

*Living School*

An equity-focused, democratic, project-based high school

# Fall 2018 Charter School Application



## Eligibility Determination & Threshold for Evaluation (Part 1)

### Executive Summary

Provide a two to four page overview of your school or network, including:

- (1) Explain the mission and vision of your school. What will your school set out to achieve in the long term, what will success look like, and how will your school get there?
- (2) Include information on what success will look like for students while attending your school, and after they leave your school (The outcomes you will achieve);
- (3) How does your school align with the district's charter authorizing priorities?
- (4) What are the elements of your educational model that will meet the needs of your target student population?
- (5) Explain why your school would be important to the community in which you are proposing to locate.
- (6) Who will your school collaborate with? What community support has the school generated? Who will your school work with to be well positioned within the city and community?

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

(1) What if New Orleans public schools were designed to improve life through the way they educate students? What if they focused on graduating healthier students? What if our schools were charged with creating more equitable communities and a deeper relationship with nature? In short, what if, in addition to providing a strong academic experience, our schools could help students improve all aspects of their lives, communities, and environment?

In the 13 years since Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans has seen a renaissance of energy, resources, and attention for its effort to improve public education for all (Leonhardt, 2018; Education Research Alliance for New Orleans, 2018; Vanacore, 2017; and New Schools for New Orleans, 2015). However, there is a broad consensus that despite this progress, our schools are still falling short of delivering on the promise of equity to all students in New Orleans (Urban League of Louisiana, 2018; Cowen Institute of Tulane University, 2018; New Orleans Equity Index, 2017; Orleans Public Education Network, 2016). We need our schools to give all of our children a world-class education that helps our entire city become healthier & more equitable.

Living School is an equity-focused, democratic, project-based high school that improves life for all. We provide our students with a totally new type of education that delivers a rigorous academic program while fostering holistic wellness, active citizenship and social entrepreneurship.

#### **Our Mission:**

Living School cultivates equity by nurturing students to do work that improves their lives, communities, and environment through holistic health, citizenship, and entrepreneurship.

#### **Our Vision:**

We envision a world where all children get what they need to live healthy, rewarding lives in equitable, peaceful communities. Our school improves lives by helping students graduate with college-acceptance, a living-wage job offer, and the habits of a holistically healthy life. We intentionally integrate diverse people and methods in a democratic and cooperative setting to do real work that benefits real people, communities, and ecosystems.



**Our Long-Term Goals:**

Our mission, vision, and design principles have helped us articulate long-term goals. We aim to make three key impacts in service of our mission:

1. **Alumni outcomes:** We cultivate authentic, equitable life outcomes for our students.
  - a. **Post-secondary success:** 100% of Living School alumni are persisting in post-secondary education and/or careers with growing socio-economic opportunity. All students will continue making positive life choices after graduation that improve their own health and that of their community and environment.
  - b. **Sustained health:** Longitudinal metrics indicate that 100% of our alumni perform significantly above average in six measures of holistic health: prevalence of preventable & treatable disease, avoidance of high-risk behaviors, housing stability, healthy relationship networks, healthy habits, and sense of well-being.
  - c. **Real-world work:** Our students & alumni do work that improves our city's ongoing ecological, social, economic and political challenges.
  
2. **Proof point:** We create and spread an equity-focused, democratic, project-based model that proves it is possible to educate our children based on multiple bottom lines.
  - a. The prevalence of college-persistence, living-wage persistence, and longitudinal holistic health become industry standard for schools across New Orleans.
  - b. We are impacting local Graduate Schools of Education to support accreditation and growth for master teachers in our multidisciplinary, project-based pedagogy.
  - c. We support the incubation of similar models elsewhere through collaboration, professional development, teacher residencies and fellowships, and university partnerships.
  - d. Local CMOs borrow and iterate on elements of Living School's model to both expand and improve it, shifting the dialogue around New Orleans education.
  
3. **Equitable organization:** Our employees represent our stakeholders (primarily native New Orleanians of color), and we pay all at least a living wage, and promote equity through our organization.
  - a. All team members have opportunities for growth and development, and they report improving measures of holistic health.
  - b. Our investments align with our values: we bank and partner with minority-owned businesses, vendors, and organizations that embody our values.
  - c. We cultivate critically conscious teams that promote equity and diversity.

**(2) Our Authentic, Equitable Student Goals**

We believe that the way to accomplish our long-term goals is to build a school that focuses on authentic equitable life outcomes. Specifically, our model focuses on cultivating the following 3 authentic, equitable life outcomes for all students:

1. **College:** All students will graduate with college acceptance in-hand (supported by strong ACT performance and a portfolio of real-world work).
2. **Living-wage careers:** All students will graduate with a living-wage job offer in-hand (supported by CTE certifications and internships).
3. **Habits of holistic health:** All students will graduate as the healthiest versions of him or herself, having developed habits that support their individual, community, and environmental health.



(3) Our model aligns well with all 4 of the [district's draft authorizing priorities](#):

**Priority 1: School programs and services addressing the unique needs of diverse learners in inclusive settings:** Our model is biodiverse by design--and accordingly honors the value of neurodiversity--with a commitment to full inclusion (Armstrong, 2015). We intentionally recruit students from across New Orleans' wide spectrum of culture, ability, and perspective, providing a dedicated special educator alongside two accredited teachers in every single class, allowing each team of highly skilled adults to serve the unique needs of all students in an inclusive setting.

**Priority 2: Intentionally-diverse schools that are representative of the population of New Orleans:** Intentional Biodiversity is one of our core design principles. Our model is designed to serve both New Orleans's most ambitious and creative students and our most challenged and struggling students in a highly-personalized, adaptive learning environment. To support the healthy integration of students across lines of race, culture, and socioeconomic status, we use structures like advisories, collaborative project-work, random groupings, affinity spaces, and universal access to all programming like honors, internships, dual-enrollment and CTE programming.

**Priority 3: Schools, programs, and services addressing youth ages 15-21 (MS and HS):** Our school day is designed to offer accelerated options for overage students to earn credits at their own pace, and for all students to explore various pathways to both college and career. Additionally, as an open-enrollment high school with a small, nimble model, we are poised to replicate and create more high quality, diverse high school seats in different neighborhoods throughout the city.

**Priority 4: Schools, programs, and services that seek to interrupt and/or address students entering the school-to-prison pipeline:** As an equity-focused high school, we are deeply committed to practices that promote equity and interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. These include: a commitment to restorative practices (International Institute of Restorative Practices, 2015), and the prioritized development of responsive relationships through advisory and small class-sizes (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004). The goal is to prevent disruptive behaviors through proactive relationship-building, and address challenging behavior when it does occur in empowering, restorative ways. We avoid removing students from learning while teaching them the skills they need to resolve conflicts both inside and outside of school.

(4) **Our Design Principles:**

Our school began as a community organizing effort in 2012, with a vision for a new type of school focused on cultivating equity. We have studied best practices from and collaborated with mentor schools (like High Tech High and High School for the Recording Arts), organizations (like the National Equity Project and Overcoming Racism), governments (like Sweden and Bhutan) and thought leaders (like Jeff Duncan-Andrade and Lisa Delpit) around the world that lead us to **Our 4 Design Principles:**

1. **Equity** - We measure success with outcomes that promote equity: student health & achievement, community health & equity, and environmental health (Hardy, D., Kincaid, M., & King, I., 2018).
2. **Intentional Biodiversity** - We intentionally integrate diverse people and methods to create the conditions where a healthy ecosystem of learning can flourish (Wells, A., Fox, L., Cordova-Cobo, 2016).
3. **Democratic Community** - Students, families, and staff form democratic branches that collaborate on every element of the school to build community and balance institutionalized



power (Meier, D. & Gasoi, E., 2017).

4. **Real-World Work** - All learning is facilitated collaboratively through interdisciplinary projects, authentic inquiry, problem-solving, internships, and apprenticeships (Heller, R. & Wolfe, R., 2015).

The first student need that we meet is a 100% graduation rate with **college access**--the first of our 3 Authentic, Equitable Student Goals (Urban League of Louisiana, 2018). We do this with the following structures:

- **Real-world, project-based learning** - All learning is done in the context of real-world, multidisciplinary projects co-lead by two certified teachers *and* a special educator in collaboration with community partners who facilitate our students contributing to real-world projects.
- **Exhibitions & POLs** - Learning is assessed in authentic Exhibitions where students publicly share their project work in groups in an authentic space to an authentic audience. Then, each individual student does a Presentation of Learning (POL) as a self-assessment for the term.
- **Mastery Transcript** - All learning is assessed based on authentic mastery of the competencies outlined in state standards, meaning grades are completely transparent, authentic and rigorous, normed with criteria for success shared with students prior to assessment, and available for as many practice and re-take opportunities as a student needs in order to achieve mastery.
- **Digital Portfolios** - Students build professional resumes & portfolios throughout their real-world projects and internships, building a professional, personal website cataloging their work.
- **Universal authentic writing** - Every teacher of every subject teaches writing in the context of authentic, professional writing in their field. Students publish authentic writing in every course.
- **Universal ACTs, College Apps, & FAFSA** - All of our students prepare for and take the ACT multiple times, apply to a diverse portfolio of colleges, and fill out the FAFSA to ensure they graduate with college-acceptance and a clear understanding of how to pay for it.
- **Universal Honors & Dual enrollment** - Every student has opportunity to earn honors credits and participate in dual enrollment courses at local colleges and universities.

The second student need that our programming meets is the need for pathways to **living-wage careers**--the second of our 3 Authentic, Equitable Student Goals--supported by Career Technical Education certifications (Cowen Institute of Tulane University, 2018). We do this with the following structures:

- **Community partnerships** - We work hard to cultivate a diverse array of community partnerships to help us with both our project-based learning and our internships.
- **Collaborative project-based work** - Most work is done collaboratively in various groupings, helping students learn the soft skills of working with diverse people, both peers and adults.
- **Universal CTE Work** - All students obtain 1 or more Industry Based Certifications.
- **Universal internships** - Through partnerships with YouthForce NOLA and local businesses, students participate in work-based learning at Living School. In 9th-10th grades, students have the opportunity to do job-shadow rotations exploring different careers. In 11th-12th grades, all students do professional internships of 1-2 days each week.
- **Universal career counseling & applications** - Every student receives career counseling to help supplement their Digital Portfolio. Every student applies to an array of living-wage careers to ensure that they graduate with a job offer in-hand.



The third and final student need that our programming meets is the need to develop the **habits of a holistically healthy life**--the third of our 3 Authentic, Equitable Student Goals (The New Orleans Equity Index, 2017). We do this with the following structures:

- **Advisories** - Students are part of a small advisory that meets twice daily throughout a student's entire time at Living School. This home-away-from-home is where students share meals, do chores, facilitate morning circles (the proactive part of our Restorative Practices), and manage Personal Learning Plan & IEP goals amongst other activities helping us ensure that every student builds a deep, caring relationship with at least one adult.
- **Restorative Practices** - We use morning circles and community meetings to do the proactive work of creating a strong, inclusive culture while using various levels of restorative interventions to address conflict and harm in a way that is healing and makes our culture stronger and safer.
- **Personalization through relationships** - By having 2 certified teachers and 1 certified special educator to every traveling group of 40, we have an incredibly low student-to-teacher ratio that ensures students get individual attention, feedback, and support in all classes.
- **Student Data Profiles & Personal Learning Plans** - We gather triangulated data, aggregated on our Student Data Profiles, to measure progress toward all of our student-outcome goals. Triangulation is a process by which teachers at Living School collect evidence of learning from three different sources including products, surveys, and observation.
- **SLCs** - Every quarter, each student leads a conference with their advisor and family to reflect on progress toward and revise PLP goals.
- **4 years of the arts & exercise** - Our students get daily physical activity at Living School and visual & performing arts all 4 years helping students establish habits and routines that support wellness.
- **Farming, Cooking, Family Meals, & Nutrition** - Students help in the farming, preparation, and service of 3 nutritious meals and 1 snack daily.
- **Stakeholder democracy** - Students, staff, and families all form democratic branches that collaboratively govern and manage the school.
- **On-site Wrap-around Services** - We seek to partner with a full-service health clinic, credit union, food co-op, and other services that benefit all members of our school and community.

(5) We plan to locate in New Orleans East, one of our city's most ethnically diverse neighborhoods, with a rich history of being a vibrant haven for middle and working class families. Recent data show that New Orleans East has the fewest school options per student and that its students, on average, travel farther to school than any other neighborhood in the city (Nobles, 2018). New Orleans East also has a low high-quality (A-, B-, or C-rated) high school seat-to-student ratio, highlighting the neighborhood's need for more high-quality high school seats.

Additionally, many of the schools consistently receiving the greatest enrollment demand in the city are intentionally-diverse, unique setting schools, none of which are located in New Orleans East. Living School's innovative program will offer a unique opportunity to New Orleans East's current portfolio of schools.

District E's (serving New Orleans East) recently elected City Council Member, Cyndi Nguyen, ran on a platform of economic development, career training, and neighborhood engagement. Living School's mission and programming are aligned with all three elements of her platform, positioning us to be strong allies for her team and the broader neighborhood's vision for itself. As an equity-focused, democratic, project-based high school with a college-and-career pathway for all graduates, Living



School is an ideal resource for advancing economic development and career training. As a small high school with democratic governance and a plan for embedded resources like a health clinic, food co-op, farm, commissary kitchen, and credit union, we are well positioned to support our community.

(6) Our school has been a collaborative effort involving a wide array of educators, students, parents, and community members over the past 6 years, and will continue to be so as we open. We are working with City Council Member Nguyen along with neighborhood organizations and existing schools in New Orleans East for feedback and support. Additionally, we have generated broad support for enrollment, finances, and programming, including strategic partnerships with YouthForce NOLA, New Schools for New Orleans, the New Schools Venture Fund, and Communities in Schools. With their help, amongst others, we are working to cultivate a network of keystone organizations that help fund our launch, advise our programming, house our student interns, provide wrap-around services, and hire our graduates.

Dozens of students and families continue to be involved in our organizing, design, and pilots, and interest in our vision continues to grow. To date, we've surveyed over 300 students and 100 parents about their priorities in a school, served 85 students through 4 pilot programs (over 75% of whom have indicated interest in enrolling at Living School), engaged over 20 students and families in planning our model through our advisory board and Board of Directors, and have garnered interest through our website and school contacts of another 40 students interested in learning more or enrolling at Living School.

### Academic Model

- (1) Describe the academic needs of the student population you propose to serve. Explain how you will set, and measure progress towards, performance goals that put your students on a path towards achieving your vision. Include your plan to gather baseline data necessary to establish goals.
- (2) Describe the concrete structures, policies, and practices that will differentiate your school from options already available to the community you propose to serve.

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

**(1) The problem: Inequitable, declining academic results, especially for our most vulnerable students**  
The graduation rate in Orleans Parish has fallen 5% to 72.8% from it's high mark of 77.8% in 2011-12 and remains about 5% lower than the state graduation rate of 78.1% as of the most recent data released by the Louisiana Department of Education (Nobles, 2018 & Dreilinger, 2017). During that same time, the parish passing rate for all End of Course exams (taken in algebra, geometry, English, biology, and U.S. history) peaked in 2014-15 at 61% but has fallen to 52%, 9 points below the statewide average of 61%, highlighting schools' continued struggles to meet students' academic needs in core content areas (City of New Orleans, 2018). Similarly, during that same time period, the parish-wide composite ACT scores of African American, SPED, and economically-disadvantaged students have each remained mostly at or below the state average, leaving few of them with opportunities for the statewide TOPS scholarships--the most feasible pathway for most of those students to access higher education options (Louisiana Department of Education, 2018).

**Our solution: Project-Based Learning + CTE toward College, Career, & a Healthy Life**  
Our students need a rigorous, authentic, and relevant learning environment that helps all students attain college success married with a program that prioritizes 21st century skills in career-applied settings, directly helping all students attain a living-wage career. Project-Based Learning (PBL) has decades of results as an effective pedagogical approach to achieving both ends (Condliffe, et al., 2017 & Buck Institute for Education, 2013). In collaboration with High Tech High, Big Picture Learning, and The Buck Institute for Education (amongst other



collaborators), we have designed all of our school systems to support best practices in Project Based Learning including:

- Multidisciplinary, collaborative teaching teams of 3 teachers in each classroom
- Exemplar study
- Student/teacher co-generated rubrics
- Critique & revision cycles
- Process documentation & reflection
- Exhibitions & Presentations of Learning
- Student-Led Conferences
- Personal Learning Plans

We pair PBL with a rigorous approach to the scientific and equitable best practice of **data triangulation** to ensure that our use of data improves our students' grades, test scores, *and* their lives--as defined by our Authentic, Equitable Student Goals. This approach includes objective data about content mastery (in alignment with content standards like the Common Core) and qualitative data both from the students themselves and from their family and instructors (Altrichter, et al., 2008).

For example, many schools focus heavily on the correlation between student literacy and career success, focusing energy and resources on measures of a narrow "reading level", neglecting the potentially connected value and impact of content relevance, cultural capital, mentorship, and access to authentic practice to drive literacy and ultimately career success. We will track many of the standard academic metrics like reading level in triangulation with other measures like a student's self-reported frequency of engagement with authentic texts and the faculty's and family's observations of that student's literacy in authentic settings.

We are developing an online dashboard that collates this triangulated data into live, easy-to-read Student Profiles that gives all stakeholders (staff, student, and family) a well-rounded picture of how each student is doing in regard to their co-designed learning & life goals. For example, in a math class, a student's "objective" performance on assessments might be triangulated with a teacher's observation data of that student on authentic performance tasks and a student's self-report of their ability to apply the math skills to their life. These Student Profiles are not only viewable by staff, but also by the student and his/her family for the purpose of transparency and alignment.

**Gathering baseline data at intake, home visits, and orientation**

We gather baseline data on all students as part of our intake process. Along with standard paperwork and gathering records from previous schools, two key parts of our intake process are a home visit for every student and a New Student Orientation event during which our baseline data (see Table 1: Performance Goals & Data) are gathered.

**Setting & tracking goals with a Personal Learning Plan & Student-Led Conferences**

Goals are tracked in a living document (always accessible to all stakeholders from the Student Dashboard) that is referenced daily by the student, called a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). PLPs are co-authored and updated quarterly (or twice a quarter for students who need it) in a collaborative meeting called a Student-Led Conference (SLC) where students facilitate a design process in collaboration with their Advisor, teachers, and family. At SLCs, students reflect on their progress toward the various goals outlined in their PLP (see Table 1) grounded in evidence from the triangulated data present in their Student Dashboard before updating their PLP with new short-term goals for the coming quarters and revisions to any long-term life goals.

As mentioned above, the triangulated data for each goal in Table 1 is aggregated into each Student's Dashboard, giving the student, faculty, and family a common data analysis tool. Faculty do weekly academic data dives and culture data dives aligned with our RTI process to track every student's progress toward the goals on his or her PLP. Students use the Profiles during their weekly selfie meeting to prepare a self-assessment to review with their teaching team and to plan out their workflow and priorities for the coming week. Families are expected to check the Profile roughly weekly to monitor and coach their student's performance.



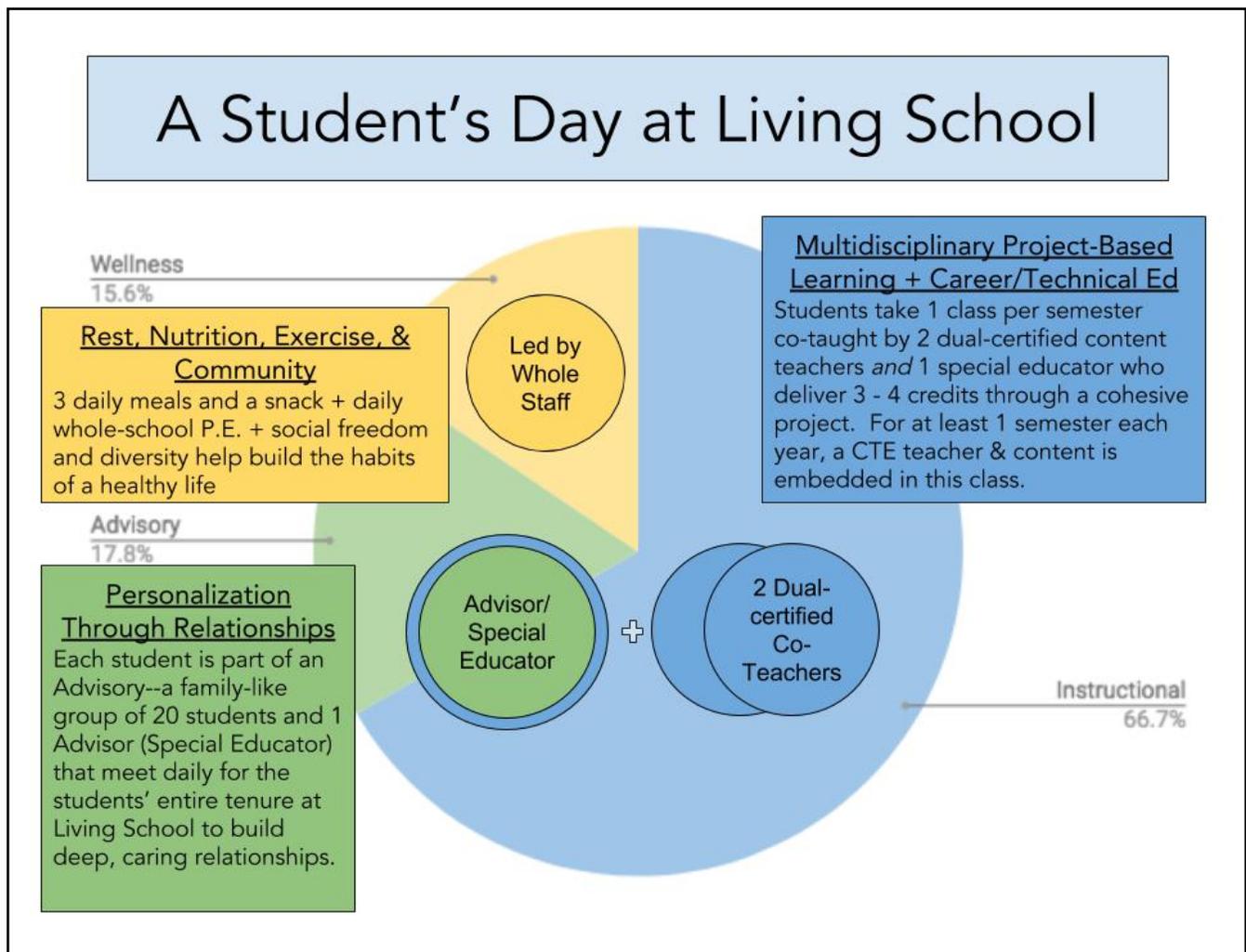
**Table 1: Performance Goals & Data**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b> Gathered upon intake during home visit & orientation event	<b>Setting Goals</b> Set quarterly in Personal Learning Plans during Student-Led Conferences w/ advisor & family	<b>Measuring Goals</b> Analyzed weekly during Data Dives & Quarterly during Generation Cycles
<b>1. College- attainment:</b> 100% of students will graduate with a TOPS Diploma, strong ACT score, & college acceptance in-hand	- Practice ACT benchmark	- Practice ACT score goals	- ACT performance
	- Middle school transcript grades/GPA	- Mastery goals aligned to content standards & credits needed	- Mastery grades aligned to content standards & credits earned for diploma
	- Historic LEAP test results	- Practice EOC exams	- End-of-Course exam results
	- Portfolio of work including writing samples	- Identifying colleges & fields/work of interest - Digital portfolio	- College acceptance & persistence rates
<b>2. Career- attainment:</b> 100% of students will graduate with a living-wage job offer supported by a CTE certification	- Skills & interest survey - Interview w/ student & family	- Identifying fields & careers of interest - Interviewing professionals in field(s) of interest	- Internship evaluations & Presentations of Learning
	- Diagnostic Performance Assessment	- CTE practice test performance	- CTE Certification exams
		- CTE course performance	- CTE competency mastery aligned to industry standards
<b>3. Habits of holistic health:</b> 100% of students will improve their physical, mental, & emotional health by building healthy habits	- Triangulated survey baseline (self-, family-, and teacher-report) - Student & family interview	- Ongoing triangulated surveys - Ongoing student & family interviews	- Triangulated survey results - Exit interview
	- Diagnostic performance assessment	- Ongoing performance assessments	- Exhibitions & Presentations of Learning
	- Historic attendance data	- Ongoing attendance data	- Final attendance rate



	- Historic culture data (awards-to-discipline ratio)	- Ongoing culture data	- Culture data results
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(2) With over two centuries of combined teaching, working in, sending children to and attending over two dozen public schools in New Orleans, our founding Team, Design Team and Board of Directors have a strong grasp on the types of options available to New Orleans high school students both currently and historically. We have worked for the past six years to study, collaborate with, and better understand all 29 of the city’s current public high schools *and* a slew of innovative schools and organizations around the country & the world in order to design a model that is unique to New Orleans yet built on the best practices of dozens of mentor schools & organizations both locally and abroad.



Some of what differentiates our model from the rest of the city includes:

**Goals**

- **College, Career, & a Healthy Life:** 100% of students will graduate with college acceptance (supported by a strong ACT score and transcript), a living-wage job offer (supported by an IBC certification, professional



internship, and a portfolio of authentic work), and the habits of a holistically healthy life (supported by good rest, nutrition, physical exercise, relationships, and goals).

**Structures**

- **Inquiry & Project Based Learning:** We blend high quality human-to-human instruction with the authentic interests of students in multidisciplinary, real-world projects that are collaborative in nature (as opposed to the trend of individualistic, computer-based “personalized” or blended learning) (Bryant, et al., 2017). This is a best practice learned from High Tech High in San Diego, CA who have an 18 year track record of running intentionally diverse high schools with an historical 96% graduation rate.
- **Multidisciplinary Teaching Teams:** All blocks are co-taught by a Teaching Team: two, dual-certified teachers *and* a dedicated special educator to each class of 40 students. Each Teaching Team offers multiple credits per period that are co-taught with multidisciplinary, real-world projects (Halverson, 2008).
- **Embedded CTE teachers:** Each student will have a full-time Career & Technical Education teacher all four years of high school. CTE teachers are embedded in one of their core content periods to ensure that all students earn both the credits for a TOPS (college-ready) degree and are prepared to pass CTE certification tests in their chosen field. These best practices are learned from over 100 New Tech Network schools around the world (including Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy in Jefferson Parish) who’ve achieved a 92% graduation and 82% college persistence rate for diverse cohorts of students.
- **Universal Internships & Dual Enrollment:** All students will participate in professional internships throughout their high school career. During 9th and 10th grades, students will be able to do exploratory job-shadow rotations before committing to a professional internship in 11th & 12th grades. Furthermore, all students will be able to begin earning college credits as soon as 10th grade through dual-enrollment with local colleges and universities. These best practices are learned from Health Sciences High and Middle College in San Diego, CA whose success for the past 12 years as a Gold School of Opportunity has hinged upon giving every student access to both vital experiences.
- **Mastery Transcript + Digital Portfolio:** Instead of letter grades, we document students’ mastery of content skills alongside their Digital Portfolio of real-world work. These best practices are learned from the Mastery Transcript Consortium who have developed and validated a new transcript tool with the top colleges and universities to better represent students’ actual work and skillfulness from their high school coursework.
- **Student-Led Conferences & Personal Learning Plans:** Students help co-create their Personal Learning Plans (that dictate course selection and goals) at quarterly Student-Led Conferences in collaboration with their Advisor, teachers, and family. We learn these best practices from Big Picture Learning who’s one-student-at-a-time approach in over 200 schools around the world (including The NET and New Harmony High in New Orleans) has shown improved post-secondary outcomes across six metrics (Arnold, et al., 2015).
- **Consistent Schedule:** All weeks that we have school are full, 5-day weeks. All weeks that we have off, we take a full 5-day week off. All school days have the same consistent schedule. Students have 4 weeks of break spread out evenly every semester. Teachers get 3 plus one week of development & planning. This consistency allows teachers and students to develop strong routines that can function uninterrupted for the entire term.

**Policies**

- **Never too late to learn:** The school’s gradebook will capture all mastery percentages as determined by the evaluation rubric used for each standard, but the only final grades we will document are A’s, B’s, and Incompletes. Students are expected to continue revising and improving work until it is a B or higher. Students will have unlimited chances to demonstrate mastery of any standard, and accordingly, can bring any grade up at any time through authentic work that demonstrates mastery. This best practice is learned from Murray High School in Charlottesville, VA who credit this policy with helping their non-traditional student body graduate at more than twice the district rate.
- **Real-World Work:** All work at Living School is done through authentic, multidisciplinary projects that add real value to the lives of real people, communities, and ecosystems. The purpose of all learning should be self-evident and staff should regularly share with students the intended purpose behind all learning activities. This best practice is learned from High School for the Recording Arts in St. Paul, MN who credit



their real-world approach with re-engaging expelled and justice-involved youth toward graduation at the highest rate in the state for the past 20 years.

- **Learning is social & freedom is learned:** We know from neurological research that learning is accelerated and retained longer when done in a social setting. Furthermore, part of our charge in helping our students live healthy lives is helping them learn to build healthy relationships and socialize appropriately. Therefore positive socialization is not just permitted but encouraged throughout our school day and campus. This includes freedom to wear appropriate clothing of one's choice, use one's phone appropriately throughout the day, and freedom to talk and move appropriately on one's own.

**Practices**

- **Cultural & Ethnic Studies:** All staff will spend time every quarter deepening their studies of their own culture & ethnicity and those represented by our student body to better incorporate this knowledge into projects and all interactions with one another. All teachers will be supported in incorporating cultural & ethnic studies into their courses (Sleeter, 2011). The whole school will build in cultural/ethnic celebrations and rituals into our school-wide culture as part of building a healthy pluralistic culture. This practice is learned from the Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque, NM whose approach to cultural & ethnic studies has given birth to a nation-wide network of similar schools.
- **Restorative Practices:** Restorative practices both help us infuse social & emotional learning throughout our school day and minimize the amount of disruptions to learning and time students get separated from learning for disciplinary reasons. We learn this from the Center for Restorative Approaches and the International Institute for Restorative Practices who both have developed a local and international following for their trailblazing work to research and spread best practices in resolving conflict productively.
- **Trauma-informed Practices:** We know that a significant number of the children who walk through our door will almost certainly have experienced some form of trauma (and many will be continuing to navigate traumatic experiences on a regular basis). We train all staff on the neuroscience behind trauma, how it affects the brain (and consequently behavior and learning), and how we can help respond to traumatized students in a healing, supportive way that helps them accomplish more than they thought possible. We learn this from Communities in Schools and Tulane University's Institute for Women & Ethnic Studies who are local leaders in helping train trauma first responders (like educators) around New Orleans.
- **Exemplar Study:** All Real-World Work starts with the study of at least two exemplars of the work, to help students understand and articulate the qualities of professional-level work. We learn this from NOCCA who've used this professional apprenticeship approach to build one of the nation's most successful conservatories for students from diverse backgrounds.
- **Co-Created Rubrics:** All Real-World Work is assessed with performance-based rubrics, co-created by faculty and students as they study exemplars from the field to create a shared vision of mastery for each standard in the project. This is a best practice learned from Students at the Center who've used this practice to do ground-breaking work helping New Orleans high schoolers publish writing professionally for over 20 years.
- **Critique & Revision:** No Real-World Work is done after a first, or even second draft. All authentic work is critiqued no fewer than two times in the production process, followed by multiple rounds of high quality revision. This practice is learned from EL Education (formerly Expeditionary Learning) whose approach has been shown to improve reading & math scores across lines of difference across the country.

**Enrollment Plans**

*The student population that you describe should be consistent with the enrollment projections that you provide in your proposal overview*

- (1) Demonstrate through the use of data that the student population that you wish to serve exists.
- (2) Describe your recruitment strategy and provide your recruitment plan. Provide any evidence that you have collected that demonstrates that parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children in your school. You may provide evidence in **Attachment 1**. **Attachment 1** will not count against the page limit.



- (3) Describe any mission specific admissions priorities, preferences or requirements, your school would seek to offer as well as any criteria used to participate in these programs. [Mission Specific Criteria must be approved through a separate application process following charter approval]

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

(1) As an open-enrollment school in New Orleans, we welcome every high school aged student in the city. EnrollNOLA notes that New Orleans needs to add 22% more high school seats over the next 6 years because of growing grade-level cohorts. Additionally, 32% of currently enrolled high schoolers attend a school rated D or F by the state. Finally, the schools receiving the greatest enrollment demand in the city are intentionally-diverse, unique-setting schools, true of only 3 of New Orleans's 29 public high schools (less than 10% of the city's high school seats). Because of these three factors and our small grade-level size (only 80 per grade level), we anticipate there being ample demand to fully enroll our school.

Specifically, we are locating in New Orleans East, one of our most ethnically diverse neighborhoods. As mentioned above, New Orleans East has one of the lowest total and high-quality high school seat-to-student ratios and no intentionally-diverse, unique setting schools, making us especially well positioned to attract much of our cohort from the community immediately surrounding our campus.

Finally, the district has identified the need to provide more accelerated and alternative pathways to a diploma for overage and non-traditional students. Living School is an ideal setting for both pathways.

(2) The heart of our recruitment plan revolves around early, authentic engagement with New Orleans families. To date, we have run four different pilots and will continue to run more throughout the coming 10 months in collaboration with partner schools, organizations, and companies to build relationships with prospective families and create compelling proof points of the type of unique work we are organizing. We've already served about 100 students and anticipate being able to serve over 200 more with our pilots over the next 10 months, which means we will need to enroll approximately 40% of those students who attend our pilots to be fully enrolled for our first year. Based on exit survey data from our pilots thus far, 99% of students have indicated that they think Living School is important to exist in New Orleans and 69% of students have communicated interest in enrolling with us once we open. See Attachment 1 – Student Recruitment Evidence for more details.

Furthermore, we have been informally recruiting for years now, as many members of our team and community are current or recent faculty, parents, and students at a number of elementary and middle schools throughout the city. From those roles, we have strong relationships with dozens of families of students entering 9th & 10th grade in 2019, many of whom have contributed to the design of Living School over the last five years and have expressed interest in enrolling. We anticipate filling between 10 and 20 of the seats in our founding class with students that we already know from these schools based on indicated family interest.

Additionally, we are engaging with New Orleans East community & neighborhood organizations, churches, and clubs like VIET to build relationships with other neighborhood leaders and families that we may miss at those schools and pilots along with reaching out to families who are currently opted out of the public school system either in private schools or who've chosen to homeschool their students. Finally, we've already received 10 unsolicited inquiries from families through our website, even before we've applied for our charter.

Finally, we have allocated a reasonable budget for marketing & recruitment to use for publications, advertisements, mailings, street campaigns, and other marketing once we are approved and ready to enroll.

(3) We do not plan to seek any admissions priorities as an open-enrollment school.



## Student Experience

- (1) Describe the culture that you envision for your school and the practices that will foster and maintain that culture.
  - a. Describe the steps that you will take to invest staff in the vision and to sustain their investment.
  - b. Define the norms that will shape the interactions between administrators and teachers and among teachers, the reason each norm is important, and the steps that you will take to establish and reinforce these norms.
- (2) Similarly, describe the behavior expectations of your school as well as the practices that will foster and uphold those expectations.
  - a. List and describe the values that will define your student culture. Provide your plan for instilling and maintaining student behavior expectations that correspond with these values.
  - b. Describe the system of policies and practices your school will implement for setting and maintaining student behavior expectations and norms.
  - c. Describe the procedures for due process when a student is subject to removal from the classroom or school, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ and the plan for providing services to students who are out of the classroom (in-school or out-of-school suspensions) for more than 10 days
    - i. This description should include a list, with definitions, of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be subject to removal from the classroom (in-school suspension) or the school (out-of-school suspension), respectively.
  - d. Describe the practices the school will use to support student's social and emotional learning, and the alignment between these practices and their impact on student achievement
- (3) Describe the mechanisms and structures available to elevate student voice and leadership at your school.

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

(1) Living School has from our inception been a connected community whose culture is focused on cultivating equity through **holistic health**, **active citizenship**, and **social entrepreneurship**.

### **WELLNESS**

To cultivate **wellness**, we have built systems that facilitate **physical health** (including rest, nutrition, physical exercise, and energy), and **social & emotional health** (including meditation, mindfulness, diverse healthy relationships, self-efficacy, and stress and trauma management).

**Physical health:** Our students will live vigorous physical lives supported by responsible, healthy choices. Our students will be part of a culture that uses our bodies for good fun and good work every day.

- **Late start time:** Our 8:30 AM start time aligns with research affirming the critical importance of late school start-times to allow adolescents to get adequate sleep (Watson, et al., 2017).
- **Daily nutrition & food culture:** We have scheduled in time and budgeted for every single student to get a nutritious, home-cooked breakfast, lunch, snack, and supper every single day--meals that students help to prepare and serve on a rotating basis using produce that students help grow on-site on our organic farm.
- **Daily exercise:** Every person--student and adult--exercises daily at Living School with meditation and stretching built into morning advisory and communal exercise built in before lunch daily, and we plan to offer sports options as after-school clubs.
- **Social & emotional learning:** Advisories are a time to integrate community programs and expertise addressing



developmental and social challenges often experienced by teens.

- **Predictable, purposeful calendar:** Our year-long calendar is designed to maximize the rhythms of the calendar year with a one week break every month (on average) and quarterly Generation Cycles followed by Staff PD weeks to facilitate regular moments for reflection and recalibration.
- **Restorative Practices:** All staff, students, and families (with the help of the Center for Restorative Approaches) get trained in the foundations of Restorative Practices and embed the practice into all of our school systems to teach all stakeholders how to resolve conflict peacefully and productively. When community norms are breached and/or harm is done to or by any member of the community, our Director of Student Life--the staff member with the highest level of restorative training--helps organize and facilitate the appropriate restorative intervention, ranging from a simple conference to a circle to a community meeting, depending on the nature of the incident(s). The goal of all of these Restorative Practices is to create a community highly skilled in de-escalating conflict in non-violent ways and resolving conflict in a way that strengthens relationships and the broader community.

**Social & emotional health:** Students achieve more than they thought possible toward their personal goals and build healthy relationships with people across lines of difference. At a critical time in their development, our students will be valued members of an intentionally diverse, anti-racist community which celebrates the natural variety of human experiences and abilities that each member of a community contributes to its success.

- **Advisory:** To cultivate deep, caring relationships, we take a one-student-at-a-time approach centered in a structure called Advisory---a small, family-like group of 20 students to 1 teacher that stay together throughout a student's four years at Living School. Each day starts with Advisory. Morning Advisory includes family-style breakfast, community circles (the proactive foundation of Restorative Practices), meditation & mindfulness, stretching, and chores amongst other activities to support social & emotional learning (SEL).
- **Home visits:** Advisors launch each student's tenure at Living School with at least one (and sometimes multiple) home visit(s) to establish trust and a strong foundation of understanding.
- **Whole-school retreats:** We start each year with a 3-day whole school retreat, which is followed by a mid-year 2-day whole school retreat. This takes place off-site at a local summer camp to launch each year in a space that facilitates deeper, more personal interactions between students and teachers.
- **Chore rotations:** Advisories share chore duties on a schedule rotating between breakfast, lunch, custodial, and maintenance duties.
- **Balance of free time & family time:** Our lunch period is free most days for students to spend it as they please but communal on Fridays so the whole school shares a family-style meal together once a week.
- **Genius Hour:** The last 40 minutes of each day is flexible time when students are free to attend office hours, get homework done, attend club meetings, pursue independent projects, or other relevant tasks as overseen by their Advisors.
- **Personal Learning Plans:** Advisors will be in charge of making sure students are working toward their personal goals set and updated quarterly on each student's Personal Learning Plan. These plans are living documents revised quarterly at Student-Led Conferences.
- **Deep, personal relationships:** In addition to the intimate relationship of advisories, each student will spend all semester in a class of 40 students with a team of 3 teachers. Those 40 students and 3 teachers will spend the entire semester together, focusing on developing deep relationships. All of this is designed to ensure that each student will be personally known by at least one staff member who understand their potential and needs using a variety of metrics--including test scores, performance on projects, and health, career, & extracurricular interests.
- **Cultural study & celebration:** Our school community will share in the study and celebration honoring all cultures represented in our building (and beyond), recognizing everything from American Holidays (like Black History Month) to a wide array of cultural celebrations (like Chinese New Year) to institutionalize our value of welcoming all into the school community.
- **Expanded definition of student success:** Living School is also working with NewSchools Venture Fund and their partner TransformingEd to incorporate their Expanded Definitions of Student Success (EDSS) into its model. EDSS identifies seven mindsets, habits and skills that are correlated to success later in life: growth mindset, intellectual curiosity, perseverance, self-awareness, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and social awareness. The EDSS model also identifies seven priorities that Living School is focused on to establish a positive learning environment: cultural and linguistic competence, learning strategies, rigorous expectations, school safety, sense



of belonging, student engagement, and teacher-student relationships.

### **ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

To cultivate **active citizenship** we've built a **democratic school** that teaches students, families, and staff the knowledge, skills, and habits to be civically engaged and we practice **democratic co-design** to encourage equity of voice, action civics, and community organizing.

**Democratic school:** The immediate stakeholders of our school have vested, institutionalized power to influence how decisions get made.

- **Staff Executive Council (SEC):** All staff members have an equal vote on the SEC and elect a cohort of their peers to be the "Leadership Team" who steward the SEC's work. The SEC has a role in setting the annual operating budget, hiring & human resources policies and procedures including the Staff Development Rubric, student disciplinary issues, the schedule, and curriculum & pedagogy.
- **Student Legislature (SL):** All students have an equal vote in the SL and elect a cohort of their peers to be the "Student Senate" who steward the SL's work. The SL has a role in setting the annual operating budget, the hiring process, the school rules and disciplinary policy, and the schedule.
- **Family Advisory Council (FAC):** All families have an equal vote on the FAC and elect a cohort of their peers to be the "School Elders" who steward the FAC's work. The FAC acts as an advisory body to both the SEC and SL, helping organize resources and support events for both bodies. The School Elders will be trained in Restorative Practices to assist the Leadership Team in mediating conflict throughout the school.
- **Community Board of Directors (CBD):** The above bodies will operate under the jurisdiction of the CBD who hold final governing authority over the school and non-profit in accordance with local, state, and federal law. See the Governance section below for more on the role, responsibilities, and organization of the Community Board of Directors.

**Democratic co-design:** We require and celebrate all stakeholders' full participation and leadership in every element of the school and community beyond.

- **Voice, choice, & autonomy:** Students and teachers alike exercise voice, choice, and autonomy from their classes and projects to the school culture and governance to elevate topics that are urgent and important to their lives informing schoolwide priorities and contributing to the day-to-day operations of the school in a building they will have co-designed and take care of on a regular basis.
- **Action civics & community organizing:** Both classes and advisories will take part in action civics projects to identify issues of collective importance, build consensus around position and strategy, organize external support, and work with relevant elected and appointed officials to pursue the group's goals.
- **Chore rotations:** See above to learn how students help collaborative care for our building.

### **SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

To cultivate **social entrepreneurship** we've built a **project-based school** that integrates knowledge & skills from many disciplines in real-world projects that add value to people's lives and incorporates **CTE for all** to make sure every student graduates with concrete career skills they are ready to use.

**Project-based school:** Learning is facilitated through real projects that real people do in the real world because they add real value to real peoples' lives.

- **Multi-disciplinary & inter-disciplinary:** Projects incorporate multiple disciplines and help students integrate the disciplines in meaningful ways.
- **Bloom's Taxonomies & Webb's Depth of Knowledge:** Project-based learning can advance students to the top of all three Bloom's taxonomies (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) and Webb's Depth of Knowledge in a unified way.
- **Porous walls:** Projects break down the false distinction between school and the rest of the community by having teaching teams plan projects collaboratively with partner organizations and companies who are doing the work on



a professional level.

- **Entrepreneurship projects:** Many projects will include supporting a local business or having students learn to launch and operate their own.

**CTE for all:** All students take courses, do internships, and earn industry-backed credentials to support their pursuit of living-wage careers.

- **Personal and business finance:** As part of CTE programming all students learn best practices for personal and business financial management.
- **Integrating hands & minds:** Students will be building, making, and creating to apply their various knowledge and skills and exhibit their work throughout the school and community in ways that help them understand how to add value to various spaces.

Our system of policies and practices--including setting high expectations, prioritizing caring adult relationships, facilitating family involvement, utilizing Restorative Practices, and explicitly teaching behavioral norms--is all informed by multidisciplinary research (from neuroscience and psychology to economics and pediatrics) creating a strong school culture that supports achievement, long-term wellness, and reduces the disproportionate rates of suspension and expulsion often experienced by historically underserved groups (Yamaguchi, et al, 2016; McClure, et al, 2010; Ryzin, 2010; Jennings, et al, 2009).

(a) The staff who co-create Living School will experience a radical reimagining of the teacher, guidance, and school leadership roles and the structures designed to support them. Our systems are designed to create a highly supportive, autonomous environment for all stakeholders. For example, teachers will co-create engaging, project-based learning experiences that leverage their expertise, extend from the interests and priorities of their students, and involve local organizations and businesses as partners.

We build this culture with year-round approach to development and support. Each year, new staff participate in a one-week Odyssey Introduction, onboarding them to the Living School story, foundational practices, policies, and procedures. Then, all staff launch the year in a 2-day off-site Retreat to establish a foundation of strong relationships across the entire staff. The Retreat is followed by three weeks of whole-staff Odyssey. This Odyssey is a balance between whole group workshops, differentiated trainings, and collaborative work time to prepare to execute a successful school year.

Some of the many critical parts of each year's Odyssey include:

- **Project Slices:** Learning project-based learning by participating in a well-facilitated project as a student and reflecting on the teaching moves and experience from the user's perspective.
- **Staff Executive Council & Leadership Team:** The Staff Executive Council elect their peer "Leadership Team" to steward the work of the council and lead the school.
- **Staff Development Rubrics:** The staff collaboratively revise the Staff Development Rubrics for each staff role (ratified by vote of the Staff Executive Council).

Once school launches with students, there is also a Staff Odyssey week built in after every quarter to ensure ample time for reflection, analysis, adjustment, and planning. This makes for a total of 7 weeks of development for all staff and 8 weeks for new staff.

Additionally, the school year is also rich with deliberately developmental structures including:

- **Period 0:** A daily hour-long work staff work period before school built for a consistent rotation of adult collaboration. Mondays are academic data dives; Tuesdays are the whole-staff meeting & workshops; Wednesdays are culture data dives; Thursdays are collegial coaching rotations between mentorships and action groups; and Fridays are independent work time.
- **Individual PD budget:** Each staff member has a stipend allocated for their differentiated development that they get to control. Staff choose how to spend the stipend on professional development opportunities that best support



their growth above and beyond our regular school structures.

- **Staff internship days:** Twice a year a full day of Odyssey is allocated for staff to arrange an internship for themselves to learn about a new career, skill, or other topic of value to their work. Staff then bring back reflections, resources, and connections to share with the whole team to be integrated into our work.

(b) The norms that will guide the interactions between administrators and teachers will be:

- **Equity:** All decisions should come down to what best furthers our mission to cultivate equity for our students.
- **Love:** All interactions and relationships should be grounded in respect, trust, and recognition of all parties' mutual humanity.
- **Development:** All staff members are expected to give and receive feedback and affirmation regularly to help one another be the best versions of ourselves.

Specifically, these norms should correlate with the following staff behaviors:

- Staff work collaboratively with one another, seeking input, working toward consensus, avoiding triangulation and resolving conflict productively, regardless of position and positionality.
- Staff treat one another and all students & families with the utmost respect for one another's humanity and sovereignty, avoiding behaviors that seek to control or harass another person or group.
- Staff are proactive and timely including attendance, communication, deadlines, and preparedness for their role.
- Staff regularly measure decisions by the question "What best furthers equity for our students?"
- Staff assume the best, acknowledge that we are all perfectly imperfect, and give one another loving feedback to help one another be our best selves.
- Staff go the extra mile in pursuit of our mission while drawing healthy personal, moral, and legal boundaries.

These Staff Norms will be under the jurisdiction of the Staff Executive Council for revision and ratification.

Some structures that will help staff uphold these norms include:

- **Partnerships:** Every staff member has a full-time collaborative partner in fulfilling their role
- **Teams:** Every Partnership is part of a broader Team that has a common responsibility
- **Mentorships:** Every staff member is paired with a peer for mutual weekly coaching
- **Student & Family Surveys:** Every staff member receives survey feedback from all relevant students and families quarterly
- **Faculty-Led Conferences:** Every staff member meets quarterly with their partner, mentor, and the Director for a collaborative evaluation using data from the above surveys, observations on the consensus-created Staff Development Rubrics.

(2) Our founding Design Team--including local educators, students, and parents--has identified the following three norms as the foundation of Living School's Community Norms:

1. **Welcome:** Seek to understand and welcome all members of our school community and visitors to it. Show love and gratitude.
2. **Golden Rule:** Treat others as you want to be treated, even if they aren't treating you that way. If someone else does the wrong thing, you do the right thing.
3. **Do No Harm:** Seek to help and be good to yourself and others. Control yourself to ensure that you do no harm to yourself, others, and the environment.

Community Norms governing behavior of students will be under the jurisdiction of the Student Legislature and will be overseen by the Staff Executive Council. These norms will be published annually in the Community Handbook, to be signed annually by each staff member, student, and parent/guardian.

Some structures that help uphold these norms include:



- **Personalized learning through relationships:** Advisories, small class sizes, our small school size, and our one-student-at-a-time approach help us personalize learning through relationships so we can support the social & emotional development of each student as they navigate the norms of a new community.
- **Restorative practices:** Both proactive and reactive practices help us minimize conflict and respond constructively to it when it arises.
- **Peer mentorship:** Students have opportunities to be mentored by older peers who've navigated similar challenges to help build relationships that can be vital protective factors for students navigating trauma.

(a) Our four Design Principles encapsulate the key values that embody the Living School:

1. **Equity** - We measure success with outcomes that promote equity: student, community, and environmental holistic health.
2. **Intentional Biodiversity** - We intentionally include and integrate diverse people and methods to create the conditions where a healthy ecosystem of learning can flourish.
3. **Democratic Community** - Students, families, and staff form democratic branches that collaborate on every element of the school to build community and balance institutionalized power.
4. **Real-World Work** - All learning is facilitated collaboratively through interdisciplinary, authentic inquiry, projects, problems, internships, and apprenticeships.

Some of the structures that reinforce the above behavior norms and values include:

- **Home visits** - Where we first introduce students and families to Living School's systems and norms, including reviewing and signing our Stakeholder Handbook (signed by staff, student, and family), begin to understand student and family strengths and needs (including exceptionalities and language barriers), and an introduction to Restorative Practices
- **New Student Orientation** - Where we orient students to the physical spaces, whole staff, transitions, and Community Norms.
- **Whole School Retreats** - Where we build a strong, positive foundation of close relationships prior to the start of the first semester and reinforce them before the start of the second semester.
- **Student Legislature** - Students exercise equal votes and elect peers as their Student Senators who steward this body's work.
- **Advisory (Community Circles & Shared Chores)** - Students meet daily in small family-like Advisories including Community Circles that help reinforce Community Norms and culture and shared chores that have students helping take care of the school communally.
- **Community Meetings** - Monthly community meetings serve as regular whole-school touch-points reinforcing or clarifying Community Norms.

(b) Our Community Handbook outlines the policies and practices for students, staff, and families at Living School including those named above. Our initial Community Handbook is written by the founding Leadership Team and adopted by the Community Board of Directors.

Then, annually in the spring, the Student Legislature and Staff Executive Council each gather community input, then draft, debate, and ratify any amendments to their respective sections of the school's Community Handbook, including Community Norms that govern behavior expectations for students. The Community Board of Directors then review and adopts the handbook for the year ahead.

The Staff Executive Council and its Leadership Team (specifically the School Director and Director of Student Life) are responsible for executing and overseeing the policies and practices outlined in the Community Handbook, including facilitating any necessary restorative disciplinary action arising from a breach of the Community Norms.

Living School uses **Restorative Practices** both to proactively cultivate positive school culture and to respond constructively to conflict, harm, and breaches of the above Community Norms when they occur. Our commitment to

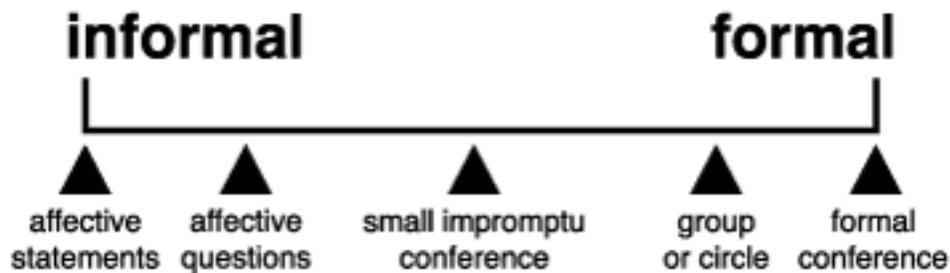


Restorative Practices is, amongst other outcomes, designed to ensure due process and support to all community members in all proceedings involving disciplinary action, to minimize the number of instances and total days when we need to exclude students from the school community in any way, and to ensure that Living School's disciplinary practices remain equitable (Yamaguchi, et al, 2016; Owen, et al, 2015; Schiff, 2013; Nishioka, et al, 2012; McCold, 2002; Karp, et al, 2001; Skiba, et al, 2000). The best practices below are backed by extensive research ( and developed in conjunction with guidance from the International Institute for Restorative Practices and the New Orleans Center for Restorative Approaches.

When any community member feels as though a Community Norm has been breached, that someone has been otherwise harmed, or that they have a grievance of another kind, they can initiate the Restorative Process following the steps below:

**Table \_\_\_\_: Living School Restorative Process**

1. Report breach, harm, or grievance to any member of the Staff Executive Council (SEC).
2. The Director of Student Life (DSL) will lead the SEC's investigation into all reports within two school days from the time of reporting.
3. DSL, reporting community member, and all affected parties will identify the appropriate tier/formality of Restorative Intervention to begin with from the continuum below to be held within 1 school day after the conclusion of the investigation.



4. If a Group/Circle or Formal Conference is requested, all parties' families will be notified at least 24 hours ahead of time and invited to attend if appropriate (with all reasonable requests for transportation or schedule modification accommodated to ensure accessibility of all meetings for all parties).
5. DSL or another trained mediator will facilitate the identified Restorative Intervention, in a manner that is equitably inclusive of all affected parties and at minimum notifying all parties' parent/guardian of the proceedings and outcomes of said Intervention within 24 hours of the conclusion of the Intervention. (Some levels of Restorative Intervention will demand the full participation of affected parties' parent/guardian.)
6. Formal Interventions always conclude with a Restorative Contract that is only ratified by consensus of all parties affected. The Restorative Contract outlines the commitments each party agrees to toward repairing harm and relationships and preventing similar conflict in the future.
7. DSL or an appointed monitor will be responsible for regularly monitoring progress on Restorative Contracts, following up with all ensigned parties at minimum 1 day, 1 week, and 1 month following the signing of the Contract. Should the monitor or any party to the contract feel like the contract's terms are not being followed, the monitor will first seek to work with the party/ies in breach of contract to help them honor the terms of the contract. If that is not deemed effective within 2 school days, all parties will be reconvened for the next tier of Restorative Intervention.
8. Should any party later feel the need to amend a Restorative Contract, the DSL or appointed monitor will reconvene the affected parties and mediate an Appeal Conference to reach a new consensus.
9. Any reported breach, harm, or grievance that cannot be resolved by consensus of all parties through



9. Any reported breach, harm, or grievance that cannot be resolved by consensus of all parties through Restorative Practices within one school week from reporting shall be referred to the Family Advisory Council--whose democratically elected School Elders shall convene within 1 school day--for further deliberation and support. The SEC will present their findings and recommendation to a panel of no fewer than 3 School Elders who will vote to either approve or deny the SEC's recommendation (simple majority vote rules). If denied, the SEC must submit a revised recommendation to a vote within 1 school day. If denied a second time, the Family Advisory Council may either request a third recommendation from the SEC or may by consensus vote approve a recommendation of their own drafting.

(c) The Restorative Process above is designed to ensure due process to all members of the Living School community. As a final safeguard to this process, at any point in the above Restorative Process, any party can report a concern or grievance to the School Leader who has the authority to intervene in the Restorative Process to help ensure that all sides' needs are being met. In the event the reporting party is unsatisfied with the resolution provided by the School Leader, they may report their concern or grievance to the Chairman of the Board of Directors who is responsible for convening the Academic & Culture Committee to make a final determination about the situation.

Additionally, in the event that we do need to exclude a student from the classroom setting for a period of time, we are committed to delivering all normal services to the student and family. Amongst other outcomes, this is done to ensure not only that there is no loss of learning, but that the student returns in a stronger academic position than when they left, therefore diminishing the likelihood of similar issues arising again from academic need or distress.

(i) We will do everything in our power to avoid suspension and expulsion at Living School, as we believe that both practices have historically been a critical part of systemic oppression that school systems have inadvertently abetted and actually have negative consequences for the health of school culture in most instances (Urban League of Louisiana, 2018; The New Orleans Equity Index, 2017; Orleans Public Education Network, 2016; Legal Aid and Justice Center, 2016). Should we exhaust all other options and the need for a suspension or expulsion arise from due Restorative Process above, we shall adhere to the OPSB Student Code of Conduct, specifically pp. 15 - 20 in outlining the levels and tiers of behavior that qualify for suspension or expulsion, and pp. 21 - 25 outlining the due process for suspensions and expulsions.

(d) Holistic health and social & emotional learning (SEL) are integral to our programming and, as such, are woven through all elements of our programming. Extensive research continues to shown that SEL is the foundation upon which academic and life success is built (Taylor, et al, 2017; Yamaguchi, et al, 2016). Below are a few of the ways we support SEL at Living School:

- **Advisories** - Our family-at-school advisory structure is designed to give each student one adult they develop a connection with across their four years at Living School along with a tight-knit group of peers across grade-levels. Advisories support SEL with daily Community Circles, mindfulness, and flexible structures to adapt to the needs of each group of students.
- **Collaborative Group Work** - As a project-based learning school, most academic work at Living School will be accomplished in small, collaborative groupings that facilitate opportunities for all students to work together closely with peers across many lines of difference on meaningful work. This is designed to mirror the way most adults are required to collaborate in their work and lives.
- **In-school Social Worker** - While our programming is built to support SEL for all students, we know that there will be a cohort of students who need extra support to navigate challenges they face outside of school. We have full-time social workers on staff from Communities in School to ensure that our team has built-in capacity from the city's most respected network of social workers to support those exceptional SEL needs.

The above practices all align with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's Effective Social & Emotional Learning Programs guidelines that have been shown to have positive long-term impacts on students' academic achievement and life outcomes (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2015).



(3) Student voice and leadership have been baked into the DNA of Living School ever since the school’s inception. Much of the thinking and design behind this application has been put together and affirmed by a wide coalition of New Orleans public school students, including students who serve on our Board of Directors.

One of our fundamental beliefs is that in order to cultivate active-citizens and leaders, we must help students develop the habits of active citizenship, leadership, and voice while students at Living School. Accordingly, the following structures ensure that each and every Living School student has ample opportunity to develop said habits:

- **Student Legislature:** Students elect one another to the legislative body that writes and revises policy for the school.
- **Student Ambassadors:** Students can volunteer to be part of the club that acts as the main tour guides and visitor liaisons for the school.
- **Exhibition & Presentations of Learning:** Students regularly present their learning both in groups during Exhibitions and individually during Presentations of Learning.
- **Community Meetings:** Students publicly present, discuss, and debate weighty topics that affect the whole school in public meetings.
- **Student-Led Conferences:** Students drive their own assessment, evaluation, and goal-setting in collaboration with their advisor and family, authoring their own Personal Learning Plan tracking their school and extra-curricular activities to their college, career, and life goals.
- **Student-self report data:** All data we collect is triangulated with student self-report data to ensure the validity of more objective measures used in our academic programming.

### Family & Community Engagement

- (1) Describe any activities you have undertaken to date to assess and build parent and community support for the school. Explain the role to date of any parents and community members in developing this application or the school, as applicable.
- (2) How will you share information with Parents/Guardians and Community Members?
- (3) How will your school create meaningful opportunities for Student, Parent/Guardian, and Community voice in school decision-making?
- (4) Describe your plans for creating a Parent-Teacher Organization.
- (5) What is the process for grievances?

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

(1) Parents and community members have been intimately involved in the building of Living School from the very inception. The vision for Living School started as a community organizing project in 2012 at what was then one of New Orleans’s highest-performing, open-enrollment charter schools. At that time, despite the school’s success on standardized tests, there was a growing consensus amongst a critical mass of parents, students, and staff who envisioned a much different future for the school. So we began organizing a coalition of students, family, and staff members to improve the school.

After eighteen months of organizing, meeting, surveying, and discussing, that coalition first articulated the vision for an equity-focused school that has now grown into Living School. We identified structural racism and oppression as the multi-faceted problem that we wanted to solve and broke that down into 5 ways that they manifest in public schools: what schools measure, segregation of demographics and methods, lack of agency for parents & students, inauthentic pedagogy, and a truncated curriculum. We then began studying exemplars both locally and around the world for how to overcome those manifestations of structural oppression in our school and began working to build a uniquely sustainable model to bring many of these best practices under the roof of a unified public school in New Orleans.



For the past five years, our founding Design Team--made up of parents, community members and educators--have all been collaborating to define the vision, practice the pedagogy in our own classrooms and organizations across New Orleans, refine the vision based on feedback and results from that practice, and organize the vision into a coherent and compelling model we truly believe will cultivate equity both within our school and city. The parents, community members, and educators on our Design Team helped devise and execute our first four pilots over the past year in collaboration with organizations including The NET Charter High School, Good Work Network, Concordia, and VIET and continue to work on developing compelling pilot opportunities for the coming ten months prior to our launch.

In the past year, we've incorporated our non-profit with the help of our Community Board of Directors--comprised of parents, community leaders, and educators. We've worked hard to gather a talented and diverse coalition of leaders to our Board who are not only active citizens in New Orleans, but the majority of whom are parents of New Orleans students and current or recent New Orleans public school students themselves. The parents, community leaders, and educators on our Board have helped co-author and revise this application, soliciting input from dozens of others throughout the process.

To date in total, we have interacted with, gathered input from, piloted with, and been collaboratively designed by at least 300 New Orleans families with school-aged children.

(2) We believe that our work is done in partnership with students' families and that our goals must be in harmony with a student's personal goals and those of their family. Accordingly, we've designed our communication systems with students and family to be strong, open, diverse, and multi-lingual. For each of the communication systems below, outgoing messages will be translated into all relevant languages for our school community and incoming communication will be staffed wherever possible with individuals who are prepared to translate.

1. **Home visits** - One of our first points of contact with students and their family is through our home visits, which is designed to make our staff highly approachable to all families and cultivate a more well-rounded understanding of families on the part of the school.
2. **Open-door policy** - We will cultivate an open-door policy to welcome all parents into the school at any time for any reason, including welcoming, trained staff, refreshments, and translation services
3. **Website & Online portal** - We will vigilantly maintain an up-to-date website including both parent and student portals with useful links, documents, and contact information
4. **Weekly email newsletter** - We will publish a weekly email newsletter sent to all staff, students, and families
5. **Social media** - We will maintain a presence on various social media platforms to ensure that our messages reach diverse users
6. **Staff cell phones** - We will provide each staff member with a cell phone (numbers will be public in all communication with families). Staff will regularly share updates by text and phone about students' progress. Students and families will be welcome to call any staff member directly.
7. **All Call & Text** - We will set up an All Call & Text system to use for emergency purposes.
8. **Exhibitions, Presentations of Learning, and Student-Led Conferences** - Much of our pedagogical model involves regular involvement of parents in the learning process for kids when they exhibit work in groups, present learning reflections individually, and develop their Personal Learning Plans in collaboration with their family and advisor.

(3) As mentioned above, student, parent, and community voice have been integral to Living School from its inception as a community organizing process. By designing a democratic school, student and parent voice is institutionalized in an effort to cultivate an equitable balance of power in a way that encourages everyone's full participation. A few of the key research-backed structures that cultivate student, parent, and community voice (Hanover Research, 2014):

1. **Student Legislature** - Students democratically elect their peers to the legislative body that writes and revises policy for the school.



2. **Family Advisory Council** - Parents & guardians democratically elect their peers to the judicial body that helps resolve disputes and interpret policy for the school, including supporting Restorative Practices.
3. **Restorative Practices** - Breaches of the Community Norms are resolved collaboratively, valuing the voices of all affected parties.
4. **Community Meetings** - Monthly community meetings act as a forum for developing the habits of voice in a larger, consensus-based setting.
5. **Exhibitions, Presentations of Learning, and Student-Led Conferences** - Each quarter culminates in students exhibiting their work and reflecting on it publicly before setting their own goals in meetings with their advisor and family.
6. **Projects in Partnership** - Teaching Teams will design projects in partnership with industry partners who help add relevant expertise and ensure that all student work is adding real value to the lives of real people, communities, and ecosystems.

(4) In accordance with the growing body of research supporting the critical importance of school-family engagement, we want to create a spectrum of opportunities for all close family members of our students to positively engage with and contribute to the Living School community. We do this primarily with our **Family Advisory Council (FAC)**. Families each have an equal vote and elect a cohort of their peers to be “School Elders” who are the leaders who steward the FAC and it’s involvement at the school. This body will also effectively be Living School’s PTA, offering parents volunteer opportunities, hosting regular social events, and organizing important family education opportunities (Wood, 2017). The Living School FAC will have meetings at least once per month and will be attended by at least two members of the Staff Executive Council (except when their absence is requested by the FAC) to ensure collaboration.

Additionally, all meetings of the Community Board of Directors, Staff Executive Council, Student Legislature, and Whole School Community Meetings will be open to any interested family member (excluding sections of meetings pertaining to personally sensitive or confidential matters). Family input will be welcome and encouraged in all decision-making forums.

(5) Any stakeholder at Living School--student, staff, or family member--has full rights to the Restorative Process. As outlined above, grievances can be reported to any member of the Staff Executive Council who are responsible for investigating the issue within 2 school days and convening the appropriate Restorative Intervention within 1 school day of the conclusion of the investigation. Any appeals or unresolved issues can be brought to the Community Board of Directors for further support.

If any community member is not satisfied with this process, we abide by the OPSB’s policy of contacting first the School Director, next the Board Chair, and next the designated OPSB representative.

## Governing Board

- (1) Describe the roles necessary on the board, the responsibilities that align with each role, and identify who will play that role on the board. Describe how the governing board will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. As **Attachment 2**, provide a resume for each of your identified board members. Resumes will not count towards the page limit.
- (2) Describe how the board will monitor the school’s overall performance.
- (3) Describe the steps the board will take to evaluate the school leader and CEO/Organizational Leader. Specifically, describe: the information the board will collect; The systems by which the board will collect information; The standards - including and in addition to student performance goals- the board will use to evaluate information it collects;
- (4) Describe the process by which your board identifies potential conflicts of interest before making decisions.



- (5) Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure. Describe the board's processes to remaining compliant with open meeting and public records laws.
- (6) (if applicable) If there's a sole member structure responsible for the appointment of governing board members, and/or if the local board (maintained in compliance with Policy HA requirements) must report to any other entity (i.e., a statewide or national board) please provide a statement explaining the nature of the relationship, and the terms/conditions under which it could be dissolved (if any).

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

(1) A diverse, mission-aligned Community Board of Directors (CBD) is critical to our success. All of our CBD structures and best practices have been designed with help from the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools and BoardOnTrack, the national authority on supporting effective charter school boards, and written into our bylaws (Cornell-Feist, 2015).

Our CBD meets every other month including one annual retreat with the option to convene the Board in between these regularly scheduled meetings should the nature of the school's business demand it. Additionally, the majority of the CBD's business is transacted in 5 standing committees (outlined below) which each meet monthly. Agendas for CBD meetings are developed collaboratively by the Chair of the Board and the CEO/School Director while committee meeting agendas are developed collaboratively by Committee Chairs and the CEO/School Director.

The CBD is always comprised of at least seven individuals who represent both the cultural & socioeconomic diversity of Greater New Orleans and the range of expertise needed to effectively govern a public institution entrusted with millions of public dollars and the lives and well-being of our students. All members of the CBD are volunteers, not receiving a salary or compensation of any kind.

All CBD and committee meetings are held in a public, easily-accessible location with the times, locations, agendas, and minutes of all meetings posted publicly in accordance with Louisiana Open Meeting Law LA R.S. 42:4.1 et seq.

The CEO/School Director of Living School acts as an ex-officio member of the CBD and its committees, collaborating closely with the Officers, Board Members, & Committees below to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the organization. The CEO/School Director reports directly to the CBD who operate a committee for the regular support and annual evaluation of the CEO/School Director (The CEO Support & Evaluation Committee). The Board maintains the power to hire and fire the CEO/School Director at their discretion.

Our CBD maintains four designated officers:

1. **Chair** - The Chair is the senior volunteer leader of the organization who presides at all meetings of the CBD and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex officio member of all committees of the organization. The Board Chair oversees implementation of board and organizational policies and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained. His/Her responsibilities include developing agendas for all CBD meetings, appointing committee chairs, managing CBD effectiveness, signing contracts authorized specifically by the CBD, and overseeing the evaluation of the CEO.
2. **Vice Chair** - The Vice Chair is the secondary volunteer leader of the charter school and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence or disability. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair including sharing the above responsibilities as appropriate.
3. **Secretary** - The Secretary provides direction for the keeping of legal documents of the CBD and Organization. This includes the organization's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Amendments, Board and Committee agendas and minutes, background checks, and any other relevant documentation. The Secretary is also responsible for ensuring compliance with open meeting law.
4. **Treasurer** - The Treasurer provides direction for the financial management of the organization and facilitates the board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. This includes acting as chair of the Board's Finance



Committee, ensuring timely and accurate financial presentations to the Board, and monitoring the organization's adherence to financial policies and procedures set by the Board.

Our Community Board of Directors currently has 16 members (See Attachment 2-Board Roster & Resumes for more details):

1. **Chair of the Development Committee, Richard Ashmore** - Richard D. Ashmore is Emeritus Professor of Psychology at Rutgers University. His research over 40 years focused on intergroup conflict, addressing racism and sexism while teaching Research Methods to undergraduates and graduates. Now a resident of New Orleans, Dr. Ashmore is a long-time volunteer with the Edible Schoolyard New Orleans and the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic.
2. **Member, Mark Davis** - Professor Davis is the Director of Tulane University's Bywater Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy. He has taught and practiced law throughout the country and spent 15 years leading the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. His children attend public schools in New Orleans and he is passionate about improving the health of the city and its surrounding ecosystems.
3. **Chair of the CEO Support & Evaluation Committee, Qasim Davis** - Born and raised in Harlem, NY, Qasim has directed his passions and devotion to non-profit program development in the interest of community political education, focusing on youth leadership development and organizing. Current director of Play Works in New Orleans, he has worked with Our School at Blair Grocery, Kids Rethink New Orleans Schools, the Highlander Center for Research and Education, Alliance for Educational Justice, and the Greater New Orleans Foundation Emerging Leaders Program.
4. **Member, Dr. Lisa Delpit** - Dr. Delpit is a MacArthur Genius Fellow, world-renowned educator, speaker, and writer, and Felton G. Clark Distinguished Professor at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Her work, including *Other People's Children* and *Multiplication is for White People*, has helped promote culturally responsive education for marginalized students around the world.
5. **Member, Nia Gates** - Nia Gates is a student at Dillard University and a talented product of New Orleans public schools. She is active in local community organizing as well as being a talented poet and artist. Her wisdom, powerful communication, and kind spirit make her a natural leader.
6. **Member, Troy Glover** - Troy Glover is a native New Orleanian and graduate of McDonough 35 High School who serves as the President of the Faubourg St. Roch Improvement Association. His career has been focused on advancing opportunities for all to combat poverty and oppression. He has worked with the Crescent City Community Land Trust, Louisiana Center for Children's Rights, and Together Louisiana to fight injustice in housing, health care, education, and the criminal justice system.
7. **Member, Mark Hash** - Mark Hash is a lead designer at the award-winning firm Eskew+Dumez+Ripple. He joined the practice over 3 years ago and has been instrumental in elevating design excellence across all project typologies. The primary design ethos for Mr. Hash is the notion of "building community" or the creation of designing communal spaces that bring people together.
8. **Treasurer, Chair of the Finance Committee, Alfredo Herrera** - Alfredo is a Manager in the Assurance practice of the Financial Services Organization of Ernst & Young (EY) in the New Orleans office. Alfredo is a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Louisiana State University. Alfredo has 6 years of auditing experience serving public and private clients. His experiences include US GAAP and Statutory based accounting and reporting for insurance companies and audits of financial statements and of internal controls over financial reporting.
9. **Secretary, Victor Jones** - Victor M. Jones is a civil litigator and education attorney at Deutsch Kerrigan LLP in New Orleans. He has represented both schools and parents in general matters as well as special education and discipline matters. Victor also represents children in proceedings before juvenile court. Before practicing law, Victor was a public school kindergarten teacher.
10. **Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of the Governance Committee, India King** - A former assistant-principal and director of special education at a high-performing New Orleans charter school, India is also a talented teaching & performing artist. Her student productions have been recognized by many students as life-changing and she works around the city to help students discover their inner-kings-and-queens.
11. **Member, Mandi Lehnherr** - Mandi Lehnherr is a former instructional designer, program director and co-principal. Starting her career as a special education teacher in New Orleans, Mandi has also worked within educational



environments in Hungary, Slovakia, Malaysia and Bangladesh. After “knowing what it means,” Mandi returned to New Orleans to continue the fight against educational inequity. A lifelong learner, Mandi is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Organizational Leadership & Learning and is looking forward to bringing her passion and expertise to the Board.

- 12. Chairman of the Board, Dr. William Mark Lister, MD** - Dr. Lister is the owner and chief medical officer of House Call Pediatrics, a pediatric medical practice in New Orleans that delivers care within patients' homes. He's also a Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Tulane University, where he's helped to develop resident curriculum for simulation training and culinary medicine. His research interests are in healthy lifestyle promotion and obesity prevention.
- 13. Member, Tristram Millard** - Originally from New Hampshire, Tris graduated from the University of Vermont in 1999 with a BA in Political Science. Upon graduation, Tris started his career in the financial services industry in New York and has over 15 years of experience. Tris first moved to New Orleans with his family in 2009 to earn his MBA from Tulane University’s A.B. Freeman School of Business with a concentration in finance and energy. Now a Partner with Gulf Point Advisors, Tris lends his financial expertise to help ensure that we use our finances to meet our mission.
- 14. Member, Dr. Nancy Mock, DrPH** - Dr. Mock is an expert in public health and international development and a mother of three students who attended New Orleans public schools. She was a founding parent and board member of Ecole Bilingue de la Nouvelle Orleans charter school and brings a deep appreciation for a well-rounded education.
- 15. Member, Jo-Muriel Ojo** - Ms. Ojo is an accomplished and respected manager of nonprofit business operations, with a proven background in nurturing partner relationships while pursuing excellence in deliverables and driving organizational loyalty, and sustainability in health, family services, and child advocacy. Ms. Ojo is also a public high school parent and education advocate.
- 16. Member, Chair of the Academic & Culture Committee, Dr. Frances Olajide, EdLD** - An award-winning educator and recipient of her Doctorate of Educational Leadership from Harvard Graduate School of Education, Frances brings a wealth of experience developing innovative education programs and human capital. She has worked with school teams around the country including Big Picture Learning and KIPP to create anti-racist rigorous learning to life.
- 17. Parent Board Member** - Upon opening in the Fall 2019, a parent member will be voted onto the Board of Directors in accordance with state & local law.

Board members receive regular trainings and updates from Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools and BoardOnTrack in order to remain informed about both best governance practices and key legal compliance issues.

(2) The Board is charged with overseeing the long-term health of the organization in alignment with our mission. Specifically, the Board has 5 primary oversight responsibilities:

1. Oversight of the academic results and culture data of the school
2. Development, approval, and amendment of annual operating budgets & regular oversight of spending
3. Development, approval, and amendment of all organizational policies including the bylaws
4. Development, approval, and amendment of organizational strategy & goals in pursuit of our mission
5. Hiring, termination, and evaluation of the CEO/School Director

Accordingly, the Board establishes long-term strategy, ongoing objectives & key results (OKRs), and delegates relevant tasks to five standing committees to allow for more agile governance. Five key committees of the Board will monitor different parts of the school’s performance:

- a. **CEO Support & Evaluation Committee:** Monitors effectiveness of and designs supports for the CEO. The committee conducts the annual evaluation of the CEO utilizing the norm-referenced BoardOnTrack evaluation tool.
- b. **Finance Committee:** Chaired by the Treasurer, this committee monitors budgets, actuals, policies, procedures, and audits supported by attendance from the CEO, Director of Finance and Director of Operations. The committee hires a 3rd party to conduct the state-mandated audit, review findings, and respond with appropriate



improvements to internal systems as needed.

- c. **Academic & Culture Committee:** Monitors the academic & cultural data and systems of the school. This includes performance on standardized measures, school-wide grades, student discipline, and student outcomes of college-acceptance, living-wage job offers, and career/technical certifications.
- d. **Governance Committee:** Monitors the effectiveness of the Board of Directors measured against strategic Objectives & Key Results (OKRs) set annually at the Board Retreat and maintained by each committee. This includes: (i.) ensuring alignment to the school’s mission; (ii.) managing recruitment & training of new Board members to fill vacancies and balance demographics & expertise; (iii.) implementing a board member evaluation system; (iv.) facilitating the annual Board Retreat; (v.) and routinely evaluate Board policies and consider amendments to these policies.
- e. **Development Committee:** Organizes fundraising efforts to help meet annual programming priorities as determined by the CEO and school staff and close any budget deficits identified by the Finance Committee and Director of Finance.

The committees will monitor the effectiveness of the school using the following data points:

**Table 2: School Effectiveness Rubric**

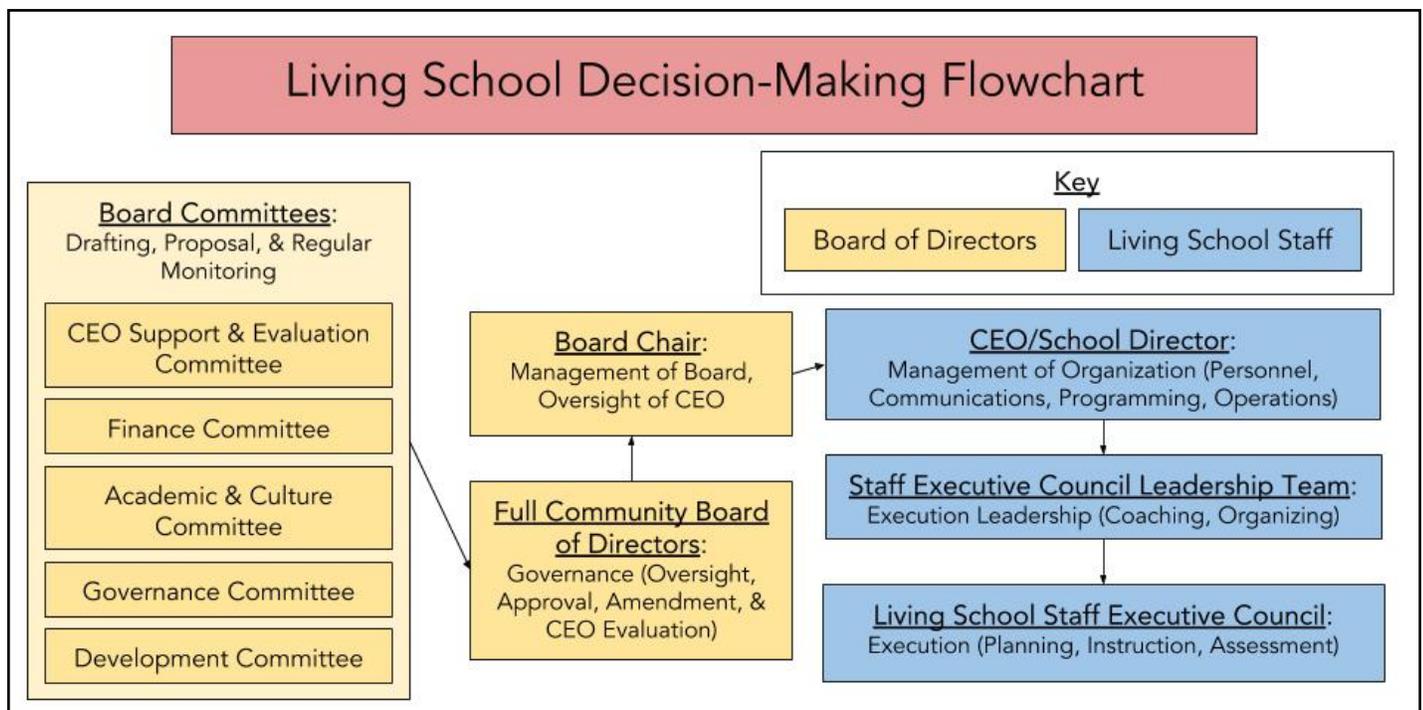
Committee	Metric	Standard
CEO Support & Evaluation	Annual CEO Evaluation	(See Question 3 Below)
Finance	Monthly budget-to-actuals	- Total spending less than or equal to outlay
	Cash-on-hand	- Increasing cash on hand up to 12% of operating budget
Academic & Culture	Grades	- 0 students failing - Equitable outcomes for students from traditionally underserved groups
	LEAP/Interim Performance	- 0 students failing - 100% of students making progress
	ACT/Interim Performance	- 100% participation - median score above 20 - 100% score 17+
	IEP Goals/Compliance	- 100% compliance with paperwork & meetings - 80%+ IEP goals being met
	Attendance	- 96% average daily attendance
	Suspensions & Expulsions	- 0 suspensions & expulsions - 100% participation in restorative process
Governance	Board Engagement	- Improving Board Engagement score until we’ve achieved “4 Star” status



		"4 Star" status on Board on Track
Development	- Grants earned	- Progress toward 100% of funds needed by end of each FY
	- Private funds raised	- Increasing # of donors and total amount of donations

At full Board meetings, each committee reports out on its work toward meetings its OKRs and presents relevant decisions for the full Board to ratify.

Most decisions about monitoring the school's effectiveness will flow as follows:



(3) The CEO Support & Evaluation committee and the Chairperson of the Board will oversee the annual evaluation of Living School's CEO using BoardOnTrack's nationally normed CEO evaluation tool with the following process:

- Preparation & Training (October):** Set and publish CEO goals, finalize committee, review and publish timeline to all stakeholders for full transparency, and train evaluators on the process & tool.
- Launch (January):** CEO self-evaluation, distribute survey links to all stakeholders, follow-up to ensure full survey participation.
- Assess (April):** Close survey, compile and analyze data, draft summary including performance rating and discussion topics.
- Communicate (June):** Provide results to full Board in closed session, committee holds evaluation conference with CEO; when CEO is retained, all parties agree upon action steps, full evaluation and action steps are published publicly for full transparency.
- Execute (July onward):** Committee supports and monitors the execution of the agreed upon action steps and begin preparing for the next year's goals and evaluation.



Specifically, the Committee & Chairperson will collect the following information with help from other relevant committees:

**Table 3: CEO/School Leader Effectiveness Rubric**

Category	Metric	Standard
Academic	Standardized test scores	95%+ of students passing
	ACT % taken	100% taken
	ACT scores	95%+ of students scoring 20+ (in alignment with the TOPS Opportunity scholarship) 100% of students scoring 17+ (in alignment with TOPS Tech)
	Mastery grades	95%+ of students with 80%+ mastery in all subjects
	College acceptance rate	100% of students accepted to 1+ college
	Living-wage job offer rate	100% of students offered 1+ living-wage job
	CTE certification rate	100% of students earn 1+ CTE certification
Culture	Stakeholder survey scores	4.0+ avg on 80%+ of Qs from 90%+ of respondents
	Stakeholder survey rate	100% board, staff, & student & 75% parent participation
	Attendance	95%+ both students & staff
	Retention	95%+ both students & staff
	Expulsion/Termination	0 expulsions & firings & 100% participation in the Restorative Process
	Discipline	0 suspensions & 100% participation in the Restorative Process
Financial	Budget actuals	Annual 3%+ surplus
	Fund balance	Achieve a 10% fund balance by the end of year 5
	Audit findings	Unqualified annual audit with no findings deemed to be significant, material, or internal control weaknesses.



In the event that any of the above standards are not met, the Committee and Chairperson will follow these steps:

1. Author an improvement plan with concrete deliverables, due dates, and metrics.
2. Submit the above improvement plan to the Board for approval.
3. Present the improvement plan to the CEO/School Leader to review deliverables, due dates, and metrics and sign their commitment to fulfilling the plan.
4. Schedule regular (at least quarterly) check-ins with the CEO, Chairman of the Board, and CEO Support & Evaluation Committee.
5. Report at regular meetings of the Board on the progress toward the goals outlined in the improvement plan.
6. Recommend retention or termination of the CEO dependent upon appropriate progress toward the deliverables & goals.

(4) Given that Living School Board Members are fiduciaries of the public trust, we will require strict compliance with all applicable ethics laws, regulations, and policies that apply to members of public charter school boards. Each Board Member will be required to attend an annual training in Louisiana ethics requirements along with the mandatory filing of an annual ethics disclosure form in accordance with the law. These forms will be kept by the Secretary of the Board in accordance with public records law and all disclosures will be reviewed annually by the full CBD.

Prior to votes of the Community Board of Directors, the person administering the vote will ask if anyone may have a conflict of interest with the forthcoming vote. Any members with a potential conflict of interest are required to publicly acknowledge the real or potential conflict and recuse themselves from said vote.

The above policies are written into our Conflict of Interest Policy, an internal policy that all Board Members must sign agreement with before assuming their role as a member of the CBD.

(5) The current Board of Directors was recruited from a combination of our Design Team, local leaders in the area who we approached and invited to serve because of their reputation and alignment with our work and values, and local community members who expressed interest in serving on a charter board to the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools.

Now, the recruitment and selection process is overseen the Governance Committee of the Board. The Governance Committee uses BoardOnTrack's tools for mapping the demographics, expertise, and upcoming term limits to help monitor the composition and upcoming needs of the current Board in order to determine recruitment priorities. We strive to have our Board comprised of at least 15 people whose racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, age, ability, and socioeconomic diversity roughly reflects the demographics of New Orleans and at least 2 members bringing expertise in the following areas: legal, finance, education, facilities/operations, development, community organizing and equity.

As part of their recruitment process, the Governance Committee will publish an annual public call for Board applicants to ensure equitable access for being considered to serve on the Board. The Board will also consider applicants that are matched with The Living School through the Louisiana Association of Public Charter School's board-matching database and local leaders who have a track record and expertise aligned with our mission and needs. Once opened, the Board of Directors will add parent/family representation on the Board in compliance with OPSB policy.

The Governance Committee must present all nominees to the full Board for consideration and vote. Any candidate for Board membership or an officer position shall recuse themselves and remove themselves from the meeting room for the duration of the deliberation and vote.

The Board will meet six times annually including an annual retreat and the option to call additional meetings as needed (provided they comply with open meeting law). The Board shall maintain the 5 committees outlined above, and will have the authority to convene other committees and delegate further responsibilities by majority vote. Committees will meet monthly with the option to call additional meetings as needed in compliance with open meeting law.

The BoardOnTrack platform builds in alerts, safeguards, and a public portal to ensure our compliance with Louisiana open



meeting and public records laws. Additionally, our hired legal counsel, Michael Higgins, and Board Secretary, Victor Jones (a practicing Louisiana attorney specializing in education law) help ensure our compliance with open meeting and public records laws.

### Staff and Organization

- (1) As **Attachment 3**, provide an organizational chart. As **Attachment 4**, include job descriptions that summarize the scope of work for all staff on the school leadership team. If applicable, As **Attachment 5 and 6**, provide redacted and un-redacted resumes for any identified leadership team members.
- (2) Describe your administrator and teacher recruitment strategy, including legally required qualifications (LA R.S. 17:3983), as well as any school design specific qualifications. Include how you will attract a diverse applicant pool that includes candidates who share the same backgrounds with students and are from the Greater New Orleans area.

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

(1) See Attachment 3-Organizational Chart, Attachment 4-Leadership Team Job Descriptions, and Attachment 6-Leadership Team Un-redacted Resumes.

(2) We require that all applicants to serve on the Board or work at Living School furnish and pass background checks in compliance with LDOE and OPSB policy and that all teachers and administrators hold at least a Bachelor of Arts degree from an accredited college or university. We also require that all teachers hold or be actively working toward a current Louisiana teaching certificate in the subject(s) that they teach in accordance with LDOE and OPSB policy. We will partner with a local teacher certification program to support both programmatically and financially any teachers who need to pursue additional certification.

Beyond that, our model demands a diverse staff of multi-talented and mission-driven individuals. In order to constantly recruit a diverse applicant pool, we will constantly recruit prospective candidates from the following places:

- **Exhibitions:** At all exhibitions of student work (including during pilot work pre-launch), we will have recruitment materials to invite any members of the public who are inspired by our work to join our team
- **Educator Network Recruitment:** Our connection with networks of master educators including Deeper Learning Network schools like High Tech High and Big Picture Learning and dozens of local schools allows us to recruit experienced teachers from a variety of different classroom and school settings.
- **Partnership with Teacher Prep Programs:** We are working closely with programs like the non-profit new teacher support network Brothers Empowered 2 Teach to create a support pipeline for new teachers at Living School. Additionally, we will cultivate relationships with, including hosting student teachers from local schools of education like Xavier University, University of New Orleans, Louisiana State University, Tulane University, Loyola University, and Southern University of New Orleans.
- **Local Industry Partners:** Through our collaborative work with diverse industry partners, we'll also look to recruit professionals with expertise in other fields who are looking to make a career change to education.

We seek to hire a team that is both as talented and as demographically representative of our student body as possible using the following procedure:

**Table 4: [Living School Hiring Process](#)**



<u>Process Step</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
1. Letter of Intent & Resume	Submitted via email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather a diverse and equitable applicant pool</li> <li>Learn about candidates' background and interest</li> <li>Gauge candidates' writing &amp; production capabilities</li> </ul>
2. Initial Interview (30 min)	Meeting/call with 1 team member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen candidates for mission alignment</li> <li>Better understand candidate's goals and intentions and their fit for the role they are applying to</li> </ul>
3. Work Samples	Digital submission of artifacts of your best, relevant work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify candidate's strengths and opportunities</li> <li>Better understand candidate's context</li> </ul>
4. Coaching (30 min)	In-person or phone meeting with observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hear candidate's reflections on Work Sample</li> <li>Gauge how candidate responds to and gives feedback</li> <li>Screen candidate for growth mindset and culture fit</li> </ul>
5. Work Sample Resubmission	Video or in-person observation of task or lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gauge how candidate adapts to feedback and continues to improve</li> </ul>
6. <a href="#">Live Performance Task</a> (2-4 hours)	In-person meetings and performance task w/ various stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give candidates ample time to make an impression</li> <li>Gauge candidate's rapport with students and families</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather input from staff, students, and families</li> <li>• See how candidates implement feedback</li> <li>• Gauge candidate’s performance on authentic tasks</li> </ul>
7. Reference Check	Interviews with at least 2 references, review of candidate’s publicly available online presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess candidate’s previous professional work</li> <li>• Assess candidate’s character &amp; persistence</li> <li>• Verify certifications &amp; credentials</li> <li>• Identify any red flags</li> </ul>
8. <a href="#">Background Check</a>	Fingerprints sent to State Police & FBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify candidate’s eligibility to work in a school setting with minors</li> </ul>

Based on our initial round of hiring recruitment (using only basic, free tools prior to our emerging partnerships with talent pipelines) for our first teaching role, we had 10 highly qualified applicants out of a total of 14 applications for our teaching roles and have received interest from about another 12 candidates. As a small school only looking to hire roughly 5 - 6 teachers each year, we consider this to be a strong indicator that we’ll be able to hire strong teachers for these roles as our recruitment and hiring work expands.

### Mission Critical Partners

Educational Service Providers are not considered “Mission Critical Partners” for the purposes of this section. Applicant groups which will use an Educational Service provider should complete the Educational Service Provider section of this application.

- (1) Describe the mission-critical partnerships that your school has established and provide, as **Attachment 7**, the terms of these partnerships in form of a written commitment or MOU.
- (2) What is the contingency plan if these partnerships are not maintained?

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

(1) While our Living School team will have the capacity to execute the core programming of our model, our school is part of a robust ecosystem of partnerships that have helped design and will continue to help support this model. Some of these partners include (See Attachment 7-Mission Critical Partnerships for details):

1. Organizational
  - a. **New Schools Venture Fund:** We are part of NSVF’s Invent cohort for new, innovative schools opening Fall 2019. This comes with start-up funding, the potential for launch funding (for our first 3 years) and a network of support for our planning year including TransformingEd to support our Expanded Definition of Student Success and CatalystEd for helping us hire and effectively manage



- high-quality consultants to support mission critical projects.
- b. **New Schools for New Orleans:** We have collaborated informally with NSNO for the past year as we've built our organization and began running pilots and are working with them to support our facilities search and programmatic launch.
- c. **Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools:** We are members of LAPCS and work with their team closely to ensure that we are following Louisiana law and best practice for charter schools
- d. **BoardOnTrack:** We contract with BoardOnTrack to support the effectiveness of our Board of Directors in governing the organization including evaluating our CEO.
- e. **4th Sector Solutions:** We contract with 4th Sector Solutions to provide back office support while we build our internal capacity.
- f. **Charter First/Arthur Gallagher Insurance:** We are fully insured (General Liability, Educators Legal Liability, Worker's Comp, Executive Liability/D&O) by highly qualified companies contracted through our agents at Charter First/Arthur Gallagher Insurance.
- g. **Highmark School Development:** We have been working with Highmark School Development to plan the eventual build-out of our permanent Living Campus.
- h. **Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer, & Adelstein:** We work with attorney Michael Higgins from SLHA as our legal counsel, a well-respected charter school attorney and firm.

2. Academic Programming

- a. **High Tech High:** Our Director is a graduate of the New School Creation Fellowship at the High Tech High Graduate School of Education having completed a Masters of Education Leadership and an embedded residency as an assistant school leader at High Tech High studying their success with project-based learning. High Tech High remains a collaborative partner, supporting the development of our project-based work.
- b. **Big Picture Learning:** We are applicants to be a part of Big Picture Learning's Affinity Cohort, developing our staff in their model of learning through internships & interests.
- c. **YouthForce NOLA:** YouthForce NOLA has advised us on the design of our internship and CTE programming and will continue to be an ongoing partner supporting our both programs.
- d. **GNO Inc.:** GNO Inc. has also advised us on the design of our internship and CTE programming and will continue to be an advisory partner on those elements.
- e. **Brothers Empowered to Teach:** BE2T has been a close collaborator who we will work with to develop a strong pipeline for educators of color to teach and lead at Living School.

3. Culture

- a. **Communities in Schools:** We will hire a full-time social worker through Communities in schools and work with them to pilot an in-school mental health clinic model.
- b. **Daughters of Charity:** We are working with the DCSNO team to service our students with all physical and mental health needs including the potential to build out of New Orleans's first school-based full-service health clinic depending on the proximity of the nearest comprehensive healthcare services to our eventual location.
- c. **Overcoming Racism:** We work with Overcoming Racism to help build cultural competence and critical pedagogy skill amongst staff, students, and parents.
- d. **Center for Restorative Approaches:** We work with CRA to help train our staff, students, and families in restorative approaches and advise the effectiveness of our school-wide approach.

We are continuing to develop more partnerships to help ensure the success of our programming, including partnerships with local keystone companies to house internships and universities to support research and certification for our teachers.

Contracts with partners will only be signed by the CEO/School Leader within the authority granted by the Board of Directors after they are evaluated to be free of conflicts of interest. All contracts will contain clear deliverables and due dates aligned to Living School's mission and strategic priorities thereof. The CEO/School Leader will manage



the delivery of agreed upon services personally, or in some cases, appoint one member of the Leadership Team to oversee the fulfillment of the contract.

(2) We leverage partnerships to build internal capacity and simultaneously forge complimentary partnerships to act as a contingency plan in the face of any unexpected changes in relationships or terms with the above partners. Our Team, Design Team and Board of Directors collectively have a strong local and national network of kindred organizations and institutions (including Tulane, Xavier, Dillard, Loyola, Southern, and Rutgers Universities and Ochsner, Google, and Ernst & Young to name a few) to help us ensure the viability of our programming, even in the face of unexpected loss of certain partnerships.

We have also built a sustainable annual operating budget for all phases of our build-out including both a 2% contingency line-item and significant annual surpluses with the intention of giving ourselves the financial flexibility to respond effectively to any changes that might arise.

### Operational and Financial Readiness

- (1) Provide, as **Attachment 8**, a detailed start-up plan for the school. Specify tasks, and key milestones, timelines for completion, and the individuals or positions responsible for each. Indicate at which point key individuals will become employees of the organization, as well as contingency plans if you are unable to open in your preferred timeframe.
- (2) Provide as **Attachment 9**, your school's start-up and Year 1 operating budget.
- (3) Do you plan to use a financial manager or a back-office service provider? If the entity that will provide your financial services has been chosen, please provide its name and attach the contract as **Attachment 10** and the resume of the person designated as your qualified business manager as **Attachment 11**. If that entity is an individual financial manager, please provide his / her one-page resume as **Attachment 11**.
- (4) To whom will your financial manager or back-office service provider report: the school leader, a network/CMO level staff member, or the board?
- (5) If your school leader or organization are considered an experienced operator include as **Attachment 12** your School/Portfolio Performance workbook.

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

(1) See Attachment 8-Start Up Planner

(2) See Attachment 23-Budget

(3) Under the direction of the Board of Directors and its Treasurer & Finance Committee, the Living School Director of Finance (DF), Joe Daschbach (see Attachment 6-Leadership Team Un-redacted Resumes for his resume) a Living School employee, will be responsible for compliance with key financial stewardship requirements. The DF will be supported by an external school sector financial consulting expert, 4<sup>th</sup> Sector Solutions (see Attachment 7-Mission Critical Partnerships for details). Living School has contracted with 4th Sector Solutions to support the DF in meeting financial and operations stewardship requirements. 4th Sector has deep expertise in all aspects of financial operations of charter schools, including management, accounting, reporting, budgeting, payroll, benefits administration, procurement, internal controls, risk management, human resources administration, and regulatory compliance. Between the DF and external financial service provider Living School meets the Louisiana standard for a "Qualified and Competent Business Professional".

(4) The Living School Director of Finance (DF), a Living School employee, will report to the CEO/School Director. The DF and external expert financial service provider will both attend monthly Board Finance Committee meetings



led by the Treasurer of the Board.

(5) Living School does not currently operate a school and has not partnered with an Educational Service Provider (ESP) that operates at least one school.

## Attachments

- (1) Attachment 1: (Optional) Student Recruitment Evidence
- (2) Attachment 2: Governing Board Roster & Resumes
- (3) Attachment 3: Organization Chart & Staffing Plan
- (4) Attachment 4: School leadership team job descriptions
- (5) Attachment 5: Redacted Leadership Team Resumes
- (6) Attachment 6: Un-redacted Leadership Team Resumes
- (7) Attachment 7: (If applicable) Mission Critical Partner MOUs/Contracts
- (8) Attachment 8: Detailed Start-up Plan
- (9) Attachment 9: Start-up and Year 1 Budget
- (10) Attachment 10: (If applicable) Financial Manager Contract
- (11) Attachment 11 Qualified Business Manager/Financial Manager resume
- (12) Attachment 12: (Experienced Operators) School/Portfolio Performance workbook



## 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 school 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)(a) All subjects will be taught in multidisciplinary, project-based courses that are co-taught by two dual-certified lead teachers *and* a dedicated special education teacher for each traveling group of 40 students. This is modeled after best practices learned from High Tech High and their 18-year track record of academic and post-secondary success with an intentionally diverse student body and supported by extensive research from many fields (See Attachment 13-Academic Model Data for more detail; Tamim, et al, 2013; Parker, et al, 2011; Ravitz, 2010; Hernández-Ramos, et al, 2009).

Each class will deliver 3 credits per semester with additional options during school breaks and before and after school for accelerated credit acquisition to help all students graduate with a TOPS University diploma and at least one Industry Based Certification at their own pace.

Table 3: Living School Academic Model illustrates how all subject areas will be taught:

**Table 5: Living School Academic Model**

Subject & Credits	Teacher	Multi-disciplinary	Curricular support	Baseline Assessment	Interim Assessment	Summative Assessment
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Credits (TOPS + JumpStart)		disciplinary PBL Classes	support	Assessment	Assessment	Assessment*
<b>English</b> 4	Humanities	English I, Civics, Performing	Pearson my Perspectives	Pearson Baseline Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Pearson Interim Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Pearson Summative ACT LEAP Performance Exhibition
		English II, US Hist, Visual				
<b>Social Studies</b> 4		English III, World Geo, Spanish I	The Choices Program & Khan Academy	Choices Baseline Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Choices Interim Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Choices Summative ACT LEAP Performance Exhibition
<b>Foreign Language</b> 2	Languages & Arts	English IV, World Hist, Spanish II	Duolingo	Performance Diagnostic	Performance Assessment	Performance Exhibition
<b>Arts</b> 2			KidsmART	Performance Diagnostic	Performance Assessment	Performance Exhibition
<b>Math</b> 4	STEM	Algebra, Bio, CTE I	Great Minds or AgileMinds & Khan Academy/ CK12	Great Minds or AgileMinds Baseline Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Great Minds or AgileMinds Interim Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Great Minds or AgileMinds Summative ACT LEAP Performance Exhibition
		Geometry, Physics, CTE II				
<b>Science</b> 4		Statistics, Chemistry, CTE III	Great Minds or AgileMinds & Khan Academy/ CK12	Practice ACT Practice LEAP	Practice ACT Practice LEAP	ACT LEAP Performance Exhibition
<b>CTE</b> 9	CTE	Calculus, Computer Science, CTE IV	Subject- specific Industry- certified resources & Coursera/EdX	Practice CTE Exam	Practice CTE Exam	CTE Exam Performance Exhibition
<b>PE/Health</b> 2	All	Daily Communal PE	Alliance for a Healthier Generation	Performance Diagnostic	Performance Assessment	Performance Exhibition

\*All Performance Exhibitions will be assessed on the Living School Exhibition Rubric below



An equity-focused, democratic, project-based high school

## Exhibition Rubric

Category*	Standards*	Both Student & Instructor Assess
1. Product	a. Content reflects the quality of work that would be expected of a professional in a relevant field.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	b. Aesthetic reflects the quality of work that would be expected of a professional in a relevant field.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	c. Reflects the student's genuine effort and highest quality work.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	d. Improves either the student's life, the student's community, or the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
2. Process	a. Steps of the process key to understanding the work and it's impact are well-documented and explained.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	b. Process includes at least: i. Exemplar study ii. Rubric co-creation iii. Multiple rounds of critique & revision with diverse input iv. Collaborative group work	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
3. Performance	a. Presenter is prepared including being timely and organized.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	b. Presenter is professional including speaking loudly and clearly with expression and eye contact	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
4. Reflections	a. Presenter shares their personal learning story including meaningful strengths, opportunities for improvement, and learnings	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
	b. Presenter strikes a balance between being humble and confident	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching
OVERALL		<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Approaching

\* Categories and Standards may be added as relevant to a specific project exhibition.

Multidisciplinary, project-based learning is a pedagogy proven to help students from diverse backgrounds learn deeply. It is highly relevant because this is how nearly all adults work and interact across professional fields. It is highly rigorous



because the bar is not a mere exam, but rather the real-world creation of value through the synthesis, analysis, and evaluation of learning assessed by authentic audiences and users. Most importantly, it is highly equitable because projects create the space for personalization based on student strengths, interests, and identities. Projects offer a low floor to easily engage even the students who struggle the most, a wide room to include the strengths and needs of all learners, and a high ceiling that allows almost limitless options for challenging students at all levels to really let their unique talents and strengths shine (Mehta, et al, 2015).

Co-teaching ensures high quality instruction for all students by creating a low student-to-staff ratio, because we know that learning is social and highly dependent upon caring adult relationships (Robinson, et al, 2016; Chingos, et al, 2011; Scruggs, et al, 2007; Cotton, 1982). All of our students will be intimately known and mentored by our staff, who will bring different expertise and perspectives to bear on each class and project to ensure the rigor, relevance, and equity of all coursework. Furthermore, the 3-staff to each classroom ratio ensures that we load each room with ample expertise and flexibility to hedge against the inadvertent consequences that sometimes come from extended teacher absences whether for parental leave, illness, or other personal issues to ensure that high-quality learning will not be disrupted by the natural life interruptions that come with running a human organization.

(b) As interim assessments, we will administer once a year in the middle of the year a practice LEAP exam (before winter break) and a practice ACT exam (after winter break). These assessments align directly to the two external academic exams that most impact our students' equitable life outcomes and our school's authorization, so we want to use the preparation tools published by the test-makers to ensure our students' preparation for those exams. Additionally, we will use exam preparatory materials as interims for the CTE exams that our students will take.

For core academic classes, we will use the built-in assessments from Tier 1 curriculum outlined above as interims to assess students' progress toward mastering relevant content in each discipline. In the event that an assessment is not available from one of the curricula above, we will work with an external organization like Achievement Network, to help us select or develop an appropriate assessment.

Teachers will align their courses to the above assessments in two ways. First, teachers use Understanding by Design (Wiggins, et al, 2005) when planning the primary project(s) for a course to map the most essential content (knowledge, skills, and habits) to the project rubric & outcomes. That way projects facilitate deep engagement with this most essential content. Additionally, teachers will map other important content and areas of need not covered by the primary project(s) and plan in breaks or asides from the project to help kids develop mastery in this non-project content.

(c) Professional development at Living School is collaboratively planned and facilitated under the leadership of School Director, Stefin Pasternak who's been a highly-effective educator in Greater New Orleans public schools for the past decade and who's spent the 2017-18 school year as a New School Creation Fellow, School Leader in Residence at High Tech High and the Director of Student Support and their Student Support Team (still to-be-hired). Our professional development plan includes layers of differentiated support for curriculum, pedagogy, partnership, and supplies. We aspire to do for our adult staff exactly what we do for our students: create a highly-supportive environment designed to promote equity and wellness. Our Student Support Team leads professional development alongside our School Leader to ensure that all school structures continue to align with best practices in supporting students with diverse and exceptional needs including emerging bilingual students and academically struggling students.

First, we will pay for all teachers to have access to high quality curriculum materials (LDOE Tier 1 Curricula in reviewed subjects as identified above) along with associated trainings on those curricula to guide the scope and sequence of instruction throughout our multidisciplinary project-based courses. Additionally, each teacher will have personal budgets for both supplies (\$1,500 each) and professional development (\$1000 each) to ensure that each practitioner has resources that they control to support their instructional practice and growth.

In terms of school-structured professional development, training our founding staff will begin months before our doors even open. We will hire our founding staff by spring 2019 and will begin their training with once-a-month Saturday collaborations where we'll introduce the foundational systems, policies, and practices of Living School.



Then, once staff begin full-time, we have seven weeks a year (four over the summer, and one each after quarters 1, 2, and 3) of whole-staff development called the Staff Odyssey lead by our School Leader and Leadership Team all designed to build staff's expertise in executing this new type of pedagogy and provide ample time for the careful planning that it requires. During these Odyssey weeks, staff engage in project slices (experiential immersions in high-quality project-based learning led by veteran educators with experience in kindred models), project-planning and tuning (including standard and assessment alignment), the development of Staff Development Rubrics (to create a shared vision of high quality teaching for us to give feedback to one another with), and the analysis of student work amongst other things. To support this vital kick off to the year with new staff, we'll be working with veteran staff from both High Tech High and Big Picture Learning to ensure our team develops capacity in all the right skills and habits.

To ensure that every staff member receives regular personalized coaching aligned with the Staff Development Rubric, every staff member is randomly paired with a peer mentor. Peer Mentorships are responsible for observing one another at least once per week and recording data from their observation on the Staff Development Rubric tracker--a schoolwide document available to all staff members to help one another improve. Peer Mentorships meet weekly to debrief observations and help one another make progress on goals.

During Odyssey weeks before each quarter, every staff member has a Faculty-Led Conference with the School Leader setting goals and aligning data to those goals alongside their Peer Mentor and Teaching Team. This allows the School Leader to track each teacher's performance and progress toward goals, maintain a schoolwide bar of excellence, and organize differentiated support for every member of the staff.

Finally, our staff also meets daily for one hour of before-school staff development. Weeks have a consistent cyclical structure to make sure we are constantly tending to the most important things include academic and cultural data, peer development, and whole-school alignment. Mondays are Academic Data Dives (focused on data and outcomes from student work and assessments), Tuesdays we meet as a whole school, Wednesdays are Cultural Data Dives, Thursdays are collegial coaching mentorships, and Fridays are independent work days.

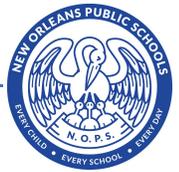
(2) Project-based learning is used all over the globe with a rich track-record of success across demographics. High Tech High, Big Picture Learning Schools, EL Education Schools, and the New Tech Network (all part of the Deeper Learning Network) are 4 networks that have a track record of both academic achievement and college persistence with intentionally diverse cohorts of students (including a high percentage of students living in poverty) using project-based learning (Heller, et al, 2015).

Second, career-technical education (CTE) that works toward industry-based certifications (IBCs) has been a vital part of the public education ecosystem for generations offering viable career pathways to a diverse array of students and training a vital portion of our local economy in careers that have been the backbone of our city. YouthForceNOLA has been championing the rebirth of local CTE work in our post-Katrina, college-focused high schools and their leadership is eager for Living School to be one of the first local schools to pioneer the path of universal college *and* career work for every student including CTE coursework, internships, dual-enrollment, and IBCs for every student. Again, research supports these practices in a synergistic approach to career-attainment (Andreason, et al, 2018; Hoffman, 2015).

Our founding CEO/School Director--the instructional leader of Living School--spent the 2017-18 school year embedded as a School Director in Residence at the flagship High Tech High in San Diego, CA apprenticing with the school & network leadership, coaching teachers, co-leading small projects and an advisory with kids, and learning intimately about how the school achieves the results it has through multidisciplinary, co-taught, project-based learning.

(a) As mentioned above, we provide curricula rated Tier 1 by the LDOE for all core content areas for teachers to leverage in their project-based instruction. The Tier 1 curricula we've identified for our founding 2019-20 school year are:

**Table 6: Living School Curricula by Subject**



English	Math	Science	Social Studies
Pearson myPerspectives	AgileMind or Great Minds		The Choices Program-Brown University

(b) The part of our model not scored by the LDE is the application of these curricular resources and standards through multidisciplinary, project-based learning. As mentioned above, there is a rich community of practice continuing to prove the validity of this approach through the equitable life outcomes of their students (Heller, et al, 2015).

We ensure that our multidisciplinary projects align with state standards both in planning and assessment. During planning, teachers map project activities and deliverables to all relevant state and/or professional standards required by each credit being offered to ensure that the scope and sequence of a project effectively helps students master the appropriate content identified said standards. As part of this planning, teachers backwards plan assessments of these standards (in alignment with best assessment practices from the Mastery Transcript Consortium & Buck Institute of Education) throughout the project to inform our competency-based grading. From these standard-aligned assessments, student grades will reflect their authentic mastery of content, giving us a strong indicator of the effectiveness of the implementation of our model.

(3) See Attachment 14-Weekly Schedule. Most students start their day at 8:30 AM (Period 1) with a family-style breakfast in their Instructional Groups (about 40 students). Students help serve breakfast daily, and rotate through other chore rotations throughout the year.

1st Period is the first of only two 2.5-hour instructional periods (their second period is from 1:30 - 4:00 PM). Students are randomly assigned to an instructional group based on the credits they need. This random assignment helps us intentionally integrate students with diverse backgrounds and needs in classes without school-imposed tracking or student-imposed self-segregation.

Each semester, a student and their Instructional Group will take both periods with a Teaching Team of 3 teachers (2 dual-certified content instructors and 1 special educator). This Teaching Team is responsible for planning and facilitating a cohesive, collaborative, multidisciplinary project (or constellation of related projects) to deliver 3 - 4 credits that align with the needs of the students in the Instructional Group. For a 9th grader, a courses might be a English I + Civics + Performance Arts class or an Applied Algebra + Biology + CTE I class.

During classes, students work collaboratively on project(s) that develops mastery in all subject areas in which credit is being earned. For example, an English I + Civics + Performance Art class might be working on a project like the one outlined below:

**Democratic Hygiene Project**  
9th Grade English I/Civics/Performance Art

<b>Driving Questions</b>	<b>1) What issues impact your life and what is your position on them?</b> <b>2) How can you advocate for those positions effectively and appropriately?</b>		
<b>Product</b>	<b>1. Digital Portfolio Webpage (individually)</b>	<b>2. Civic Action Log (individually)</b>	<b>3. Issue Ad/Action (recorded or live in groups)</b>
<b>Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional homepage with student profile</li> <li>- Second page with a summary of student's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issue strategy (identifies issue, leverage points, key players, and a background on those key players)</li> <li>- Prepared scripts for issue calls at the local, state, and federal levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 - 5 minute soapbox speech in public area</li> <li>- 3 - 5 minute silent scene about an issue</li> <li>- 2 - 5 minute issue...</li> </ul>



	summary of student's positions on a list of 10-20 issues - 1-2 paragraph justifications for each position - Links to influential thinkers for 3+ issues - 3-5 paragraph bios for influential thinkers w/ annotated list of important works/media	local, state, and federal levels - Professional issue letters (1+ to each local, state, and federal officials) citing 2+ pieces of evidence - Prepared script and supporting material for meetings w/ elected officials (1+ to each local, state, and federal officials) - Written reflection w/ documented evidence (photos, artifacts, etc.) on participation in 1+ lobbying effort and 1+ organizing/demonstration effort	- 3 - 5 minute improv scene - 5-15 minute advertisement or 15-30 minute public action designed to impact an issue (w/ written script, staging, and rehearsal)
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While an Applied Algebra, Biology, CTE I class might be working on a project like this:

**Building the School of Our Dreams Project**  
9th Grade Applied Algebra/Biology/Pre-Engineering

<b>Driving Questions</b>	1) How do organizations raise funds for major projects? 2) What does it take to professionally design a major commercial building project? 3) How do we translate those designs into the building?		
<b>Product</b>	<b>1. Funding Plan (in groups)</b>	<b>2. Socio-Environmental Impact Study (in groups)</b>	<b>3. Blueprints &amp; Build Plans (in groups)</b>
<b>Elements</b>	- Comprehensive project & maintenance budgets (including itemized cost calculations for each element of the project and annual maintenance and depreciation) - Budget communication tools (to communicate budget and logic behind it to different stakeholders) - Funding stream analyses (comparing and contrasting pros/cons of different methods of funding) - Comprehensive funding proposal	- Digital resource maps of the area (each group maps resources impacting a different focus area like water, wildlife, soil, and human communities) - Study of significant factors impacting group's focus area (including identifying metrics for evaluating and tracking impact) - Comprehensive impact study in group's focus area (including scientific data collection, analysis, and write-up, and visual presentation) - Impact factor experiment (testing the effects of different design considerations on specific impact factors)	- Professional quality blueprints and build plans for each element of the Living Campus (digital and analog renderings) - Calculations behind major components of the blueprints - Cost calculations for each build plan

In the course of comprehensive, collaborative, multidisciplinary projects like these, Teaching Teams outline a scope and sequence of lessons, activities, experiences, and work time to best facilitate the successful accomplishment of the



external assessments (like LEAP 2025 & ACT) and project deliverables (a.k.a. performance assessments) outlined above.

Teaching Teams have the autonomy to organize each day's 150 minute block in whatever way is most productive to that part of the project. At times, this may look and feel more like three discreet 50-minute direct-instruction lessons, each focusing on developing a specific skill in the different subjects. Other days might take a large chunk of the time for extended activities like socratic seminars, labs, critiques, or even whole days for group work time while teachers conference with individuals and groups about the progress being made on both the deliverables and the associated competency mastery. Some sample agendas for the first project above are below:

**Table 7: Democratic Hygiene Project Sample Daily Objectives & Agendas (150 mins)**

Day 2 - Project Launch	Day 8 - Instructional Day	Day 30 - Project Work Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SWBAT explain the project and its goals, key deliverables, and experiences</li> <li>- SWBAT begin identifying the criteria for success for the final project deliverables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SWBAT explain the differences in the personal, political, and economic rights of citizenship. (SS-C.5.1)</li> <li>- SWBAT gather evidence from written texts. (ELA-RBPK-9)</li> <li>- SWBAT assume and sustain various roles in group interactions. (TH-CE-H2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SWBAT make measurable progress toward project goals and deliverables</li> </ul>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Travel to City Hall - Trivia questionnaire in pairs (20 min)</li> <li>2. Intro to the Project w/ Trivia answers (20 min)</li> <li>3. Tour of City Hall - Scavenger Hunt (60 min)</li> <li>4. Observe City Council Meeting (20 min)</li> <li>5. Review syllabus in hearing room (10 min)</li> <li>6. Travel back to school - Small group check-ins (20 min)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improv Warm-up (10 min)</li> <li>2. Civics Lesson: Rights of Citizenship (15 min)</li> <li>3. Rights Role Plays (15 min)</li> <li>4. Mapping Rights of Citizenship (15 min)</li> <li>5. Share Out, Q &amp; A (10 min)</li> <li>6. English Lesson: Gathering Evidence (15 min)</li> <li>7. Gathering Evidence for Platform Positions (20 min)</li> <li>8. Share Out, Q &amp; A (5 min)</li> <li>9. Performance Lesson: Non-verbal interactions (15 min)</li> <li>10. Non-verbal improv (10 min)</li> <li>11. Small Group Skit Work (10 min)</li> <li>12. Closing Circle (10 min)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exemplar study (20 min)</li> <li>2. Review deadlines &amp; criteria for success (5 min)</li> <li>3. Standing check-in meeting (10 min)</li> <li>4. Independent work time (105 minutes)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each group conferences w/ teachers for 10 min</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Standing close-out meeting (10 min)</li> </ol>

Inevitably, projects won't always be able to authentically cover all important content in all subject areas. Part of the benefit of project-based-learning is that Teaching Teams can reasonably plan mini-units as breaks in or asides from the project to help students develop mastery in content not otherwise covered by the project.

After Period 1, the entire school (students and staff) do 30 minutes of vigorous Communal Physical Education (11:00 - 11:30). Staff members offer different month-long mini-courses like running, basketball, or martial arts that students can choose between (students do get to select their PE course and may change courses every month).



After Communal PE, students go to lunch (11:30 - 12:10). Like breakfast, lunch is served and managed by Advisories on a chore rotation. Monday through Thursday, students are free to enjoy their lunch how and with whomever they please. On Fridays, lunch is communal and serves as a whole-school gathering for announcements, shout-outs, and other cultural celebrations.

After lunch, students go to Period 2--their second and final required instructional period of the day as outlined above (12:10 - 2:40). Again, Period 2 have students in the same randomly assigned Instructional Groups with the same Teaching Team working on the same cohesive, collaborative, multidisciplinary project for the semester allowing students and teachers to focus on personalization through close, caring personal relationships.

After Period 2, students break into Advisories that meet for 40 minutes daily (2:40 - 3:20). Advisories are a student's family-at-school (roughly 20 students to each Advisor) that stay together throughout their entire tenure at Living School. Advisories include the foundation of our Restorative Practices--daily community circles--and also engage in a range of different activities on a day-to-day basis ranging from meditation and stretching to a social & emotional health curriculum and chore rotations.

After Advisory, the next 40 minutes of every day are spent in Genius Hour (3:20 - 4:00). During Genius Hour, students continue to be under the supervision of their Advisors, though it is mostly an independent work and project time. Advisors oversee the whereabouts and progress of their advisees who choose between office hours, clubs, tutoring, independent work time, or occasionally chore rotations.

All students also have the option of participating in Periods 0 (before school) and 3 (after regular dismissal) where we offer certain clubs, enrichment, and accelerated credit acquisition.

Over the course of the year, students start each year at a 2-day, off-site, whole-school retreat designed to launch each year with a sacred space to codify strong relationships as the foundation both of our learning and culture.

After the retreat, the rest of the year is designed to be highly consistent and predictable to maximize the effectiveness of routines and structures. The year is broken into two 18-week semesters. All weeks are full 5-day weeks (no three-day weekends with four day weeks, etc.) and all quarters have two full week-long breaks (one in middle and one at the end) to allow appropriate time for rest, recalibration, and planning.

Semesters are spent, as described above, primarily in multidisciplinary, co-taught, project-based courses that can look very different day-to-day depending on the nature and stage of the project. Additionally, students may be off campus for Internships. As ninth and tenth graders, students have the opportunity to participate in quarter-long internship rotations before specializing in eleventh and twelfth grades, where students go to the same internship for a minimum of a full year one day a week.

All projects culminate in an authentic public Exhibition, often at the schoolwide Exhibition Day at the end of each semester (some projects may exhibit at another time and space that may be more authentic to their work). At Exhibitions, student groups present the process and products of their project to a broad, public audience including professionals with expertise in the field. Exhibitions are followed (sometimes on the same day) by Presentations of Learning (PoLs) where each individual student gets up in front of the whole group to speak to their personal growth, reflections, and goals.

Quarterly, there is a week-long Generation Cycle during which students spend half the week assessing their growth over the past quarter and planning for upcoming quarters in Student-Led Conferences wherein students meet with their families, advisors, and instructors to regularly align their coursework and individual actions with their long-term goals. The other half of Generation Cycles are spent in brief Expeditionary and Experiential Learning Labs, giving students access to a rich variety of perspective-broadening experiences.

There is a second, 3-day, off-site, school-wide retreat following Winter Break to continue strengthening personal relationships and reinvest in culture at the midpoint of the year. See Attachment 15 – Calendar of Special Events for more



details.

(4) We will follow OPSB’s Pupil Progression Plan in accordance with state and local law and policy.

(5) We do not currently have plans to offer early childhood or Pre-Kindergarten classes.

### 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) “Today, despite the fact that special education is still closely connected to a medical model where children are ‘diagnosed’ with certain disabilities, most educators have embraced three important understandings: Learning differences exist along a vast continuum; human beings typically develop compensatory strengths—often formidable ones—to allow them to expand their learning, even though they may have some areas of difficulty; and strategic instruction can significantly and positively affect what students achieve. Moreover, many educators now believe that the view of disability as some kind of insurmountable deficit is a social construct that has been proven to be detrimental to children and should be challenged.” - Linda Darling Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education and President and CEO of the Learning Policy Institute.

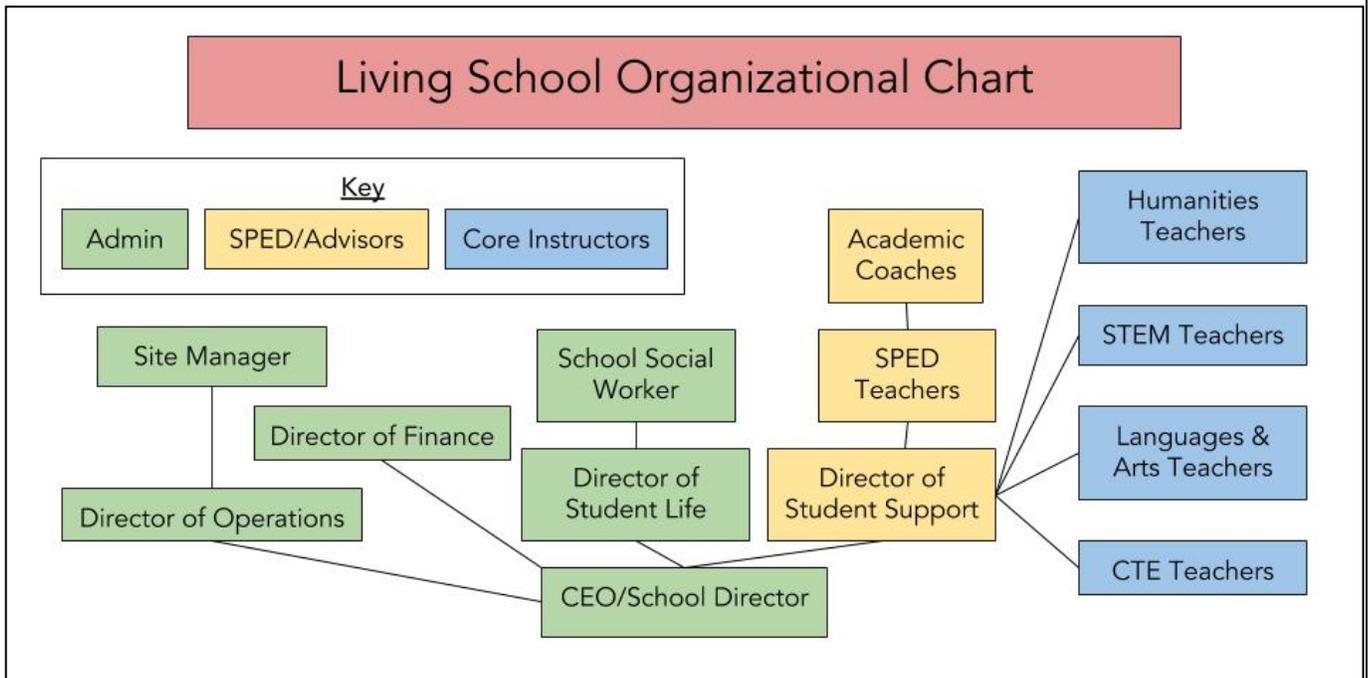
**An equity-focused, full-inclusion approach to special education**

Our school is focused on promoting equity for our intentionally diverse student body—including neurodiversity. We do this with a full-inclusion special education model including wrap-around supports designed to meet and exceed



the laws and standards outlined in all Federal and State Legislation (including FAPE, ADA, IDEA, and Section 504) along with the LDE’s Special Education Guidebook and the national Child Find campaign for all of our students with exceptionalities. We are deeply committed to serving every child who walks in our doors and supporting them toward fulfilling both our school goals (graduation with college-acceptance, a living-wage job offer, and the habits of a healthy life) and their personal goals (including connecting their family with the relevant outside agencies). Living School will never discriminate against any student—including those that have or are suspected to have an exceptionality—in admissions, enrollment, programming, promotion, or graduation. We plan to opt into OPSB’s LEA to support evaluation and provision of services that we do not have the in-house staff to provide.

**Industry-best in-house capacity for wrap-around student support**



Our Student Support Team (lead by our Director of Student Support), are the instructional leaders of Living School, helping develop all other teachers toward our collectively-defined vision of teaching mastery.

Our Director of Student Support (DSS) oversees our wrap-around support systems including but not limited to special education evaluation and compliance, our Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS), and acts as our Testing Coordinator. The DSS will train the entire staff bi-annually in how to utilize our wrap-around support systems for the benefit of every student, including monthly audits on our special education performance and RTI both to the entire Staff Executive Council and the Leadership Team.

The DSS works collaboratively with the Director of Student Life (DSL) and the School Social Worker (contracted through Communities in Schools). The DSL is in charge of student schedules, Restorative Practices, and the Advisory program that are all part of the holistic support structures for all students, especially those with IEPs. The School Social Worker will support the DSS in coordinating wrap-around services for all students and families, along with providing direct counseling and social work to a caseload of students.

The cornerstone of our special education program is having one fully-certified Special Educator dedicated to each Instructional Group of 40 students to support our full-inclusion model. We anticipate between 12-20% students with IEPs, meaning that each special educator can expect to support a caseload of between 4 - 8 students with IEPs



while also supporting the content Teaching Team in making their project work accessible and challenging for all learners in the room by utilizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL; National Center on Universal Design for Learning, 2011). Since our Special Educators serve as both Advisor and Inclusion Specialist for the students on their caseload, they will be able to check in individually with each of the students on their caseload at least once a day to support progress toward IEP goals.

We also have a team of Academic Coaches whose role is to be freelance, student-directed support staff. In addition to student-directed support, they also serve as flexible support adults for DSS, DSL, or Special Educators to leverage for certain projects.

The cornerstone, not only of our special education program, but of all our programming is intimate, mentoring relationships for all students. Accordingly, our Student Support Team (DSS, Special Educators, and Academic Coaches) will act as Advisors, mentoring a small cohort of about 20 students for their entire tenure at Living School. Advisors are each student's staff mentor for quarterly Student-Led Conferences (SLCs) where every student revises their Personal Learning Plan (PLP), complete with academic and non-academic goals ranging from the short-term to life goals. These SLCs set us up to collaboratively authoring rich and meaningful IEPs for students who qualify. Special Educators will have students in their caseloads also in their Advisories to ensure the continuity of support for students with IEPs across all programming at our school.

**Identification to evaluation: MTSS for empowering tiered support**

Our approach to special education includes screening every student for exceptional academic or behavioral needs (in accordance with Child Find law) and serving every student in the mainstream learning environment (in accordance with Least Restrictive Environment law). This is executed with a combination of personalized learning (through use of Personal Learning Plans and IEPs), integrating layers of support staff (Special Educators and Academic Coaches), systems (collaborative groupings and blended learning), and the adaptability of project-based learning (authentic projects have low floors, wide walls, and high ceilings to engage, accommodate, and offer challenge to all students).

Students can enter the MTSS process in 3 different ways:

1. Beginning of year intake data & screeners
2. Weekly data dives indicating an academic or behavioral gap between a student and their peers
3. Referral at any time by staff or family member on our Student Support Referral Form

Upon registration, our team obtains records from every incoming students' previous schools and interviews the student and family during home visits in order to get a well-rounded sense of all of our students' strengths and needs, including any special education services already identified by existing IEPs or 504s. This includes outlining transition plans for students coming from very different school backgrounds or for students who have documented trouble with transitions. Because of the capacity and flexibility built into our staffing model, we anticipate being able to meet and exceed the services outlined in any IEPs that students bring with them to Living School.

Also, as mentioned above in the Academic section, we screen all students for academic and behavioral needs as part of the intake process.

Again, the foundation of our special education program lies in the intimate knowledge of students we are able to build with each student through close, mentoring relationships. We use a research-backed Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) model, overseen by our DSS, to ensure that the well-rounded data and information we gather about each student helps us identify each student's unique strengths and needs so we can personalize an appropriate level of wrap-around support for each student (Hughes, et al). The MTSS research-based best practices outlined below help us identify students for tiers of support, up to and including evaluation for special education--the highest tier of support:



**Table 8 : Living School MTSS Tiers of Support**

Tier 1 (all students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and social/emotional indicators of need</li> <li>• Research-based high quality instruction &amp; support in multi-disciplinary, collaborative, project-based courses</li> </ul>
Tier 2 (estimated 25% of students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary academic, behavioral, and/or social/emotional interventions for students not responding adequately to Tier 1 supports (like specialized instruction, tutoring, mentorship, or a Behavior Support Plan)</li> <li>• Progress monitoring under the care of a Student Study Team</li> </ul>
Tier 3 (estimated 12% of students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tertiary academic, behavioral, and/or social/emotional interventions for students not responding adequately to Tier 2 supports including (but not limited to) evaluation for special education</li> </ul>

The DSS will oversee the school's bi-weekly data dives (Mondays for academic data, Wednesdays for cultural data) where teams of teachers will, amongst other agenda topics, identify any students whose triangulated data has raised concerns for the team. Additionally, the DSS will do a weekly school-wide data sweep to see if there are any students who the teams missed that need to be flagged for the MTSS process. Any staff member can use the [Student Support Referral Form](#) to refer a student to the MTSS process, even outside of the weekly cycle.

Students referred for MTSS are added to the agenda for the weekly Student Study Team meeting, where a team with knowledge of the student convene to begin studying and discussing the nature of the student's strengths and challenges, ultimately forming an action plan for the second tier of intervention(s). This action plan identifies key actions for staff and students, key data target points, establishes a communication plan with the student's family, and schedules regular progress monitoring check-ins at least every four weeks for the entire Student Study Team to reconvene.

Students can be referred for special education evaluation either by request of the student's parent/guardian at any time, or by referral from the student's Student Study Team (typically after at least two cycles of MTSS intervention) with consent of the student's parent/guardian. Evaluations are coordinated and overseen within 60 days of referral by our DSS who will work closely with a school psychologist (contracted ideally through our participation in OPSB's LEA) and the Student Support Team to conduct the evaluation in the native language of the student. Evaluations, like the rest of our educational model, must triangulate multiple points of data using multiple types of assessment relevant to the nature of the concern about the student.

**IEPs for top-tier support**

Students identified as eligible for special education services will co-author an IEP in a meeting with their Advisor/Special Educator, Teaching Team, family, the DSS, and any other relevant team members to set appropriately rigorous IEP goals (that align with the student's PLP goals already in progress), a holistic instructional plan, and the special education services that our team and partners will provide to best support the student's needs in accomplishing those goals. Quarterly Student-Led Conferences serve as IEP check-in meetings for students with IEPs, where a student meets with their Advisor/Special Educator and family to continually reflect upon progress and revise the IEP's goals, instructional plan, and services. Annually, one of these IEP check-ins will also include the DSS to serve as the formal annual IEP meeting.

Students with IEPs on a typical assessment pathway will access the same grade-level content as their peers with support to ensure their success. Students on an alternative assessment pathway will access content modified to be appropriate and empowering in alignment with grade level standards.



As mentioned above, our Special Educators manage small caseloads (roughly 4 - 8 students). They carry these relationships in two ways: first by being full-time members of the teaching team for their caseload's class including co-planning all projects and lessons, co-facilitating daily work including provision of services for the students in their caseload, and monitoring equity of access to material and outcomes of learning for all students in the class.

Second, Special Educators also serve as Advisor for the students on their caseload, facilitating the daily family-at-school group that a student is part of for their entire tenure at Living School. Advisory offers Special Educators a non-academic period of every day to be building trust and relationship with the students on their caseload in a non-exclusive setting to avoid feelings of being singled out for any students with IEPs.

We have designed our staffing model to build industry-best in-house capacity for supporting the needs of all students with our highly-trained, mission-aligned team. That said, we recognize that as a small school, there will be resources that some students need that we will not be able to provide internally (like physical and occupational therapy or speech-language pathology). We will partner with the district and local support agencies to ensure that we provide full services over and above those guaranteed by our students' IEPs to the entire school community. These partners will include Communities in Schools (along with their School Social Worker that will serve on our Leadership Team helping us connect our families with outside agencies), Special Education Leadership Fellowship to develop our team's expertise, and Children's Bureau to connect with further outside agencies and professionals to provide essential services.

(a) Multidisciplinary, project-based learning is the ideal instructional strategy for providing a continuum of services because it utilizes UDL's three principles:

- 1. Multiple means of representation:** Our Teaching Teams use a variety of means of instruction to help all students master core academic content and learn how to learn. This includes direct instruction in groups of various sizes, blended learning and online learning platforms, hands-on labs and experiences, peer grouping and tutoring, and internships.
- 2. Multiple means of expression:** Projects allow all students to represent their mastery of content in a variety of ways including writing, speaking, building, and visual or performing arts. Projects also have flexible timelines to allow students to express their mastery at their own pace.
- 3. Multiple means of engagement:** Our Teaching Teams engage students in the collaborative design of each project's driving questions, products, and process to marry authenticity with student interest. Authentic projects demand many talents from collaborative groups, allowing all students to showcase their diverse strengths throughout a project.

Our staffing and instructional models also allow us an incredible amount of flexibility to help students meet their needs either individually or in flexible groupings.

(b) We focus on graduating all students with college acceptance, a living-wage job offer (supported by a career/technical certification), and the habits of a holistically health life in-hand. Accordingly, we help all students work toward a TOPS (university) diploma along with at least one industry-backed career certificate. To ensure all students, regardless of exceptionality, achieve these goals we have designed flexible, supportive systems grounded in documented best practices to be able to adapt to and accommodate each individual's unique strengths, goals, and needs.

We recognize that for a very small population of students with low-incidence exceptionalities, these goals may not be appropriate and we may instead pursue an alternate assessment diploma pathway. In those instances, our team will work closely with those students and their families to identify appropriate graduation and post-secondary goals aligned with the student's data that we will be monitoring. Whatever the student's goals, we will work toward together with the same rigor, support, and resources as we work toward our goals for our mainstream population.

(c) We have budgeted to hire a full-time School Social Worker through Communities in Schools to support our team in coordinating wrap-around services for all students and families in collaboration with a network of local agencies



(like Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Advocacy Center of Louisiana, and Metropolitan Human Services District).

The School Social Worker will be a part of Student Study & Student Support Teams to ensure that our staff connects students with the best resources to support their needs. The School Social Worker will serve on the Leadership Team and will train the entire staff both about best practices for being trauma and diversity informed and about the network of services we are able to connect families with and the procedures staff will follow to connect students and families with those resources.

We are also working on plans with Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans (DCSNO) to potentially embed a full-service school-health clinic on site. DCSNO will partner with us to provide qualified on-site staff to offer comprehensive (physical, behavioral, and mental) health services both to our students and families as well as potentially to the surrounding community.

(d) Our use of Restorative Practices, supported by the Center for Restorative Approaches, is designed to ensure that discipline is equitable and fair for all students, those with exceptionalities included, in accordance with all Federal, State, and Local law including the OPSB Student Code of Conduct. As mentioned above, our Restorative Practices are designed to minimize the need for disciplinary action that changes placement or exclude students from class (suspensions and expulsions) and ensure due process if either is necessary in rare occasions. For students with exceptionalities, this means considering whether the behavior necessitating discipline was a manifestation of a student's exceptionality, particularly before a change in placement. The Staff Executive council will monitor changes in placement to ensure equity and legal compliance.

(2) Again, our mission is cultivating equity for all students who walk through our doors, including emergent bilingual speakers of all languages. This entails a commitment to full curricular and extracurricular inclusion and support for English Learners, celebration and opportunity to use their expertise in another language, and translation (both in person and in all written communication) for all students and families in their native language. We want to make clear that we see multilingualism not as a disability, but as an incredible talent that we want to cultivate not only for our ELs, but for all students, while recognizing that English proficiently is a key foundation for the goals we have for all of our students. Accordingly, we will make every effort to ensure the equitable success of EL student as outlined below.

As part of our intake process, we do home visits for every student including informal interviews of each student and their family, which we anticipate will help us identify the majority of English Learners (ELs). Staff can also refer students at any point to the MTSS system with concerns about a student's English proficiency.

Students who speak no English will be receive full-scale EL support, and those that speak some English will be administered the English Language Skills Assessment to determine the nature of the student's English proficiency, and the services afforded to support that student accordingly. This assessment will be readministered quarterly during Generation Cycles to monitor progress of EL students. This assessment data, triangulated with teacher observation and a student's academic data will help us constantly monitor a student's progress gaining English proficiency around which goals will be set and services adjusted accordingly at quarterly Student-Led Conferences including determination, when appropriate, of a student's preparedness to be exited from EL services.

In classes, our team will ensure that ELs are working with the same material, scaffolded by in-person and technology language supports. This may also include language-support pull-outs, direct English instruction, English instruction software, and accommodated means of representation, expression, and engagement (in line with UDL) depending on the needs of an individual student. In Advisories, ELs will be paired, whenever possible, with peers who share and an Advisor that speaks the same native language to encourage a continuity of support. Across the school, staff will be asked to engage with all students in studies of any native languages and cultures represented in the student body of the school to encourage equal standing for all students through the celebration of our diversity in a pluralistic institution. Finally, all school-wide events will include signage and translation in the native languages of all families in our community, along with direct opportunities for families to learn about all the languages and cultures present in our community.



At full enrollment, we will ensure that at least two of our Special Education staff are certified with the English as a Second Language endorsement. We will also ensure that at least two staff members are fluent in the native languages of every student, both for translation and representation purposes. We have budgeted funds to help pay for the ESL endorsement or language training for any interested staff to help us exceed the minimum criteria set above.

The trained staff outlined above will lead biannually training for the whole staff on how to best support ELs and will provide the Leadership Team and Staff Executive Council regular updates about the progress of the school's support for ELs. Any staff with regular, direct contact with ELs will receive both more in-depth training about how to serve ELs in their care equitably and will have access to training to become fluent in the ELs' native language(s).

As mentioned above, emerging multilingualism is seen as a profound asset at Living School and we will encourage and invite native speakers of other languages to share their native language and culture with their classmates and the whole school in various ways. As an intentionally diverse school, we celebrate a pluralistic school community and the many cultures, languages, and perspectives that comprise our team and family. Naturally, all students, including ELs, will have full access to all extracurricular activities as well as the opportunity to organize extracurricular activities of their own vision.

Finally, our DSS who also fulfills the role of our Testing Coordinator will ensure that EL's needs are met in all formal testing settings.

(3) We do not plan to actively identify or evaluated gifted and/or talented students because we believe that every single student has unique gifts and talents that we strive to honor, cultivate, and create opportunities to let shine. All students will be able to opt into honors coursework in any course the state recognizes and all projects will offer authentic opportunities for students to leverage their unique gifts and talents.

That said, if students come to us with a gifted and/or talented IEP, we will honor the goals and services in accordance with their IEP and our IEP procedures outlined above.

(4) See Attachment 17-SPED Job Descriptions for more detail.

### 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).

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



(1) See Attachment 19-Calendar & Schedule.

(2) We will offer a TOPS University Diploma pathway for all students (except those with the most severe exceptionalities for whom it may not be appropriate). We only offer this single diploma pathways in alignment with our mission to cultivate equity by supporting all students regardless of background and interest to graduate with multiple positive post-secondary options in-hand at graduation including both college-acceptance (supported by a TOPS University Diploma) and a living-wage job offer (supported by CTE coursework, an Industry Backed Certification, and professional internships). We've designed flexible systems to allow different students to pursue these goals in a personalized manner including multiple modalities for earning credits, the ability to earn credits at one's own pace, and the built-in support to help students accomplish more than they thought they could in an inclusive setting.

Diplomas are issued in accordance with all State law and regulation including but not limited to minutes offered, minutes attended, credit acquisition, examinations, and performance.

By integrating CTE instructors into our core content Teaching Teams, students will be able to earn both the necessary TOPS credits alongside career-tech focused credits in synergistic projects and experiences that bridge the divide between college and careers that schools too often exacerbate. Projects, internships, and partnerships allow us to offer a wide variety of content within this TOPS diploma track, so all students will be able to pursue their interests in alignments with our graduation goals.

Living School Sample Transcript								
Jeffries, Lyndell	9th S1	9th S2	10th S1	10th S2	11th S1	11th S2	12th S1	12th S2
<b>Period 0</b>								
<b>Period 1</b>	English I	Applied Algebra	English II	Geometry	English III	Statistics	English IV	Calculus
	Civics	Biology	US History	Physics	World Geography	Chemistry	World History	Computer Science
	Performance Art	CTE I	Visual Arts	CTE III	Spanish I	CTE VI	Spanish II	CTE VIII
<b>PE</b>	Health I	PE I	Health I	PE I	PE II	PE II	PE III	PE III
<b>Period 2</b>	English I	Applied Algebra	English II	Geometry	English III	Statistics	English IV	Calculus
	Civics	Biology	US History	Physics	World Geography	Chemistry	World History	Computer Science
	Performance Art	CTE II	Visual Arts	CTE IV	Spanish I	CTE VI	Spanish II	CTE IX
<b>Advisory</b>								
<b>Genius Hour</b>	CTE I	CTE II	CTE III	CTE IV	CTE V	CTE VII	CTE VIII	CTE IX
<b>Period 3</b>					CTE V	CTE VII		
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	4.5	9	13.5	18	22.5	27	31.5	36

We utilize quarterly Student-Led Conferences during Generation Cycles when students complete and update their Personal Learning Plans to ensure that students are pursuing their personal interests and post-secondary plans throughout their years at Living School.

Our Director of Student Support will identify students for whom our above-stated school goals are not appropriate or empowering (in accordance with Louisiana Act 833) and ensure that, as part of their IEP/PLP process, the student, family, and school team will complete an Individual Graduation Plan including appropriate assessment plans to support the student in accomplishing their goals.

(3) Living School is designed to graduate all students with the following outcomes & achievements in-hand:

1. College acceptance (supported by a TOPS University diploma & strong ACT scores)
2. Living-wage job offer (supported by Industry Backed Certifications, CTE coursework, a digital portfolio of authentic work, and professional internships)
3. Habits of a holistically healthy life (supported by nutrition, exercise, rest, diverse relationships, and a strong



sense of identity and belonging)

In other words, our school is designed to make the shift from college and career *readiness* to college and career *attainment*.

To ensure our students' ability to attain college acceptance, we align our courses and assessments with the most rigorous curricular standards and diploma (TOPS University), including alignment with the LEAP 2025 and ACT tests. Furthermore, we offer all students opportunities to take dual-enrollment courses starting sophomore year at local colleges and universities including Delgado Community College and University of New Orleans. This ensures that all students can graduate having earned their first college credits (with some students able to potentially earn enough credits for an associates degree concurrently with their high school graduation). Students curate a Digital Portfolio, including a resume, of their best work throughout their tenure at Living School as an authentic tool to use for college and career applications. We also support all students in researching and applying to a personalized portfolio of colleges & universities, scholarships, and financial aid including helping all students fill out the FAFSA and all applications and take advantage of ACT practice tests.

To ensure our students' ability to attain living-wage job offers at high school graduation, we work with YouthForce NOLA, Greater New Orleans, Inc., the New Orleans Business Association, and local industry partners to house our students in rigorous, career-preparatory internships in high-wage, high-growth industries. Additionally, our industry partners regularly help us collaborate on authentic projects through our multidisciplinary, project-based courses to offer students exposure to working across industries and projects that will contribute to their Digital Portfolio. We support all students in researching and applying to a personalized portfolio of living-wage careers, including helping all students acquire appropriate clothing and job-specific tools. To ensure our students' ability to attain Career/Technical Certifications, we work with the above partners to build out 4 unique, multidisciplinary CTE pathways that train students to earn valuable Industry Backed Certifications that align with our city's most promising career pipelines for youth.

To ensure our students' ability to attain the habits of a holistically healthy life, we work with local experts in personal, community, and environmental health to align our programming and metrics with professional standards of holistic health in each domain.

*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.

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

(1) Living School's one-student-at-a-time approach is designed for the maximum amount of both flexibility and support to cultivate equity for all students, including those in danger of dropping out and/or not meeting graduation requirements. We have incorporated research-proven best practices from the National Dropout Prevention Center to ensure that we do everything possible to support all students toward graduation.

Our focus on intimate, mentoring relationships through Advisory and small school and class sizes helps us build meaningful relationships with kids and families which, in turn, helps us identify students in danger of dropping out before most other schools might notice the symptoms and encourage proactive problem-solving to propel a student's trajectory toward graduation and post-secondary success. Research shows the importance of strong adult-child relationships in encouraging school persistence (Velasquez, et al, 2013).



At weekly data dives (academic on Monday and cultural on Wednesday), Teaching Teams monitor our triangulated data including grades and test scores, flagging students at risk of not passing classes--whether because of performance, attendance, or behavior. Additionally the Leadership Team monitors all student grades, attendance, and behavior data to follow up with the appropriate teachers, advisors, and students respectively. The thresholds past which we consider a student at-risk for dropping out are:

<b>Table 9: Drop-out concern criteria</b>	
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower than 94% attendance</li> </ul>
Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At risk of failing their 2nd course</li> <li>Not on track to earn required diploma credits by the year they turn 21</li> </ul>
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two major conflicts in a year</li> </ul>

Advisors will all be trained in Ross Greene’s Collaborative Problem Solving protocols and have access to his Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP) to help guide problem-solving for struggling students (Stetson, et al, 2016; Schaubman, et al, 2011). Through the RTI process, Advisors and Student Study Teams have the ability to help students tap into the following interventions depending on what would be most effective to help a particular student graduate on time:

<b>Table 10: Living School Interventions for Students in Danger of Dropping Out</b>	
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Supporting School Structures</b>
Family engagement/mentorship	Home visits, regular conferencing, parent support coaches, ALSUP and Collaborative Problem Solving protocols
Tutoring & office hours	Genius hour and Period 3, Peer tutoring, Private tutoring scholarships
Accelerated credit acquisition	Periods 0 and 3 extra courses, Winter & Summer Break courses
Out of school credit acquisition	Internships, work-studies, and dual-enrollment, independent study contracts
Pathways to income	Paid internships, connections to jobs that can accommodate school commitments
Wrap-around supports	Staff and budget to support solutions for everything from healthcare and housing to transportation and childcare

Additionally, the combination of flexibly-paced project-based learning and personalization through Personal Learning Plans will help make mainstream classes flexible enough to accommodate and support students who are significantly behind or struggling. Our low student-to-teacher ratio will allow Teaching Teams the flexibility and manpower to offer intimate support to struggling students to ensure each and every student’s success in and out of the classroom.



(2) Daily student arrival is treated as an important ritual at Living School. The majority of the staff stands at the main entrance to the building to affectionately welcome every student to each day. After the beginning of Period 1, a small team of staff remain at the entrance, welcoming late students with a personal connection, encouraging timeliness, offering transportation problem-solving, and ensuring the accurate reporting of attendance and tardies on the sign-in computers. The Site Manager oversees the schoolwide attendance reporting, validating all the data collected from sign-ins and teacher-reported attendance, including daily communication with all families of absent students who haven't reported the student's absence ahead of time.

Advisors and teachers always welcome a student back from an absence with a brief, supportive conversation to screen absences for broader signs of personal or family trouble, communicate to the student their value to the community and the value of their daily timeliness and attendance to their education, and to normalize feedback in our community. Peers in an advisory will also often follow up with a student when they are absent again to show caring and screen for signs of trouble.

The Director of Student Life monitors attendance and truancy daily, aiming to be as proactive as possible in addressing student attendance issues. The DSL follows the following protocol for following up with attendance or truancy issues:

**Table 11: Living School Truancy Interventions**

<b>Threshold</b> (# unexcused absences and/ or truancies per year)	<b>Intervention</b>
2	In-person conversation with student; action plan
4	In-person conversation with student & advisor; Collaborative Problem Solving protocol
6	Verbal and written communication with family; ALSUP assessment
8	In-person conference w/ student, family, Advisor, and School Social Worker; revised action plan
10	Home visit; referral to outside agencies for support; school-time recuperation plan established

Our goal is to regularly exceed 95% attendance as a school, so all staff will be updated weekly on the strength of our attendance and reporting to ensure that it is a constant priority for all team members.

*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.

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

(1) Again, we are designed to graduate all students with the following in-hand:

1. College acceptance (supported by a TOPS University diploma & strong ACT scores)
2. Living-wage job offer (supported by Industry Backed Certifications, CTE coursework, a digital portfolio of authentic work, and professional internships)
3. Habits of a holistically healthy life (supported by nutrition, exercise, rest, diverse relationships, and a strong sense of identity and belonging)

We have built into our programming every available opportunity for students not only to graduate *prepared* for college and career, but with college and career *attained*. Some of the main ways we do this include:

- **Universal ACT:** All students prepare for and take the ACT multiple times (which we pay for) to ensure that every student earns their most competitive college-going score.
- **Universal dual-enrollment:** All students have the opportunity to graduate with college credits attained (potentially even enough for an associate's degree) through dual-enrollment partnership with local colleges and universities.
- **Universal CTE Instruction & IBCs:** All students will receive 4 years of CTE instruction and will earn at least one Industry Backed Certification.
- **Universal Internships:** All students will spend time all four years doing job shadows that eventually lead to extended professional internships.
- **Personal Learning Plans & Student-Led Conferences:** Students co-author their Personal Learning Plan which backwards maps their high school work to align with their post-secondary life goals. Students then revise these plans quarterly at Student-Led Conferences alongside their families and Advisor.

Again, for students with low-incidence disabilities, the quarterly IEP/PLP meetings are a time work closely with the student's families and supporting agencies around the city to backwards map those students' high school work to align with the most appropriate and empowering post-secondary life goals.

(a) All students will have ACT preparatory units embedded into their 10th - 12th grade English classes focused on reviewing both the scope of content and teaching important test-taking strategies, including taking a practice ACT once a year as an interim test. Students who struggle with practice ACTs will also get small-group ACT tutoring to support successful testing strategies.

We have also budgeted to support a limited number of students with private ACT tutoring and all students in taking the ACT multiple times to ensure all students are able to achieve a college going ACT score in time for college applications.

(b) All students will have the opportunity to earn college credit through dual enrollment courses with local colleges and universities starting sophomore year. We have budgeted to support each student in taking courses.



(c) All students will have the opportunity to earn Industry Backed Certifications through a combination of embedded CTE instruction, internships, and the potential for partner courses with outside providers like the New Orleans Career Center and Operation Spark. We will work to help our students earn any credential that a student want to work toward, but will focus on offering four multidisciplinary CTE pathways in-house that fill important gaps in the local CTE landscape:

**Table 12: Living School CTE Pathways**

<b>Pathway Credentials</b>	<b>Coastal Restoration</b>	<b>Food Systems</b>	<b>Energy</b>	<b>Technology &amp; Entrepreneurship</b>
<b>Credentials</b>	AutoCAD, Pre-Engineering, Environmental Protection, Stormwater Management	Louisiana Agritechnology & ProStart	NCCER Welding & Electrical	Fundamentals of JavaScript, Functional Programming, and Web Development & Statewide Micro-Enterprise
<b>Prospective Internship Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waggoner &amp; Ball Architects</li> <li>- Arcadis</li> <li>- Sewerage &amp; Water Board</li> <li>- Coastal Protection &amp; Restoration Authority</li> <li>- Tulane Institute for Water Law &amp; Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LSU AgCenter</li> <li>- USDA Southern Regional Research Center</li> <li>- Hollygrove Market &amp; Farm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entergy</li> <li>- Joule Energy</li> <li>- South Coast Solar</li> <li>- Solar Alternatives</li> <li>- Shell</li> <li>- Chevron</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Propellor</li> <li>- IdeaVillage</li> <li>- JP Morgan Chase</li> <li>- Capital One Bank</li> </ul>

(d) As mentioned above, students will be able to participate in job-shadow rotations as early as 9th - 10th grades. Then, by 11th - 12th grades, all students specialize in a field of their choosing, staying with the same internship for at least one full year.

(e) Starting at our intake into 9th grade, students begin exploring post-secondary options including identifying their strengths and interests using a variety of assessments and experiences. Students track their strengths and post-secondary interests in their Personal Learning Plan, revised quarterly at Student-Led Conferences, where the student, in collaboration with their family and Advisor, plan to align a student's goals, course of study, and internships with their post-secondary plans.

(f) For all students with exceptionalities, part of their IEP process will include planning for appropriately rigorous post-secondary options, along with the pathways to attaining those options. Quarterly IEP check-ins and annual IEP meetings will focus on supporting the student's attainment of the outlined 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.**

(1) Our transition and orientation for new students starts with a home visit from their Advisor to establish personal rapport and contact with a trusted staff member. This also serves as an opportunity to on-board new students and families to Living School systems and structures and begin to get to know the student's and family's strengths and needs.

Home visits are followed by a New Student Orientation night at the school that involves a tour with student ambassadors, face time with all of their new teachers, diagnostic assessments, and a community meal.

Then, every school year starts with a two-day, off-site, whole-school retreat. This retreat is meant to establish strong relational bonds between our staff and every student so that by the time school starts on Day 1, we are beginning to know every student in our building well and providing them multiple trusted points of contact.

Finally, all school days culminate in Advisory with food, community circles, and other activities designed to foster belonging and connection.

For students who join us mid-year, we still do a home visit and a personalized orientation day. Their Advisor will take extra care to attend to their transition and they will have the opportunity at the mid-year, three-day, off-site retreat to develop similar bonds across the school community.

(2) We will support transitional 9th (T9) graders in accordance with LDOE's guidance including training teachers to design flexible curricula, regular communication with student and family about the details of our T9 program, customizing counseling and student support, and developing personal goals through the student's Personal Learning Plan.

T9 students will be expedited through our RTI system to begin receiving Tier 2 interventions (like individual or small-group direct instruction or a peer tutor) from Day 1 at Living School (Hughes, et al). Given our full-inclusion model, these students will be integrated socially into Living School just like any other 9th grader to make sure they have access to the same grade-level content as their peers and avoid social isolation because of their unique designation (Balfanz, et al, 2007).

In addition to the highly personalized and adaptive curriculum we offer to all students, we are able to offer additional remediation and tutoring to T9 students through our use of Special Educators and Academic Coaches during the regular school day, Periods 0, 3, and Genius Hour as unique time slots built into the daily schedule, and blended learning as a self-paced addendum to core work.

**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) We are members of BoardOnTrack, a charter school governance consulting firm that both supports the effectiveness of our Community Board of Directors (CBD) with the development of our Board Members & Officers and provides a platform that helps in managing membership, meetings, and documents. As mentioned above and in accordance with BoardOnTrack recommended best practices, the Governance Committee of our Board of Directors will be responsible for overseeing the recruitment of new members to and development of our Board over time.

Given that our Board will operate five committees outlined above (Governance, CEO Support & Evaluation, Finance, Academic & Cultural Oversight, and Development), we will strive to maintain a membership of roughly fifteen Board Members at any given time (we currently have 16) to allow for 3 Board Members to participate in each committee with the Board Chair as an ex-officio member of all committees. We will not grow beyond 16 to ensure that the Board is small enough to effectively govern the institution.

Board Members serve staggered three-year terms—a strategy recommended by both BoardOnTrack and the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools (LAPCS)—to ensure the continuity of institutional knowledge as Board Members serve a long enough term to develop appropriate expertise at governance before they term out only a few at a time at a predictable rate to allow our Governance Committee time to anticipate and recruit new Members to fill those vacancies.

Board candidates must submit both a letter of intent and resume for consideration. The Governance committee then interviews and does background research on Board candidates to ensure mission alignment, value-add, and capacity before putting forth nominations for discussion and voting at meetings of the entire CBD based on anticipated vacancies.

We work hard to ensure that our Board represents diverse perspectives and has a balance of expertise outlined below. BoardOnTrack’s tools allow us to analyze our current Board Membership for demographic and expertise diversity to allow our Governance Committee to identify our Board’s greatest needs as they recruit. The Governance Committee publishes an annual call for applicants to the Board of Directors and works to recruit new Members in collaboration with partners from our network like LAPCS.



**Table 13: Living School Board Diversity Priorities**

Demographic	Expertise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial</li> <li>• Socioeconomic</li> <li>• Cultural</li> <li>• Geographic (ZIP codes of New Orleans)</li> <li>• Families, Alumni, &amp; Students of NO Public Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Organizational operations</li> <li>• Facilities/real estate</li> <li>• Community development</li> <li>• Law</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Diversity, equity, &amp; inclusion</li> </ul>

Once operational, CBD membership will be 100% people living in Orleans Parish and we will reserve one spot on the CBD for a parent/alumni parent member in accordance with local & state policy.

As a non-profit applying for a single charter, our Board of Directors will govern both Living School, Inc. the non-profit and Living School the school. Should we decide in the future to apply to run multiple schools, we will adjust the operations of our Board accordingly.

(2) All new Members of the CBD receive an introductory training to charter school governance from our Governance Committee (and supported by BoardOnTrack) within a month of their election to the Board. This includes training all Board Members in the legal responsibilities, mission obligations, ethical considerations, and governance mechanics including an overview of the Bylaws and founding documents. All new Board Members must submit a clear background check within a month of their election to the Board.

Additionally, the Board will ratify annual objectives & key results (OKRs) to guide its governing priorities in adding value to the institution. The Governance Committee will utilize BoardOnTrack’s built-in Governance Grading tool to monitor regular engagement and effectiveness of the Board and will use BoardOnTrack’s built-in Board Assessment tool each spring to conduct a comprehensive annual audit of the Board’s effectiveness to identify opportunities for improvement and development. The Governance Committee will use the results of these tools to organize appropriate development requirements and opportunities for all Board Members.

Finally, the Governance Committee will also identify potential successors for Board Officers at least 6 months before an officer’s term expires. Successor nominations will be ratified at full Board Meetings and will be provisional, pending another vote at the end of the transition term to finalize the successor’s new role. This is designed to ensure a development runway for up and coming leadership and a continuity of leadership throughout transitions.

(3) The most important stakeholders we need to ensure Living School’s success is the active and trusting participation of students and families. We have made efforts to invite and prioritize input from local students and parents from our inception including at all Board meetings and proceedings and will continue to publicize all Board proceedings to students and parents.

Second, we have worked to engaged with the OPSB including School Board Members and employees, to get input about the needs and opportunities in the district. Once we earn our charter, we intend to work closely with the entire OPSB team to ensure our school contributes to the city-wide efforts to cultivate equity for all students.

Third, the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools (LAPCS) and New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) have both been instrumental to supporting dozens of local charters and have a strong understanding both of the legal and programmatic landscape of local charter schools. We have become members of LAPCS, participating in their trainings



and events and seeking their counsel on key operational questions from Board governance to finance. Thus far, have informally engaged with NSNO, soliciting their input on everything from our pilots to our internship programming. We are current applicants to their Innovative Schools Fellowship and are exploring other formal engagements with them.

Fourth, because our model is new both to New Orleans and the rest of the country, we have worked to engage with the leaders of other innovative schools/networks like Bricolage, Rooted School, High Tech High, and Big Picture Learning (including local BPL schools The NET and New Harmony High) to advise us in how best to execute our model in our particular context. We are exploring formal partnership with the above schools/networks as we work toward launch.

Fifth, we have begun informally engaging with local political leadership from City Council, to U.S. House Representatives to solicit feedback on our work.

Finally, we have been working to form partnerships with a variety of local organizations from Communities in Schools to YouthForce NOLA to support various elements our programming. Most of these partnerships cannot be formalized until we earn our charter, so we have informally engaged them all in feedback on our charter application and design of program and budget until the time at which we can sign appropriate contracts or MOUs.

### 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) Our organization chart has not changed since our original submission. See Attachment 3 for our organization chart.

(2) We plan to use COMPASS to track evaluation targets to support development for all faculty from teachers up through the School Director.

Expectations for all faculty roles are outlined annually in our Staff Development Rubrics. These Rubrics triangulate data about staff effectiveness the same way we do with student data, in order to get a well-rounded picture of how staff are performing. These Staff Development Rubrics are revisited and revised annually by the Staff Executive Council at the beginning of each year to ensure clarity and alignment. Once ratified, the updated master versions will be available digitally to all school stakeholders through the school's website and in print at the school.

Staff Development Rubrics are broken into the following 4 levels of proficiency across 2 categories (in which some goals are role-specific while others apply to the whole faculty):



**Table 14: Living School Staff Development Rubric**

	<b>Results</b>	<b>Culture</b>
<b>Mastery</b>	Role-specific goals: - 95%+ 3.0 GPA or higher - 100% college acceptance - 100% living-wage job offers - 100% CTE certification  Faculty-wide goals: - 100% graduation - 100% improved habits of holistic health as measured by our Health Assessment Suite - producing work that improves the world measured by TEN Survey	Role-specific goals: - 95%+ student attendance - 95%+ student satisfaction on TEN Survey - 95%+ family satisfaction on TEN Survey - 95%+ student retention  Faculty-wide goals: - 95%+ staff attendance and timeliness - 90%+ staff voluntary retention - 95%+ staff commitment follow-through measured by TEN staff survey - 100% giving, receiving, and using regular feedback measured by TEN staff survey - 100% mutual, productive resolution to conflict using Restorative Practices
<b>Skillful</b>	Descriptors at Novice, Developing, and Skillful levels set annually by the Staff Executive Council.	
<b>Developing</b>		
<b>Novice</b>		
<p>As a deliberately developmental school, we cultivate an atmosphere of mutual respect and support, where everyone--regardless of their role--is encouraged to offer one another feedback at any appropriate time. Each staff member will have a live, digital Personal Feedback Sheet aligned with their role-specific rubric that they will receive feedback on from the members of their Teaching Team, their Peer Mentor, and the School Director regularly. Any other staff or stakeholders who wish to offer feedback will also have access to this sheet to document feedback in alignment with the staff member's individual rubric. The Director will also do two formal observations of each faculty member using the COMPASS rubric annually.</p> <p>This Personal Feedback Sheet is used along with COMPASS data at quarterly Faculty-Led Conferences that act as our collaborative evaluation between the faculty member, their Teaching Partner, Peer Mentor, and the School Director. Each faculty member, with support from their peers, author a Professional Growth Plan (akin to student Personal Learning Plans) encompassing their needs, goals for improving their performance, and plans.</p> <p>(3) We have designed our staffing model and school culture to leverage research-backed strategies for attracting and retaining high quality teachers to ensure a stable teaching and leadership force (Kegan, et al, 2016; The New Teacher Project, 2012; Pink, 2009):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Competitive compensation:</b> Average administrative, teaching, and support staff salaries are comparable</li> </ul>		



to industry standards and everyone in the building (from support staff on up) make a living wage with full benefits that is administered with a single, all-staff Compensation Framework.

- **Clear, collaborative, high expectations:** From our mission all the way down to our Staff Development Rubrics, expectations for staff are developed collaboratively and communicated clearly throughout our organization to maintain a high bar and celebrate those meeting it.
- **Publicly recognize excellence & growth:** Daily school meetings and communication regularly feature shout-outs that spotlight faculty accomplishments that align to our mission and school goals.
- **Intimate, mentoring relationships:** We cultivate close, mentoring relationships amongst faculty to support one another's development the same way faculty do with students. This includes daily collaboration with a Teaching Partner, Special Educator, and Teaching Team; weekly meetings with a Peer Mentor; and quarterly Faculty-Led Conferences with the Director.
- **Deliberate development:** In addition to the relational developmental structures above, we provide a dedicated budget to support each teacher's development in the way(s) they see fit. This also means supporting brief absences for teachers to pursue development outside of the building and all over the world.
- **Flexibility and autonomy:** Teaching Partnerships and Teams, supported by their Special Educators have an incredible amount of flexibility and autonomy over how to use their time with students and their personal budgets to further the mission and goals of the organization. This includes built-in team support to cover for absences or other unusual circumstances.
- **Leadership across a flat organization:** As a democratic school lead by a Staff Executive Council, opportunities for leadership are accessible across the organization to anyone who is interested. In addition to service on the Executive Council, there will be opportunities for all staff to lead professional development, coach peers, host guests, and present at events outside of the school.

(4) All employees who work 75% time or more will be eligible for full benefits including a 3% contribution to a 403b retirement account and comprehensive medical, dental, and vision insurance.

Our average salary for teachers is \$46,000 and \$55,000 for administrators. In addition to monetary compensation, our staffing model has been carefully designed to align with best practices identified by research for supporting employees in doing complex work (Pink, 2009):

- **Autonomy:** At Living School, staff have a tremendous amount of agency and autonomy to impact the school at large and manage their individual work with a high degree of voice and choice.
- **Mastery:** As a project-based learning school, staff will continue to master skills they are motivated by and do so as a model for students.
- **Purpose:** Our mission and project are unique in New Orleans, offering our staff a compelling purpose and team to be a part of.
- **Sustainability:** Our systems (from class size to staff teams to the school schedule) are designed to be much more sustainable than a typical school, accommodating the natural variations that come with running a human organization with much less disruption and stress on fellow colleagues.

We also reserve \$500 per staff member to offer annual bonuses.

### 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 1 & 2 or prompts 3 & 4.



- (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) Stefin Pasternak is the proposed school leader. Find below a summary of his leadership roles in schools and youth programs, responsibilities, and the impact of his leadership:

<b>Table 15: Stefin Pasternak Academic Leadership Roles</b>		
<b>Leadership Role</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Impact</b>
School Leader in Residence, High Tech High, 2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acting as Assistant Director apprenticing with School Director</li> <li>- Supporting staff development, strategic planning, budget management, and talent management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Part of school leadership team for 10th straight year of 99%+ graduation rate with 96% college-going rate</li> <li>- Collaboratively developed 2018-19 Operating Budget</li> </ul>
Lead Chef Educator, Edible Schoolyard New Orleans @ Samuel J. Green Charter School, 2014-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lead teacher and administrator for ESYNOLA's teaching kitchen serving 520 students annually with over 600 classes and 60 special events</li> <li>- Created streamlined K-8 project-and-experience-based curriculum integrating core content with wellness and career pathways</li> <li>- Budget &amp; talent management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Part of school leadership team through 3 years of School Performance Score growth/stability</li> <li>- Created a pre-culinary career pathway sending students to high school culinary programs</li> <li>- Launched an annual student-run restaurant promoting entrepreneurship through multi-disciplinary project-based learning</li> </ul>
Grade-Level Chair, Regional Content Lead, Writing Teacher, KIPP Believe College Prep 2010-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Created, taught, and trained other teachers in a project-based, continuum-validated writing curriculum</li> <li>- Coordinated coaching, culture, data analysis, and discipline for 100 students and 6 teachers</li> <li>- Lead quarterly data-dives and professional development for 5-8th grade writing teachers across 4 KIPP middle schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 72.5% of my students scored Basic and above on 6th Grade ELA iLEAP test across 4 years (top 10 in open-enrollment district all 4 years)</li> <li>- 92% of my students met nationally-normed MAP growth goals</li> <li>- Region-wide 6th grade writing team that I lead had city's highest aggregate iLEAP scores amongst charter networks</li> </ul>



	middle schools	
Director Larkspur Art n' Sport Camp 2003-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talent &amp; program management for 150 campers and 30 staff</li> <li>- Designed and lead camp activities in arts, crafts, cooking, sports, and games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased enrollment by 20%</li> <li>- 86% Family satisfaction</li> <li>- Expanded experiential field trips</li> <li>- Youngest director in camp history</li> </ul>

(2) Below is a summary of key performance data under Stefin Pasternak's leadership.

**Table 16: Stefin Pasternak Academic Leadership Data**

Year	School	Data Points	Compare Against
2017-18	High Tech High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 22.3 average composite ACT score &amp; 1105 average composite SAT score (equivalent to a 22 composite on ACT)</li> <li>- 100% graduation rate with 99% university ready diplomas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 18.9 New Orleans average composite ACT score</li> <li>- 86.6% San Diego graduation rate &amp; 72% New Orleans graduation rate</li> </ul>
2016-17	Green Charter School	- 78.5 School Performance Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 70.8 Orleans Parish combined District Performance Score</li> <li>- 86.8 Louisiana State Performance Score</li> </ul>
2015-16	Green Charter School	- 79 School Performance Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 84.9 Orleans Parish combined District Performance Score</li> <li>- 83 Louisiana State Performance Score</li> </ul>
2014-15	Green Charter School	- 73.6 School Performance Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 83.4 Orleans Parish combined District Performance Score</li> <li>- 88.8 Louisiana State Performance Score</li> </ul>
2013-14	KIPP Believe College Prep	- 66% Basic & above on iLEAP ELA for my class	- 62% RSD NOLA
2012-13	KIPP Believe College Prep	- 73% Basic & above on iLEAP ELA for my class	- 58% RSD NOLA
2011-12	KIPP Believe College Prep	- 67% Basic & above on iLEAP ELA for my class	- 54% RSD NOLA
2010-11	KIPP Believe College Prep	- 84% Basic & above on iLEAP ELA for my class	- 52% RSD NOLA



(3) Below is a summary of leadership positions Stefin Pasternak has held in which he was responsible for the operations and finances of the program.

**Table 17: Stefin Pasternak Operations & Finance Leadership Roles**

Leadership Role	Responsibilities	Impact
School Leader in Residence, High Tech High, 2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acting as Assistant Director apprenticing with School Director</li> <li>- Supporting staff development, strategic planning, budget management, and talent management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboratively developed 2018-19 Operating Budget</li> <li>- Helped manage 2017-18 Budget</li> <li>- Helped streamline operational systems for recording and validating daily attendance</li> </ul>
Lead Chef Educator, Edible Schoolyard New Orleans @ Green Charter, 2014-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lead teacher and administrator for ESYNOLA’s teaching kitchen serving 520 students annually with over 600 classes and 60 special events</li> <li>- Budget &amp; talent management</li> <li>- Managed the safety and operations of a professional teaching kitchen</li> <li>- Coordinated logistics and operations for hundreds of special events and trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through a combination of budget management and fundraising, we expanded one of our signature programs by 500% while adding new programming</li> <li>- 0 incidents of major safety incidents in any classes, events, or trips and zero incidents of hygiene violations in the kitchen</li> </ul>
Director Larkspur Art n’ Sport Camp 2003-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lead operations of an open-enrollment public summer camp in a public park</li> <li>- Talent &amp; program management for 150 campers and 22 staff</li> <li>- Designed and lead camp operations and activities in arts, crafts, cooking, sports, and games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0 major safety incidents</li> <li>- Increased enrollment by 20%</li> <li>- Expanded experiential field trips</li> <li>- Youngest director in camp history</li> </ul>

(4) Below is a summary of key operational and financial data under Stefin Pasternak’s leadership.

**Table 18: Stefin Pasternak Operations & Finance Leadership Data**

Year	Organization	Data Points
2017-18	High Tech High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Projected 8% budget surplus for FY 2017-18 \$6M budget (in addition to 3% contingency built into budget)</li> <li>- Reduced time it takes to collect &amp; verify daily attendance by 20% helping school improve average daily attendance by over 1% from semester 1 to semester 2</li> </ul>
2016-17	ESYNOLA Teaching Kitchen @ Green Charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased budget by 15% through fundraising and strategic programming</li> </ul>



17	Kitchen @ Green Charter	partnerships - 0 major safety incidents or inspection violations
2015-16	ESYNOLA Teaching Kitchen @ Green Charter	- 4% surplus on program budget - 0 major safety incidents or inspection violations
2014-15	ESYNOLA Teaching Kitchen @ Green Charter	- 2% surplus on program budget - 0 major safety incidents or inspection violations
2004	Larkspur Art 'n' Sport Camp	- 3% surplus on program budget - retained 100% of 22 person staff - 0 major safety incidents
2003	Larkspur Art 'n' Sport Camp	- 2% surplus on program budget - retained 100% of 20 person staff - 0 major safety incidents

**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) Our CEO, Director of Finance (who has facilities acquisition, engineering, and design expertise), and Director of Operations (who has facilities management expertise) are working with commercial realtor Paul Richard from NAI/Latter & Blum and lead architect Mark Hash from Eskew+Dumez+Ripple (who serves on our Community Board of Directors) to lease a temporary, private facility for our first 2-3 years of operation while we fund, finance and secure our permanent Living Campus. We plan for both our launch site and permanent campus to be in New Orleans East.

Based on our work so far, we've identified at least 7 potential viable locations that have the square footage, proximity to an RTA bus route, and characteristics we need and have begun budgeting and planning accordingly for the acquisition of one of our top choices upon charter approval. This will give us ample time for any necessary planning, renovations, inspections, and finishing touches prior to the first day of school.

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



Our facilities acquisition timeline is as follows:

**Table 19: Facilities Acquisition Timeline**

Assigned to	Major Task	Minor Tasks	Sub Taks	Due Date	Status
DO	Secure Facilities	Ribbon cutting for Living Campus		6/1/23	On Track
DO		Break ground on Living Campus		3/1/22	On Track
DO		Building/development plans for Living Campus complete		1/1/22	On Track
DF		Purchase land/property for Living Campus		10/1/21	On Track
DF		Secure financing for Living Campus		6/1/21	On Track
CEO		Launch Living Campus capital campaign		1/1/20	On Track
DF		Living Campus fundraising & financing proposal approved by Board		7/1/19	On Track
DF		Hire Living Campus design & development team	Commercial realtor: Paul Richard	6/1/18	Complete
DF			Developer	11/30/18	On Track
DF			Architect	11/30/18	On Track
DO		Move in to temporary facility		6/1/19	On Track
DF		Lease temporary facility	2 - 3 year lease	3/15/19	On Track
DF			Insurance	3/1/19	On Track
CEO		Identify temporary facility & begin negotiating lease		1/1/19	On Track
DO		Visioning programming w/ architect(s)		2/1/19	On Track
DF		Research private financing and building of facilities		1/1/19	Ongoing
CEO		Explore private facilities possibilities		12/31/18	Ongoing
CEO		Draft 10-year facilities plan & schedule		7/31/18	Complete
CEO		Explore facilities possibilities w/ OPSB		12/1/17	Complete

(2) For our temporary facility, we anticipate using a non-traditional, private space that can accommodate our projected enrollment through year 3 (240 students) with a minimum of at least 65 sq. ft. per student (15,600 sq. ft. total). Our programming can be adaptable to a variety of types of spaces, but we will seek a space with a relatively open floor plan that has access to the outdoors (green space and water access especially), capacity for at least a two rooms that can support the safe use of industrial building tools, an industrial kitchen, and a property with larger, adaptive space for group gatherings.

For our permanent Living Campus, we are seeking to build a space that is no smaller than 20,800 sq. ft. (at full enrollment of a projected 320 students, this would give us 65 sq. ft. per student) that utilizes adaptable classrooms (classrooms with moving walls that can divide or unify the classroom space depending on need) that can each safely and effectively



operate both industrial building equipment and high-tech computer technology in a building that is sustainably built and operated (we are developing plans for our Living Campus to be able to operate off-grid as a model of a sustainable school campus for New Orleans). The campus will also include an industrial kitchen, a multipurpose space large enough for a group twice the size of the entire school to gather, and the land needs to accommodate ideally at least 1 acre of food production and ½ an acre of outdoor green space for physical exercise. Depending on the siting, we may also include plans for a gym. The Living Campus will be built to meet all federal, state, local, and OPSB standards for facility safety and will adhere to fire/life safety codes and ADA standards.

(3) We are committed to meeting all state, local, and OPSB standards for facility safety and maintenance. This includes and is not limited to collaboration with OPSB during site selection and build processes, conducting regular self-inspections and cooperation with all external inspections, establishing comprehensive emergency preparedness guidelines and implementing training for all staff and students, available comprehensive first aid and training for staff in administration of first aid, established contacts with all local first responders and service providers, and processes for keeping records of all safety incidents which may occur.

To ensure proper maintenance, we have dedicated resources to regular school maintenance and have scheduled depreciation for all school resources to make sure we are saving in preparation for major maintenance efforts down the road.

(4) Living School will meet all codes and standards for fire/life safety and access for people with disabilities. This includes and is not limited to careful consideration of codes and standards during site selection, adherence to all codes and standards during design/build processes, conducting regular self-inspections, and cooperation with all external inspections.

## 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.**

(1) See Attachment 23-Budget.

(2) See Attachment 24-Budget Narrative.

(3) The Leadership Team of our Staff Executive Council (chaired by the CEO/School Director and including the Directors of Finance, Operations, Student Life, and Student Support) and the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors (chaired by the Treasurer of the Board) collaboratively develop Living School's annual budget. The budget is designed to reflect strategic priorities agreed upon by the Board of Directors, Student Legislature, Family Advisory Council, and Staff Executive Council.

The first draft of the budget is circulated to our financial services partner, 4th Sector Solutions for feedback before being sent with 4th Sector's notes, to the Student Legislature and Family Advisory Council for input.

Once input is gathered from the Student Legislature and Family Advisory Council, the draft budget is presented to the full Community Board of Directors for final approval and monitored throughout the year by the Director of Finance (DF) and the Finance Committee for reasonableness. The budget adoption follows the "Steps Necessary for Adoption and Implementation of a Local School Board Budget" as dictated by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor.

On a monthly basis, the DF produces and presents the financial board package highlighting budget to actual results, actual and forecasted balance sheets, as well as monitoring key financial ratios. The DF analyzes the budget regularly and meets with the CEO/School Director and Treasurer of the Board to reforecast budget assumptions to reflect the actual financial condition of the school. This analysis includes and is not limited to monitoring budgeted enrollment numbers versus actual enrollment, staffing plans, and analyzing any unforeseen expenditures. The CEO/School Director determines the day-to-day priorities for the school and communicates with the DF to reallocate resources and/or adjust budget line items to maximize the use of the school's resources, while maintaining the quality of the school's program and ensuring that the needs of its students are met.

(4) Living School is committed to developing and maintaining financial policies and procedures that ensure sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility, and accounting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) rules and regulations. Strong financial policies and procedures enable us to meet our financial needs and obligations, ensure long-term financial stability and viability, and protect our tangible assets.

Living School, with assistance from 4th Sector Solutions, has adopted a Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual to govern all aspects of financial management of the school. To properly segregate duties within LIVING SCHOOL, the Board Chairperson, the Treasurer of the Board and Board approved LIVING SCHOOL employees are the only individuals with signatory authority and are responsible for authorizing all cash transactions subject to authorization levels approved by the board.



Living School is committed to implementing an internal accounting control system that promotes and protects sound management practices, both general and financial. Living School and 4th Sector Solutions are further committed to assuring that the information generated as a result of these controls is: reliable and useful for making programmatic and other decisions; effective in the process of asset and records management; instrumental in assuring that the school's policies are followed; and maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Living School's Director of Finance is an Ed.D. with over a decade of experience in school finance & operations. In addition, the school has engaged 4th Sector Solutions (4SS) to support them with financial management. 4SS staff has in-depth knowledge surrounding the finances, operations, and compliance reporting required for all schools.

(5) Living School will complete an annual financial audit for each fiscal year as required by Louisiana Charter Law and in accordance with La.R.S. 24:513 et seq. This annual audit is performed by an independent Certified Public Accountant duly authorized to practice and licensed as such by the Louisiana Board of Examiners, and the audit will be provided to the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) by the stated deadline. The CPA also prepares the IRS form 990.

Annually, Living School also engages the auditor to perform the Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) dictated by the LLA on the control and compliance areas identified in the LLA's Statewide AUPs.

Auditors are selected by the Board's Finance Committee and work closely with the CEO/School Director, Director of Finance, and 4th Sector Solutions to complete the annual audit and AUPs. Findings, if any, are reported directly to the Finance Committee and to the Board of Directors.

(6) Living School takes the appropriate steps to ensure financial transparency both to OPSB and the public. Budgets, Audit Reports, financial information provided at Board Meetings, and the AUPs are available for inspection both on our website and in-person upon request. In addition, these reports are submitted to the appropriate parties by the specified submission dates.

Each year Living School will publish a public notice at least 15 days prior to the first Board meeting at which the Board will discuss the annual budget. The Board will give the public opportunity to comment on proposed budget before approval, and the Board will vote to adopt budget at the following meeting. This ensures that there is at least one public hearing on the proposed budget, pursuant to La. R.S. 39:1307(C). Once budget has been adopted, Living School will provide the required public notice. The school will submit timely, accurate quarterly financial statements to OPSB including: balance sheet and actual versus expected budgeted revenues and expenditures report, and other statements as required, including annual financial reports. After completion of the annual audit, the auditor will present findings to the Board in a properly noticed open meeting. The Board will submit audit report to OPSB.

(7) Living School may choose to hire outside contractors and consultants for reasons of specialized skills and knowledge, as well as to allow for financial segregation of duties. In selecting outside contractors and consultants, Living School abides by Louisiana Public Bid Law R.S. 38:2211 when required. The school ensures contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts. In accordance with our mission of cultivating equity, Living School strives to work with disadvantaged business enterprises whenever possible.

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

### Question 1

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