.

Board and Principal Relationship
In order to maintain an effective relationship between the board and the Principal, the board will establish clear distinctions between its functions and the functions of the Principal. The main function of the Board of Directors is to provide oversight, secure additional funding and develop the strategic plan. The Principal's main responsibility is to implement the mission and vision established by the board. To this end, the distinctions between the board and Principal's role ensure a cooperative relationship of governance and management.

Board of Directors – Powers and Duties
The Board will have ultimate authority in ensuring that the school meets its mission. The powers and duties of the Board of Directors are outlined in the by-laws and further contained in the Charter School Board of Directors Job Description and Charter School Individual Director Performance Expectations.

The powers of the board include but are not limited to the following:
- Set The Academy's mission and purpose
- Hire, evaluate, and, if necessary, terminate the Principal
- Develop, approve and implement the school's strategic plan
- Develop and implement the school's fund development strategy
- Develop, approve and provide oversight over the school's policies
- Approve major transactions
- Approve budgets and generally serve as a steward of the organization's financial resources
- Hire and fire the financial auditor [1]

Individual Board members must adhere to the legal duties of care, loyalty and obedience in the execution of these powers. The duty of care requires Board members to use their judgment and act in a manner of an "ordinary prudent person" in similar circumstances.[2] As such it will be expected that the Academy's Board members, actively participate in the decisions and activities of the board. It is also expected that board members make informed decisions and recommendations to advance the school's mission and strategic goals. The duty of care requires that Board members refrain from activities that could create a conflict of interest. The Academy's conflict of interest policies will clearly define when board members breach this duty and establish the appropriate remedies. The duty of obedience requires that board members remain in compliance with all laws and adhere to the board's bylaws. The Academy will reinforce this duty through its Board agreement and other quality control and quality assurance policies.

The Board will use its committees – executive, finance, operations and development to carry out specific tasks and projects that will also be guided by the same powers and duties. The Board will be also be responsible for other administrative areas mandated by the District of Columbia or federal law.

Once a charter is awarded, the Founding Group will develop the Board Manual. The Board Manual will address the following issues: legal documents, strategic plans, membership

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[1] Board Source. *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit* Boards, http://www.boardsource.org/Knowledge.asp?ID=3.368.
[2] "Compliance for Highly Effective Charter Board Schools", Charter Board Partners, http://charterboards.org/files/4013/5899/5076/CBP_Compliance_Tool.pdf.

organizations and operation, finance and resource development, public and community relations, school code of conduct, and human resources and personnel. The Board Manual will be submitted to the full Board for vote at the first annual meeting.

Board of Directors – Conflicts of Interest
The Academy expects that all members of its Board of Directors exercise good faith and avoid participating in any activity where there exists an actual or perceived conflict of interest. A conflict of interest will arise whenever the personal or professional interests of a board member are at odds with the best interest of the school. Specifically, the school has defined the following as areas of potential conflict: obtaining financial gain or advantage for themselves or members of their family; disclosing confidential information and serving on a committee, interest group, task force or other such groups that negatively impacts the work of The Academy.

Prior to appointment, prospective Board members will submit a disclosure statement naming any potential conflicts. The Executive Committee will review the disclosure statement to determine if the conflict precludes board membership. If the Executive Committee is unable to reach consensus, the Committee will seek the opinion of legal counsel. Board members will re-submit disclosure statements annually. As with the initial statement, the annual disclosures will be reviewed by the Executive Committee. It will decide whether a conflict exists and the appropriate remedy. For example, a Board member with a conflict might be asked to recuse him/herself from discussion and voting on certain issues.

If any member of the board becomes aware of an actual or potential conflict of interest involving another member, he/she must adhere to the following procedures:
1. Discuss the issue with the Member;
2. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, the Board Chair must be informed and the Chair must develop the appropriate resolution;
3. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the Chair must present the issue to the board for decision.

Where an individual member believes that he has an actual or potential conflict of interest, it is incumbent upon that member to recuse themself from discussion and decision-making in the matter. The recusal will then be noted in the record.

The Executive Committee will refine the Conflict of Interest policy to further define areas of conflict and its procedures for remedy.

c. Administrative Structure
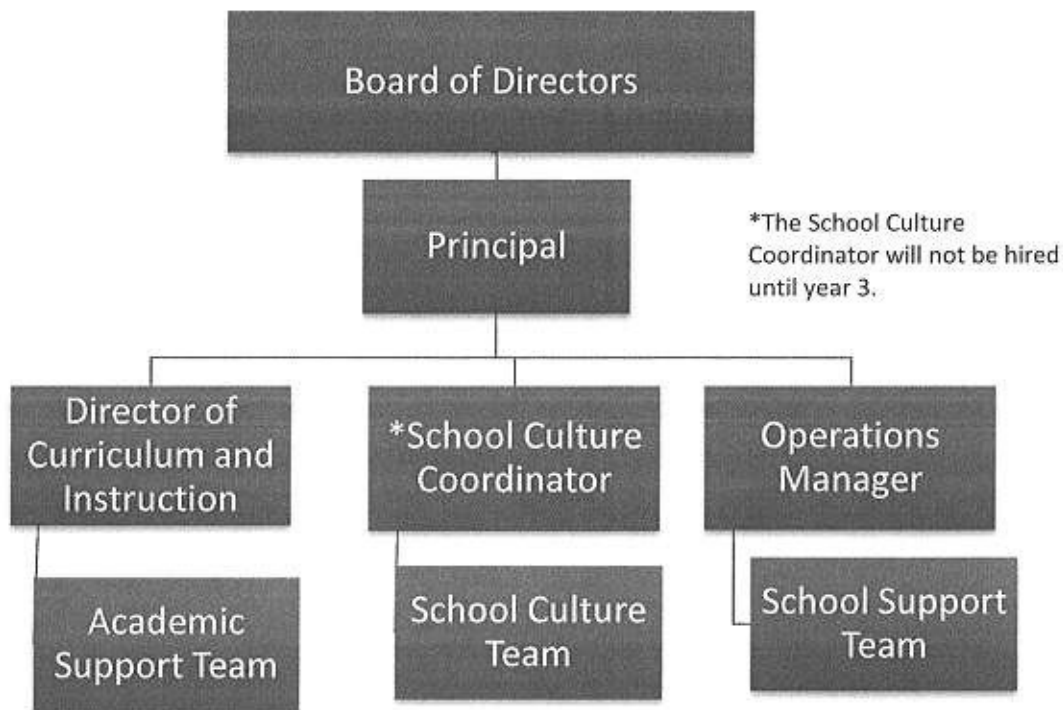
The Principal will be responsible for the administration of the school. The Principal will directly supervise the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and the School Culture Coordinator. Until year three of the school's operation, the Principal will handle the responsibilities of the School Culture Coordinator. The Principal will report to the Board of Directors.

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for the teaching and instructional program of the school. He or she will supervise the Academic Support Team that includes: teachers, Resident Teachers, the Guidance Counselor and Special Education Coordinator.

The School Culture Coordinator will be responsible for managing the school climate and wrap-around supports. The School Culture Coordinator will supervise the School Culture Team, which includes the Licensed Clinical Social Worker, School Psychologist, and the Outreach and Engagement Coordinator.

The Operations Manager will manage the business and financial operations of the school. The Operations Manager will report to the Principal and supervise the School Support Team. The Operations Manager will be responsible for the development and implementation of the accounting policies of the school and ensuring compliance with federal and local accounting procedures. He or she will also be responsible for providing oversight to EdOps or similar accounting firm.

How will parents, teachers, and students of the proposed school have input in decision-making?
Parent, Teacher and Student Input in Decision-Making

The Academy will use the following mechanisms to receive parent, teacher, and student input in decision-making:

- The Family, Teacher, Student and Community Association (FTSCA), as a mechanism to increase familial, teacher and student input in decision-making.
- Stakeholder surveys, as tools to obtain recommendations for enhancing school policies.
- Family representatives on the board of directors to drive the mission and vision of the school and enhance the annual strategic planning process.
- Staff meetings and professional development to solicit staff input.
- Student surveys and the Student Government Association as a forum to empower students and bridge the communication between students and the Principal and Board of Directors.

3. Finance

a. Anticipated Sources of Funds

Anticipated Per Pupil Allocation

	2013-14 (Planning)	2014-15	2015-16
Student Enrollment			
Ninth Grade		50	50
Tenth Grade		50	50
Eleventh Grade		0	50
Total Number of Students		100	150
% of students receiving special education services		30%	30%
% of students who are English Language Learners (ELLs)		1%	1%
Per Pupil Allocations			
UPSFF (High School)		$11,119	$11,453
Facilities Allowance		$3,000	$3,000
Per Pupil Revenue			
Total Per Pupil Allocation		$1,111,926	$1,717,926
Total Facilities Allowance		$300,000	$450,000
Total Special Education Funding		$635,523	$962,730

Total ELL Funding		$4,314	$8,886
Total Summer School funding		$0	$162,955
Total Per Pupil Charter Payments		$2,051,763	$3,302,496
Other Public Revenue			
Federal Entitlements	$200,000	$375,400	$443,158
National School Lunch Program		$43,126	$75,513
Healthy Schools Act Program		$3,500	$6,928
E-Rate Program		$2,520	$11,680
Total Other Public Revenue	$200,000	$424,545	$537,279
Total Public Funding	$200,000	$2,476,308	$3,839,775

Additional Expected Resources

Private Revenue			
Grants and Donations	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Activity Fees		$2,329	$4,318
Interest Income		$328	$547
Total Private Revenue	$10,000	$12,658	$14,866

Describe what contingencies are in place in the event that funds for per pupil allocations are not available as early as expected, or are lower than expected.

Funding Contingency Plan

For the purposes of thinking about our contingency planning, The Academy differentiate between enrollment-related funding shocks and other types because elicit different initial responses. In the event that enrollment was significantly lower than expected, the first response would be to determine if instructional staff could be cut to bring student teacher ratios back in line with our original plan. This would apply to both scenarios in which total enrollment was lower than budgeted or where the special education levels were lower than budgeted.

For most other types of revenue shock (e.g. sequestration of federal funding) or for cuts that are still required after class sizes have been normalized in an enrollment shock, the plan would be to find places to save the necessary funds outside of the classroom to the extent possible. Potential examples would include the following:
- Reduce the full time Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LISCW) to part time. The School Psychologist (already at part time in year 1) would share the counseling responsibilities with the LICSW in year 1. This would save approximately $33,750 plus benefits.
- Reduce capital budget by reducing or deferring per-teacher computer and per-classroom furniture expenses.
- Reduce salaries of administrative staff.

Only as a last resort would The Academy consider options such as increasing average class size or cutting the number of resident teachers. To reduce the likelihood that painful cuts would be required in the event of a revenue shock, the school has adopted conservative budgeting practices, with an average surplus in the first five years of operations of 4% of revenue. This practice has the dual effect of creating a contingency in the annual operating budget that can help cushion the impact of revenue shocks and, over time, creating a cash reserve that can serve as an added protection for the school. The school will also seek a $25K line of credit that can serve as an additional protection.

Financial Goals and Objectives

The overall financial goal of The Academy is to build a budget that enhances program quality in both the short and long run. Programmatically, the Academy seeks to fulfill the emotional, social, and academic needs of disconnected youth. In order to adequately address these issues, it will be necessary to recruit and retain a strong network of administrators, teachers, social workers, and other critical staff members and to provide them with sufficient resources. The budget reflects the investments necessary to create such a school, including above-average teacher salaries and dedicated support staff to drive instructional improvements and student achievement.

For long run program quality, spending on these direct drivers of quality will be wedded with financial sustainability and long-range planning. Towards that end, the budget generates an average annual surplus over the five years in excess of 4%. Over the course of the five years, The Academy is budgeted to accumulate in excess of $1M in cash reserves. These reserves can be used to help the school withstand against financial shocks and also as equity for financing a permanent facility.

b. Planned Fundraising Efforts

The Academy has three immediate fundraising objectives: develop a capital campaign to purchase a facility, minimize the impact of budgetary shocks and increase revenue for student materials, technology and experiential learning opportunities. Traditional and non-traditional funding streams were researched and will be incorporated as school's fundraising strategy is refined. For year 1 through year 5, the school has set a minimum annual fundraising goal of $10,000 for budgeting purposes, though in practice the goal will be more. Achieving the $10,000 goal will support the school purchase laptops or computers for all its faculty and staff.

Federal and State Funding: Applying for state and federal funding will be a significant component of the fund development strategy. The Academy will apply for grants related but not limited to at-risk youth, court-involved youth, charter schools, education, alternative education, Washington, DC, and poverty. The Title Vb grant administered by OSSE provides approximately $700,000 in funding for planning year, year 1, and year 2. The Academy will seek federal funding from the Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Department of Education. Historically, these agencies have given grants to support programs serving the

targeted population. The Academy has researched the following grants from the Department of Education:

- Gaining Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (Gear Up)
- Parental Information and Resource Center Grant
- Elementary and School Counseling Grants
- College Access Challenge Grant Program
- Enhancing Education Through Technology (Ed-Tech) State Program

Foundations and Corporations: The Academy will primarily seek foundations and corporations that provide funding in the following areas: education, alternative education, at-risk youth, court-involved youth, and Washington, DC. Below is a list of opportunities that the school is currently exploring:

- Roy A. Hunt- Youth Violence Prevention Initiative
- Taco Bell Foundation for Teens- Grants to Inspire Teens to Stay in School & Graduate
- Dollar General Literacy Foundation- Youth Literacy Grants
- NEA Foundation – Student Achievement Grants
- Walton Family Foundation – Public Charter School Grant
- Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation- Community Improvement and Public Education
- John Edward Fowler Memorial Foundation- Fowler Educational Grants
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Individual Donors: The Board's Development Committee will also cultivate contributions from individual donors. Each board member will be expected to make a monetary contribution as well as achieve individual fundraising goal through their spheres of influence. The Academy will also use social media campaigns focusing on crowd sourcing, aggregating individuals around causes through online platforms, such as Cause, Crowdrise, and Network for Good.
The Committee will also sponsor fundraising events like an annual fundraiser to increase financial support for the school.

Planning Year Funds
The Academy plans to apply for the Title V-b Startup grant through the Office of the State Superintendent for Education. The Academy also plans to apply for the Walton Family Fund Public Startup Grant. The Academy also plans to initiate a giving campaign to solicit individual donations for cover the cost of planning and development. For budgeting purposes, only the Title V-b grant ($200K for planning year) plus $10K in additional fundraising is assumed.

c. Financial Management and Accounting

The Operations Manager will be the staff person responsible for financial management and internal accounting procedures. The school plans to hire EdOps or a similar accounting firm specializing in charter schools to advise it with respect to financial management and accounting procedures and to handle certain outsourced functions. The operations manager will be the primary interface with EdOps on a day-to-day basis and be responsible for managing that relationship.

The school will maintain its books on an accrual basis in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (as defined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants). It will maintain its books using mainstream accounting software commonly used by D.C. charter schools (e.g. Quickbooks, Peachtree). A firm from the PCSB's approved auditors list will conduct an annual financial audit. The Board of Directors will be responsible for hiring that firm.

Financial policies and procedures will be spelled out in detail in a financial policies manual to be adopted by the Board of Directors by June 30, 2013. In general, the Board of Directors, with guidance from its Finance committee, will be responsible for establishing financial policies and for ultimate oversight regarding the financial integrity of the school. The Principal and Operations Manager will be responsible for implementing those policies. Policies including but not limited to the following issues will be covered in the manual: opening and closing bank accounts; audit procedures; investment policy; asset safeguard and physical controls; borrowing funds and establishing lines of credit; budget process; contracts and agreements; insurance and payroll systems.

Cash Flow Management Plan
The foundation of the school's cash flow management plan is solid accounting and regular internal reporting. All bank accounts will be reconciled and reviewed by the staff and the board monthly. Having advance warning of any potential or actual cash flow shocks is a priority within this process.

The next element of the cash flow management plan is the timely submission of federal grants reimbursement workbooks. This will be particularly important during the early years when the school has large amounts of Title V-b funding. In order to prevent cash flow crunches, the school will submit grant reimbursement requests in a timely manner. Retaining EdOps or a similar firm specializing in D.C. charter schools will enhance the school's capacity to maintain a positive cash flow.

Finally, the Founding Group will develop safety nets to protect the school in the event of a cash flow shock. Conservative budgeting, will aid the school build a cash reserve over the years. To augment that reserve, the school will attempt to establish a line of credit with a commercial bank of $25K.

Financial Separation from Parent Organization
N/A

d. Civil Liability and Insurance

The following types and minimum levels of coverage will be purchased in time for the planning of the opening and the opening of the school:

* All numbers are expressed in $1,000's

General Liability	$1000 per occurrence, $2000 aggregate
Directors and Officers Liability	$1000
Educators Legal Liability	$1000
Umbrella Coverage	$3000 (not providing transportation)
Property/Lease Insurance	100% of replacement cost
Boiler and Machinery Insurance	Actual loss sustained
Auto Liability Insurance	$1000
Workers Compensation	As required by law
Health Insurance	Major Medical, Hospitalization, Dental, Vision, Prescription

e. Provision for Audit

An audit of financial statements will be conducted annually by a Certified Public Accountant licensed in the District of Columbia. A firm from the DC Public Charter School Board's approved list will perform the audit. The Academy will voluntarily provide all financial records and requested data to support the timely completion of a financial audit. Upon completion, The Academy will submit a copy to the DC Public Charter School Board in accordance with published deadlines.

4. Facilities

a. Identification of a Site

O.U.R. Leadership Academy PCS Site Identification and Acquisition Timetable
The Academy recognizes that securing a facility is one of the most significant challenges a startup charter school faces. In recognition of the importance and difficulty of this challenge, the school has decided to seek professional guidance from the outset and has partnered with Building Hope. A letter of support is included in the appendix.

First, The Academy intends to be centrally located. Accessibility, both in relation to proximity to metro and degree of gang/crew neutrality, is key in selecting a facility. Based on this consideration, facilities availability, and neighborhood demographics, The Academy believes Wards 5 & 6, specifically the Navy Yard Area, would be its ideal geographic target. With that said, The Academy is realistic about the difficulty of the process and remains open to various location possibilities.

In terms of size, The Academy is fortunate compared to most charter schools in that it has a relatively modest enrollment increase. Between launch in Year 1 and full enrollment in Year 3, The Academy only increases its enrollment by 100 students. That means it could realistically stay in its initial facility for multiple years. In estimating the ideal size for that facility, the Academy took its full enrollment of 200 students and applied the recommended industry standard supplied by Building Hope of 100 square feet per student to arrive at an estimate of 20,000 square feet. The building should include approximately 20 rooms in total for classes, staff offices, and a cafeteria as well as recreational space.

With a general understanding of the location and type of facility it is seeking, The Academy is pursuing the following options to secure a temporary facility for the school.

Incubator Space: Building Hope's Incubator Initiative provides affordable facilities for charter schools to use while seeking a more permanent location. The two major advantages of the Incubator Initiative are 1) that it offer occupancy ready space so the school does not have to add renovation to its startup challenges and 2) that the rental rate is equal to the number of student times 80% of the facilities allowance so the school is not exposed to the potential expense of paying full rent and not reaching maximum enrollment. The major drawback of the Incubator Initiative is that a space for SY2014-15 is not currently available. The rotational period of its occupants ensures that there will be some future availability, but there is no guaranty at this point exactly where that will be.

Co-location or sublet: The Academy considers co-location with other charter schools or DCPS a viable option. In particular, Richard Wright PCS and the Academy have initiated discussions regarding co-locating at the Blue Castle in the Navy Yard. A major advantage of this solution would be that it presents an opportunity to build relationships with another charter school, to share resources, and model collaboration for students. A potential drawback is that co-location can pose challenges related to behavior given The Academy's target population.

Commercial Leasing: The Academy will also work with Building Hope to seek commercial spaces that may suit the school's facility needs. The advantages in this solution are the flexibility in the number of sites potentially available in a dynamic commercial market and the potential ability to customize your own site. The major drawbacks are the cost given that commercial real estate space ranges from $20-25 per square foot on a NNN basis and the potential difficulties of financing and managing any renovations needed as a young school.

Given this framework, The Academy has set the following timeline to secure a facility for the school:

- Site Search: Ongoing
- Site Selection: December 2013
- Lease negation and finalization: January 2014
- Architectural design and renovation: February – March 2014
- Completion of Renovation: April 2014
- Occupation by the Academy: August 2014

The timeline includes a four-month contingency between completion of the renovation and occupation of the building to allow for unforeseen complications.

b. Site Renovation

Site Renovation

N/A

DCPS Site Conversion and Renovation

N/A

c. Financing Plans for Facilities

At this point in the process, the school has not secured a facility, so our goal here is to sketch various financing scenarios.

The simplest scenario is a rental that involves lease payments with no significant renovation. This would be the case for both the Incubator Initiative and Blue Castle colocation and so, at this point is probably the most likely scenario for The Academy for its first year of operations. The lease payment would be financed from all available revenue sources including but not limited to per pupil funding, federal funding (to the extent permitted by law), private grants and donations, and other fundraising activities, though our goal would be for the lease payments to fit within the facilities allotment.

A more complex scenario would involve the purchase of a facility or a major renovation of a facility (either leased or purchased). In this case, The Academy's first priority would be to obtain professional guidance from a group such as Building Hope that has significant charter school facilities expertise. With that guidance in place, the school would then most likely proceed to obtain some type of debt financing to pay for the project. Financing would be sought from the sources typically pursued by D.C. charter schools, which include commercial bank financing, new market tax credits, tax-exempt bonds, credit enhancement products, and subordinate debt

from Building Hope or OSSE. Fixed rate debt instruments are preferred. To the extent those are not available directly from the primary lender, interest rate swap options would then be investigated. In terms of serving the debt, the school's goal would be for total facilities cost (including debt service and any lease payments) to fit within the facilities allotment.

The Academy recognizes that many of these financing options receive require the school to make an equity contribution of its own. Accordingly, the school has planned to build conservative operating budgets with the goal of building cash reserve that can help meet this equity requirement.

d. Building Maintenance

The Academy will contract with an industrial cleaning service to provide daily cleaning services. Prior to signing a lease, The Academy will have the building inspected by an appropriate engineer.

If The Academy uses one of Building Hope's incubator spaces, the school will contract with Building Hope to provide building maintenance.

5. Recruiting and Marketing

a. Outreach to the Community [see below for student recruitment]

O.U.R. Academy PCS: School Marketing Strategy
The Academy will host events at local community centers as well as at/in conjunction with community businesses and organizations to gain visibility and connectivity and broker relationships with local partners and ambassadors. Events are a great way to garner corporate support as well as market the school and attract students and staff.

Additionally, The Academy will aggressively reach out to organizations and agencies that support disconnected youth in Washington, DC. Department of Youth and Rehabilitation Services, Court Social Services, Metropolitan Police Department and DC Department of Corrections, DC Child Welfare Agencies will be the primary agencies from which The Academy will seek referrals for the school.

The Academy intends to serve youth, 16-21, who are disconnected from school. It is expected that a majority of the population will be over-aged and under-credited or significantly marginalized in their current educational placements.

Community-based Outreach Strategy
The Founding group has developed relationships with the following organizations to assist in outreach and recruitment efforts:

Organization	Key Contacts	Mission of Organization
DC Lawyers for Youth	R. Daniel Okonkwo and Eduardo Ferrer	DC Lawyers for Youth seeks to improve the DC juvenile justice system by advocating for reforms that promote positive youth development, effective legal representation, and supportive relationships between the community and DC's youth.
Free Minds	Tara Libert	Free Minds' mission is to introduce young inmates to the transformative power of books and creative writing. By mentoring them and connecting them to supportive services throughout their incarceration into reentry, Free Minds inspires these youths to see their potential and achieve new educational and career goals.
Dream Works Inc.	Daniel Bradley	Dreams Work, Inc. continuously strives to meet the needs of youth by providing them with the opportunity to gain life-building skills using the arts. They will utilize their talent(s) through performances, as a way to spread awareness and education about various social issues throughout the community.
DC Youth Link	Eric Abraham	DC YouthLink is a coalition of community-based organizations united in providing a network of resources, services, and support to enhance the community capacity to respond to the needs of DYRS youth and families and provide a system to successfully reintegrate DYRS youth back into their community.
Life Deeds	M.E. Morris	The mission of Life Deeds, Inc. is to provide comprehensive, quality professional services to runaway, homeless, committed, abused, neglected and at-risk youth. We accomplish this by providing youth residential facilities, life skills training, counseling and positive youth development activities.

Community Information about DCPS Conversion

N/A

b. Recruitment of Students

The Academy will recruit students using the following mechanisms:

1. Direct Referrals – Referrals from agencies and organizations that work with disconnected youth. The Academy will set up partnership agreements with agencies like

Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services, Department Of Employment Services, Department of Human Services, Child and Family Services Agency, Department of Parks and Recreation, Court Social Services to aid in the enrollment of youth who are "wards of the state", homeless and/or have "dropped out". These agreements will enhance the system of accountability around student attendance and performance. The Academy will conduct open houses for the stakeholders of the particular agencies to inform them of the schools program and its mechanisms to appropriately engage the target population.

2. Web-based marketing - The Academy will also initiate an Internet campaign, using the organization's website, Facebook and Twitter for ongoing outreach to the school's community. These social media tools are vital to maintain the schools "buzz" and foster new relationships with potential students, funders and partners.

3. Traditional media marketing – The Academy will procure advertisement through various newspapers and radio stations. We also plan to use bus advertisements. Print media will ensure that the Academy has opportunities for unlimited exposure and can reach the target market that lack regular access to the Internet.

4. Community Based Referrals – The Academy will also conduct outreach to organizations that work with high-risk youth. The Academy will similarly host open houses to engage community partners in the school.

5. Direct outreach to target youth and families – The Academy will hire an Outreach and Family Engagement Coordinator at least 5 months prior to the schools opening. This person will be responsible for conducting outreach to target youth in the community, managing relationships between community-based organizations, families and The Academy and facilitating the intake process.

Student Recruitment Timeline
The Academy will begin actively recruiting students during the summer of 2013. In preparation for recruitment, The Academy will complete the following tasks between May 2013 and the June 2013:
- Develop advertising materials and the website;
- Formalize relationships with community partners and government agencies that engage disconnected youth; and
- Explore opportunity for obtaining public announcement spaces on radio, public television and various print and social media.

Beginning in June 2013, The Academy will participate in community events and fairs to promote the school and distribute information to prospective students and families. Once a facility is secured, The Academy will host open houses and enrollment fairs.

Student recruitment will be an ongoing process. The Academy will modify its student recruitment timeline as needed to ensure it hits annual enrollment targets.

Enrollment Strategy in the Event of Locating in an Area Densely Populated with Schools
At present, it is not the plan to locate the school in an area that is densely populated with schools. However, if that becomes the case, The Academy will aggressively target youth in all areas of the city. The Academy will also reach out to other high schools, serving a similar population to receive referrals from their waitlist. Additionally, the school will strengthen its outreach to community organizations/agencies serving disconnected youth and request their support in recruiting prospective students.

Target Population and Open Enrollment Process
The Academy plans to target youth who have been disconnected from traditional schools. The Academy will use the Common Application and deadlines to facilitate an open and enrollment process. The information gathered will not be used to ascribe preference to prospective students. Youth will be enrolled based upon the capacity of the school though the lottery and waitlist process described in the Operations Plan. The Academy will follow the policy as outlined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 in enrolling homeless youth.

c. Future Expansion and Improvements

Enrollment Targets and Plans for Future Expansion

	SY 2014/2015 (100)	SY 2015/2016 (150)	SY 2016/2017 (200)	SY 2018/2019 (200)	SY 2020/2021 (200)
9th grade	50	50	50	50	50
10th grade	50	50	50	50	50
11th grade	0	50	50	50	50
12th grade	0		50	50	50
Total ELL population	1	1.5	2	2	2
Special Needs Level 1	2.5	3.75	5	5	5
Special Needs Level 2	7.5	11.25	15	15	15
Special Needs Level 3	13.8	20.7	27.6	27.6	27.6
Special Needs Level 4	6.3	9.45	12.6	12.6	12.6

The Academy will open in 2014 with 100 students and reach its capacity in SY 2016/2017 with 200 students. The Academy does not expect to expand its facility during its initial five years of operations as its enrollment growth is modest enough that it plans to begin in a facility that supports its projected student population.

The Academy will implement its teacher recruitment strategy to seek additional staff to support the academic and socio-emotional needs of the students. Staff candidates will be identified through classified ads, search firms, website advertisements, and personal referrals. The Academy will also participate in job fairs. To find candidates who have experience with the target population and meet the hiring criteria, the school will develop an internal pipeline by recruiting staff and teachers through partnerships with colleges and universities and targeting non-traditional candidates. The Academy will also use creative strategies and marketing techniques to attract and retain highly qualified teachers, administrative, and support staff.

Additionally, The Academy has budgeted for the increased cost of supporting the annual growth in population during the first three years. The Academy will use its increased Per Pupil Charter Payments and Federal Entitlements to secure resources to serve the larger population. The school has been advised by EdOps that, as we increase our enrollment, scale will most likely make the school easier to operate from a financial perspective. In the event that the school confronts cash flow problems related to growth, the school will use its reserves to fill budgetary gaps. On average the school is allocating 4% of total revenue in each year's operating budget for its reserves.