



Spring 2018 Charter School Application  
Common Application Template



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## Common Application (Part 2)

### Section I: School

#### Academic Model & Schedule

- (1) For all core content and mission-related subject areas:
  - a. Identify the program model or curricula that your school will use and your reasons for these choices, you may include as **Attachment 13** data or research supporting your academic model;
  - b. Identify the interim assessments you will use and how these align to the curricula;
  - c. Describe your professional development plans for teachers and how they connect to the curricula and assessments.
- (2) Where has each identified core instructional component, program model or curricula been used before? What have been the results, in particular with your intended student population?
  - a. If your schools is using an existing curricula, provide the curricula’s Louisiana Department of Education Curricular Review Score (<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews>)
  - b. If the model or curricula has not been scored by LDE, what is the research and evidence base and/or logic model informing your curricular design choices? How will you ensure alignment between the curriculum and state standards, and how will you evaluate the effectiveness of its implementation?
- (3) Describe a day and year in the life of a student at your school. Include, as **Attachment 14**, a weekly student schedule and, as **Attachment 15**, a calendar of special events that will happen throughout the school’s inaugural year.
- (4) Provide as **Attachment 16**, a copy of the school/organization’s [Pupil Progression Plan](#). If your school does not yet have an adopted PPP, please attach a draft version.
- (5) Does the school intend to offer early childhood education, or Pre-Kindergarten classes? Describe the group’s anticipated funding source(s) and model for early childhood education.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH**

Young Audiences Charter School – Orleans Parish (YACS – Orleans) will open as a Pre-K - 3 Type 1 charter, serving 424 students (36 Pre-k, 88 K, and 100 per subsequent grades) in 2018-19 with plans to add a grade each year through 8<sup>th</sup> (chartered Pre-K – 8). YACS – Orleans will be the second school in the YACA network, following the opening of YACS – Jefferson in 2013. YACS – Jefferson currently serves 761 students grades K-7 of which more than 81% qualify for free and reduced lunch. Like its sister school, YACS - Orleans will provide an education that demands rigorous academics while nurturing inherent student talents with a mission to *educate the whole child through arts integration and equip our creative learners to flourish as leaders in life and learning*. Both YACA schools provide an innovative academic environment with differentiated instruction in and through the arts.

We believe that every child has the right to an education that empowers them to play a role in their personal achievement and that fosters skills necessary to be effective and creative thinkers. The demands of the 21st Century require students to be dynamic, creative, and flexible. Young Audiences Charter Association (YACA) is committed to providing an education that inspires students to be independent,



confident, motivated life-long learners who are driven to reach their highest potential. The arts-integrated curriculum allows students to assume responsibility for their own learning by gaining insight from concrete experiences and developing positive problem solving and critical thinking skills to enable more efficient and meaningful choices and deepened understanding. The use of the arts as a teaching tool accommodates individual learning styles across multiple intelligences, encourages active participation, and creates motivation and enthusiasm for learning. This method is designed to support student achievement as well as prepare them for future job markets that are dependent on communication, creativity, and problem solving. In addition, arts experiences afford multiple points of access for parent and community engagement. We believe that by providing greater opportunities for education and engagement community members can become active stakeholders in the development and growth of their school and neighborhood.

A noted study from the National Endowment for the Arts found that at-risk students who have access to the arts in or out of school tend to have better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement. Arts-rich experiences can help English Language Learners increase their vocabulary with arts-related terms, including colors, shapes, and sizes. Special needs students gain from the therapeutic benefits of music, art, and other art forms, and will have multiple opportunities to shine whether performing or displaying artwork. DuPont (1993) found that sixth grade remedial readers using creative drama as a learning strategy scored consistently higher on the Metropolitan Reading Comprehension Test. In a national longitudinal study of 920 high-risk elementary school students in the arts-integrated Different Ways of Knowing Program, Catterall (1995) reported an eight percentile-point gain on standardized tests for one year of participation and a 16-point gain after two years. The arts integration model works because it encourages students to problem solve, think analytically, and use their creativity to play an active role in their own learning. Students who have experienced repeated failure in traditional settings learn how to succeed through a process that requires them to utilize multiple intelligences.

Students highly involved in the arts are more likely to have improved grades, better standardized test scores, and lower dropout rates; the connection is particularly strong among low-income students (Catterall et al., 1999; Heath, 1998). Arts education also develops valuable skills for the workplace such as creativity, organization and collaboration (Ohler, 2000). Finally, the arts are a defining feature of culture; art helps students understand their own identities and provides a window into other historic and contemporary cultures (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001).

Arts education benefits all students because it cultivates the whole child, gradually building literacy across disciplines while developing intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity into unique forms of expression and communication. This process requires not merely an active mind but a trained one. School curricula have traditionally been structured to provide students with opportunities to study separately each of the disciplines (e.g., history, literature, mathematics, science). There is merit to this specialization and work within a discipline. Equally important, however, is to bring wholeness to students' study. Students must have opportunities to see how disciplines meet, overlap, and inform each other. The arts



provide an excellent vehicle for exploring these connections. In particular, the arts offer aesthetic, personal, and creative dimensions to various disciplines included in the curriculum. (Kennedy Center Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program, unpublished paper, 2004).

YACA's arts-integrated curriculum and instruction reflects research from the arts education field that provides significant evidence of the value of the arts in the learning process, and places the arts "firmly within current discussions and debates about the education policies and practices that will best bring about school reform and improvement and high achievement for students" (Deasy, 2002). Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles (1999) found that student learning and achievement in non-arts domains is heightened in environments featuring high quality arts education programs and a school climate supportive of active and participatory learning. Richard Deasy, retired Executive Director of Arts Education Partnership (AEP) and a renowned expert in the field, is now a special advisor to Critical Mission Partner Young Audiences of Louisiana (YALA) and has collaborated on the original design model for YACA.

According to Rocco Landesman, former National Endowment for the Arts' Chairman, "when a school delivers the complete education to which every child is entitled—an education that very much includes the arts—the whole child blossoms." YACS - Orleans creates and supports a culture of high expectations that allows for the "whole child" to truly "blossom." To accomplish this, the school provides a safe, supportive, and challenging environment that encourages students to maximize their learning and explore their interests. We create schools where the artistic habits of mind foster mutual respect for one another and one another's work that permeate all other aspects of the school culture. We empower students of all learning styles and abilities to take ownership over their individual projects while absorbing the material and gaining a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

YACA believes that while students must be successful in achieving mastery on state mandated tests, it is our additional responsibility to provide an education that goes beyond that. Students at YACS - Orleans will be creative thinkers, problem solvers, and future leaders in the competitive 21st Century world in which they live. They will enter high school prepared to meet the challenges that they will face and to have the confidence to know that they will succeed.

**a. YACA's Arts-Integrated Model**

YACA'S specific model for arts integration is research-based, founded in whole child pedagogical best practices, and continuously refined to improve teacher performance and student academic outcomes. The use of the arts as a teaching tool accommodates individual learning styles across multiple intelligences, encourages active participation, and creates motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Opportunities for students to contribute their ideas through open-ended questions and performance-based experiences are essential elements for fostering the creative process and providing connections and scaffolds to the learning hierarchy. Five years of operation at YACS – Jefferson has allowed for the model in its entirety, as well as its individual components, to be evaluated and improved to best meet student needs. Curricula meets LDOE Curricular Review Score Tier 1 standards, has been recommended by the LDOE, or has been vetted nationally; curricula that does not fall under the aforementioned



standards are used to supplement core materials. YACA's model is comprised of four main elements: (1) arts-integrated instruction framework; (2) arts experiences and performances; (3) assessment; and (4) professional development.

**Arts-Integrated Instruction through Planning, Project Based Learning, and Differentiated Instruction**

YACA's arts-integrated approach to teaching and learning has demonstrated success for children of all abilities from the highest performing students to those with significant deficits. Arts-integrated programs have proven to hasten student achievement, raising standardized test scores as much as two times faster than the scores of youth in more traditional schools (Evaluation, Chicago Arts Partnership in Education, Catterall & Waldorf, 1999). Additionally, arts-integrated programs are associated with academic gains across the curriculum, having particularly significant impacts on achievement levels of struggling students (Rabkin & Redmond, 2004). Low-performing students in arts-integrated programs consistently show decreased levels of truancy and increased levels of classroom engagement as the arts-integrated curriculum provides them with multiple avenues to success.

Teaching through the arts promotes competencies for children across the curriculum. Students are offered a comprehensive and connected educational program that reflects the philosophy of educating the whole child and recognizes that individuals learn in different ways. At YACS – Orleans, the arts-integrated, balanced curriculum challenges students and allows them to demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways. Projects within disciplines reflect curriculum guidelines for that subject and incorporate guidelines from National Core Arts Standards as well. Arts integration is accomplished through backwards planning and project based learning.

**BACKWARDS PLANNING:** "To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction." (Covey, 1994) At YACS - Orleans, teachers use backwards design strategies from Understanding by Design (UbD) by Wiggins and McTighe, to guide their lesson development and instructional practices. In the backward design model, the teacher starts with the end, the desired results, and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning called for by the expectations and the teaching needed to equip students to perform. Teachers at first plan assessments that drive the units of study, and then lay out the enduring understandings that are critical to student academic and arts outcomes, and provide opportunities for students to connect those understandings and apply them to new learning experiences and to real life situations. Teachers then systematically determine students' prior knowledge through pre-assessments, student surveys, checklists, and other means before each unit is introduced. Teachers consider content standards central to instruction, but students are taught how to apply their new knowledge in ways that are meaningful to them.

**PROJECT BASED LEARNING:** Arts integration is at its core project based learning (PBL). Through the act of creation students actively explore real-world problems and challenges and acquire a deeper knowledge. In general, lessons follow the "I-We-You" approach: I do, we do, and then you do. In other words, lessons begin with direct instruction, continue with guided practice, and then culminate in a longer period of



independent or group practice. Once students have mastered the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (remembering, understanding, and applying) through these periods of practice, they transition to the higher levels of Taxonomy (analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating) through the creation of their own product or performance. At the end of each unit of study, the learning objective(s) are assessed. Classrooms are organized in learning stations to emphasize student collaboration and to facilitate project based learning according to Buck Institute for Education guidelines. Because PBL is filled with active and engaged learning, it inspires students to obtain a deeper knowledge of the subjects they are studying. Research also indicates that students are more likely to retain the knowledge gained through this approach far more readily than through traditional textbook-centered learning. In addition, students develop confidence and self-direction as they move through both team-based and independent work. In the process of completing their projects, students also hone their organizational and research skills, develop better communication with their peers and adults, and often work within their community while seeing the positive effect of their work.

Students also thrive on the greater flexibility of PBL. In addition to participating in traditional assessment, they can be evaluated using performance tasks incorporating technology into presentations to a community audience, informative tours of a local historical site based on their recently acquired expertise, or a screening of a scripted film they have painstakingly produced. Because students are evaluated on the basis of their projects, rather than on the comparatively narrow rubrics defined by exams, essays, and written reports, assessment of project-based work is often more meaningful to them. They quickly see how academic work can connect to real-life issues - and may even be inspired to pursue a career or engage in activism that relates to the project they developed.

**INTERVENTION AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION:** At YACS – Orleans, students are instructed in diverse classroom settings, with high expectations for every learner. Each student, regardless of skill level, encounters learning experiences that are engaging, relevant, and challenging. We recognize that students come to school with varied skill sets and experiences and that all students must be provided with opportunities to master the skills necessary for success on state standardized tests. More importantly, students must be prepared for the higher-order demands of our curriculum, as well as longer-term success in high school, college, and career. Teachers provide mini-lessons, individual and small group instruction, and whole group instruction of basic skills in reading, writing, and math as students need it for unit study and academic success. The team identifies children who need additional support. Interventionists, using research-based resources and practices pull students for individual or small group instruction. Working with classroom teachers, the team will utilize adaptive technologies like Iready, Lexia, and Dreambox to address skill deficits and/or to provide accelerated learning opportunities. At YACS – Jefferson, 20% of students learn through IEPs. The efficacy of learning through the arts for differently-abled students is evident at YACS – Jefferson where SPED students outperformed the state SPED population on the LEAP test during the 2015-16 academic year.

The YACA model also meets the exceptional academic and artistic needs of gifted and talented students through specialized small group instruction by certified professionals. YACA employs a full-time gifted and



talented coordinator dedicated to identifying exceptional students and ensuring that they received the services they require to meet their highest potential academically and artistically. Central to our arts focus, YACS – Orleans not only provides differentiated instruction for academically-talented students, but also for those identified as being exemplary in their art form.

**ARTS EXPERIENCES AND PERFORMANCES:** YACS-Orleans will offer five major arts disciplines, providing broad opportunities for student artistic and cultural growth as well as pathways to master academic core competencies. Students will participate in one discipline per academic year based on grade level, allowing the exploration of all five art forms as students matriculate. Disciplines include visual arts, drama, dance, music, and digital media arts. YACS - Orleans students participating in the afterschool program will have additional opportunities to practice their preferred artistic disciplines.

YACA believes that students should find joy in their learning. Every other Friday, students, faculty, and administration attend a performance or demonstration by a local professional performing or ensemble artist as part of a school-wide performance series. Artists are selected by the school’s Director of Arts Integration. The series complements existing school events, meets specific curriculum standards, and addresses academic content in subject areas such as math, science, language arts, and social studies. Incorporating live performances into the school day increases YACA’s capacity to deliver our arts-integrated mission and provide the best possible, whole-child education for students. Specifically, the performance series (1) introduces students to a variety of performing art forms; (2) provides teachers with the opportunity to integrate live performances into core content curricula; (3) cultivates a joyous and creative campus culture; (4) supports the local arts and cultural community; and (5) ensures young people are informed about, connected to, and invested in cultural traditions. Many YACS – Jefferson parents report that the performances inspire their students to work harder in their own creative pursuits. Friday performances are funded by Arts Council New Orleans.

Also unique to the YACA model are quarterly Celebrations of Learning. Guided by principles championed in “Leaders of their Own Learning: Transforming Schools through Student-Engaged Assessment,” the evening celebrations give students the opportunity to guide their families and visiting community members through the trajectories of their quarterly learning experiences (Berger, Ron et.al). The events feature student musical and theatrical performances, art exhibitions, and readings, providing an opportunity to showcase student talent and encourage students to reflect upon on their academic and creative journeys. Parents who attend Celebrations of Learning acquire a better understanding of the school’s approach to teaching and learning, and the positive effects on their children.

**b. Academic Progress Assessments**

Once in operation, baseline data for all students entering YACS – Orleans will be collected through National NWEA MAP assessments for reading and math and Fountas & Pinnell beginning in August 2019. Incoming students are required to submit their previous grade report card when applicable. YACS – Orleans will organize academic, behavioral, and attendance data using a student information system such as Infinite Campus or Power School, or as recommended by OPSB.



YACS-Orleans employs a Director of SPED who is responsible for identifying students in need of special education (SPED) services and program oversight to ensure that students receive these services in accordance with the law. The school follows Child Find regulations to identify and evaluate learners with disabilities.

YACS-Orleans conducts internal formative assessments for instructional, evaluative, and predictive purposes.

- Instructional: assessments outline strengths/weaknesses of individual students or groups of students in order to identify areas for remediation and improve instructional strategy. Instructional assessments are also used to provide feedback and motivation for students;
- Evaluative: overall curriculum effectiveness assessments inform curriculum pacing, areas of instructional improvement, and quality of arts integration.
- Predictive: assessments indicate likelihood of individual students to perform at mastery on the iLEAP and LEAP tests to inform intervention.

School-wide common formative assessments are conducted on a quarterly basis to ensure that students are making sufficient academic progress toward school goals and state standards. Teachers are provided with student performance data to inform adjustments to their curriculum content or delivery in order to achieve highest student outcomes. YACS – Orleans’s curriculum committee ensures that interim assessments align with Louisiana Student Standards, National Core Art Standards, and internally created Essential and Consensus curriculum maps. The committee develops sequence and pacing guides based on state standards, identifying “power standards” that are used to create formative assessments. Each assessment is reviewed against a checklist to ensure that it is of adequate rigor and is reflective of the question formats of and Depth of Knowledge required for success on the iLEAP and LEAP tests. Assessments include multiple choice and multi-step problems with a Depth of Knowledge range of 3 or 4 to measure student performance on higher-level thinking skills. At YACS - Orleans, teachers design and utilize benchmark tests periodically to monitor student progress of content standards and grade level expectations and also provide alternative assessments to differentially measure progress.

YACS – Orleans also conducts Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing three times per year and LEAP360 testing four times per year. These standardized, formative assessments inform “data dives.” During “data dives” instructional specialists, teachers, and teaching artists review how students are performing on targeted standards and develop plans to re-teach standards that students have not mastered. After interim assessments, teachers meet with the School Leader and Director of Curriculum and Instruction to analyze data and determine instructional adjustments. Teachers conduct item analyses, where they correlate exit tickets, benchmark test results and portfolio items to standards-based objectives, assess student mastery on these, and determine specific misunderstandings that may exist with groups of students or individual students to guide re-teaching plans. Noting how students fared with specific objectives will provide the platform for the lesson and unit plans teachers create. Teachers will break the mastery of objectives into groups which correlate with the following circumstances: (1)



objectives mastered by 100% of students and require additional challenge, which may involve increasing the rigor through word and logic problems or advancing vertically to the next grade level's objective within that same strand; (2) objectives mastered by 70% or more of students, which require small group intervention and support with the 30% of students failing to achieve mastery; (3) objectives mastered by less than 70% of the students, which requires a re-teach of a lesson to the majority of the classroom. Lesson and unit plans will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they reflect these adjustments. YACS – Orleans relies on the adaptive programs Iready and Lexia to monitor progress in special populations and design interventions in real time to meet their ever-changing needs. YACS – Orleans's assessment plan follows the same model and schedule for assessment of student progress currently employed at YACS - Jefferson.

Preparing teachers to use student performance data to adjust both curriculum content and the manner through which they present material is an important part of YACA's professional development. Teachers are trained from well-versed and experienced instructional leadership to analyze data and translate the information into actionable steps for improved instruction and student mastery. Data is utilized to determine the needs of professional development, support curricular decisions, and create specific intervention or enrichment lessons for creative learners. In addition to following MAP and LEAP 360 assessments, data dives are led by instructional leadership and team leads on a *weekly basis* for formative assessments and *monthly/quarterly* basis for interim assessments. Team Leads are trained on how to successfully guide their team in analysis of data through pre-determined protocols for the school asking:

**What?**

*What does the data reveal about your students' strengths and weaknesses?*

*What patterns or trends do you notice?*

**So What?**

*What does the data reveal about INSTRUCTION?*

*What does the data reveal about student performance?*

**Now What?**

*Based on the data, what are your team or your NEXT STEPS?*

*What skills/standards need to be addressed?*

Instructional Leadership supports and/or leads teams and Team Leads in leading data dives on interim assessments. Teachers complete reteach plans or Data Analysis Action Plans that target specific skills, standards, and/or students in need of intervention or enrichment. Instructional Leadership uses reteach plans to support in follow-through of actionable steps for improved instruction and student mastery.

At YACS - Orleans, teachers and administrators form relationships with their students, sitting with them during lunch, teaching them, listening to them, and assuring that formative and summative assessments are implemented consistently in order to keep a watchful eye on their progress. Teachers informally and formally assess and monitor student understanding through questioning, checklists, rubrics, samples of their work, performance tasks, writing, and through the use of cumulative quarterly and final exams.



Faculty and administrators follow individual student progress closely over time in order to ensure that each child is making adequate yearly progress.

**ARTISTIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENTS:** Standardized tests have become powerful engines in the drive to modify and measure what children should know and be able to do. In many instances, high-stakes testing has helped school districts focus on the skills and knowledge that children need as they move from one grade to the next, or from one level of schooling to the next. Many educators, however, have become frustrated with the limitations of standardized tests and their inability to give a full picture of students' capabilities and competencies. While standardized tests do help us compare and measure students on a wide range of skills, they often leave large gaps of empty canvas in the pictures they paint of our students. YACS – Orleans utilizes a school-wide portfolio system as an effective means to help fill in these gaps. Portfolios, in concert with standardized test data, give us a clearer understanding of students' strengths and challenges; focus our academic expectations through constructive dialogue; and help us set high academic standards that our students can both internalize and understand.

When used in individual classrooms, portfolios are especially effective in giving children an opportunity to look critically at their own work. This helps students to internalize their own definitions of standards and quality. When used across a school in an integrated system, portfolios have the ability to shape and improve school-wide assessment and instruction.

In order to create a school-wide portfolio system, our teachers come together to discuss their common expectations for students. This dialogue is an integral part of instructional improvement and the creation of specific, measurable, and high-quality standards. Portfolios can be samples of student work over time, individual and group projects, performances, and student exhibitions, which reflect student abilities to assimilate and synthesize information. YACS – Orleans considers portfolios as artistic outputs that demonstrate student understanding of core content subjects, similar to research projects or cumulative science experiments. Portfolios are weighted the same as end of unit tests (50% of total grade) and are assessed using a project-specific rubric developed by teachers and teaching artists.

**c. Professional Development**

Providing growth opportunities for all levels of YACS – Orleans staff is at the center of school policy and critical to the successful implementation of the school's model. Arts integration is a learned skill, even for teachers who are naturally talented in the arts. The pedagogical practice of simultaneous instruction in both art and core content standards requires educators to be skilled in identifying and demonstrating content area connections, while being confident in their ability to instruct through the arts. YACA has developed and vetted a comprehensive model for professional development inclusive of classroom teachers, support staff, and leadership with the goal of creating a school-wide culture of arts integration. The professional development scaffold includes both traditional "top-down" delivery and "hands-on" co-teaching elements including (1) professional development institutes and traditional professional development in-service days; (2) dedicated, full-time arts integration specialists and teaching artists on staff; (3) co-taught professional teaching artist residencies; and (4) arts integration leadership training.



- **INSTITUTES AND IN-SERVICE:** Ten days of professional development take place before the start of every school year led by Mission Critical Partner YALA, YACA’s Chief Academic Officer, Director of Curriculum, Director of Arts Integration, teaching artists, and other experts in the field. Institutes provide foundational information regarding arts integration theory and practice, curriculum and assessment planning, and team-building activities. Teachers receive intensive training on implementation YACA’s selected curriculums, as well as how to use assessments and data to improve their pedagogy and student outcomes. Professional development sessions are often conducted by representatives of the curriculum providers, as one of YACA’s criteria for curriculum selection is inclusion company-led, expert professional development. Professional development also includes sessions on classroom management and discipline strategies. Teachers will participate in six professional development in-service days during the academic year. Ongoing assessment of institutes at YACS – Jefferson indicates that teachers are increasingly satisfied with professional development offerings. When surveyed about our most recent institute, more than 90% of our instructional staff gave the professional development a rating of “very satisfied” when asked if the content was engaging, as well as when asked if the content was useful.
- **FULL-TIME ARTS INTEGRATION SPECIALISTS:** The rigor with which classroom teachers are expected to teach through arts integration is intense and sustained. YACA has found that the approach of placing artists in classroom residencies to co-teach removes the two largest obstacles many educators cite as their reluctance to incorporate the arts into their daily lessons: the perception that they do not have artistic talent and the reality that most do not have formal arts training. Full-time teaching artist staff members write curriculum, co-plan, and co-teach arts integrated units alongside classroom teachers. On-staff teaching artists support teachers in their independent use of arts integration, gradually transferring leadership of arts integrated lessons to the teacher over the course of the academic year. Highly-experienced YACS – Orleans teaching artists deliver comprehensive, guided, and individualized support to classroom teachers, allowing them to develop trust in arts integration as pedagogical best practice and in their own abilities as arts integrationists.
- **CO-TAUGHT TEACHING ARTIST RESIDENCIES:** In addition to YACA’s full-time teaching artists, Critical Mission Partner Young Audiences of Louisiana (YALA) provides professional development residencies led by professional teaching artists with extensive training in the Arts for Learning (A4L) (see Curriculum section) and Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts (WTI) models. WTI specializes in improving early learning outcomes for Pre-Kindergarten through First Grade students through performing arts experiences and A4L improves literacy outcomes through arts integration in grades 2 through 4. Students also benefit artistically, creatively, and expressively from the direct arts services afforded by all three partnerships.
- **ARTS-INTEGRATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Arts integration is most effective when all staff become arts integrationists in theory and practice and buy-in for arts integration extends beyond the classroom. Realizing that most school leaders hail from traditional (non-arts) academic backgrounds, YALA and YACA developed a comprehensive leadership training program in the complexities of managing an arts-



integrated school, mentoring staff, and evaluating success. The Arts Integration Leadership Development Framework (AILDF) will provide YACS – Orleans’s three tiers of leadership (senior, mid, and grade-level) with the skills, resources, and assessment techniques specific to their job responsibilities to create a school-wide culture of arts-integration (Attachment 7). Arts integration as a pedagogical practice is not sustainable in the classroom or school-wide levels without teachers increasing both their content knowledge of and “comfort zone” with visual arts, theatre, music, and dance. YACS – Orleans’ professional development program, particularly its emphasis on co-teaching, aligns with what research findings indicate as effective teaching practice. Rather than responding to teacher needs, workshops are delivered as prescriptive models, often occurring only once during the school year and presenting decontextualized information that does not resonate with teachers (Bransford, HPL). By contrast, YACA follows a more collaborative, teacher-centered approach to professional development that extends over time and allows for variations in teacher background and readiness. Co-teaching removes the “top down” delivery common to professional development workshops and makes it a team activity, thus validating that teachers have valuable pedagogical insights to contribute to arts-integrated lesson planning. The effectiveness of this model is asserted by teachers and confirmed through independent assessment conducted by Loyola University’s Institute for Quality and Equity in Education (IQEE) in 2017: “Based on our analysis of 62 classroom observations of the embedded residences to date there is evidence that the teachers continue to improve and expand based on participation. Teachers are taking the initiative in both planning and in the classroom in developing arts-integrated lessons. Additionally, it has been observed that teachers and artists are collaborating in a manner where more innovation is being brought into lesson planning and classroom delivery. As teachers become more comfortable in the arts-integrated model it has become apparent that a synergy has emerged between teacher and artist that adds both texture and substance to the lessons.”

#### Teacher Performance Assessment

The YACA model includes regular cycles of observation, feedback, and coaching to ensure that our teachers are performing to the best of their abilities and have access to resources and support for improvement. Observations are performed a minimum of once quarterly by arts integration specialists, curriculum specialists, and school leadership. Observation sessions are followed by feedback meetings and additional in-class coaching as needed. Underperforming teachers will complete Professional Improvement Plans (PIPs) and receive weekly support from an instructional specialist. Like YACS – Jefferson, YACS – Orleans will use Whetstone to record all observation data, schedule feedback meetings, and record PIPs (see Staff section).

#### **(2) SELECTION OF CURRICULA AND IDENTIFIED CORE INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENTS:**

A framework of curriculum maps using the Louisiana Student Standards guides YACA Instruction. Made up of teacher leaders, teaching artists, instructional specialists, and arts-integration specialists, the YACA curriculum committee developed Essential Maps, or scopes of each unit at-a-glance, and Consensus Maps, which unpack the standards for the year for all grade levels in four content areas: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Curriculum Maps are utilized to provide teachers with a better understanding of instructional objectives, and to provide more direction in creating lesson plans. Following these maps



allows teachers the freedom to use the additional curricular resources adopted by YACA, or to design original arts-integrated units and assessments that promote student mastery of the targeted standards. To ensure that instruction is targeted, rigorous, and builds deep student understanding, these maps (1) are based on data analysis and lessons learned from the classroom; (2) are vertically aligned; (3) provide information about opportune points of integration with the arts; and (4) provide instructional strategies for teaching, extending, and differentiating the progression of standards outlined.

**a. Curricula**

The following resources and supplemental materials, are used at YACA to implement Louisiana Student Standards:

Content Area	Resource	Grade Levels	LDOE Education Curricular Review Score	Used with Current Population?	Success Measures
English Language Arts	Arts for Learning Lessons (A4L)	Pre-K - 3	Not Rated	Yes	Evaluation by IQEE, Common Formative Assessment (CFA)
	Core Knowledge ELA Skill Strand	K - 2	Tier 1	Yes	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), K-2 Formative Tasks (LDOE), Grade 3 LEAP 360; End of year teacher surveys to determine curriculum effectiveness
	Louisiana Guidebooks 2.0	K- 3	Not Rated	Yes	
	Being a Writer	K – 3	Not Rated	Yes	
	Wolf Trap Early Learning Through the Arts	Pre-k – 1	Not Rated	Yes	



<b>Math</b>	Eureka Math	K-3	Tier 1	Yes	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), K-2 Formative Tasks (LDOE), Grade 3 LEAP 360; End of year teacher surveys to determine curriculum effectiveness
<b>Science</b>	Discovery Education Techbook	K-3	Not Rated	Yes	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), K-2 Formative Tasks (LDOE); End of year teacher surveys to determine curriculum effectiveness
	Louisiana Scope and Sequence	K-3	Not Rated	Yes	
<b>Social Studies</b>	Louisiana Scope and Sequence	K-3	Not Rated	Yes	CFA, MAP; End of year teacher surveys to determine curriculum effectiveness
<b>Pre - K</b>	Frog Street Pre-K	Pre-K	Tier 1	Yes	TS Gold; End of year teacher surveys to determine curriculum effectiveness

**b. Rationale for Selection of Resources and Evidence of Success**

ARTS FOR LEARNING LESSONS: Arts for Learning Lessons (A4L) blends the creativity and discipline of the arts with learning science to raise student achievement in reading and writing. Crafted by a design team from the University of Washington led by learning scientist Dr. John Bransford and Young Audiences national (YA), A4L consists of six units of arts-integrated study. Units are aligned with Louisiana Student Standards and National Core Arts Standards. A4L was selected for use by YACA because it provides a comprehensive, research based exemplar curriculum to round out our arts-integrated model. For teachers that have little to no experience in arts-integration, A4L is a primer that spans the arts disciplines, giving them the opportunity to independently practice teaching through arts-integration before planning their own arts-integrated units.

National research studies conducted for seven consecutive years by WestEd, a national education research and development agency, consistently show that students experiencing A4L Lessons made reliable (statistically significant) gains in literacy learning, with the strongest gains associated with the implementation of two or more A4L Units of instruction and an intensive quality arts experience. This



pattern of improvement has continued to be evident in studies across different grade levels, implementation patterns, geographic locations, and school districts, including extended learning time and after school applications.

**ADDITIONAL CURRICULA** (Core Knowledge ELA Skill Strand, Louisiana Guidebooks 2.0, Being a Writer, Eureka Math, Louisiana Scope and Sequence Science/Social Studies, Frog Street Pre-K): The additional curricular resources, recommended by LDOE and adopted by schools nation-wide, are a natural fit for YACA's arts-integrated model. A distinguishing feature of all of these selected curricula is flexibility. Because YACA expects instructors to integrate the arts into any curriculum being used, adaptability is a necessary component of any resource. These curricula provide a comprehensive approach to teaching the Louisiana Student Standards with rigor and coherence, yet allow for modifications to ensure that teachers are able to differentiate instruction, customize assessments, and use project based learning to achieve instructional objectives.

Making real life connections with academic content is another key characteristic of the resources adopted by YACA. The curricula fit seamlessly with the school model, as arts-integration requires that students apply knowledge and thinking from one content area to another – a skill that will serve them well both school and in real life.

Professional growth for teachers is a high priority for YACA and an integral part of the school model. YACA has selected the additional resources based on a common commitment from each of the curriculum developers to ongoing professional development. Experts from the curriculum development teams will visit YACS - Orleans on regularly scheduled professional development days to ensure that teachers are able to use the resources to maximize student learning. YACS - Orleans leadership will ensure that teachers receive the additional support they need to integrate the arts with these curricula.

Each of the resources identified is research based and has been proven effective in schools across the United States, including communities with a similar student population to YACA's. Data collected from use of the student assessment materials that are provided with the adopted curricula shows that these curriculum tools are effective and work well within the YACA instructional model. End of year teacher surveys indicate that teachers are highly satisfied with the resources provided and that they have seen academic growth in their students as a result of their use.

**SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES:** YACA has selected adaptive programs such as Lexia, Iready, and Dreambox to supplement the curriculum and help teachers to reach individual learners and fill in any gaps in academic understanding. These programs allow teachers to implement effective interventions in the classroom while maintaining the appropriate pace of instruction for the whole class. Implementation has resulted in individual student academic growth at YACS - Jefferson and it is expected that the same will be seen at YACS - Orleans.

During the summer of 2017, YACA's curriculum committee developed Arts-Integrated Crosswalks to



support teachers in curriculum implementation. Designed to assist novice teachers in finding opportunities for arts integration in the curriculum, the crosswalks connect National Core Arts Standards with Louisiana Student Standards and outline projects that advance student mastery of both standards. These crosswalks are included in the curriculum maps so that teachers may easily access the material in one place. Arts-Integrated Crosswalks are being piloted this year at YACS - Jefferson, with plans to refine the materials during the summer of 2018 based on student achievement data on targeted standards and staff feedback.

**ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS:** In 2013, YACA contracted IQEE to perform an assessment and make recommendations for an evaluation framework for YACS – Jefferson based on its organizational and curricular framework during its first year and, subsequently, to carry out a pilot evaluation of that possible framework. To craft their evaluation framework and recommendations, IQEE conducted informal interviews, classroom observations, and staff surveying to provide multiple forms of data with which to assess the current efficacy of attempts to develop the YACA arts-integration mission specifically within a school setting. Findings were used to (1) craft detailed job descriptions and organizational charts to clarify staff roles and responsibilities; (2) develop arts integration theory and practice materials targeted to the specific needs/questions of YACS – Jefferson teachers; and (3) invest leadership and classroom staff in the process of evaluation for continual improvement. IQEE assessment rubrics continue to be an integral part of the school’s annual internal audit of success toward academic, professional development, and artistic goals set by the leadership and board. YACS – Orleans will initiate a similar IQEE evaluation of Year One school systems and academic effectiveness.

In addition to oversight by the State of Louisiana and Orleans Parish School Board, YACS – Orleans will also be held accountable by the CMO and YACA Board of Directors, which will ensure that high standards are met in schools. YACS - Orleans is committed to reflecting on its priorities and ensuring that the integrity of the operational, cultural, and academic systems are upheld to the highest standards. As such, school committees have been established to address concerns, identify priorities, and evaluate progress related to one of the following areas: Community Involvement, School Beautification, Professional Culture, Leadership, Academics, Professional Learning Community, Curriculum, Happiness/Social, and Professional Development. Each committee has regularly scheduled formal opportunities to meet as a team or with the other committees, in addition to the daily informal opportunities to share their findings with the school’s leadership. The committee members serve as facilitators for the coordination of academic and cultural resources and act as liaisons within the school. Members are an integral part in determining the extent to which their committee’s focus is aligning with school goals. Each team acts as a grievance committee when needed. They are also responsible for developing questionnaires on instruction and school culture to be given to all school constituents, compiling the data, designating goals for the upcoming school year based on the data, and making a presentation of their findings to the faculty, the school leader, parents, and the Board of Directors.

YACA believes that our accountability starts with each individual child. If we are meeting their educational and creative needs, our comprehensive assessment plan will make it unlikely that any number of students



will fail to meet their academic objectives while in our program. Therefore, long before the school would be labeled Academically Below the State Average, YACA would identify any areas of deficiency and create an action plan in conjunction with faculty and leadership to implement a program for improvement.

However, in the event that YACA does not meet our standards for student performance, we will immediately take corrective measures, utilizing all available resources. Possible turnaround measures include: re-evaluating school-wide and personal goals; adopting a research-based reform program; working to ensure that all teachers are highly effective; creating incentives for students to study and achieve; organizing the school into small learning communities; and changing the school schedule.

### **(3) SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR SCHEDULES (Attachment 14 and Attachment 15)**

Recognizing that families may have children in other Orleans Parish schools, YACS - Orleans will closely follow the calendar for the majority of Orleans Parish Public Schools for instructional days, holidays, and professional development whenever possible. YACS - Orleans students will be in school for a minimum of 179 days, receiving 69,807 minutes of total instruction (1,163 hours). There will be ten days of preopening professional development, with an additional six PD/in-service days during the school year.

The school building will open for faculty and staff at 6:30 a.m., giving teachers an entire hour to plan and collaborate before school starts. Students arrive between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. During this time, children eat breakfast, work quietly in classrooms, and/or perform morning duties. For every YACS - Orleans student, the instructional day begins at 8:00 a.m. (8:10 a.m. for Pre-K). All classes start with Art Reflection Time (ART) followed by Morning Meeting. During ART, children are exposed to a great work of art (i.e. painting, song, poem, or scene from a play or film) and given an opportunity to respond in writing or orally. ART is utilized to provide exposure to various art forms while connecting it to content taught for the day. For Morning Meeting, children engage in facilitated conversations about issues outside of the formal curriculum. This time is dedicated to building a strong learning culture and building community.

Students engage in all core content areas throughout the day as well as recess and enrichment, including physical education, Spanish, music, and digital media for all elementary grades students. The YACS - Orleans school schedule for elementary grades (K - 3) is organized around three, 90 - minute interdisciplinary core content blocks. Project based block lessons include a "hook" or real-world connection, direct instruction, guided practice, independent practice, and a reflection activity. Targeted arts-integration and writing blocks complete the school day (Attachment 14). The YACS - Orleans Pre-K schedule is arranged in smaller time blocks, allowing for small and large group instruction in addition to regularly scheduled recess, longer transitions, and breaks (see section 5). YACS - Orleans students and staff enjoy a rich calendar of events that strengthen student academics, build community, promote social/emotional growth, and express appreciation (Attachment 15).

- **ENGLISH / LANGUAGE ARTS:** During the English/Language Arts block, YACS - Orleans students practice basic ELA reading and comprehension skills via whole-group instruction and/or small group learning stations and participate in literacy-based arts activities developed by the YACA curriculum committee.



- **MATH:** Students practice conceptual math learning and expand their understanding to include real-world math applications.
- **Science or Social Studies:** Students alternate between science and social studies content daily with the weekly schedule determined by the teachers based on current units of study. Science content is delivered through hands-on experimentation, fostering life-long science engagement and to achieving core content understanding. Through experimentation, students are encouraged to: (1) develop content understanding beyond memorization of facts; (2) collect and interpret data; (3) form hypotheses and question “facts”; and (4) observe the process of cause and effect. As an arts-integrated school, YACS-Orleans is fortunate to be immersed in the rich cultural, musical, and artistic fabric that is New Orleans. Local culture informs both student arts experiences and understanding of their city, region, country, and world. As such, social studies instruction is an important element of the YACS – Orleans school day. Students explore anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology as related to past and present contexts.
- **WRITING:** All elementary grades students participate in daily 30-minute writing sessions guided by the Being A Writer curriculum. Exercises are founded in comprehension and response to a literary, informative, or persuasive original texts – a foundational element of the Louisiana Student Standards. Writing assignments are both individual and collaborative and are employed not only English/Language Arts lessons, but across the core competencies of science, social studies, mathematics, and the arts. As personal communication is increasingly taking place through the limited languages of tweets and texts, YACA has the critical responsibility to ensure that students develop the communication skills necessary to be successful in the 21st Century workforce.
- **ARTS-INTEGRATED INSTRUCTION:** Unique to the YACA model, each class participates in a daily arts-integrated lesson co-planned and co-taught between the classroom teacher and teaching artist. These specially designed units target benchmarks selected by the classroom teacher and encourage students to work creatively, analytically, and collaboratively. While arts integration is practiced throughout the school day, it is these blocks that differentiate the YACA student experience from other learning models. Students pursue deep academic and artistic skill development, learn joyfully through personal expression, and acquire different perspectives through the co-teaching dynamic.

For students of all grade levels, YACS - Orleans meets the exceptional academic and artistic needs of gifted and talented students and those with learning differences through specialized small group instruction by certified professionals.

For 30 to 45 minutes at the end of the instructional day, teachers are available in their classrooms to meet with students or families that need assistance, to evaluate student work, to plan instruction and for committee meetings. For families that choose to participate, YACS - Orleans provides an afterschool program in partnership with Critical Mission Partner Young Audiences of Louisiana (YALA), an operator



with a lengthy and proven ability to provide quality afterschool programming. Options include arts instruction from ballet to cultural dance, from band to percussion, creative writing, visual arts, sports and chess, gymnastics to academic support. Students participating in the afterschool program (3:15 to 5:45 p.m.) pay a \$300 flat fee that covers the entirety of the academic year, and scholarships are available for students who qualify.

**(4) PUPIL PROGRESSION PLAN (Attachment 16)**

YACS - Orleans uses a standards-based report card, issued quarterly, to communicate progress data to parents. However, regular communication between home and school engages parents and teachers in on-going dialogue surrounding student achievement. At the beginning of each academic year, parents receive a copy of his/her child's year-long curriculum plan, in the form of a curriculum letter or syllabus from the classroom teacher and teaching artists. This document lays out curriculum and academic objectives as well as promotion expectations and faculty contact information for further communication. Parents are invited to contact teachers for conferences; conversely, faculty is encouraged to communicate with parents on a regular basis sharing both successes and concerns. Frequent demonstrations of our arts-integrated programming (performances, showings and readings) that families are encouraged to attend provide us with valuable opportunities to communicate student progress in arts-integration.

YACS – Orleans will use varied reporting systems, including a school website, YA Charter School app managed by TAPP It Technologies and available on the app store, a robo-calling system, mailings, and person to person conferences in order to keep communication open between school and home, especially where student progress is concerned. All teachers are issued cell phones that parents can call directly to schedule meetings in a timely manner.

**(5) ARTS INTEGRATION AS BEST PRACTICE FOR PRE-K LEARNERS**

Instructing through the arts is a particularly effective strategy for early learners. Integrating art activities into early literacy and math instruction stimulates children's innate desire for active, multisensory learning and allows them to embody concepts by singing and dancing, and through puppetry, story dramatization, role play, and creation. It is easy to reason that an enriched and stimulating environment will enhance children's academic, cognitive, and social development, particularly in four and five year old students when rapid brain growth is still occurring: "The quality and reliability of early experiences and environments are the building blocks of early brain architecture" (Phillips, et al, 2017). Research has shown that underserved students, in particular, benefit from challenging arts integrated content.

YACS – Orleans employs the same curriculum and strategies for early learners developed by the nationally acclaimed Wolf Trap Early Learning through the Arts (WTI) program and implemented at YACS – Jefferson. WTI applies a co-taught teaching artist residency model to improve pre-literacy, math, and social/emotional skills for children ages two through five by integrating the performing arts into core content lessons. In 2005-2008, the US Department of Education funded a study on Wolf Trap efficacy conducted by The Alliance Theatre to assess teacher development of arts integration skills and literacy



outcomes for kindergarteners in six underperforming Georgia schools. The initiative placed teaching artists in two residencies per project year and provided additional skill development opportunities through PD workshops. The study hypothesized that students would evidence improvement in language development, writing, and academic achievement through the integration of drama into core content curriculum. Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVAs) conducted in vocabulary, language development, and writing indicated statistically significant gains across all areas in the intervention group as compared to control group students: “The results reported here support the hypothesis that the Georgia Wolf Trap program is making progress in affecting student development in language, achievement, and long-term academic achievement. Of special note in this regard is the significant improvement in language development for intervention students, both those in regular education and those with special needs” (The Alliance Theatre, 2008). WTI proves that the arts can enhance deeper understanding of core content areas in early learners that require higher levels of motivation, comprehension and meta-cognitive strategies.

YACS – Orleans will serve 36 Pre-K 4 students in two classrooms. Eighteen students will pay tuition of \$5,000 and 18 will be subsidized out of the school’s operating budget dependent on qualifying to receive free and reduced lunch. In Year 1 of operation YACS – Orleans’s DCI will oversee Pre-K curriculum, coordination, and assessment. As YACS – Orleans grows a full-time Early Childhood Coordinator will be added to the staff in Year 2 in order to allow the DCI to focus more intently on the performance of students in testing grades. The Early Childhood Coordinator will manage the curriculum and assessment specifications unique to Pre-K and Kindergarten. YACA intends to pursue NAEYC Accreditation for its YACS - Orleans Pre – K program.

**Pre-K Daily Activities:** To provide students the academic and social/emotional benefits of arts integration at the foundational level, Pre-K co-teachers will be certified WTI instructors. The addition of highly-qualified WTI professionals as classroom co-teachers is unique to the YACA early learning model and provides the proven academic, social/emotional, and artistic benefits of WTI throughout the Pre-K school day. YACS – Orleans Pre-K curriculum is designed to encourage child development in the following key areas (1) language literacy; (2) executive function; (3) social/emotional; (4) physical health/wellness; (5) cognitive; and (6) creative expression. The curriculum and structure teaches early learners – many who have not attended school before – to be students, collaborative thinkers, and artists.

YACS – Orleans will employ the comprehensive Frog Street Pre-K curriculum designed to meet the academic and developmental needs of students ages 3 – 5. The curriculum is research-based, integrates instruction across developmental domains, and is organized around thematic units. Frog Street will be used to instruct ELA, math, science, social studies, and social/emotional development aligned to Louisiana Pre-K 4 Early Learning Development Standards, with supplemental Wolf Trap Early Learning Through the Arts lessons. Daily schedules include time for teacher-directed, child-directed, and enrichment (visual art, physical education, music/movement), as well as free play. Small group and large group activities will take place outdoors when possible and appropriate to the area of instruction. Pre-K lesson plans/activities include adaptations/modifications necessary to meet students’ Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or



Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals, along with adaptations for English Language Learners. The Frog Street curriculum also provides a framework for the Conscious Discipline method of classroom management, creating a learning environment where students feel respected, safe, and loved. YACS – Orleans’s Pre-K daily schedule is set in accordance with Bulletin 741. In addition to recess, nap, snack time (during beginning of Large Group instruction), and transitions, a typical day includes:

**Centers:** Student-led learning is an integral part of YACS – Orleans’s Pre-K schedule. During the centers time block, students rotate through dramatic play, building blocks, science, library, art, music/movement, writing, and math manipulative activities. Centers are organized with low, open shelves, and bins to encourage easy access by students. Thematic with each center, examples of materials include art supplies, costumes, different types of building blocks, magnifying glasses, rock collections, prisms, shapes and countable/sortable math items, books, scarves, and musical instruments. Classrooms also have a “safe” center with mats, stuffed animals, and other comfort items.

**Small Group Instruction:** Small group instruction time allows teachers to work with groups of students on ELA, math, or science lessons, and provides time for intervention/remedial instruction for students requiring additional assistance toward achieving concept mastery. Math lessons are taught predominantly in the small group format to encourage “hands on” learning and personalized feedback. Students also work individually during this time when appropriate.

**Physical Education:** Physical activity and the development of gross motor skills and teamwork are essential to a healthy Pre-K experience. YACS – Orleans Pre-k students participate in daily PE classes that provide opportunities for both teacher-led games instruction and free play.

**Large Group Instruction:** Teachers and students engage in whole group ELA, science, and social studies activities based on thematic units. All lessons encourage problem-solving, creative thinking, personal expression, community-building, and learning through play. This block is also used for additional small group instruction time or story time as needed, as well as snack time.

**Enrichment:** YACS – Orleans’s arts-integrated model weaves enrichment activities into the entirety of the school-day experience, but daily music and/or movement activities allow students time to focus specifically on the art forms of music and dance. Along with joyful learning experiences, students develop the motor skills, teamwork, math, spatial awareness, and sensory skills intrinsic to music and movement.

**STUDENT AND TEACHER ASSESSMENT:** YACS – Orleans assesses progress student achievement of the Pre-K 4 Early Learning Development Standards using the TS Gold rubric for evaluation in the areas of Social/ Emotional, Physical, Language and Literacy, Cognitive, Science and Technology, and Arts development. As recommended assessments toward benchmarks will take place three times per academic year (October, February, May). Students with IEPs will be assessed using the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System, Interactive (AEPSi) rubric. Teachers also maintain portfolios of student writing samples, artwork, math sheets, etc. Teacher effectiveness will be assessed using the



CLASS observation twice per year as well as the Whetstone rubric (see page 37 for additional details on teacher effectiveness assessment and Attachment 22).

### Special Student Populations

*All schools are obligated to provide services to students with identified disabilities and English language learners under Federal law, and state law and BESE policy also provide for (but do not mandate) services to students identified as gifted/talented.*

- (1) Provide a detailed special education plan describing how you will ensure that all special education students succeed at your school. Describe plans for identifying, evaluating, and serving special education students. Include your staffing plan for special education.
  - a. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for students with exceptionalities,
  - b. Plans for promoting graduation for students with exceptionalities,
  - c. Plan to develop partnerships and connect students with disabilities and their families to outside agencies, and
  - d. Plan to discipline students with disabilities in an equitable and fair manner, in accordance with the IDEA.
- (2) Provide a detailed English Language Learner plan describing how you will ensure that all English Language Learners succeed. Describe plans for identifying, evaluating, and serving English Language Learners. Include your staffing plan for English Language Learners. Include specific instructional programs, practices and strategies the school will employ to ensure success both academically and socially, as well as equitable access to the core academic program for these students.
- (3) Describe plans for identifying, evaluating, and serving gifted and/or talented students. If the school will not provide gifted/talented instructional services as described in BESE Bulletins 126, 1508 and 1566 please indicate. If applicable describe the instructional programs, strategies, and supports that will be provided to ensure the success of intellectually gifted and/or talented students.
- (4) Provide as **Attachment 17** the relevant job description(s) and, if applicable, **Attachment 18**, resumes for individuals responsible for Special Education evaluations and/or service provision.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### **(1) DETAILED SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN**

YACS – Orleans projects enrollment of SPED, ELL, and Gifted & Talented to mirror current percentages in Orleans Parish, serving approximately 47 SPED, 21 ELL, and 60 Gifted & Talented students. The arts-integrated classroom provides the opportunity and space for differently-abled students to find and explore their voice—however that voice may manifest. Teachers at YACS - Orleans will be trained in instructional techniques (such as scaffolding, differentiation and teaching to multiple intelligences) that allow intervention and acceleration needs to be addressed during regular instruction. For most students, teachers will provide comprehensive in-classroom learning; however, for some students additional support may be needed. To meet the needs of various learners, YACS - Orleans will use both the inclusion model and the resource model of intervention. Adequate opportunities to support the specific



needs of students, including those receiving ELL, SPED, intervention, and gifted and talented (G&T) programming will be provided throughout the school day, specifically in those blocks labeled as “enrichment” in the school schedule provided. In all cases, YACS-Orleans will adhere to Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations.

**a. Strategies**

YACS-Orleans employs a Director of Special Education who is responsible for identifying students in need of special education (SPED) services and program oversight to ensure that students receive these services in accordance with the law. The school will follow Child Find regulations to identify and evaluate learners with disabilities, and Child Find brochures will be readily available in the school office and distributed throughout the year to ensure that families are aware of the regulations and their FAPE rights. School personnel are responsible for implementing Child Find Regulations.

The Response to Intervention (RTI) process will be used to identify learners within the school in need of extra supports and interventions. The Academic and Behavioral Intervention (A/BIT) team, consisting of Administration, Director of SPED, RTI Coordinator (counted in staff plan/budget as interventionist), ELL Coordinator (counted in staff plan/budget as interventionist), Dean of Culture, Social Worker, parent, special education/intervention and general education staff, will utilize a structured protocol to identify, evaluate, and assist learners with disabilities. This team will grow as the YACS – Orleans adds grade levels with the addition of a full-time counselor and expansion of the speech therapist position from part-time to full-time in Year Three.

To organize a system of supportive placement and intervention determination, YACS - Orleans will rely on the following four components of RTI integration:

*Component 1- Universal Screening:* All students will be assessed through benchmark assessments throughout the year to determine if they are proficient on targeted skills for the appropriate time of year in each grade level. Parents will be notified via report card of each student’s status after each benchmarking. Once benchmark testing is complete, students not meeting benchmarking levels will be assigned to appropriate intervention groups.

*Component 2- Tiered Interventions:* Interventions will be done daily and with accuracy for all students not meeting benchmark levels on assessments. A three-tiered model of intervention will be implemented.

- TIER I (Least Intensive) is the level at which students are achieving grade-level success. Supplemental intervention is provided in addition to general instruction typically within a small group setting. Frequency will vary between three to five times a week for approximately 10-15 minute each time. This intervention will be administered by the classroom teacher, parent, assistant teacher or peer.
- TIER II (Moderately intensive) will be implemented when students need strategic support to achieve



grade-level success (are consistent with Approaching Basic Scores on State Assessments). Supplemental intervention will be provided outside the classroom and will typically occur within a small group or on an individual basis three to four times a week for 15 to 30 minutes. The intervention will be administered by the classroom teacher, the assistant teacher, or interventionist.

- TIER III (Most Intensive) is the level at which students need intensive support to achieve grade level success (are consistent with Unsatisfactory scores on State Assessments). Intervention will be typically administered 3-4 times a week for 30-40 minutes and is one-on-one. The intervention will be administered by the classroom teacher and intervention team.

*Component 3- Progress Monitoring:* Progress monitoring will be performed for students not achieving adequate levels on benchmark assessments through interventionist examination of weekly progress. Every four weeks each student's data will be reviewed for progress. If a student hasn't made progress in four consecutive data points, changes will occur to provide the student with more targeted intervention strategies. Every student should participate in documenting their data. Students achieving benchmark level on benchmark assessments will have their progress monitored on the highest skill assessed once every four weeks by the classroom teacher. If any student shows a decline in scores, it will be the teacher's responsibility to have the student assessed for re-entry into an intervention group. Parents of all Tier 2 and Tier 3 students will be provided with a Parent Report with the report card of each grading period reflecting student progress. Parents will be included in the decision making process when students reach Tier 3 status.

*Component 4- Outcomes Driven Model:* All activities for interventions will be evidence based, proven to be effective, and chosen based on data indicating each student's individual areas of need. A compilation of data is important when making instructional decisions. Teachers and other stakeholders must look at several data sources before making instructional decisions or changes. Interventionists provide students with tools to track their own data. This is done in a planner, student agenda, homework folder, etc. Student tracking of data helps students to be more aware of their own progress toward their academic goals.

The Director of SPED and RTI coordinator will assign appropriate supplemental intervention curricula and develop the intervention plan. The RTI process is designed to help school leaders, teachers, parents, and teachers assistants utilize data-based decisions to improve the educational outcomes for all students, especially those students whose success is at risk due to academic or behavioral challenges. Successful outcomes reduce the need for special education services. Unless a student has an obvious disability requiring Special Education services, a referral for a Special Education evaluation is expected to be accompanied by data demonstrating that the student was provided with appropriate scientific research-based instruction (including interventions) in the general education setting, delivered by qualified personnel, along with progress monitoring data as required by federal and state regulations. If, over time, collected data indicates that the student has not shown adequate progress despite implemented research-based interventions, consideration for Special Education may be warranted. Students identified



as academically at-risk in by their 2nd grade Fountas & Pinnell and MAP scores will be referred to our Education Services Department and placed into a small group or individual resource sessions; additionally, classroom teachers may recommend a student for academic supports. YACS - Orleans will employ remediation specialists trained to implement intervention with our students. Children will be in resource sessions two to five times weekly, depending on need. Individual student progress will be tracked at each session and assessments given weekly. Student remediation plans will be modified according to progress made during the week. Some students will be taken out of remediation due to ample success, others will increase remediation efforts due to lack of progress.

RTI, IEPs, and 504 Services will be managed at the school level by the Director of SPED. YACS - Orleans will hire a highly qualified, highly certified special education professional to fill this role. This person will act as the steward of all special services (including the addition of a G&T Coordinator in Year 2) and is responsible for assembling IEP teams, coordinating professional development for SPED services personnel, encouraging the participation and education of classroom teachers in the delivery of special services. They will hold the primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with all reporting and documenting requirements and the coordination, collaboration and supervision of multi-disciplinary teams of related service providers, both in school and contracted (i.e. physical therapists, assisted PE coaches, occupational therapists, etc.). They will also be responsible for observation and support of classroom teachers and interventionists in the implementation of the RTI model.

YACA's highly qualified teachers working in the roles of G&T Coordinator, RTI Coordinator, interventionists, and SPED teachers meet specifications of "highly qualified" in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act and Louisiana's special education certification or will complete the certification process during their academic year of hire. These staff members will directly provide services for exceptional students, both in the classroom and small group settings. They will interact with regular education teachers to optimize inclusion in regular classroom activities. They will review lesson plans with teachers and strategize ways to integrate special services into classroom activities. They will hold IEP meetings and ensure compliance and reporting requirements for the students assigned to them.

**b. Graduation for Students with Exceptionalities**

YACA is currently developing a plan for promoting graduation for students with exceptionalities as YACS – Jefferson expands to high school. The same plan would be employed at YACS – Orleans in the event that the school is eventually chartered for high school.

**c. Partnerships to Support Students and Families**

New Orleans has a rich network of service providers and advocates for students with disabilities and their families including Families Helping Families, Tulane Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Pyramid Community Parent Resource Center, and Autism Society of Greater New Orleans. Once in place, the YACS – Orleans Director of SPED will pursue partnerships with such organizations prior to the school opening and during its first several years of operation to have a network of resources in place to support YACS – Orleans families of children with special needs.



**d. Discipline Policies for Students with Exceptional Needs**

YACS-Orleans employs a specific discipline policy for students learning under IEP or 504 plans that is in accordance with the policies outlined in IDEA. Before proceeding with disciplinary actions for IEP and 504 students, YACS-Orleans’s Director of SPED, School Leader, and Dean of Culture conduct a manifestation determination to assess whether the child’s disability causes or contributes to his or her misbehavior. The team also evaluates whether all aspects of a student’s IEP or 504 plan are being followed or if disruptions in service have occurred that could negatively impact student behavior. If the team determines that the student’s behavior is not a result of his or her disability or lapse in school provided special education services, the student is disciplined following the YACS-Orleans standard discipline policy. Students determined to be in violation of school policies as a direct result of their disabilities undergo a functional behavioral assessment by the Academic and Behavioral Intervention (A/BIT) team, and the team develops a behavioral intervention plan.

YACS-Orleans does not restrain or seclude students with IEP or 504 plans as disciplinary policy.

In cases of discipline related exceptionalities, the Director of SPED, School Leader, and Dean of Culture will collaborate to determine appropriate interventions. All disciplinary action will be made in accordance with IDEA and will be documented in a student information system such as Infinite Campus or PowerSchool.

**(2) ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

The families of all new students to YACS – Orleans will complete a student registration form that will include the three questions below. These questions serve as the first step of the screening process to determine if a student is in need of ELL services, and are:

- What is the first language learned by the student?
- Is there a language other than English used at home, and if so, what is it?
- What is the language the student uses most often?

In the case where a student's registration form shows the use of a language other than English, the student will be identified as a language minority student and screened for English language proficiency. Students whose first language is one other than English, or who speak another language the majority of the time, will also be screened for English language proficiency. Students identified as language minority will be administered the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA) Test. This test is an objective screening instrument used to assess English proficiency in order to determine whether the student is identified as "limited English proficient" (LEP) and therefore eligible for ESL services. Once a student is identified as having limited proficiency in the English language, based on the results of the language assessment, the ELL Coordinator (counted in staff plan/budget as interventionist), will determine the most appropriate instructional plan for the student, which includes regular classroom instruction and targeted intervention as needed. The parent is notified of this instructional plan and of the exit (ELDA)



test that is administered each spring to determine the following year's instructional plan for a student with LEP. Instruction and accommodations are provided and monitored throughout the year for each ELL with the goal full English proficiency in academic content.

YACS - Orleans will provide a comprehensive educational program that leads to the attainment of English proficiency and academic achievement. In addition to specific ESL instruction and programming, the strong and inclusive community and emphasis on differentiated instruction will provide added supports as needed. Students identified as LEP will be equally celebrated, encouraged, and inspired to develop and demonstrate accomplishments.

Each teacher of students who qualify as LEP will participate on a committee that will develop a year-round achievement plan to address the English language learning needs of each specific student. This plan, based on the Louisiana English as a Second Language Standards, will be used to regularly reflect on individual progress toward achieving proficiency on annual English Language Arts (ELA) assessments. Students are to be included in general classes with other students to the maximum extent appropriate, to ensure growth in the general education curriculum. Newcomers and beginners within the language utilize resources like Rosetta Stone, Lexia, and 1 to 1 Instruction to help each learner meet their language proficiency goals. Teachers of ELL students will use a variety of techniques in the classroom including, but not limited to: TPR, demonstrations, illustrated directions, written directions (with diagrams or examples), visual aids, modified speech, focus on key vocabulary, yes/no questions, allowing physical responses or single-word answers, and use of cloze exercises to expand on student answers. To teach vocabulary and word usage, ELL teachers will introduce new words orally first, using realia and pictures to provide visual representation. Students will then be shown the word in print, working with the teacher to sound out and read the word. Finally, students will copy and spell the new word. Teachers will recycle the vocabulary in future lessons and encourage learners to use the new words in speaking and, eventually, in reading and writing.

Student progress will be measured with The Louisiana ESL standards (which provide learning objectives for each performance level) and the National TESOL standards. Teachers will recommend adjustments to the LEP plan as needed for students to make effective progress. Parents/guardians will be required to review and authorize their student's plan, with the opportunity to make recommendations for change at any point during its design or implementation. According to students' ESL level, combined with anecdotal information and classroom samples, general education teachers will use previously outlined strategies to differentiate instruction for ESL students in the classroom. RTI is an applicable system to ESL students as well as other students who need additional assistance.

In addition to teachers' weekly progress notes on the LEP plan, students' scores on the LEAP Assessment will be used to aid in ongoing monitoring. This data will serve as the most important marker of English language improvement as scores are generated against scientifically accepted and standardized benchmarks. A Language Appraisal Team comprised of the ESL specialist, a classroom teacher, and an administrator will review the diagnostic data, student grades, student social adjustment, LEAP scores,



and other assessment materials. This team will decide when it is appropriate to graduate a student from the program. Students will continue to be monitored for up to two years after exiting the program. If a student fails to make academic progress during a monitoring year, students may be retested and reassessed, and their achievement plan revised.

### **(3) GIFTED AND TALENTED**

YACS - Orleans is committed to providing a free appropriate public education to all its students, including those who are identified as gifted/talented (G&T). Because our school is designed to use differentiation, project-based learning, and multiple forms of diagnostics and assessment for all students, we anticipate that it will be particularly effective in providing students identified as G&T with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction.

We offer extensively differentiated classroom instruction in an arts-integrated environment, using strategies and techniques designed to reach each learner at their individual level. In this way, our curriculum, in essence, becomes a gifted curriculum for all learners, encouraging them to excel at or beyond grade level, and reach understanding at a high level on Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives. The G&T Coordinator (Year 2) will be responsible for ensuring all identification, screening, parental involvement, and procedural safeguard requirements are followed in accordance with the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Pupil Appraisal Handbook, Bulletin 1508 and Bulletin 1706. Incoming students with an IEP identifying their G&T designation will receive instructional services in accordance with federal regulations and school procedures. For non-identified students suspected of being G&T, a School Building Level Committee meeting will be convened to consider eligibility for G&T designation. The committee will draw upon information from a variety of sources, including state standardized and internal interim assessments, parent input and teacher recommendations. If a student is determined to be G&T, the IEP team (parents, general education teacher, G&T teacher, district representative, and student when determined appropriate) will meet to develop the student's new IEP. The G&T Coordinator will facilitate the development and delivery of differentiated curricula to meet the needs of G&T students in the general education classroom. Additionally, G&T students will participate in resource classes a minimum of 60 minutes per week in their concentration (academic or artistic).

Benchmark assessments will be used to monitor student progress and ensure that instruction is appropriately challenging. Professional development in gifted and talented education will be provided to enable faculty to appropriately interpret data to indicate progression of the G&T student. Such professional development will include a background of general knowledge about the characteristics of giftedness and implications for curriculum, instruction, and assessment of specific content. This may include:

- Characteristics and identification of gifted and talented students;
- Psychology and developmental needs;
- Need for and concept of differentiated services;
- Development of appropriate curriculum;
- Differentiated teaching strategies and assessments for gifted and talented students;



- Strategies for identifying and serving student groups historically underrepresented in gifted and talented education, including students who live in poverty, those who are culturally or linguistically diverse, and students with disabilities;
- Administrative alternatives and program options to support acceleration and enrichment; and
- Program implementation, evaluation, and revision.

At YACS-Orleans, differentiated curricula for the G&T student will contain the following:

- Content that is compact and accelerated in such a way that the amount of time usually involved in mastery is significantly reduced;
- Content that reflects a higher degree of complexity, emphasizes abstract concepts, and develops higher-level thinking processes than is found in regular course work;
- Content that goes beyond the prescribed curriculum to involve the application of learning to areas of greater challenge; and
- Multi-disciplinary content that increases student's abilities to formulate and test new generalizations and/or products.

YACS - Orleans leaders will implement a screening process that is based on data and provides accurate, timely, and relevant information to stakeholders for G/T program improvement. Once screened YACS - Orleans will follow Orleans Parish Guidelines in the evaluation process of Gifted and Talented learners. The screening process will be conducted by persons having expertise in gifted and talented education and will assess processes and products of each component of the gifted and talented program. Once identified, learners who are gifted and/or talented will have evaluation processes that focus on whether the goals, objectives, and strategies for gifted and talented students have been reached. The quantity, quality, and appropriateness of the programs and services provided for gifted and talented students will be assessed. Data for evaluation will be obtained from a variety of valid and reliable instruments, procedures, and information sources as appropriate.

In the case of talented in the arts, teacher and parent referrals will be used to determine which students should be screened for talent in visual arts, music, or theater. A team of professional artists and educators will pre-screen students based on district criteria, with the district conducting the final evaluation for those students that pass the screening process. Talented in the arts students will attend resource classes in their art form for a minimum of 60 minutes per week.

### High School Specific Questions

*OPSB requires additional information from applicants seeking to start, transform or convert a school serving grades 9-12 in Orleans Parish. Complete this section only if your application proposes such a school.*

#### *State and District Graduation Standards*

- (1) Provide as **Attachment 19** an example of a daily schedule for a student attending your school as well as your school's academic calendar.
- (2) Detail each type of diploma your school will offer. Describe how your school will ensure every student is on a pathway to the diploma that best meets the individual student's interests and post-secondary plans. Describe



how your school will implement the state’s required Individual Graduation Plan, as well as the requirements of Act 833 relative to high school completion for students with identified disabilities.

- (3) Explain how the diploma pathways and credentialing offered by the school will ensure student readiness for postsecondary opportunities (college, trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).

*Supporting Success for All Students – Truancy Prevention, Remediation and Intervention*

- (1) Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students in danger of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements. Specifically describe any programs designed to support students who have fallen behind in credit accumulation or are at-risk of falling behind to encourage on-time graduation.
- (2) Describe any systems and interventions your school will employ to decrease truancy.

*Ensuring College and Career Readiness*

- (1) What features will your school implement to ensure all students not only graduate from high school, but graduate prepared for success in college and career? Specifically, how will your school ensure students meet the following, or articulate why your school may not offer these opportunities:
  - a. achieve a college going ACT score and/or career-ready WorkKeys score,
  - b. have opportunities to earn college credit during high school,
  - c. have opportunities to earn industry-based credentials (please provide information about the specific credentials students enrolled at your school will have the opportunity to earn)
  - d. have opportunities to engage in work-based learning experiences,
  - e. graduate with the knowledge, skills, competencies and experiences required to take ownership over individual post-secondary plans.
  - f. taking alternative assessments, with low incidence disabilities, are prepared to access to a variety of post-secondary options.

*Strong Start – 9th Grade Transition Plan*

- (1) How will your school ensure a successful transition into your school from 8th grade, and orient new students to your school?
- (2) How will your school use evidence based-strategies and interventions to support transitional 9th grade, and other students, who arrive 2 or more years behind? Please describe their path to graduation.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Attachments

- (1) Attachment 13: (Optional) Provide data or research supporting your academic model
- (2) Attachment 14: Weekly Student Schedule
- (3) Attachment 15: Calendar of Special Events
- (4) Attachment 16: Pupil Progression Plan
- (5) Attachment 17: Job Descriptions for staff performing Special Education evaluations and/or services
- (6) Attachment 18: (If Applicable) Redacted & Un-Redacted resumes for staff performing Special Education evaluations and/or services



- (7) Attachment 19: (High School applicants) Daily Schedule for high school students

Section II: People

Governing Board

- (1) How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled? What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members? If there will be a network-level board, identify any board development requirements relative to the organization’s proposed growth and governance needs.
- (2) Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and requirements for participation.
- (3) Identify the stakeholders whose partnership you have determined is necessary to your school’s success. Describe what your board has done already to establish these relationships and explain what your board will do to deepen and sustain these relationships.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) BOARD RECRUITMENT**

The YACA board is a talented group of volunteers committed both to the success of YACS – Jefferson and to the task of providing Orleans Parish students and families with an option for quality, arts-integrated education. Expansion to Orleans Parish and governance of both schools will require the current YACA board to develop over time, adding and diversifying members to represent the interests of families in both parishes. The YACA board bylaws approved in 2015 allow for board growth with a cap on membership at 28 directors (currently 10). Board members serve a three-year term, with no directors serving more than two consecutive terms without an absence of at least one year. The annual meeting of the board for the election of new members and officers takes place in June. The current cycle of membership will create two vacancies on the board in 2019 prior to the opening of YACS – Orleans. While the majority of current board members are residents of Orleans Parish, this timing represents a great opportunity for recruitment of new members with ties specific to the YACS – Orleans school site community and to share institutional knowledge from board members who participated in the founding years of YACS – Jefferson before they cycle off. YACA intends to focus upcoming recruitment efforts on candidates with fundraising and public relations experience, as the Board and school leader have determined the creation of a Fundraising and Public Relations committee necessary to support the launch of the CMO and to facilitate growth at both schools.

The Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending applicants for appointment to the Board, organizing Board orientation and training, and conducting background checks on all potential board members. YACA will launch its efforts to attract new members upon receipt of its OPBS charter following the same strategy and vetting process that has been effective since its inception in 2012. Efforts will focus on creating a balance on the board between Jefferson and Orleans Parishes, recruitment of board members with fundraising/public relations experience, and compliance with OPSB



Policy HA. The recruitment process is as follows:

- Summer 2018: Governance committee analyzes mission, vision, growth plan, and the performance requirements of the charter contract to determine (in addition to development/PR) any new skills, capacities, or connections necessary to maximize board functionality and school success. The committee also conducts a profile of current board capacity to determine strengths and areas for growth, closely considering voids created by members completing their terms.
- Fall 2018: Governance committee researches potential candidates and solicits nominations from the Board. The committee mails recruitment packets including an introduction letter, board member “job description,” and information on YACA’s schools. Follow up calls are made to invite potential board members to tour school campuses and participate in prospective member orientation.
- Winter 2018-19: Governance committee hosts school tours and orientation in order to clearly define expectations for members’ time, involvement, and financial commitments; familiarize prospective members with YACA’s mission, vision, and educational model; and answer questions. Committee members will also hold individual interviews with prospects and conduct background checks.
- Winter / Spring 2019: Governance committee secures declarations of prospective members’ willingness to serve in advance of election during June Annual Meeting.

**(2) BOARD CAPACITY-BUILDING**

The strength of the board resides in the experiences and skills of individual members, as well as their ability to work as a team. The constant evolution of the educational, cultural, and political landscapes necessitates ongoing board development through continuing education. YACA conducts board orientation meetings for new members and periodically includes speakers on relevant topics at its meetings. Orientation for new board members is a half-day event that includes briefings on the role of the Board, officers, and staff; overview of programs, plans, and finances; and talk with the school leader(s). All new board members receive a YACA Board Handbook that includes the by-laws, code of ethics, school handbooks, meeting schedule, and committee lists. Board-specific trainings are incorporated into the regular board meeting schedule, with directors also being invited to participate in all school-based professional development workshops and retreats. The YACA Board intends to participate in the acclaimed Board on Track development program in preparation for the launch of YACS – Orleans to ensure readiness to govern schools in two parishes (funds for board development are part of the Consultants budget line item Attachments 23 & 24). YACA also keeps abreast of trainings offered by the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools. Board members are required to attend all 10 meetings. The Executive, Academic, and Facilities committees meet monthly, with meetings of the remaining committees scheduled as needed. Additional meetings are scheduled with appropriate committees and/or school leader and CEO to set school performance goals and evaluate performance. All board meetings include presentation of operations dashboard, review of pending contract renewals or initiation, and committee reports. Additional details on board review topics and continuing education are included below.

**FY 2019-20 Sample Board Schedule**



June – Annual Meeting	August	September	October	November
Election of officers and new board members	Review of CEO and school performance from prior academic year; review of 2019-20 goals; review of preliminary LEAP test scores	Review quarterly school performance data; <b>ASSESSMENT LITERACY WORKSHOP – Understanding achievement data and assessments</b>	Assess school culture and address specific concerns of PCO	Review finalized LEAP scores; <b>STRATEGIC SYSTEMS / GOAL SETTING WORKSHOP – Setting Attainable CMO/School goals</b>
January	February	March	April	May
Review and acceptance of previous year’s audit; review of quarterly school performance data	Review by-laws; <b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP – Working with parents, public, and organizations to build capacity</b>	Review quarterly school performance data; review of parent surveys/feedback	Review planning and budgeting for upcoming year	Approve annual budget for next year; review progress against annual goals

In addition to board meeting-based external professional development and to ensure solid and effective evaluation YACA provides board training in assessment of School Leader performance, particularly in the area of understanding academic performance assessments. Prior to the start of each school year, board members participate in a special session conducted by the CEO and CAO to review school performance assessment measures including MAP and LEAP 360 testing and how to interpret results as reflective of student growth. This training is also a part of new board member orientation.

**(3) KEY STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS**

The YACA Board of Directors is a diverse group of strong and motivated community leaders that is committed to effective school and organizational governance; realization of vision and mission; stewardship of supporters; and assurance of institutional stability. The Board nurtures and maintains effective, mutually supportive working relationships with both school leaders and partner organizations, realizing that success stems from cultivating internal and external associations. Board members and administrators share an understanding of YACA’s mission and goals and agree that energy should be focused on productivity, success, and high student achievement in an innovative, arts-integrated environment. The individuals who comprise the Board of Directors bring expertise in social services, medical, legal, finance, community relations and engagement, and education fields – along with the support of their business and social networks. YACA board members regularly invite current and potential supporters on tours of YACS – Jefferson to witness arts integration in action and to speak with



the administration, teachers, students, and parents. YACA maintains regular communication with stakeholders and pursues all opportunities to publically recognize the contributions of our supporters.

Current YACA partnerships include universities, nonprofits, corporations, chambers, and foundations. YACA has built relationships with Xavier University to provide STEM lessons for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students; Loyola University evaluates the effectiveness of YACA’s operations and makes recommendations for improvement; corporate supporters such as Capital One, IBERIABANK, Kinder Morgan, and Atkins commit both grant funding and volunteer time; private foundations such as Pro Bono Publico and Holley Pavy Deblois and John M Deblois Foundation underwrite curriculum and expenses related to student mental health. Arts Council New Orleans provides ongoing support by underwriting the Friday performance series. These relationships form the foundation for the school’s culture and increase potential for positive impact as a community asset, but the Board realizes the great potential for growth in community support with the opening of YACS – Orleans. The launch of the Board’s Fundraising/PR Committee chaired by Edna Moore at the start of the 2018-19 Fiscal Year, along with the contracting of a grant writer in 2019, will ensure the proper stewardship of YACA’s current relationships and the potential for new growth.

Staff

- (1) If your organization chart or job descriptions have changed since your original submission, please submit an updated school level organizational chart as **Attachment 20**. Include job descriptions that summarize the scope of work for all staff on the school leadership team as **Attachment 21**.
- (2) Describe the expectations for teachers. How you will clearly communicate these expectations and ensure that teachers stay on track towards meeting expectations? What instrument will be used for staff evaluation? Will the school seek a waiver from the state observation rubrics under COMPASS? If other than COMPASS attach any teacher evaluation tools to be used by the school as **Attachment 22**.
- (3) Describe your strategies for retaining high quality teachers, ensuring a stable teaching force, and your pathways to leadership for qualified staff members.
- (4) Outline the proposed school’s salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS**  
 YACA’s updated org chart and job descriptions are included as Attachment 20.

**(2) TEACHER EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION**  
**Expectations and Communication**  
 YACA has high expectations for teachers and realizes that educators perform best when given the clarity of expectations, professional development, resources, and positive work environment they deserve.



Faculty and staff must possess a firm belief in the school's mission and core instructional beliefs, exemplary personal character, and critical professional qualifications. Teachers are made aware of the support and evaluation system throughout the recruitment and hiring process and it is reinforced in the Employee Handbook and in professional development sessions throughout the year, beginning in July at the onboarding professional development. YACA's Employee Handbook outlines basic expectations for attendance, dress code, lesson planning, staff meetings, homework/projects, inclusion, field trips, professional learning, class coverage, recordkeeping, grading, conferences, credentials, security, visitors, office supplies/copier, communications with parents, social media, and financial procedures. YACA realizes, however, that the most foundational expectation is the cultivation of the positive, functional, and creative classroom environments deserved by our students; research supports that the classroom physical environment directly impacts student attitudes and achievement. The following expectations are in place for creating an effective classroom:

- All classrooms and work areas should be organized and orderly
- Classroom expectations and consequences that adhere to the school's discipline policies and procedures should be posted in each room
- Boards should display the date, daily agenda, and learning targets and should be updated daily and written in creative learner-friendly language
- Each class should have classroom goals and essential questions posted and easily visible to all creative learners
- Lesson plans should be up-to-date for observers to reference and for substitute teachers to utilize as necessary
- Hallway and classroom walls should be decorated with academic and/or encouraging materials
- Windows on classroom doors should never be covered
- Creative learner work should be posted and updated at least quarterly
- Desks and tables should be arranged in a way that is conducive to learning for all creative learners
- Any work posted outside the classroom must include a completed Gallery Sheet approved by the Director of Arts Integration

Congruent to expectations regarding the physical classroom environment, YACA outlines expectations for classroom management and procedures:

- All staff employ effective procedures for transitional elements of the school day. In addition to explicitly teaching those procedures to creative learners, consistent practice using them is required so that a particular routine becomes habitual/ritual.
- Teachers use (and receive ongoing training with) a variety of top-quality behavior management techniques, which include classroom setup tips and sample procedures for dealing with different types of misbehavior.
- YACA is committed to taking a proactive approach with regard to school culture and classroom management. By using a universal behavior system that works with all ages and with different instructional approaches, we strive for consistency and continue to anticipate and prevent potential problems while encouraging and supporting our creative learners' growth and development into responsible, self-disciplined students.



- Any chronic or severe infractions of the behavior code (ongoing creative learner actions which are unacceptable or obstruct learning) that may arise are handled collaboratively by the school leadership, faculty, and/or grade level teams in addition to the individual teacher. Teams of teachers work together to design and tweak approaches and procedures that align with creative learners' specific needs and/or personalities.
- Grade-level teams are expected to design, teach, and practice effective procedures.

SMART (specific, relevant, achievable, time-bound) goals for academic performance are set prior to the school year by the Board, School Leader, Academic Committee, CAO, and CEO. These expectations are communicated regularly to instructional staff during professional development, data dives, monthly meetings, and school-wide Monday Memos.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

YACA uses a rigorous and supportive evaluation process to ensure that its teachers continue to grow in their ability to educate students to the highest levels of academic achievement. The School Leader has primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of all teachers, with additional support provided by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Director of Arts Integration. The School Leader uses frequent feedback loops to provide teachers with input on planning and instruction (see section on coaching and modeling). At the start of each school year, teachers use MAP test performance data to create Student Learning Targets (SLTs): performance and developmental goals specific to each classroom, which are incorporated into overall teacher evaluation. SLTs allow teachers to monitor student growth at the classroom level (and to adjust instruction as needed and in real time) and leadership to determine teacher effectiveness given context of particular classrooms and student abilities. SLTs directly link student academic goals to the expectations of YACA teachers because growth can be monitored on the individual classroom level.

YACA will not seek a waiver from the state observation rubrics and will continue to use the COMPASS system to evaluate teachers according to the procedures recommended by the Louisiana Department of Education. For regular formative observation and feedback sessions, leaders will use a custom rubric that is housed in Whetstone. The Whetstone classroom observation platform is used by instructional leadership to conduct formative, weekly classroom observations and provide teacher feedback. Whetstone rubric is based on COMPASS but YACS - Orleans has embedded additional metrics to make sure teachers are improving instruction for students specific to YACA instruction and to the arts-integrated model. Areas of assessment include learning outcomes, student engagement, demonstration of learning, percent on task, response to redirection, academic climate, and behavioral climate, arts project management, and connecting artwork to meaning. Whetstone data is reviewed every two weeks during instructional meetings to create action plans to assist teachers in improving low-performing components. Whetstone's formative assessments supplement the summative COMPASS evaluation (Attachment 22).

### **Teacher Professional Improvement Plans**



YACA provides scaffolds of support for teachers in need of assistance to ensure that their students meet academic expectations. Deficiencies identified through observation, COMPASS, Whetstone, and/or student performance data trigger protocols to provide teacher support. Struggling teachers first receive additional classroom coaching from the DCI or Director of Arts Integration. If improvements are not evident, teachers are placed on Professional Improvement Plans (PIPs). PIPs, developed by the DCI and School Leader, outline objectives for improvement that are aligned to areas of growth, and provide a system of supports (i.e. additional professional development, coaching, etc.) to help teachers achieve success. Progress toward PIP goal achievement is assessed and tracked through Whetstone.

**Evaluation of Non-Teaching Staff**

YACA realizes that a school’s functionality and culture are heavily reliant on the performance and dedication of support staff. All staff in non-teaching positions complete self-evaluations which are reviewed by respective supervisors. Supervisors then meet with staff to discuss areas of improvement and applaud areas of strength. Staff members found to be underperforming are placed on supervisor-guided improvement plans.

**(3) Strategies to Retain Highly-Qualified Teachers and Ensure a Stable Teaching Force**

Just as we expect our faculty and staff to develop a positive learning environment for our students, YACA leaders will create a positive working environment. YACA believes that employing engaging curriculum, innovative pedagogical strategies, and professional support will decrease teacher attrition and increase teacher longevity for teachers of all experience levels. Simply, teachers work best in an environment where they feel valued and supported and will be more likely to remain in careers with YACA if the leadership prioritizes continuing education (and its positive impact on earning potential) and demonstrates respect for pedagogical innovation. Studies affirm this assertion: “Administrative support was the most significant predictor of teachers’ job satisfaction, while teachers’ job satisfaction was the most significant predictor of teachers’ intent to stay in teaching” (Tickle, 2008). Regular survey data shows that YACS – Jefferson has a high rate of satisfaction among staff and faculty, with 95% of faculty and staff that were offered positions returning for 2017-18 school year. YACA teachers are encouraged to educate creatively - not “only teach to the test” - and their ideas are respected which increases teacher job satisfaction, enhances school culture, and provides consistency for students.

The high faculty-staff retention rate exhibited at the established school will be a part of the new school’s annual goal setting and our School Leaders’ evaluation. YACS - Jefferson employs a variety of strategies to promote teacher retention and stability, which will be replicated at YACS - Orleans including professional development, cultivation of a positive work environment, teacher appreciation, and incentives (see section 4).

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER SUPPORT:** YACA promotes a culture that values employee engagement and empowerment. YACA believes that employee training, development, and education combined with supportive coaching and a culture of collaboration and mutual respect, will result in increased effectiveness, productivity, knowledge, loyalty, and contribution. To that end, extensive on-



site professional development is offered for all staff, as well as opportunities to attend specialized, off-site professional development as budget allows.

Targeted professional development helps teachers learn how to set high expectations for all students, appropriately sequence and pace content, and use effective instructional strategies to help our students meet expectations. Professional development consistently takes the arts-integrated model into account and additional support is provided for teachers to meet all of these goals while teaching through the arts. Oversight by academic administration ensures that the curriculum stays aligned with Louisiana Student Standards and National Core Art Standards and is implemented equally across grade levels and subject areas. All teachers have online access to the school's curriculum maps and are given opportunities to regularly align and refine them.

YACS - Orleans uses a rigorous and supportive process to ensure that its teachers continue to grow in their ability to educate students to the highest levels of academic achievement. Professional development at YACS - Orleans is focused on providing faculty and staff with the skills they need to facilitate each individual student's learning of the curriculum. Because we tailor instruction to meet each child's distinct and specific needs, it is critical for teachers, administrators, and other school staff to understand who their students are, where they come from, and what abilities, ideas, and understandings they bring to the table. Weekly meetings between the Director of SPED and grade level teams will provide opportunities to discuss individual student needs so that SPED teachers and classroom teachers can coordinate their efforts and best serve the students. Unique to our model is our sabbatical program, which allows each grade level team one half day per quarter for planning or visiting model programs.

- Pre-Opening: YACS - Orleans will allocate multiple days to whole school Professional Development (PD). Beginning with 10 full days prior to the opening of the school, a rigorous schedule is planned for the year. To ensure that the YACS - Orleans team's instructional, operational and cultural expectations are cohesive, comprehensive and aligned with high standards of arts integration recommended by Mission Critical Partner YALA, professional development focuses on three learning areas: School Culture (team-building, mission, vision, values, rituals and routines); Instructional Methods (arts- integration, co-teaching, teaching techniques, assessments, learning standards, teaching children with exceptionalities, quality lesson planning and curriculum mapping); and Operational Expectations (classroom management, systems and procedures, data collection and dissemination, communications, and report cards). Pre-opening professional development is coordinated by the school the leadership team, qualified teachers, and recognized consultants. Professional development is conducted by YALA and school-based leadership.

- Coaching and Modeling: Highly effective charter school models such as Achievement First, Uncommon Schools, Roxbury Prep and Sci Academy exhibit a deep commitment to teacher observation, instructional coaching, and modeling of effective practices and techniques. YACS - Orleans also integrates this critical avenue of professional development into its culture and programming. The School Leader and leadership team will work with less experienced teachers through a process of evaluation, immediate feedback, and



demonstration of appropriate techniques in a “real-time” environment.

- **Classroom Observations and Feedback:** The Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) and the Director of Arts Integration (DIA) conduct regular classroom observations. Teachers at YACS – Orleans will receive feedback through written follow-ups and debrief conversations around strengths and areas for growth within the observed lesson. Achievement data from the lesson’s objective will be discussed and both teacher and student actions will be correlated to the data to determine trends. Follow up steps will be derived from the debrief conversations and follow-up observations are conducted to ensure a frequent observation-feedback loop. Observations will range from 5 to 30 minutes. The School Leader will identify teachers demonstrating strong instructional practices in specific areas and provide coverage for teachers to observe these best practices in action.
- **Professional Learning Community:** YACS - Orleans is a professional learning community (PLC). Grade level teams meet regularly (no less than 2-4 times per week) for the purposes of coaching, engagement in planning lessons, creating assignments, and determining how curriculum and or instruction may need to be modified based on performance data. Participants read and share pertinent articles, discuss data which informs instruction, attend training sessions, and reflect on the work of the entire charter with the intent of working toward overall school improvement. Standards-based Instruction, project-based teaching, and Balanced Literacy/Numeracy are examples of subject areas for PLC learning.
- **Video Review:** Each teacher at YACS - Orleans will video record at least one lesson per quarter. The teachers then review the videos with an instructional leader to identify areas of strength and areas for growth. These videos will be used during professional development time as a way to share best practices. Over time, YACS - Orleans will build a bank of instructional videos, which will include footage from other schools.
- **Instructional Rounds:** Throughout the year, YACS - Orleans teachers will be given opportunities to visit and observe other classes through instructional rounds. Less experienced teachers are paired with mentors; and teachers working on a particular strategy will work with a “master” practitioner. The instructional leadership team will also regularly conduct a whole-school analysis of instruction by observing every classroom. All staff members will be observed and receive feedback a minimum of once per semester. Following a discussion, notes will be calibrated, trends will be determined, and instructional gaps will be identified. Professional development effectiveness is evaluated regularly through observation, teacher feedback surveys, and school performance data. Following all PD sessions teachers are asked to reflect and evaluate the program. In the days and weeks following, school leaders observe for evidence that the training is being implemented and having a positive effect on student outcomes.

**POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT:** At YACA schools each teacher serves on a committee to support a positive school environment. One such committee, the Social/Happiness committee, specifically focuses on events, activities, and recognition opportunities to cultivate a family environment among staff and



ensure that they experience joy in the workplace.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION:** Throughout the year, leadership takes care to acknowledge staff commitment through meals, affirmations, small gifts, and special privileges.

**PATHWAYS TO LEADERSHIP:** YACA’s arts-integrated model requires that teachers make commitments to developing their pedagogical skills beyond the requirements for traditional schools, and YACA makes significant investments of both time and money in ongoing teacher training. Promotion from within is the logical choice at YACA schools given the uniqueness of our model and the caliber of our teachers. YACA also recognizes that a strong pipeline to leadership encourages positive school culture and incentivizes employees to perform to their best ability. YACA advertises vacancies both internally and externally, with additional consideration being given to current YACA employees. YACA also provides arts-integrated leadership professional development to prepare new hires/newly promoted employees for their roles as academic and creative leaders. As precedent, YACS – Jefferson’s School leader was hired as Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the Director of Arts Integration was promoted from teaching artist, and an Instructional Specialist started as a classroom teacher. Although YACA does support pathways to leadership, we abide by a fair and equitable hiring process in selecting the best candidate for the position whether or not that person is a current YACA employee.

**(4) SALARY RANGES AND BENEFITS**

YACS – Orleans will offer competitive wages, a comprehensive benefits package and, most importantly, YACA HR policies related to compensation and evaluation are and will continue to be compliant with state statutes and BESE policies. New policies are reviewed internally by the central network team, verified by the legal consultant and then voted on by the Board of Directors, ensuring at least three sets of checks and balances. YACS-Orleans will align closely to the OPSB pay scale. YACA will add \$2,000 to each pay level to compensate for the lack of participation in the TRSL system. Benefits include:

- Health, dental, and vision insurance for all full-time employees with family coverage options available. YACA pays 75% of health insurance premiums for employees only.
- Qualified retirement plans to all employees. Employees may opt to defer a portion of their current gross pay and to have those funds invested in accordance with applicable federal and state guidelines. The employer match will be based on the first 5% of compensation saved starting from plan entry date.
- Short-term and long-term disability plans for all employees who are unable to work because of non-work related injury or illness.
- Workers Compensation, unemployment insurance, and COBRA.

**Incentives:** YACA provides incentivized pay raises for highly qualified-teachers in two categories: Highly Effective Teachers and Highly Effective Use of Arts Integration by Teachers. Teachers qualifying in either category will receive a \$1,000 pay raise and are eligible to receive both increases. Bestowment of the categorization(s) is decided by members of the academic leadership team and is offered at the discretion of the school leader. Criteria for both are as follows:



(1) Highly Effective:

- Show growth on MAP, standardized testing, and report cards for their students
- Have excellent attendance that does not exceed their allocated PTO days
- Participate in professional development opportunities
- Lead or serve on at least one school committee
- Fulfill all YACA obligations including duty schedules, Celebrations of Learning, and staff meetings
- Communicate frequently and sensitively with parents/guardians and relate both positive and negative concerns
- Exhibit good classroom management
- Assist and support members of their grade level team
- Make referrals (G&T and SPED) in a timely manner
- Show effective co-teaching

(2) Highly Effective Arts Integration:

In addition to successful co-planning and co-teaching artists, each teacher shall independently plan and implement at least one 10-lesson arts-integrated unit or two 5-lesson arts-integrated units per quarter. Units must culminate in a performance task or project and include an assessment that reflects both the arts skill and the connection content skill or standard.

School Leader Capacity

Note that the application should not refer to the experiences of an Educational Service Provider or another company (such as a back-office service provider) that will provide services to the school. Only the school leader OR a member of the school leadership team may respond to the prompts below. In addition to submitting their resume, the school leader must at least respond to prompts 2 & 3 or prompts 4 & 5.

- (1) Describe the school(s) or academic program(s) for which you, the proposed school leader, have been responsible. Describe your leadership role(s) and primary responsibilities at the relevant school(s) or academic program(s). The summary should describe the impact that these responsibilities had on the success of the relevant entity.
- (2) Provide multiple years of student performance data under your leadership. This data must include but is not limited to: proficiency and growth on either state or national standardized tests.
- (3) Describe a leadership position you have held in which you were responsible for the operations and/or finances of a program or organization. Describe your leadership role and primary responsibilities at the relevant program or organization. The summary should describe the impact that these responsibilities had on the success of the relevant entity.
- (4) Provide data or evidence that speaks to the organizational and/or financial viability of the program/organization for which you were responsible as a leader.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) STATEMENT FROM SCHOOL LEADER BRANDON HOUSE**

During my career as an educator, I have had the privilege to serve as a leader in three different



capacities. I began my tenure as a leader serving as an Instructional Technology Coach. My primary responsibilities consisted of coaching teachers on ways to integrate technology into their lessons, facilitating district-wide professional development seminars focused on web-based instructional resources, and managing and monitoring student device usage.

I then transitioned into the role of Director of Curriculum and Instruction. In this role, I was responsible for ensuring that teachers consistently delivered high-quality instruction. I provided daily observations and feedback conferences for all instructional staff in Kindergarten through fourth grade. Additionally, I oversaw the functions of the technology department by monitoring device usage, vetting quality web-based instructional resources, and facilitating school-wide professional development.

I currently serve as School Leader of Young Audiences Charter School - Jefferson Parish. In this role, I oversee the daily academic and operational functions of the school. My primary responsibility is to provide instructional leadership to team leaders and teachers. I dedicate my time to coaching the instructional leadership team and teachers through regular check-ins and observations. My additional responsibilities include building and maintaining community relationships, creating the school’s master schedule and calendar, and hiring and developing staff members.

Each role in leadership has developed me to be a well-rounded instructional leader. My experiences have created in me a deep commitment to developing the whole child, and the realization that this process requires the support of the whole staff. I have learned the important skill of building meaningful relationships with teachers and staff members so that each person can feel connected to the mission and vision of the school. As a coach and school leader, I utilize the best practices of coaching and feedback. I encourage my staff to take ownership of his/her work environment by being an expert in an area of education that ignites his/her passion. I also work to build intentional relationships with all of my students. I encourage them to pursue their best and to dream big.

Our school's four core values are passion, creativity, discipline, and teamwork. I believe that my skills emulate these four basic tenets and inspire adults and students to do the same. I plan to continue to cultivate and refine my skills as a leader so that the faculty and staff at Young Audiences Charter School – Orleans Parish can successfully guide our students in the pursuit of excellence.

**(2) PERFORMANCE DATA** Student academic performance has been steadily increasing since I joined YACS as School Leader in fall 2015, but we have more work to do to meet the high standards set for our school and deserving of our students. The table below shows our student growth on iLEAP/LEAP and MAP testing between 2014 and 2016. As School Leader, I am excited about the more than 20% increase in students *exceeding* the state standards for English Language Arts and Math under my tenure.

ASSESSMENT	2016	2015	2014
Students Meeting or Exceeding iLEAP/LEAP Reading Standards	63%	60%	50%



Students Exceeding iLEAP/LEAP Reading Standards	34%	31%	19%
Students Exceeding iLEAP/LEAP Math Standards	31%	31%	19%
MAP Testing - Reading	48%	42%	
MAP Testing - Math	57%	50%	

Our school has made some recent significant changes to improve academic outcomes for our students, and we are seeing great progress. After reviewing 2017-18 performance data, school leadership collaborated on a plan to introduce more rigorous curriculum and more frequent assessments of both student and teacher performance. Students returned in the fall of 2017 to the (1) institution of Eureka Math curriculum for all grades (2) use of Louisiana Guidebooks for English Language Arts in grades 3 - 5; (3) implementation of My Perspectives for English Language Arts in grades 6 and 7 (classified Louisiana Tier 1); and (4) more frequent data dives to assess student progress and make curriculum and delivery adjustments quickly as needed.

December MAP testing of all students demonstrates exciting improvement in student English Language Arts performance. Based on the MAP data the percentage of students projected to pass the LEAP (basic, mastery, advanced) increased from 60% (2016-17) to 65%. Our seventh grade students' English Language Arts MAP scores improved greatly between spring 2017 and winter 2017 testing: 27.7% of students achieved mastery in spring 2017 versus 45.1% in winter 2017. Advanced scores improved from 2.4% to 7.0% during the same test period. Our current third graders outperformed the state and 46 out of 50 OPSB/RSD open enrollment schools. These same third graders also achieved scores of basic and above at rates 6% higher than the state average and 8% higher than the average of the Jefferson Parish Public School System (JPPSS).

Attachments

- (1) Attachment 20 (Optional) Updated Organization chart
- (2) Attachment 21: (Optional) School leadership team job descriptions
- (3) Attachment 22: Teacher Evaluation tool

Section III: Operations

Facility

- (1) What is your plan for securing a facility?
- (2) What facility characteristics are required to serve your academic program?



- (3) How will the organization meet state, local, and OPSB standards<sup>1</sup> for facility safety and maintenance?
- (4) Please address how your school will plan to adhere to occupancy and fire/life safety codes and ADA standards.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) FACILITY PLAN:** The Young Audiences Charter Association (YACA) is hopeful to partner with OPSB to secure a suitable facility in a neighborhood identified as having fewer seats for students than current demand. There has been rapid change affecting populations and facilities since Hurricane Katrina, and YACA is willing to work with the district to improve a building. In the event that a building through OPSB is not available, YACA has experience identifying and securing alternate facilities as we are in the process of finalizing financing for a 175,000 square foot non-district facility for YACS – Jefferson.

YACA has experience working with Educational Building Specialists through facilities expansion planning for YACS – Jefferson. These specialists include Charter School Property Solutions, Sizeler Thompson Brown Architects, and Core Construction. These three partners comprise a team with an exemplary record of charter school property acquisition, planning, and construction as detailed below:

- Charter School Property Solutions: CSPS is a full-service firm that provides financial, developer, and consultant services to nonprofits endeavoring to open a charter school. Since 2006, SCPS has (1) helped charter schools secure financing by acting as either a direct lender or as a consultant in arranging long term financing through an array of financial institutions; (2) collaborated with local real estate brokers to locate suitable properties and assisted clients in navigating zoning and entitlement restrictions and environmental concerns; and (3) consulted to develop master site plans that provide both cutting-edge educational design and environmental sustainability.
- Sizeler Thompson Brown Architects: For decades, Sizeler Thompson Brown Architects has been creating environments that foster work, play, healing, and learning. Committed to sustainability and technological innovation, the firm is always seeking opportunities to improve the world through inspired, purposeful design. Local school projects include Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School of Literature and Technology, Martin Luther King Jr. Charter High School, and McDonough 35 High School.
- Core Construction: Core Louisiana focuses on building for the public sector. Since Hurricane Katrina, the Core team has built and renovated more K-12 projects around New Orleans than any other general contractor in Louisiana, and has won more public Construction Manager at Risk contracts than any other CM in the state.

If required, immediately upon approval of this application, the School Leadership Team will engage this team in the identification of a school location or identify an appropriate school site for conversion. Upon identification of an appropriate facility, a detailed budget based on the specifics of the approved site will be provided. The YACS - Orleans budget submitted with this application includes \$240,000 annually for facility rental costs in the event that an OPSB building is not available.

<sup>1</sup> OPSB Facilities policies are located in OPSB Policy HD (Charter School Facilities Management)



**(2) CHARACTERISTICS** Based on the school’s anticipated enrollment at capacity, we are seeking a building to house 924 students in grades K-8 with adequate outdoor green space. Based on our research, we will need a facility with approximately 135,000 square feet of indoor space; a minimum of 38 classrooms is required, although a space with dedicated classrooms for arts-integration and enrichment (library, theatre/auditorium, computer lab, dance, music and art studios) is preferred.

**(3) FACILITIES COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS:**

If approved by OPSB, YACA will contract with CSPS, Sizler, and Core to ensure that a chosen building meets all requirements, is properly zoned, meets the accessibility needs of all students, and is maintained for our proposed education program. Long-term plans include fundraising for renovation in any facility we occupy. The startup budget includes \$25,000 under Contractual Consultants for this purpose (Attachments 23 & 24).

Financial Readiness

- (1) Include, as **Attachment 23**, your Financial Plan and Budget.
- (2) Include, as **Attachment 24**, your school’s budget narrative. The narrative should not exceed 3 pages (and should not include the network-level budget if applicable as this is covered in the Experienced Operator section), and should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). Include:
  - a. Per Pupil Revenue. Use the figures in the Budget Template in developing your budget assumptions.
  - b. Anticipated Funding Sources. Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school’s core operation depends.
  - c. Describe the resources required to support they key elements of your program. What are the expected costs of key program elements (including staffing model)?
  - d. How will you finance these costs to keep the school sustainable?
  - e. Describe the resources required to support they key elements of your program. What are the expected costs of key program elements (including staffing model)?
  - f. How will you finance these costs to keep the school sustainable?
- (3) Describe your approach to budgeting, including an explanation of your approach to cutting costs if faced (as schools so often are) with a budget shortfall. Specifically describe the roles of the governing board, CMO/organizational leadership (if applicable), and the school site leadership in the budgeting process.
- (4) Describe the accounting and control systems you will install, including essential checks, balances, and segregation of duties. Please indicate how a culture of proper financial controls and reporting will become an essential component of your organizational culture.
- (5) Describe the school’s plans and procedures for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school. Who will select the audit firm, and to whom will they report?



- (6) Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual financial report.
- (7) Describe your organization’s process for awarding contracts including any processes to increase utilization of disadvantaged business enterprises.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Healthy finances and decision-making with regard to short and long term budget goals are the keys to a successful school operation and achieved by making sure that a proper set of checks and balances are put into place as well as a transparent reporting system. This will ensure accountability of leadership and the Board to the community and to the state, as well as foster a sense of trust and support with the stakeholders vested in the school’s success. The Board has a priority on organizational sustainability and fiscal solvency and as a result, the school has a prudent approach to financial decision-making that is focused on leveraging assets to maximize educational impact. YACA has managed YACS- Jefferson responsibly. As of November 30, 2017, YACS-Jefferson had total net assets of \$1.48 million and has earned a rating of 97 of 100 based on financial health indicators valued by the Jefferson Parish Public School System.

**(1 and 2) FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET NARRATIVE (Attachments 23 & 24)**

**(3) APPROACH TO BUDGETING:** Original annual operating budgets and budget updates are prepared by the CFO in conjunction with the School Leader, CEO, Operations Manager, and Finance Committee and submitted for approval to the full Board. Any updated operating budgets with greater than a 5% variance in either revenue or expenses are required to have full Board approval (after review by the Finance Committee). The budget is based on public revenue assumptions which are estimated conservatively. These include MFP, Title I, IDEA, and Food Service funds as well as tuition for eighteen Pre-K students at \$5,000 each. No private donations are recognized as revenues and incorporated into the budget until received or obligated by reputable organization (note: while start up funds have been anticipated from an upcoming Walton Foundation grant, an interest free loan has been approved and guaranteed by Young Audiences of Louisiana to cover these funds if needed, repayable in five years but currently budgeted to be repaid in three).



In the event that fewer students enroll than anticipated and revenues are low enough cause an annual deficit, the CFO will work with the CEO, COO, CAO, and School Leader to implement reasonable cuts that adjust services down to a smaller student body. Leadership will make every effort to maintain original teacher/student ratios and original targets for per pupil spending.

**(4) ACCOUNTING CONTROL SYSTEMS:** YACA engages an experienced back office service provider to ensure a strong foundation for effective school operations. Michael Dunn of Dunn Financial Solutions, LLC will be hired and employed as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Mr. Dunn, is an experienced professional with over 25 years of financial experience, 10 years non-profit experience, and is former CFO of KIPP New Orleans. Mr. Dunn has provided financial services for several charters school in Louisiana, including YACS – Jefferson.

The CFO will report directly to the CEO and provide monthly reports for review by the Board of Directors in cooperation with the COO and School Leader. The CFO, COO, School Leader, and Operations Manager will work closely with the Board Finance Committee to ensure that all finances are accurately accounted for in the school’s financial statements.

YACA uses Financial Edge (Blackbaud) as its accounting and financial reporting. The software will be set up to coincide with the Louisiana Accounting Uniform Governmental Handbook (LAUGH) system to allow for uniform financial reporting. The school will implement the same financial policies and procedures instituted at YACS - Jefferson that cover, at a minimum, the following areas:

- o Cash receipts
- o Cash disbursements
- o Purchasing
- o Accounts payable
- o Federal & state grants management
- o Payroll
- o Financial reporting
- o Fixed assets

The Operations Manager, School Leader, COO, and CFO will together to manage all



receivable and payables with oversight from the CEO. These staff members along with Finance Committee Chair and Board President will participate in Professional Development outlining best practices in financial control and reporting. Each transaction will have multiple checks and balances i.e. those issuing checks will not have authority to sign checks which require two signatures, one of which must be a board signature. The Finance Committee chair will review reconciliations monthly and participate in annual audits by reputable firms such as Carr, Riggs, and Ingram.

**5) ANNUAL AUDIT:** The Board will choose a qualified CPA firm based on proposals gathered by CMO staff to audit the school's financial records, including payroll and grants. All transactions and documents will adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP). Furthermore, the CPA will ensure that restricted grant funds have been properly appropriated according to the terms associated with the awarding of those grants. The CPA firm will also make recommendations on general financial accounting and financial analysis practices.

The CPA firm will complete the following annually:

- Annual financial audit which includes review of all financial statements and internal control processes;
- A-133 Single audit (if necessary) which is a federal audit required if receiving more than \$500,000 in federal funds;
- Agreed upon procedures reports as required by BESE
- 990 tax return (information return from the IRS).

**(6) FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY:** The Board of YACA appoints a Finance Committee to ensure fiscal accountability and transparency. The committee will do this by:

- In conjunction with CEO and School Leader, reviewing the school's financial statements, including the balance sheet and revenue & expense statement with the CFO, COO, and Operations Manager on a monthly basis;
- Ensuring proper financial and accounting practices in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations;
- Conducting thorough investigations of any financial discrepancies or



irregularities; report any issues to the appropriate agencies;

- Choosing a qualified CPA firm to handle the annual audit and tax returns

**(7) PROCESS FOR CONTRACTS:** All new and renewed contracts over \$10,000 must be reviewed annually at regular board meetings. COO and the Operations Manager will follow all bid laws and thresholds and solicit a minimum of three bids for every contract, taking special care to consult businesses designated as disadvantaged business enterprises by the Louisiana Secretary of State.

Educational Service Providers

*An Educational Service Provider is defined as an entity that is providing primary education services for a school even though the entity is not the governing board that holds the charter. If your non-profit plans to use an Educational Service Provider (ESP), please complete this section and provide as **Attachment 25** a copy of the ESP contract that your nonprofit board will sign with the Educational Service Provider that you have selected. Additionally, please provide an independent audit of the ESP as **Attachment 26**.*

- (1) Personnel: Who (which positions) will be employed directly by the charter governing board? Whom from the ESP is accountable to the governing board? (teachers) building instructional leader (principal), CEO/Exec Dir or equivalent, and Qualified Business Professional?
- (2) Finances/Operations:
  - a. Who is responsible for the preparation of the annual budget?
  - b. How will governmental funds allocated to the school be accounted for and held?
  - c. What steps will be taken to maintain accurate records regarding assets purchased in whole or in part with governmental funds?
- (3) Who is responsible for the annual audit? To whom (or what entity) will the audit be submitted?
- (4) Termination: What recourse does the governing board have if there is a breach of the ESP agreement?
  - a. Under what circumstances/terms can the agreement be terminated, and by which parties? How much time is required?
  - b. What financial penalties or consequences are incurred?
  - c. How will the security of student information (data) be maintained, and which records will be transferred to the governing board? How will the ESP comply with the provisions of R.S. 17:3913 and R.S. 17:3914 with respect to maintaining the privacy of personally-identifiable student information?
- (5) How will public assets (those purchased in whole or in part with governmental funds) be transferred to the nonprofit governing board? Who will employ the school’s instructional staff

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**



Attachments

- (1) Attachment 23: Financial Plan and Budget
- (2) Attachment 24: Budget Narrative
- (3) Attachment 25: (If applicable) ESP Contract
- (4) Attachment 26: (If applicable) ESP Audit



### Experienced Operator Addendum

*Experienced operators, as well as any new start or Type 3 conversion applicants with more than one full year in school leadership<sup>2</sup> are required to complete the Experienced Operator Addendum. 15 page limit.*

### Past School Performance

- (1) In your proposal overview you provided performance data on the schools your organization currently operates or has previously operated. If necessary, provide a brief accompanying narrative that describes your organization’s success educating a similar demographic population to the population you intend to educate in Louisiana. Please note that the OPSB may contact your other authorizers. In addition, describe the causes that led to and the current status of:
  - a. Any performance deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to authorizer intervention;
  - b. Any litigation involving your organization or a school that you operate; and,
  - c. Any material audit findings for your organization or a school that you operate.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Young Audiences Charter Association (YACA) currently operates one open-admissions charter school in Jefferson Parish, serving over 750 students in Kindergarten through seventh grades. YACS - Jefferson’s student body is representative of the students of Jefferson and Orleans Parish and Louisiana as a whole: approximately 83% are economically disadvantaged, 69.5% are minority, and 20% receive special education services (including 4% who receive gifted and talented services). Mission Critical Partner Young Audiences of Louisiana (YALA) founded YACA in 2013 to launch and oversee Young Audiences Charter School at Kate Middleton (YACS - Jefferson). YALA is the largest provider of arts in education services in Louisiana, providing an array of arts integration professional development services and direct arts experiences for students and families since 1963. The YALA board has no role in the governance of the YACA CMO or of the personnel at YACS – Jefferson or YACS – Orleans, and YALA is governed by a separate board of directors with no overlap with the YACA board. YALA will continue as a Mission Critical contracted service provider for both schools. YALA’s contract with YACA outlines clear roles, responsibilities, accountability, and finance. **As with all contracts, the YACA board has the power to terminate its contract with YALA if the relationship is deemed unproductive for its schools.**

YACS - Jefferson served 408 students grades kindergarten through third grade in its inaugural year, and has added one grade each subsequent year. Student performance has improved each year since its inception. Before Mr. Brandon House (current school leader of YACS - Jefferson and future leader of YACS – Orleans) became school leader, YACS - Jefferson received a school performance score (SPS) of 59. Under Mr. House’s leadership, YACS – Jefferson’s performance steadily increased over the past three

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<sup>2</sup> Experience leading or managing public schools is defined as one complete academic year in which one of the following is true: the individual held final building-level oversight of the instructional and operational performance of a public school (e.g., Head of School or Principal), or the individual served in a system-level role with direct supervisory responsibilities and accountability for the performance of a building leader (e.g., Chief Academic Officer, Area Superintendent, Supervisor of Principals)



years and the school received a C letter grade for the 2016-17 academic year. YACS - Jefferson's SPS increased by 14% in from 2014-15 to 2015-16, among the highest academic growth in Jefferson Parish.

YACS – Jefferson's third graders outperformed the state and 46 out of 50 OPSB/RSD schools with non-selective admission standards on the 2017 iLEAP. These same third grade students also achieved scores of basic and above at rates 6% higher than the state average and 8% higher than the average of the Jefferson Parish Public School System (JPPSS). This third grade class entered YACS - Jefferson in Kindergarten and have benefitted by the school's arts integrated approach to learning.

YACS – Jefferson recently implemented a series of school policy measures and new curricula intended to hasten the school's strong, but gradual academic growth during the fall 2017 semester. Measures included (1) institution of Eureka Math curriculum for all grades (2) use of Louisiana Guidebooks for English Language Arts in grades 3 - 5; (3) implementation of My Perspectives for English Language Arts in grades 6 and 7 (classified Louisiana Tier 1); and (4) more frequent data dives to assess student progress closer to "real time." MAP testing of all students at the close of the fall 2017 semester indicates significant improvement in student English Language Arts performance. Based on the MAP data the percentage of students projected to pass the LEAP (basic, mastery, advanced) increased from 60% (2016-17) to 65%. More dramatic is a comparison between YACS – Jefferson's seventh grade students' end 2016-17 English Language Arts MAP scores and those from December 2017: 27.7% of students achieved mastery in spring 2017 v. 45.1% in winter 2017. Advanced scores improved from 2.4% to 7.0% during the same test period. YACA continues to work toward continuous academic improvement and excellence at YACS - Jefferson, but the gains that students have achieved thus far are inspiring and indicative of future progress. Mr. House and his achievement and leadership team have implemented and established a set of practices and systems for whole school turn-around, all of which will inform subsequent school openings by YACA.

**CURRENT STATUS OF AUTHORIZER INTERVENTION, LITIGATION, AND AUDIT FINDINGS**

Young Audiences Charter Association has:

- NO Performance deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to authorizer interventions.
- NO Litigation involving the Young Audiences Charter Association or the school.
- NO Material audit findings for the Young Audiences Charter Association or the school.

Growth Plan

- (1) Describe the specific student population that your proposed school(s) will serve. Identify the needs of your intended student population.
- (2) (Applicable to groups applying for multiple sites). Describe the number of schools that you plan to open in every year for at least the next five years, the year in which each school will open, and how the organization will adapt to meet changing community needs. If your network operates multiple models, identify the model that you will open in each location.



- (3) Does the organization have any approved or pending charters (not yet in operation) in any jurisdiction? If so, include the name of the authorizer(s) and include as **Attachment EO-1**, the official record of decision/approval from the authorizing authority.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(1) YACS – ORLEANS STUDENTS**

**YACS – Orleans Projected Student Population:** YACA believes our arts-integrated model is ideal to serve the academic and creative needs of students in Orleans Parish, regardless of socio/economic status, academic ability, or early learning/pre-school readiness. Although the YACA board is committed to expansion in the state, it will be a measured growth guided by internal and external evaluations that prove capacity and ability to succeed. By opening a second school in August 2019 YACA will reach both economically secure and unsecure students whose families are seeking an arts integrated school in Orleans Parish and provide a much needed, high-quality Pre-K option. YACS – Jefferson has exceeded its enrollment targets in all four years of operations and maintains a list of inquiries from families in other Jefferson Parish communities who cannot be served by our bus transportation service. YACA anticipates our model will continue to enroll students whose race, gender, family income level, and Special Education needs align with percentages that are similar to that of the *population of Orleans Parish*. While not a “diverse by design” school, the arts-integrated model employed by YACS – Orleans and the appeal of quality, “whole child” education will attract a racially and economically diverse student population. YACA expects student demographics similar to its YACS –Jefferson campus (53% African American, 29% Caucasian, 10% Hispanic, 2% American Indian, 2% Asian, and 4% other) and peer open enrollment charter schools with specialized programs such as Morris Jeff Community School and Bricolage. However, YACA is prepared to serve any and all student populations with excellence. YACA’s experience serving in-need students at YACS – Jefferson (81% free and reduced lunch) has prepared leadership and staff to provide the academic, social/emotional, and family supports necessary to ensure success for vulnerable students (81.1% Orleans free and reduced lunch). YACS – Orleans projects enrollment of SPED, ELL, and Gifted & Talented to mirror current percentages in Orleans Parish, serving approximately 47 SPED, 21 ELL, and 60 Gifted & Talented students. *The launch of YACS – Orleans directly supports OPSB’s Unified Path Forward Goal Six to increase school diversity.*

Support for school expansion and replication is growing in the community on both sides of the Mississippi River. At YACS – Jefferson, enrollment has met or surpassed projection each year and the student mobility rate is only 6.8%. The Jefferson Parish School Board is so confident in the school’s potential that it voted to expand its charter to include Pre-k through 12th grades (original charter stipulated K-8th) in June 2017; this decision was made, in part, because of our 97 out of 100 financial health measures score from JPPSS. Parent surveys from Critical Mission Partner YALA’s 2017 summer arts enrichment programs overwhelmingly indicate that there is interest in expansion of the YACA model to Orleans Parish: 90% of respondents indicated their level of interest at “4” or “5” on a Likert scale with “5” being the highest level of interest.

**Needs of Student Population – Academic and Beyond:**



Although academic performance in Orleans Parish and across the state is steadily improving, providing options to ensure a “rigorous and diverse academic experience” is only one of the areas that the May 2017 *Superintendent’s Student Advisory Committee* identified as critical to the quality of the school experience. Building on academics, the twenty-two Orleans Parish students that participated on the committee also believe that every public school student is entitled to (1) robust extracurricular opportunities; (2) comprehensive student support services; (3) fair and firm school culture and discipline; and (4) authentic platforms for student voice and representation. Orleans Parish students recognize that they deserve to learn creatively in an enriching and fair environment. As districts or as school founders we should listen to them. The YACA arts-integrated model delivers not only academic excellence, but also the positive, supportive, and empowering school culture requested by Orleans students.

**YACA’S RIGOROUS AND DIVERSE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE FOR ALL STUDENTS:** In Orleans Parish 81.1% of students are eligible for free or low-cost lunch, and only 27% of students grades 3 – 8 scored “Mastery” or above according to the 2015-16 Louisiana Department of Education School District report card. Indicative of an equity gap, minority, SPED, and economically disadvantaged students scored at “Mastery” or above 25%, 13%, and 23% respectively. Failing to provide and engaging curriculum help close the achievement gap is a crisis that will have a lasting impact on the wellbeing of Louisianans for years to come: “Thousands of children in Louisiana enter kindergarten unprepared and quickly fall behind their peers. The effects from a lack of high-quality early childhood education can be long-lasting, resulting in lower LEAP and iLEAP scores, retention through elementary, middle and high school and even dropouts in 7th grade and beyond” (louisiana.edu).

YACA strongly believes that arts integration will yield improvements in student engagement and understanding of the material based on both evidence from educators and research: “The ongoing debate over the achievement gap in American schools has largely overlooked its underlying cause: the engagement gap. Fortunately, simple and proven tools exist to close the engagement gap: hands-on activities [arts/project-based learning] rekindle a love of learning and connect abstract concepts to the real world - while achieving desired educational outcomes.” (RAFT: Resource Area for Teaching. 2013. “Bridging the Engagement Gap with Hands-On Teaching”). YACA schools provide integrated arts learning, access to professional art performances, and participation in hands-on art experiences that are critical to fostering students’ academic, social/emotional, and cultural development.

**YACA’S ROBUST EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES:** YACS – Orleans offers a rich menu of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities for students of all grade levels with options in and outside of the arts. Similar to YACS – Jefferson, co-curricular activities take place afterschool with oversight by a school-day teacher, parent volunteer(s), or afterschool contract service provider YALA. School-sponsored co-curricular activities include newspaper (grade 3), homework help (all grades), chess club (grades 1+), and student council (upon growth to middle school grades). Mission Critical Partner YALA provides all academic and arts-based experiences including:

Cultural Drumming (grades 1+)



- Concert Band (grades 3)
- Intro Band (grades 1+)
- Marching Band and Auxiliary Units (grades 3+)
- Dance (grades 1+)
- Theater (grades 1+)
- Visual Art (grades 1+)
- Gymnastics (grades 1+)
- STE[A]M (grades 1+)
- Tutoring (all grades)

Extra-curricular activities for male and female students will include soccer, basketball, and cross-country dependent on student level of interest and participation as the school adds grades.

**COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:** Research affirms YACA’s assertion that arts-integrated instruction is an effective pedagogical approach to engage a variety of differently-abled learners. An arts-based education is particularly beneficial for children who struggle in traditional educational settings or where the arts are not provided in a sequential and standards-based format. English may not be their first language, or compounding learning deficits that are endemic to low-performing schools, may have discouraged them from believing that they can learn and even enjoy the learning process. The arts-integrated model employed by YACA provides a wide-range of diversified strategies that level the “learning field” for young students and offer them unique pathways to success in the classroom and in life. YACS – Orleans provides all learners participation in academic environment that is not always evaluated on rigid standards, and instead prioritizes creativity and uniqueness.

YACA recognizes that our students arrive at school from widely varying home-life situations. Our schools staff highly-qualified and dedicated social/emotional wellness professionals and counselors, along with providing mindfulness/meditation professional development for teachers to assist students in coping with both everyday and extraordinary stressors.

**FAIR AND FIRM SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE:** In order to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment in which each child can reach their fullest potential, YACA is not dependent on policies that enforce rules, but those that encourage and expect appropriate behavior in all students and community members. YACA’s approach to discipline and mediation is to build relationships as well as provide examples and strategies for repairing relationships that may need mending. This process provides opportunities for all to participate in expressing the feelings of those involved in conflict, group conferences with parental support, and a voice for the students to express themselves and be a part of the decision-making process as it relates to appropriate consequences and rewards for behavior. YACA’s discipline system is founded on logical, fair, consistent, and age-appropriate consequences when prevention and intervention measures are unsuccessful.

**AUTHENTIC PLATFORMS FOR STUDENT VOICE AND REPRESENTATION:** The mission and vision of YACA



schools are founded in the tenet that students perform to their academic potential when encouraged to express themselves – vocally and creatively, both as individuals and as teams. Artistic creation fosters personal growth, confidence, and self-expression as pathways to leadership skills development and allows students to “find their voices” in a safe and nurturing environment. The arts-integrated classroom provides the opportunity and space for all students to find and explore their voice, however that voice may manifest.

Arts integration supports the many students whose learning styles are not met in traditional school environments. YACA’s approach to teaching and learning has demonstrated success for children of all abilities from the highest performing students to those with significant deficits. Arts-integrated programs are proven to advance student achievement, raising standardized test scores as much as two times faster than more traditional schools. Low-performing students in arts-integrated programs consistently show decreased levels of truancy and increased levels of classroom engagement, as arts-integrated curriculum provides multiple avenues to success. YACA’s diverse arts-integrated school fits into 2016 OPSB Charter Authorizing and Portfolio Priority #4 as an innovative school program that does not replicate existing school models within the current citywide portfolio and it enhances high-quality options available to families.

(2) YACA does not plan to open any additional schools during the next five years beyond the Orleans Parish school detailed in this application.

(3) YACA holds an approved charter to operate YACS – Jefferson as a Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> school in Jefferson Parish (Attachment EO – 1).

### Scale Strategy & Risk Mitigation

- (1) Describe the steps that you will take to scale your model to new sites, including the people involved and the resources contributed both by the parent organization and the new school(s).
  - (2) If your organization operates schools in other jurisdictions, compare your efforts to scale operations in Orleans to past scale efforts.
  - (3) Identify the greatest new threats to your success and the steps you will take to minimize the possibility that the threats you identified will prevent you from achieving your targeted outcomes.
  - (4) If your organization currently operates fewer than three schools, please clearly identify your plans for ensuring the continued success of your current school, should the proposed charter be approved.
    - a. Which staff members (instructional and administrative) will transition to the proposed school and what is your organization’s plan for replacing these individuals?
    - b. Which functions will become centralized?
    - c. How will you ensure success at both the existing and proposed (new) school?
2. Discuss the school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated. a. What is your Start-up and Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening?



- (5) Discuss the school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated. Provide your Start-up and Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.

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**(1) STEPS TO SCALE AND RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**

The founding of a school is an endeavor to be taken very seriously. As such, YACA looked to the experts in crafting plans for start-up operations at YACS - Jefferson, recognizing agreement with a report by the Center for Reinvigorating Public Education that “Coherent schools are not accidents. They come about because their commitments to the student experience are explicit and widely appreciated and because teachers, parents, and students choose them knowing what to expect and what will be expected of them. Schools that are not explicit about how their parts fit together and don’t control their boundaries (whom they employ, student mission based on informed choice) can neither attain a high degree of coherence nor, when they make some progress, sustain it. Especially in their early years, new schools must intentionally take advantage of their blank slates to carefully create and maintain school structures that enable coherent practices.” To achieve cohesion across the school’s mission, academics, and procedures from the beginning, YACA identified potential impediments to cohesion in elementary and middle school settings - both general and specific to our model – and developed plans to mitigate those challenges as the school evolves and matures. These challenges and solutions are also applicable to opening YACS – Orleans and will guide planning and decision-making as the new school evolves.

IMPEDIMENT	SOLUTION
Compartmentalized faculty, fragmented teamwork	Co-planning and co-teaching
Faculty confusion about or resistance to arts-integrated pedagogy	Intentional and ongoing discussion of school mission and vision; leadership training to promote arts-integrated culture
Disparity between arts-integrated mission and actual curriculum delivery	Formation of the curriculum committee and development of research-based curriculum units specific to Louisiana Student Standards and National Core Arts Standards
Lack of parental and/or community buy-in to school mission and values	Clearly communicated expectations for academic and behavioral performance; ongoing, multi-channel communication with parents and community members to ensure understanding of arts-integrated model
Increased costs incurred by operating an arts-integrated instruction model	Diversified funding plan and aggressive pursuit of community partnerships
Increased time required to plan arts-integrated lessons	Built in quarterly planning sabbaticals for each grade level team; added once weekly mandatory planning hour afterschool



After lengthy preparation YACA opened its doors to serve 408 Jefferson Parish students in grades Kindergarten through three in 2013. While priority was established for children residing in the high poverty neighborhood where the school is located, the school's innovative approach drew applicants throughout the West Bank of Jefferson Parish. By beginning with a large student population, including a testing grade, YACA experienced many of the challenges that are common to new school operators in the Greater New Orleans area.

Through careful planning for instructional design and strategies, immersion in the community to gain a solid cultural awareness, and development of approaches to involve parents and other stakeholders, YACS - Jefferson has experienced significant academic growth each year, financial stability, full enrollment, and strong community support. Mr. House, current YACS - Jefferson school leader and his team, will bring these successful strategies to YACS - Orleans as well as his experience in guiding a large and diverse student population. Mr. House will also use his experience in combining a rigorous academic curriculum with quality arts integration. Studies support YACA's belief that arts integration is an effective approach to classroom management, to reaching all types of learners, and to establishing a healthy and happy school community. Mr. House has the experience to maximize our model's potential.

In addition to cultivating stalwart leadership, five years of operation at YACS – Jefferson has allowed for the refinement of all aspects of school operation including curriculum, staffing plans, student policies, assessments, and delivery of arts-integrated lessons. “Lessons learned” at YACS – Jefferson – and the corrective actions taken to improve outcomes and systems – are producing steady academic growth and the evolution of a strong, community-based school culture that supports teacher (and student) happiness and retention. Recognizing that arts and culture are among New Orleans's greatest assets to be celebrated, and responding to the call for new schools inline with OPSB's charter priorities, YACA made the decision to plan for expansion to Orleans Parish. This decision required a careful analysis of factors including potential school population/demographics; needs of Orleans students; current staff and Board capacity; and financial preparedness. In consultation with legal council Adams and Reese LLP, YACA assembled a team of Board members, YACS – Jefferson school leadership and faculty, parents, community members, and consultants from Mission Critical Partner YALA to develop a strategy to scale. Through planning and development it became apparent that, while the locations are separated by the Mississippi River, there are more similarities than differences in launching a school in Jefferson or Orleans Parishes. YACS – Orleans will be operate under the same Louisiana Department of Education regulations, and employ the same model, curriculum, professional development scaffold, basic discipline policies, and afterschool program as YACS – Jefferson. YACA expects to serve students who qualify for free and reduced lunch at similar high percentages on both campuses.

**Formation of a CMO**

If granted a second charter to open a school in Orleans Parish, the YACA board will expand its capacity to manage multiple schools as a Charter Management Organization (CMO) comprised of current Mission Critical Partner YALA staff and new hires: Chief Executive Officer Rickie Nutik (to lead the YACA CMO



leadership team), Chief Financial Officer Mike Dunn, Chief Operating Officer Richard Bates (currently YALA’s Associate Director), a Chief Academic Officer Bradley Philipson, data and technology support personnel, and a grant writer. Ms. Nutik will step down from her role as CEO of YALA to assume leadership of the YACA CMO. Founding of YACS – Jefferson or YACS –Orleans would not be possible without the arts integration expertise of Mission Critical Partner YALA, and Ms. Nutik (CEO) and Mr. Bates (COO) will bring a wealth of arts in education experience and institutional knowledge to the new CMO.

The CMO must be effective, knowledgeable, and supportive so that both schools can best focus on their students and the schools’ priorities. YACA provides proven systems, structures, and guidance to the school leaders so that decisions can be made efficiently, best practices can be implemented, and variance across schools can be decreased. It is also our belief that the YACA CMO need not be large to be effective and should be designed with economy of scale to efficiently optimize impact. While decision-making about school daily operations will reside with the School Leaders, formation of a CMO will ensure consistency and quality in curriculum, fidelity to the arts-integrated model, centralized handling of contracts and payments, financial stability and transparency, and back-office services of data management and tech support. Details are as follows:

- **Academics and Arts Integration:** YACA is responsible for setting the instructional model and academic/arts integration components for all schools within its network. Yearly and benchmark testing, content pacing guides, and professional development models are determined by YACA, with support and training given to school leaders and their leadership teams to ensure student progress and success.
- **Finance:** Under the direction of Michael Dunn, CFO, the Central Office sets policies and procedures for all finance related functions including accounting, audit, purchasing, and payroll, programs and initiatives while maintaining compliance to the organizational budgetary model. In addition, the central office provides “back office” processing support in accounting and finance to assist the schools. The CFO also prepares and oversees all audit related responsibilities.
- **Operations:** Under the director of the Chief Operating Officer Richard Bates, YACA handles all authorizer interactions as they relate to buildings and facilities. Additionally, YACA oversees the RFP process, vendor relations, information technology, and infrastructure so that schools can focus on educating students and building community relationships.
- **Development:** YACA supports schools with communication, external relations, and development initiatives including government grants applications, local, state and national fundraising efforts, and supports all major fund raisers. Large-scale communication and outreach initiatives will be led by the Central Office, including government grant applications and national fundraising efforts.
- **Staffing and Human Resources:** Though each school leader ultimately makes staffing and hiring decisions, YACA provides guidelines and assistance throughout the hiring process and provides a school



staffing model that has been proven effective in existing schools. In addition, YACA provides employee benefits and other human resources assistance to our schools.

**People**

YACA’s CMO leadership team plays an integral part in the development and support of both schools but will have a heightened role in the launch of the school during the planning phase and first year. The following current YACS – Jefferson staff will transition in their same roles to YACS – Orleans to ensure the successful launch of the school and that the arts-integrated model is implemented with fidelity:

- (1) Brandon House – School Leader
- (2) Martha Mason – Curriculum and Instruction
- (3) Roscoe Reddix Jr. – Director of Arts Integration
- (4) 1 teacher from each grade level
- (5) 3 teaching artists

Additionally Jon Coper (currently Director of Extended Learning at YALA) will join the CMO-supervised, school-based staff as the Operations Manager bringing more than five years of experience at YALA, an MBA from Tulane University, and extensive experience in programs operation and management. The leadership team will ensure that the best practices that have been successful and that led to annual growth in student achievement at YACS - Jefferson will be utilized and implemented in YACS - Orleans.

**School Planning & Replication**

YACA is well prepared to replicate our model in the launch of a YACS – Orleans campus. Prior to opening YACA’s CMO leadership team will provide support, training, and oversight to the leadership team of YA – Orleans School. During the six-month planning and launch period, YACA’s CMO leadership team and the school will focus on recognizing the needs of the new school’s community and adapting YACA’s educational model to meet those needs while maintaining fidelity to the arts-integrated model. The YACA leadership team has knowledge of and expertise in academics, arts integration, finance, and operations and will support, train and build for the leaders, staff and students at YACS - Orleans.

YACA will embed our core beliefs in YACS - Orleans primarily through close collaboration with and leadership training within our existing YACS - Jefferson school. These core beliefs include rigorous academics with arts integration, teamwork, discipline, and creativity. The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) Bradley Philipson, with the support of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Rickie Nutik and School Leader Brandon House, will be responsible for ensuring that YACS – Orleans implements and follows the structures, practices, and policies that have been successful at the existing YACS - Jefferson school. The YACA CMO leadership team will support both schools with a focus on instruction, culture, leadership development, data analysis, and continued academic growth. Key elements in YACA’s plan for successful replication both before and after opening include (1) leadership development and recruitment; (2) framework for positive school culture/effective discipline; (3) systems to serve students of all abilities; (4) community engagement and promotion; (5) and goal setting.



**LEADERSHIP/TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND RECRUITMENT:** The success of YACA schools is closely tied to the quality of the school leadership team and teachers. YACA is very intentional about teacher recruitment seeking diversity that closely reflects the student body, classroom experience, and willingness to embrace arts integration combined with rigorous academics. YACS - Jefferson currently employs 42 instructional staff, of which, 47% identify as African American, 12% identify as Latino, and 39% identify as White. Of the staff, 41% are male. According to a 2015 article by the Times-Picayune only 32% of teachers in Jefferson Parish identify as African American and 4% as Latino. **A comparison of the staff at YACS – Jefferson to the district average makes clear that YACA’s efforts to recruit a diversity of instructional staff are effective.** Despite the teacher shortage in this country, YACA has successfully recruited experienced teachers who are drawn to our model of educating the whole child through rigorous academics with arts integration.

YACA has developed an ambitious and rigorous approach to recruiting teachers that includes outreach to national Young Audiences partners and affiliates, and to local partners Xavier University of Louisiana and Loyola University. While we strive to identify experienced teachers who have a track record of success, YACA also conducts a mentorship program for all novice teachers. In addition to the professional development that all teachers participate in, novice teachers (those with two years or less of experience) are partnered with an experienced mentor (generally in their grade level). Novice teachers also receive additional coaching and oversight from our DCI and have opportunities to observe successful classroom practices as needed. YACA’s schedule ensures ample planning time for grade level teams allowing novice teachers to work closely with their colleagues and receive guidance and support in planning successful lessons and in effective classroom management.

Leadership development is also a key component in our expansion effort. YACS - Jefferson’s leadership team includes a School Leader, Assistant School Leader (will be added at YACS – Orleans in Year 3), Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Arts Integration, Director of SPED, Dean of Culture, and Operations Manager. In addition, each grade level has a lead teacher, all of whom have participated in internal and external professional development opportunities including ASCD, Leading Educators, and Cooper Hewitt Institute for Design. These leaders and aspiring leaders also have numerous opportunities to present team workshops, model excellent teaching practices, and co-teach in preparation for future administrative roles.

**GROUNDWORK FOR POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE/DISCIPLINE:** All visitors to YACS - Jefferson note the positive and warm atmosphere at the school. Visitors also comment on the friendliness of the students and the joyful feeling on campus. Even though the facility is outdated, YACA has worked hard to brighten the physical environment by adding beautiful murals (created by professional artists and students) and learning gardens; we display student artwork throughout the campus and strive to make the school environment as inviting as possible to foster the self-worth of our students. YACA believes in offering a rich menu of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities for students of all grade levels with options in and outside of the arts. Co-curricular activities take place afterschool with oversight by a school-day



teacher, parent volunteer(s), or afterschool contract service provider YALA.

A primary goal at YACS - Jefferson is for every student to feel safe and to know that they are valued. Numerous events are held on campus that are well attended by families. Celebrations of Learning occur each quarter. Students demonstrate what they are learning to their families who are often invited to participate in planned activities. Student performances in ballet, band, gymnastics, cultural dance and drumming, and art exhibits are staged each semester giving students an opportunity to perform and their families an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments. Winter and Spring Talent Spotlights, held in large venues to accommodate audiences of 800 people, demonstrate the talents, poise, and self confidence that our students gain from attending our arts integrated school.

YACA is committed to reflecting on its priorities and ensuring that the integrity of the operational, cultural, and academic systems are upheld to the highest standards. As such, school-based committees have been established to address concerns, identify priorities, and evaluate progress related to the following areas: Community Involvement, School Beautification, Professional Culture, Leadership, Academics, Professional Learning Community, Social/Happiness and Professional Development. Each committee has regularly scheduled formal opportunities to meet as a team or with the other committees, in addition to the daily informal opportunities to share their findings with the school's leadership. The committee members serve as facilitators for the coordination of academic and cultural resources and act as liaisons within the school. Members are an integral part in determining the extent to which their committee's focus is aligning with school goals. Each team acts as a grievance committee when needed. They are also responsible for developing questionnaires on instruction and school culture to be given to all school constituents, compiling the data, designating goals for the upcoming school year based on the data, and making a presentation of their findings to the faculty, the school leader, parents, and the Board of Directors. This school-based committee structure will be replicated at YACS – Orleans.

We recognize that establishing a positive culture from the onset is key to success in launching a new school. The YACS - Orleans leadership team will devote the first weeks and months of school to establishing a positive culture; communicating high, clearly-defined expectations for student behavior and academics; and engraining our arts-integrated approach to learning.

In order to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment in which each child can reach their fullest potential, YACA is not dependent on policies that enforce rules, but those that encourage and expect appropriate behavior in all students and community members. Expectations are clearly defined and emphasis will be placed early and often on establishing a discipline scaffold that will be followed by all staff and students. School leaders are charged with creating a safe and behaviorally appropriate environment that allows effective learning to take place, thereby building a discipline system strengthened by a foundation of mutual respect. While similar to policies in Jefferson Parish, YACA leadership has become well versed in the discipline protocols and procedures in place in Orleans Parish and aligned this scaffold with our overarching discipline philosophy in preparation for the launch of the new school.



YACS - Orleans leadership and staff will be vigilant in maintaining and enforcing expectations to create a learning environment that is fair, equitable, and happy for students and employees. School culture and student behavior expectations are part of YACA's school professional development curriculum to ensure a positive, fair, and equitable learning environment.

**SYSTEMS TO SERVE STUDENTS OF ALL ABILITIES:** YACS - Jefferson has a high percentage of students with special accommodations and a growing gifted and talented population. The Academic and Behavioral Intervention (A/BIT) team, consisting of Administration, Director of SPED, RTI Coordinator, ELL Coordinator, Dean of Culture, Social Worker, parents, special education/intervention and general education staff, utilize a structured protocol to identify and evaluate learners with disabilities. The SPED team works closely with classroom teachers to establish specific student learning plans and ensure that all students, regardless of academic, social/emotional, or physical ability, are learning under the arts-integrated model.

At YACS - Orleans, a similar team will proactively gather data to ensure that all students receive individualized support plans as needed. This data will include attendance history, behavior, health, and academic performance. Staff will do private screenings with students before developing individualized support plans or referring them to SPED/GT.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTION:** YACS - Jefferson has a fully engaged and effective Parent Community Organization (PCO) that helms school-based fundraisers that increase resources for students; supports faculty and staff by organizing teacher appreciation events and volunteering when needed; assists families in need by raising money for school uniforms, field trips, and supplies; and responds to annual community needs as well as emergencies by raising money through volunteer activities. Utilizing the resources and expertise of YACS – Jefferson's existing PCO will be integral to YACS - Orleans. Working closely with stakeholders and listening to their concerns and to their expectations will help guide YACA in respecting the culture of the school's community and assure parents/caregivers that their input, time, talents, and support are vital to the success of YACS – Orleans. YACA will actively seek out parent and community input and will also draw on its successful YACS - Jefferson PCO to establish a similar group at YACS – Orleans. The launch of the YACS – Orleans PCO is a goal set for the beginning of academic Year 2. Additional opportunities for parental involvement include orientation, board meetings, Celebrations of Learning, school-wide events, fundraisers, and volunteerism.

YACS – Orleans will work with school staff, parents, community organizations and other stakeholders in to promote the school as a new and exciting option for Orleans parents. A summary of the strategy is below:

- Marketing Materials and Campaign: YACS – Orleans will develop marketing materials in all relevant languages (brochures, flyers, etc.) to promote the YACS – Orleans brand and provide information to prospective parents. Enrollment recruiters will target local community organizations, recreation centers, churches, and may go door-to-door in the school's



neighborhood to share information. YACS – Orleans enrollment will also be promoted through radio ads and through billboard advertising if necessary. A social media campaign will be launched congruently.

- Recruitment and Community Events: YACS – Orleans will host family fairs and open houses to introduce prospective parents to our arts-integrated program and school culture. YACS – Orleans will also participate in strategic community events as a way of broadening exposure.

**GOAL SETTING:** While we plan to replicate our arts integrated curriculum and behavior management approach at YACS -\_Orleans, we recognize that the needs of each school and its student population are unique. Therefore, individual goals must be set for each school to measure those components that will most contribute to its overall success. The goals of YACS - Jefferson may differ somewhat from YACS - Orleans, though both are rigorous and focus on improving student achievement, teacher efficacy, and on developing a positive culture. As with YACS - Jefferson, we will establish specific goals for safety, for operations, and for fair, efficient handling of disciplinary incidents as part of our overarching school founding plan. YACA will continue to set long-term goals and benchmark progress toward them, with each school’s goals relating to their individual growth areas while connecting to our overall mission and objectives. **Initial goals for YACS – Orleans and the metrics by which success will be measured are outlined in the Executive Summary.** These goals will be adjusted based on actual student academic and behavioral data after students are enrolled.

**(2) Efforts to Scale in Other Jurisdictions:** The launch of a school in Orleans Parish is YACA’s first effort to scale, so comparison to previous efforts to scale is not applicable.

**(3) Threats and Steps to Mitigate**

YACA has identified four main threats that we may encounter and have an established contingency plan that will minimize these risks.

**ADOPTION OF NEW BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN:** While YACS - Jefferson was able to address an overwhelming need for an alternative education model, a different established learning culture was already embedded in the majority of its students having come from traditional schools. YACA’s commitment to developing the whole child is dependent on forming a reflective culture wherein each student becomes an active participant in their own intrinsically motivated discipline, but most of our students were accustomed to a “No Excuses” model. While there are established expectations of behavior, empowering students to have a voice in the process of creating a positive learning environment requires flexibility since each student has different needs affecting their full participation. YACS - Orleans may encounter a student population that has experienced the “No Excuses” or Token Economy approach to behavior modification thereby posing a potential threat to the implementation of our established behavior management plan.

*Response to Threat:*

YACA will provide intensive professional development to prepare staff to establish a reflective culture throughout the school. Mr. House is familiar in the practice of restorative justice and will ensure that the



school has the training, staff (Dean of Culture, Director of SPED, social worker, counselor, etc.), resources, and support necessary to implement our approach to discipline that has been successful at YACS – Jefferson.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS ENROLLMENT:** YACS - Jefferson has met its enrollment target annually since inception in 2013, and all grades are fully enrolled. YACA currently only recruits for the incoming Kindergarten class and fills few spots that become available in other grades. YACS - Orleans will face more competition in student recruitment since there are already many established charter schools throughout the city.

YACA has an established and respected position in Jefferson Parish and a supportive and active Parent Community Organization. Parent surveys have indicated a high level of satisfaction for YACS – Jefferson and a desire to keep their children at the school through graduation from high school. YACS – Orleans will face the challenge of integrating into a new community and reaching out to parents and other stakeholders.

*Response to the Threat:*

We recognize that there is more competition for students in Orleans Parish than in Jefferson Parish because there are more options for choice within charter schools. Our plan is to be more intentional in recruiting new students, especially for those interested in the arts. Because an academic curriculum with arts integration is appropriate for all learning styles, we will work hard to inform parents and students of the merits of our approach to teaching and learning. **YACS – Orleans’s Communications Manager will be one of the first positions hired with onboarding in August 2018.**

YACA understands that in order to best serve and meet the needs of a New Orleans community, it must form relationships and establish partnerships with individuals, families, and organizations with the neighborhood and community where the school is located. To this end, YACA and school leaders will meet with community groups, organizations, families, and students to hear from them directly what actual needs are and to incorporate this input into planning for YACS - Orleans.

**TALENT:** The YACA model for rigorous academics with arts integration is unique and, therefore, the majority of the teachers we employ must go through intensive professional development. Our classroom teachers must understand the basics of arts integration and be comfortable with co-teaching. They must also believe that the arts will contribute to student academic success and not detract or limit from teaching core curriculum. Our teaching artists (all professional artists with a minimum of a BA from a four-year college) must be equally committed to learning grade level standards and working with classroom teachers to develop lessons that utilize their art form to make learning more accessible for students. This unique partnership of classroom teachers and teaching artists requires a deep dedication to the method and to intensive and continuous professional development. A potential threat to our model would be a lack of qualified leaders and teachers who are aligned with the mission of YACA and appreciative our unique approach to teaching and learning.



*Response to the Threat:*

YACA understands that the uniqueness of our approach requires us to provide quality and on-going training for leaders and teachers in our schools. YACA has access to a national network of teaching artists who have extensive classroom experience, training in co-teaching, and artistic excellence. For this reason, we are able to recruit teachers nationally and with confidence that they are fully immersed and trained in effective arts integration methods. Teaching Artist Institutes, led by Jenny James, Director of Education and Programs for YALA, provide specialized training for artists who have the interest and capacity to work alongside classroom teachers. Ms. James, through her management and oversight of two major four-year grants from the Department of Education (Professional Development for Arts Educators), developed high quality professional development workshops for classroom teachers that teach them to create lesson plans that integrate the arts into their classroom thereby strengthening the teaching of academic standards. With lessons learned from this grant, Ms. James will work in a consulting capacity with newly hired local teachers for YACS - Orleans to give them the tools needed to become arts integrationists.

YACA will also utilize current partnerships with Xavier University and Loyola University to recruit teachers, along with attending Teacher Job Fairs at Tulane University. Our membership in the Greater New Orleans Collaborative (formerly Eastbank Collaborative) will provide access to additional teacher candidates. We will also utilize our current teachers at YACS - Jefferson to recommend highly qualified teachers who would thrive in an environment that is academically rigorous, creative, and inspiring.

**BOARD OVERSIGHT IN TWO PARISHES:** One of the strengths of YACA is its high-functioning, professional, and caring Board of Directors. These 10 individuals bring a variety of professional and life experience to YACS - Jefferson. Included on the board are the following: a social worker, a child psychiatrist on staff at LSU, an attorney, a banker at IBERAIBANK, a business executive, a teacher, an educational consultant, a retired PR executive, a city planner whose child attends the school, and the Executive Director of a large community foundation.

The board has a clear understanding of their responsibilities and meet monthly. The majority of the board members live in Orleans Parish. The following are board committees that regularly: Finance, Governance, Academic, Fundraising, and Facilities. YACA also has an established grievance procedure for parents and employees to engage that is provided in their respective handbooks. A potential threat is the challenge of managing charter schools in multi-parishes, and maximizing support resources (fundraising, partnerships, volunteerism) in both.

*Response to the Threat:*

Multiple steps will be taken to guarantee successful board governance as the YACA network expands. The Board will (1) review and understand requirements established by OPBS for charter schools; (2) meet requirements and expectations in a timely and professional manner; (3) establish policies that are fair and effective for both YACS - Orleans and YACS – Jefferson; and (4) increase capacity through the



creation of a Fundraising and Public Relations committee. The YACA board is experienced and knowledgeable about board governance. With planning and feedback from stakeholders and school leadership they will proactively manage multiple schools in diverse parishes while abiding by the specific requirements is each. Risks of low student performance, decreases in state funding, and changes in board governance always exist but constant evaluation and oversight prepare YACA to make well-informed and rapid decisions. The YACA board has both strong members and a solid committee structure, and all parties take their responsibilities very seriously. The board is also committed to improvement and as such will utilize support from established sources including Board On Track and the Louisiana Association of Charter Schools.

**(4) Stability and Success at YACS – Jefferson**

YACA’s application to launch a start-up school in Orleans Parish allows for more measured growth than our previous application to transform a school with a large student population. The addition of one grade per year until capacity at both YACS – Jefferson and YACS – Orleans is a scaffold for modest growth that is manageable under the direction of the Board and CMO. The centralization of services at the CMO level - particularly in regards to CAO oversight of curriculum - will ensure stability, consistency, and rigor to the YACA academic program as students matriculate. Financial management, high-level operations/contracts, data management, IT support, and grant-writing will also become functions of the CMO. The practice of “seeding” new schools with trusted and established professionals from an established school makes sense to ensure quality and fidelity to model, and is common to CMOs: 55% of CMOs participating in a Center on Reinventing Public Education study entitled “The National Charter Landscape” responded that they transfer principals to start-up schools, along with 53% moving established teachers.

Several people in leadership positions at YACS – Jefferson will be transitioning to YACS – Orleans, along with one teacher per grade (K-3) and three teaching artists, however the formation of the CMO and the leadership pipeline at YACS – Jefferson will ensure that YACA’s original school remains strong. Transitions are as follows:

- School Leader Brandon House will transfer to YACS – Orleans, being replaced by current YACS – Jefferson Assistant School Leader Brionne Stewart (Assistant School Leader will be an advertised position)
- Director of Arts Integration Roscoe Reddix Jr. will transfer, being replaced by Lead Teaching Artist Valorie Polmer
- Director of Curriculum and Instruction Martha Mason will transfer, being replaced by Lead Teacher Tamara Watson
- YACS – Jefferson Data Manager Damien Sayles will become the data manager at the CMO level as the position is centralized

YACS – Jefferson’s Operations Manager and Dean of Culture will remain in their positions. YACA’s intensive and sustained model for professional development will ensure that new teachers at YACS – Jefferson (hired to replace those that transitioned to Orleans) will join a team of teachers highly-qualified to imbue peer-to-peer arts integration supports.



YACA is confident that its success in founding YACS – Jefferson will translate to YACS – Orleans. Board guidance, careful planning, ongoing assessment, fiscal responsibility, high-caliber personnel, strong leadership, and fidelity to YACA’s model and protocols will ensure success across both sites and at the CMO level. In the event that either school does not meet our standards for student performance, we will immediately take corrective measures, utilizing all available resources. Possible turnaround measures include: re-evaluating school-wide and personal goals; adopting a research-based reform program; working to ensure that all teachers are highly effective; creating incentives for students to study and achieve; organizing the school into small learning communities; and changing the school schedule.

**(5) Contingency Plan**

Start-up of YACS – Orleans will be facilitated by a grant anticipated from the Walton Foundation. The contingency plan, if Walton funds are not available, is facilitated by Mission Critical Partner Young Audiences of Louisiana who will loan YACA up to \$259,000 in start-up funds. YALA’s board has approved this five-year interest free loan to help with costs related to start-up (a copy of the loan agreement is included in Attachment 24). YALA has these funds in their cash reserve. In the unlikely event that startup funds are unavailable the CEO will delay the starting dates of selected staff in the most strategic manner possible, prioritizing as early a start date as possible for the School Leader.

If enrollment in in Year One is lower than in current budget projections, CEO, CFO, COO, CAO, and the school leader will meet agree on areas to reduce spending with the goal of maintaining and maximizing classroom staff and resources.

Model & Key Staff

- (1) Provide as **Attachment EO-2** a CMO-level org chart (at least two layers out from the CEO), as envisioned at scale and clearly indicating which positions are currently filled, which are vacant, and which are new additions, AND
- (2) The job description and EITHER the redacted and unredacted resume of the current occupant, AND/OR the recruitment plan for the following “key” people:
  - a. As **Attachment EO-3**: The CEO or overall organizational leader (Agency Head, as defined in state statutes and for purposes of the organization’s annual audit)
  - b. As **Attachment EO-4**: The CAO or lead instructional person accountable for the implementation of the academic model, including curriculum and instructional practices (if this is different from #1) – this is usually also the person responsible for direct day-to-day supervision of building principals, if that’s not the CEO.



- c. As **Attachment EO-5**: The organizational lead for special education services (Director of Special Education, or equivalent position, if this is different from #2)
  - d. As **Attachment EO-6**: The CFO and/or COO, or the lead person(s) in the finance and operations areas
  - e. As **Attachment EO-7**: The organization’s Qualified and Competent Business Professional, accountable for the accuracy of the organization’s financial statements as required by the LAUGH Guide
- (3) The succession plan(s) in place for each of the above-named key positions, including any internal development pipelines and/or external recruitment plans to identify and evaluate candidates (this may include, but doesn’t have to identify, specific names)

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(3) SUCCESSION PLANS, PIPELINES, AND RECRUITMENT**

YACA is fortunate to have experienced, highly-qualified professionals in place at YACS – Jefferson and at Mission Critical Partner YALA. As YACA expands to meet the needs of students across parish lines, key personnel in the founding of its original school will take on new roles at both the CMO and school levels, bringing a wealth of institutional knowledge, skills, and dedication. Succession plans are as follows:

- **CMO CEO**: Mission Critical Partner YALA’s Chief Operating Officer Rickie Nutik will assume the role of YACA CMO CEO. Her previous position at YALA will be filled either through internal promotion or a call for applicants.
- **CAO**: Bradley Philipson will be assuming the position of CAO. This is an entirely new position for YACA, and one that commands great responsibility to the effectiveness of model delivery and the success of our students. Mr. Philipson was selected based on his experience in leadership and upon his qualifications. He also helped develop the model in the early stages and has extensive understanding of the mission and culture.
- **DIRECTOR OF SPED**: This position will be school-based to cultivate a trusting and close relationship between the applicant and the students he/she serves. YACS – Jefferson’s Director of SPED is not currently slated to transition to YACS - Orleans, but members of the YACS – Jefferson SPED team will have the opportunity to apply. This position will be filled through a call for applicants (recruitment plan Attachment EO – 5).
- **CFO & QAULIFIED BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL**: These positions will be consolidated and assumed by Mike Dunn who currently manages finances for YACS – Jefferson. As this position will be centralized a succession plan is not necessary.
- **COO**: Richard Bates, YALA’s current Associate Director, will assume the position of COO. This position at YALA will be filled either through internal promotion or a call for applicants.

**For Experienced Operators with Fewer than 3 Schools**

- (4) A narrative (2 pages max) summarizing the intended “CMO” or Network Model:
- a. Which functions will be centralized at the network level, both academically (curriculum/instruction) and operationally (including finances)?
  - b. Which functions will remain site-based?



- c. What are the core elements of the network educational program or model?
  - d. Will the organization seek to expand by replicating its existing school(s), or by operating substantially new or different school models/designs at successive campuses? (e.g., if School 1 is a language-immersion model, will all other schools operated by the organization also be language-immersion?)
  - e. What will be the organization’s “non-negotiables”?
  - f. What are the degrees of freedom in key areas that are not “non-negotiables”?
- (5) CMO or Network Level Financial Model:
- a. What is the budget and how is the initial stand-up of the CMO/network office being funded? How will its continuing operations be funded? Include CMO-level budget as **Attachment EO-8**.
  - b. Is there a structural deficit or gap projected at either the school or network level, and if so, how will this be closed?
  - c. How much will each school “pay” to the network office for services?
  - d. Who sets and who approves school-level budgets and expenditures?
  - e. Is there a standard staffing model or required positions, or is this at the schools’ discretion?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**(a & b) CMO Level and School-Based Operations**

YACA’s primary role as a CMO is to set and maintain high standards for student and staff performance across both schools. Additional important functions include establishing YACA’s mission and vision; developing a strategy to ensure effective growth with the addition of grade levels; providing operational structures and support; defining and enforcing our arts-integrated model; and assuring quality through training and professional development.

YACA’s CMO staff relationships with school-based employees will be strong and supportive, with CMO staff having a regular presence on campus at both sites. Open communication with and feedback from school-based leadership is essential to both the success of the school and the cultivation of working relationships based on value, respect, and trust. YACA’s plan for which functions are centralized and which are school-based provides a balance of “top down” oversight and support while allowing school leadership autonomy to lead their team, develop positive school culture, and contribute to the overall decision-making process. Breakdown of functions is as follows:

**CENTRALIZED AND SITE-BASED FUNCTIONS**

FUNCTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<b>CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION</b>	
Selection of curriculum	CMO
Oversight of Professional development	CMO
Oversight of adherence to arts-integrated model	CMO
Goal setting	CMO and School Leader
Intervention in performance problems	CMO
Implementation of curriculum	School-based
Overarching assessment of progress toward goals	CMO
Assessments (MAP, LEAP 360, etc.)	School-based with CMO review
<b>FINANCES</b>	
Creation of school budgets	CMO with input from School Leader



Reporting	CMO
Fidelity to budget	School-based
Petty cash (field trip payments, library fines, etc.)	School-based
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	
Hiring of School Leader/Assistant School Leader	CMO
Recruitment of teacher and school staff applicants	CMO
Setting of incentives for staff and students to work productively	CMO
Hiring of teachers, leadership, and support staff positions	School-based
Human resources tasks	CMO
Evaluation of School Leader	CMO
Evaluation of all other school employees	School-based
Creation of Professional Improvement Plans	School-based
<b>OPERATIONS</b>	
Negotiating contracts	CMO
Creation of operational practices and procedures	CMO
Management of legal services	CMO
Overseeing charter compliance	CMO
Student recruitment	CMO
Payroll	School-based
Management of contracted service providers (food service, transportation, facilities, etc.)	School-based
Management of afterschool and sports programs	School-based
<b>SCHOOL CULTURE / DISCIPLINE</b>	
Creation of overarching discipline policy and organizational culture	CMO
Establishment of mission and vision	CMO
Establishment of behavior-related goals	CMO and School Leader
Implementation of behavior policy	School-based
Positive reinforcement for student and staff success	School-based
Coordination of Parent Community Organization (PCO)	School-based
<b>DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS</b>	
Pursuit of partnerships	CMO
Fundraising and grant writing	CMO
Fundraising (PCO)	School-based
Inter-school communications	School-based
School public/parent communications	School-based

**(c) MODEL:** YACA’s model is comprised of four main elements working cohesively to achieve both student and staff success: (1) arts-integrated instruction framework; (2) professional development; (3) arts experiences and performances; and (4) assessment. Teaching through the arts promotes competencies for children across the curriculum. Students are offered a comprehensive and connected educational program that reflects the philosophy of educating the whole child and recognizes that individuals learn in different ways. At YACS – Orleans, the arts-integrated, balanced curriculum challenges students and allows them to demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways. Projects within disciplines reflect curriculum guidelines for that subject and incorporate guidelines from National Core Arts Standards as well. Arts-integration is accomplished through backwards planning, project based learning, and co-teaching between classroom teachers and teaching artists.



YACA’s arts-integrated, project based approach to teaching and learning has demonstrated success for children of all abilities from the highest performing students to those with significant deficits. Arts-integrated programs have proven to hasten student achievement, raising standardized test scores as much as two times faster than the scores of youth in more traditional schools (Evaluation, Chicago Arts Partnership in Education (CAPE), Catterall & Waldorf, 1999, and CAPE’s PAIR Report, 2013). Additionally, arts-integrated programs are associated with academic gains across the curriculum, having particularly significant impacts on achievement levels of struggling students (Rabkin & Redmond, 2004). Low-performing students in arts-integrated programs consistently show decreased levels of truancy and increased levels of classroom engagement as the arts-integrated curriculum provides them with multiple avenues to success.

**(d) EXPANSION THROUGH REPLICATION:** YACA intends YACS – Orleans to be an arts-integrated school founded on the same model as YACS – Jefferson without substantial differences in curriculum, operations, or school culture.

**(e & f) NON-NEGOTIABLES AND DEGREES OF FREEDOM**

Adherence to YACA’s arts-integrated model is non-negotiable without degrees of freedom. All other areas of school operations are open to negotiation based on the conviction that arts-integration is a powerfully effective model to improve academic, social/emotional, and creative outcomes for all students regardless of ability or means.

**(5) CMO LEVEL FINANCIAL MODEL**

**(a)** YACA will retain its nonprofit status and transition to a CMO upon receipt of the OBSB charter. The initial standup of the CMO will be funded by Walton Foundation grant funds or the YALA loan and pro-rated fees from YACS – Jefferson as an already established school.

Ongoing CMO operations will be funded at no more than 7.13% of the total school budget by YACS – Orleans and are planned in the five-year budget to decrease annually as services are streamlined. The balance of CMO fees are collected from YACS – Jefferson. While the total of YACS - Jefferson fees is higher than what YACS – Orleans will pay the percentage of the total operating budget it marginally lower as YACS – Jefferson has been in operation for a longer time period.

**(b)** There is no structural deficit or gap projected at this time.

**(c)** In Year One, to cover CMO costs, YACS – Orleans is projected to pay 7.13% of its total budget (\$309,286). The same year, YACS – Jefferson is projected to spend 6.02% (\$500,247).

**(d)** The CFO works closely with school leaders, CEO, COO, CAO, board Finance Committee to prepare budgets that maximize impact on student growth, achievement, and safety.



**(e)** While there is discretion for schools to affect staffing model, meaningful arts integration is integral to YACA’s mission and vision, thus deviations must include daily arts integration activities for all students.

Attachments

- (1) Attachment EO-1: (if applicable) Authorizer approvals (for non-OPSB charters awarded, but not in operation)
- (2) Attachment EO-2: CMO-level Organization Chart
- (3) Attachment EO-3: CEO: Job Description and either Resume or Recruitment Plan
- (4) Attachment EO-4: CAO: Job Description and either Resume or Recruitment Plan
- (5) Attachment EO-5: Director of Special Education: Job Description and either Resume or Recruitment Plan
- (6) Attachment EO-6: CFO and/or COO: Job Description and either Resume or Recruitment Plan
- (7) Attachment EO-7: Qualified Business Professional: Job Description and either Resume or Recruitment Plan
- (8) Attachment EO-8: Network-level budget
- (9) Attachment EO-9: Audited Financial statements (most recent)
- (10) Attachment EO-10: Annual Report (most recent)
- (11) Attachment EO-11: (If applicable) Litigation documentation
- (12) Attachment EO-12: (If applicable) ESP contract

Transformation Addendum

***Applicants seeking or potentially willing to seek a match to operate an existing Orleans public charter school or school facility, which is subject to nonrenewal, revocation, or voluntary relinquishment by the existing chartering organization should complete the Transformation Addendum. Complete this section only if your application proposes such a school. 15 page limit***

Transformation Overview

- (1) Please identify the type(s) of transformation (e.g., full takeovers, reconfigurations) that your organization is prepared to undertake.
- (2) Will all currently enrolled students be able to re-enroll next year? If your proposal does not provide for all currently-enrolled students to remain at the school, please provide a rationale for this decision, and explain how your organization will work to communicate with families in order to ensure that all impacted students are able to access high-quality schools.
- (3) How has your organization operated a transformation school previously? If applicable, what lessons have you learned, and how have they informed changes in your practice and in this proposal.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Educational Program

- (1) What are the key tenets of your transformation model? Please identify the research base or other rationale supporting each identified tenet.
- (2) How will your transformation model support equitable achievement for all students? Please specifically identify how your model will support the learning of students with disabilities, English language learners, and



other “at-risk” student populations (as this is defined in state law). Discuss any potential conflicts of interest between the corporate partner and the school.

- (3) How will your organization ensure a successful transition period and first year of operation? What steps will you take to ensure sufficient enrollment (by retaining existing students and/or recruiting new families), create a positive school climate and culture, and establish high expectations for students, teachers, and staff?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

School Operations

- (1) Provide a brief addition to your staffing plan, explaining what additional steps you will take to recruit and retain highly-effective teachers and non-classroom staff.
- (2) Provide a brief addition to your budget and budget narrative, explaining any additional financial resources you have received or anticipate receiving to support transformation efforts. Has your school applied for LDE School Redesign Funding, or does your organization intend to apply?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Metrics and Goals

- (1) How will your organization use data to set goals, and inform decision-making? How will you measure progress in your transformation efforts, and what steps have you taken to mitigate risks? What will you do if your transformation effort is off-track?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Community Engagement

- (1) Describe the specific strategies you will use for engaging the following stakeholders in the transformation effort: a) parents/guardians/families, b) residents of the community surrounding the school. What is the role of parents in your schools’ decision-making processes, and what venues will be established to articulate and elevate parent and community voice?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**





Corporate Partnerships Addendum

***If your school intends to participate in a corporate partnership in accordance with LA R.S. 17:3991 please complete this addendum. In order for a business to be considered a school’s Corporate Partner, it must individually, or as part of a consortium of businesses, donate one or more of the following to the school in an amount equivalent to at least 50% of the per pupil allocation: land, building space, renovations to existing school building, and/or technology. Complete this section only if your application proposes such a school. 15 page limit***

Corporate Partnership Formation

- (1) Explain how and why the corporate partnership was developed.
- (2) Describe the nature of any donation(s), regardless of type that the corporate partner will make to the charter school and how they meet the requirements laid out in RS: 17 3991.1.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Corporate Partner Track Record

- (1) Explain the corporate partner’s past experience, if any, in serving student populations similar to the target population of the school, including any educational programming offered by the organization.
- (2) Provide, as **Attachment CP-1**, the most recent annual report of the corporate partner.
- (3) Nonprofit organizations:
  - a. Provide, as **Attachment CP-2** your most recent audited financial statements; and
  - b. Discuss any material audit findings for your organization or any school that you operate.
 --OR--
  - For-profit organizations:
    - a. Provide as **Attachment CP-2** your most recent financial statements to be reviewed confidentially; and
    - b. Discuss any material audit findings for your organization or any school that you operate.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Legal Relationships

- (1) Discuss any potential conflicts of interest between the corporate partner and the school.
- (2) Provide, as **Attachment CP-3**, the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the board and the corporate partner, as well as the approved minutes of the board meeting at which the draft MOU was accepted by both the corporate partner and the board of the proposed school.
- (3) Explain the process for the required annual renewal of the corporate partner MOU. Describe the conditions that both the corporate partner and the school must satisfy for the MOU to be renewed. Describe the procedures for determining whether the MOU will be renewed. On what grounds can the corporate partner



or the board terminate the MOU for cause (including provisions for notice to the other party)? What are any conditions under which either party may terminate the MOU without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Organizational Structure

- (1) Describe the methods by which the corporate partner will support the charter school, including but not limited to any internships for students, career counseling, academic tutoring, or enrichment activities.
- (2) Describe the plan for the operation of the school in the case that the MOU is terminated or not renewed.
- (3) Specifically describe any proposed enrollment set-asides for this corporate partner. (These enrollment set-asides must align with provisions of and requirements of the Enrollment process and are subject to separate approval)

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Attachments

- (1) Attachment CP-1: Annual Report (most recent)
- (2) Attachment CP-2: Audited Financial Statements (most recent)
- (3) Attachment CP-3: Draft MOU between the Nonprofit board and corporate partner



### Virtual School Addendum

***Applicants whose primary instructional environment is computer-based or virtual (defined as more than 40% of instructional delivery via technology) must complete the Virtual School Addendum. Please complete this section only if your application proposes such a school. 15 page limit.***

#### Location

- (1) Facility: If students will be required to regularly or periodically attend a brick and mortar facility, specify such requirements and describe the facility.
- (2) Louisiana Office: Provide the address of and describe the Louisiana-based administrative office of the virtual charter school, including its size and staffing.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### Educational Program

- (1) Describe the level of participation in instructional activities students will be required to meet to receive credit for successfully completing a course and receive a satisfactory grade for that course. The level of participation may include the amount of time students will be engaged in both online and other instructional activities in order to receive credit for a course. Please note the amount of time for the online and offline work by grade level and course.
- (2) Can a student enrolled in the virtual charter school program be enrolled in other instructional activities elsewhere and/or earn Carnegie units from another institution? If so, please identify the other institution(s).
- (3) Describe procedures to ensure the integrity and authenticity of student work product and assessment scores, including the use of an academic honesty and computer acceptable use policy.
- (4) Describe the intervention procedures the virtual charter school will take when students fail to provide authentic work product or assessment responses.
- (5) Describe what role parents/guardians will have in promoting accountability.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### Instructional Staff

- (1) Describe what, if any, additional responsibilities will be required of teachers in the virtual environment (e.g. course development/design, research, website maintenance) and describe how the virtual charter school will communicate these responsibilities to teachers.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**



State and Federally Mandated Services

- (1) Describe how the virtual charter school will provide services to all enrolled students with exceptionalities, regardless of where the student resides.
- (2) Describe the virtual charter school’s procedures for Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, including determining where such meetings will occur.
- (3) Describe how the virtual charter school will implement ADA and Rehabilitation Act standards for accessibility to web-based curricula.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Evaluation and Assessment

- (1) Discuss the virtual charter school’s plan and method for the administration of all required state assessments (iLEAP, LEAP, GEE) and other assessments set forth in the school’s charter. The plan should address, test taking location(s), who will administer the tests, and test security procedures.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

School Operations

- (1) Describe how the virtual charter school will ensure or facilitate student attendance at any in-person school activities.
- (2) Identify any non-teacher faculty members (paraprofessionals, guidance counselors, parent instructional coaches) and describe their roles and how they will function in the virtual charter school.
- (3) Describe the virtual charter school’s policies regarding truancy, absence, withdrawal, issuing of Carnegie units, repeat/delete, credit recovery, and AP/dual enrollment.
- (4) Describe the intervention procedures the virtual charter school will take when students are not logging in and/or completing coursework as required.
- (5) Describe all technological equipment and services that the virtual charter school will provide, including hardware, software, connectivity, and media storage devices, and property controls and equipment tagging that will be in place. Specify any equipment or technological support that students and families will be responsible for purchasing or obtaining.
- (6) Describe the scope of technical support that will be provided, including where support staff will be located, and the hours (including weekends and holidays) and manner in which the support will be accessible to students and school employees.
- (7) Describe the virtual charter school’s data retention, security, and confidentiality procedures.



- (8) Describe procedures to deliver instruction when equipment, software, or connectivity at any location is lost or impaired. Specify who will pay for Internet connectivity and address minimum bandwidth and a course of action for areas of the state that do not have the minimum bandwidth.
- (9) Describe data protection and recovery procedures in event of catastrophic system failure (include offsite back-up).
- (10) Describe how the virtual charter school will provide for the health and safety of students and staff both in online and offline activities.
- (11) Describe how the virtual charter school will address the nutritional needs of students when appropriate.
- (12) Describe how the virtual school will administer the required Title 28, Chapter 11, §1119 Health Screening as part of enrollment and the ongoing functioning of the school.
- (13) Describe the school’s plan for delivering instruction in the event of technical and other course delivery problems which prevent normal course delivery.
- (14) Provide a summary of data protection and recovery procedures in the event of catastrophic system failure.
- (15) Describe how the school will provide professional development appropriate to the delivery method used and the acceptable use and electronic communication policies.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

Parent and Community Involvement

- (1) Indicate the nature, frequency, and location of all required in-person meetings between parents and virtual charter school faculty/administration, such as parent/teacher conferences, parent-teacher meetings, field trips, etc.
- (2) Indicate the nature and frequency of all optional opportunities for in-person meetings and interactions, such as open houses and school community meetings.
- (3) Describe the procedures for parents to contact virtual charter school faculty and administrators with concerns of any nature and the procedures and required timelines for prompt and helpful responsiveness to such communications.
- (4) Explain how virtual charter school administration will communicate with non-English speaking parents/guardians.
- (5) Describe how the school will provide adequate, timely, and appropriate technical support to students, teachers, facilitators, and instructional coaches.
- (6) What is the role of the parents/guardians?
- (7) Are opportunities for parent/guardian training available?
- (8) How do parents access student grades and understand student progress?



- (9) Provide a plan for orientations to enrolled students, their parents, and their instructional coaches on the course delivery model prior to the beginning of the class.

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