

In Response To

The National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Recommendation Report 2018

Submitted to

Orleans Parish School Board November 8, 2018

Commitment to New Orleans Youngsters

The Orleans Parish School Board and the applicant share a deep commitment to more effectively serve students and families in New Orleans. Moreover, we believe that the Board and applicant agree that there are students who currently are being well served, and others who not well served by the existing public schools in the city. Our proposal focuses on students who currently are not succeeding.

The following is an attempt to do two things:

- a. Document the ability of the applicant, based on previous work, to create a strong chartered public school
- b. Point to material in the application that has been submitted, which responds to each of the concerns recently shared in a review of the application.

Previous work by the applicant. While there are hundreds of details involved in creating a new charter public school, we believe that the following is worth noting: The proposed school leader, Dr. Shawn A. Hearn has a proven track record of performance. Just last year, he was an integral member of the leadership team charged with the conversion of McMain High School from OPSB to Inspire NOLA Charter Schools. Under his leadership, during this year of conversion McMain improved its school culture, moved its school performance grade from a "C" to a "B", and ACT composite scores improved by 10 points. Under his leadership the school was also able to earn accreditation and the special education department was removed from corrective action after being in corrective action for several years prior to the conversion. This information helps demonstrate the ability of the applicant to pull together the hundreds of details necessary for a successful school. It is not intended as a complete statement of applicant capability.

We now turn to responses to specific concerns raised in a recent review.

1. Introduction:

This is in fact the second independent evaluation afforded to THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL during this process. A previous review of the proposal by Tandem Learning found "The plan demonstrates understanding of District needs and makes a compelling case that the model will fulfill priorities the District has identified for improving public education, including providing families with access to a diverse set of options. If the school aims to build a distinctive program or

serve a particular population, the purpose and methodology are clear and compelling” (Tandem Learning Partners, May 1, 2018,pg. 8).

Moreover, the applicant recently participated in an interview with representatives of the New Orleans Parish Board. We asked to their satisfaction. In each case, the answer was “yes.” We hope that the following information helps support those responses. during that interview if the questions that NOPB representatives raised had been answered to their satisfaction.

Salient Details and Examples of Points To Consider

I. Pg. 5 - Mission Statement

- A. The evaluation failed to properly quote the mission of the proposed school. They reference Part 1, page 21. The quote cited does not appear on the page as cited. The school’s mission is clearly outlined in several places throughout the proposal. Most notably in the Executive Summary where respondents are asked to explain the mission and vision of the school. Part 1 pages 2-3, paragraph 3 states: “The purpose of THE COUMMUNITY SCHOOL is fueled by the passion of those who are aware of the need for mental and behavioral health services in our city and the importance of a high quality education for every child in the city. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL is uniquely situated to provide services for students until the age of 25. Services are designed to support students as they matriculate towards meeting post-secondary educational goals and/or transitioning to a career. Our aim is to ensure that all THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL’S scholars are well prepared to be productive, independent community members ready to thrive in the city of New Orleans or wherever they decide to make their home. The norms or principles that drive SCHOOL’S mission are rooted in the seven domains of Trauma Informed Care.”

II. Plan Summary – Pg. 7

- A. The last statement of the plan summary states that “The goal is to reintegrate students back into their home schools with support as soon as possible”. This statement is incorrect and is not found in the proposal submitted. Part 1, page 4, paragraph 1 in the section Academic Model best states the goal of the academic model: “The goal of THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL is to integrate every child into a traditional general education environment with the skills needed to meet each child’s individual educational, social, behavioral and emotional goals to support their post-secondary educational and career goals”.

Understanding this fundamental concept is critical to understanding how the academic model works.

III. Analysis – page 7

- A. The first paragraph in the recent evaluation states: “The School section does not meet the standard because much of this section neglected to provide all required information and sufficient detail to clearly communicate the applicant’s plans. Due to a lack of detail in the written application, this analysis is based primarily on capacity interview responses.”

As a part of the application process, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL responded to a Request for Clarification from NACSA. Their RFC did not mention any need for clarification in this area. The RFC document clearly states that: “The RFC may address the following issues, among others: 1) sections of the proposal are in contradiction with one another; 2) Rubric section cannot be scored due to lack of information; 3) financial forms have errors that prevent meaningful evaluation.” If additional detail was needed to assist in the evaluation of the proposal, it was incumbent upon NACSA to present this need during the Request for Clarification stage of the process. The final evaluation recommendation is not the proper stage to suggest that not enough information was available to make a valid decision. The failure of NACSA to act in accordance with the rules and guidelines that they established and using their failure to support their contention that not enough information was available to make a valid decision is tantamount to not reading the proposal and suggesting that it’s the applicant’s fault.

Tandem Learning’s report found that the proposal included sufficient detail to clearly communicate the applicant’s plans. Tandem Learning wrote: “The plan demonstrates understanding of District needs and makes a compelling case that the model will fulfill priorities the District has identified for improving public education, including providing families with access to a diverse set of options. If the school aims to build a distinctive program or serve a particular population, the purpose and methodology are clear and compelling” (Tandem Learning Partners, May 1, 2018, pg. 8).

The recommendation by Tandem Learning Partners is more consistent with the comments and feedback that the applicant has received from national organization who support new school creation around the country.

- B. Analysis – page 7, paragraph 3 asserts “...clear information about the school’s academic program was not provided.” “Given the lack of information about curriculum, instruction, and assessment, it is not clear how the proposed program will meet state requirements for graduation. This information is provided in detail in Part 2, Academic Model and Schedule, pg. 3-11 and High School Specific Questions pg. 12-18 Page 15 of the proposal clearly outlines in writing and by visual representation the requirements to earn a JumpStart TOPS Tech Career Diploma and a TOPS University Diploma.

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- C. Analysis – page 7, paragraph 4 begins by stating: “It is not clear that the applicant has sufficient knowledge about federal and state requirements for identifying and serving with special needs.” The founding Board and design team have more than 40 years of experience in special education. The Founder/CEO and School Leader, Dr. Hearn, holds advanced degrees in special education, leadership and law. He holds active certifications in several states in multiple areas of special education, general education and leadership. Dr. Hearn has also earned certification and endorsements by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service as a federally recognized mediator. He has served as a consultant in on State level special education mediation proceedings, provides professional development and graduate level courses for aspiring special education teachers.

As noted above, he was an integral member of the leadership team charged with the conversion of McMain High School from OPSB to Inspire NOLA Charter Schools. Under his leadership, during this year of conversion McMain improved its school culture, moved its school performance grade from a “C” to a “B”, and ACT composite scores improved by 10 points. Under his leadership the school was also able to earn accreditation and the special education department was removed from corrective action after being in corrective action for several years prior to the conversion. This information helps demonstrate the ability of the applicant to pull together the hundreds of details necessary for a successful school.

- D. Analysis – page 7, paragraph 5, NACSA writes “...the applicant did not address plans for school culture, disciplinary system and student engagement in the Student Experience section.” This statement is unfounded and without merit. However, . Part 1 pg. 13-18 – Student Experience, provides a detailed narrative of school culture and engagement. In addition, Part 2 pg. 7-10 - Academic Model provides a detailed narrative and visual representation of the level system that will be in place. In this same paragraph, NACSA further demonstrates its professional negligence by asserting, “The application did not describe efforts to build community/parent support...”. Not only are these efforts described in detail in both sections 1 and 2 of the application, the applicant responded to this matter during the RFC stage of the application process and during the capacity interview. See page 4 of the RFC, Family & Community Engagement, Applicant Response which reads, “127 parents, guardians and students participated in the generation of application. Each participant completed a questionnaire identifying the needs of their community and the type of school they believed would best meet their needs.” This was a part of the “creation story” that the applicants presented during the capacity interview. The comments made here by NACSA further supports the contention that not only did the panel fail to read the proposal with fidelity, they have a very limited understanding of student experience and culture in a non-traditional learning environment. These items were discussed in detail during the Capacity Interview and the information is written in the proposal.

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- E. Analysis- page 8, paragraph 2, NACSA writes, "The application stated that the board will have six members but stated in the Request for Clarification that the board will have eleven members, however, three members of the current board are proposed school employees. No information was provided about transitioning from a founding board a governing board."

This statement and all subsequent statements in the paragraph are false. Part 1, pages 20-23, Governing Board describes in detail the roles necessary on the board, the responsibilities that align with each role, and identify who will play that role on the board. It also describes how the governing board will interact with the head of school. Monitor the school's overall performance, evaluate the school leader and CEO and many other details of the board in general. Part 2, pages 18-21, Governing Board, the applicant continues to provide succinct details about the operation of the board. In this section the applicant thoroughly describes how the board will expand and develop over time in the form of a "succession plan" and sharing roles and responsibilities. This section also describes training that the board will undertake and the need for ongoing professional development in targeted areas. The applicant's response to the RFC, page 6, Governing Board clearly states, "The desired board size is 11. This number will give the Board consistency as some offices reach term limits." At no point in the application does the applicant refer to having only 6 members. The number required by OPSB is 7. Further, in the area of Governance/Founding Group in the report prepared by Tandem Learning Partners, page 5, the evaluators assert, "The founding team is comprised of highly experienced educators with particular depth in special education. The governing board has adopted a committed structure that aligns with the vision and goals of the organization."

Conclusion

This process only afforded applicants one day to respond to the recommendation report prepared by NACSA. This responses only addresses two of three of the areas outlined in the report. In the final section, many of the same material errors are evident. The respondent simply did not have the time to continue a line by line examination of this report to in furtherance of the assertion that the report by NACSA should be reconsidered.

The recommendation report prepared by NACSA is in stark contrast to the report prepared by Tandem Learning. The report prepared by NACSA categorically fails to support the spirit of OPSB's application process by 1) failing to ask clarifying questions that would adequately inform their decision making, 2) failing to read the proposal with fidelity and 3) failing to have the required subject matter expertise in business, law, mental and behavioral health and high school operation to make an informed decision.

The evaluation panel of NACSA has demonstrated that they have neither the relative experience nor subject matter expertise required to adequately comprehend and make a valid decision on this applicant's highly specialized, special education based program. According to their biographies, none of the panelist have any special education experience, training or certification.

Conversely, subject matter expertise and experience abound with the evaluation team from Tandem Learning. The team has a wealth of experience in special education and law. In addition, the Tandem

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Learning team has ties to the New Orleans community and understands the need for such a unique, individualized learning experience that focuses on healing and learning.

Finally, the aforementioned details contained herein serve as prima facie evidence supporting the contention that the recommendation posited by NACSA should be excluded from the approval process.

To follow this writing are three supporting documents:

1. NACSA's recommendation report – 10 pages
2. NACSA'S request for clarification – 7 pages
3. Tandem Learning Partner's prospectus formative assessment -13 pages.

These documents should be published along with this writing to adequately support the contention of the applicant.

ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION REPORT 2018

National Association of Charter School Authorizers

November 5, 2018

New Charter School Application for

The Community School

Submitted by

Community Exceptional Children's Services Centers

Evaluation Team

TEAM LEAD: Dr. Iris Palazesi

EVALUATORS: Wanda Guillame

Anthony Oliver

3220 2120

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INTRODUCTION

Across New Orleans, more than 90 percent of public school students currently attend charter schools. These schools have led to a dramatic increase in the number of students meeting academic proficiency standards and the performance gap between students in Orleans Parish and Louisiana as a whole has dramatically decreased over the last 12 years.

Despite these gains, additional progress is needed. Every student deserves high quality schools where their interests will come first, where they and their families will have choice, and where educators will have the tools and support they need to be successful.

The Spring 2018 charter school application process seeks proposals from highly qualified applicants to open new Type 1 charter schools and transform existing district-run schools into Type 3 charter schools.

Focus on Quality

The 2018 Request for Proposals and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that approved charter school operators possess the capacity to implement a school model that is likely to dramatically increase student outcomes. Successful applicants will demonstrate high levels of expertise and capacity in the areas of curriculum and instruction, school finance, educational and operational leadership, and non-profit governance, as well as high expectations for excellence in student achievement and professional standards. An application that merits a recommendation for approval will present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how this school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans.

Evaluation Process

For the 2018 RFP cycle, OPSB partnered with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to manage the application process and to provide independent, merit-based recommendations regarding whether to approve or deny each proposal. NACSA assembled an independent evaluation team that included both national and local expertise related to charter school start-up and operation. This report from the evaluation team is a culmination of three stages of review:

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The evaluation team conducted individual and group assessment of the merits of the proposal based on the complete written submission. In the case of experienced school operators, OPSB and NACSA supplemented this written evaluation with due diligence to verify claims made in the proposal related to past performance.

CAPACITY INTERVIEW

After reviewing the application and discussing the findings of their individual reviews, the evaluation team conducted an in-person interview to assess the team's overall capacity to implement the proposal as written in the application.

CONSENSUS JUDGMENT

Following the capacity interview, the evaluation team came to consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial. The duty of the evaluation team is to recommend approval or denial of each application based on its merits against OPSB-approved evaluation criteria. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the members of OPSB.

Report Contents

This evaluation report includes the following:

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

RECOMMENDATION

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

EVALUATION

Analysis of the proposal based on four primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant team to execute the plan as presented:

School: academic model and schedule, LEA status, special student populations, goals and metrics, enrollment plans, school culture, and family and community engagement.

People: founder's submission, governing board, staff, mission critical partners, and education service providers.

Operations: start-up plan, facility, budget, and financial readiness.

EVALUATION: ADDENDA

For applicants on the existing or experienced operator tracks, applicants that are or will form a corporate partnership, schools whose primary instructional environment is computer-based or virtual, applicants seeking or potentially willing to seek a match to operate an existing Orleans public charter school or school facility, or applicants seeking to start, transform or convert a school serving Grades 9-12, an analysis of:

Experienced Operator Addendum (if applicable): past school performance, growth plan, scale strategy, and risks and associated contingency plans.

Corporate Partnership Addendum (if applicable): corporate partnership formation, corporate partner track record, legal relationships, and organizational structure.

Virtual School Addendum (if applicable): location, educational program, instructional staff, state and federally mandated services, evaluation and assessment, school operations, and parent and community involvement.

Transformation Addendum (if applicable): transformation overview, operator track record, educational program, school operations, metrics and goals, and community engagement.

High School Addendum (if applicable): state and district graduation standards, supporting success for all students – truancy prevention, remediation and intervention, ensuring college and career readiness, and strong start – 9th grade transition plan.

RATINGS CHARACTERISTICS

Evaluation teams assess each application against the published evaluation criteria. In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

Meets the Standard

The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

Meets the Standard with Reservations

The response meets the criteria in many respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

Approaches the Standard

The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in a number of areas

Does Not Meet the Standard

The response is wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Applicant Name:

Community Exceptional Children's Services Centers

Proposed School Name:

The Community School

Mission:

The school's mission is to "provide behavioral and mental health care support throughout the Greater New Orleans area" (Part 1, page 21).

Proposed Location:

To be determined

Enrollment Projections:

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Planned # Students</i>	<i>Maximum # Students</i>	<i>Grades Served</i>
2018-19	0	0	9-12
2019-20	110	120	9-12
2020-21	195	200	9-12
2021-22	295	300	9-12
2022-23	330	335	9-12
At Capacity	400	425	9-12

SECTION RATINGS

The Community School

Recommendation:

Denial

Summary of Section Ratings:

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others. *Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

SCHOOL

Does Not Meet the Standard

EXPERIENCED OPERATOR ADDENDUM (IF APPLICABLE)

N/A

PEOPLE

Does Not Meet the Standard

TRANSFORMATION ADDENDUM (IF APPLICABLE)

N/A

OPERATIONS

Does Not Meet the Standard

SCHOOL

The Community School

RATING:

Does Not Meet the Standard

Plan Summary:

The applicant has proposed a school that will operate as three autonomous units working together under one roof to meet the needs of youth who experience mental and behavioral health concerns. The units are (1) an open-enrollment day treatment and therapeutic day school, (2) suspension abatement and incarceration diversion programs, and (3) a community-based behavioral and mental health clinic for adolescents and young adults. The target population is students up to age 25 who are chronically disruptive, who are dealing with emotional/behavioral disorders, and/or who are facing suspensions or expulsions. Students will be able to enroll via the OneApp process or by referral from their home schools. Upon enrollment, students will receive diagnostic assessments and a progress plan with measurable benchmarks to determine how well each student is progressing toward being prepared for a less-restrictive environment. The goal is to reintegrate students back into their home schools with support as soon as possible.

Analysis:

The School section does not meet the standard because much of this section neglected to provide all required information and sufficient detail to clearly communicate the applicant's plans. Due to a lack of detail in the written application, this analysis is based primarily on capacity interview responses.

For example, clear information about the school's academic program was not provided, including curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessment. When asked during the interview about the curriculum to be used, the applicant discussed athletics, therapy, and internships. When asked to specifically identify the math curriculum, the applicant was unable to do so. The applicant was also asked during the interview about key instructional strategies and was unable to identify key instructional strategies that will be effective for the proposed student population. Further, the applicant was asked during the interview about the assessments planned for the school, including interim and summative assessments. The applicant was unable to speak to the specific assessments that will be used. Given the lack of information about curriculum, instruction, and assessment, it is not clear how the proposed program will meet state requirements for graduation.

It is not clear that the applicant has sufficient knowledge about federal and state requirements for identifying and serving students with special needs. During the interview, the applicant was asked how the school would respond to a suspected disability in a student. The applicant stated that the school provides a periodic wellness survey and would develop a plan for the student based on the survey results. This response did not indicate that the applicant has thorough and accurate knowledge about the federal and state requirements for identifying students with disabilities and raises questions about the applicant's capacity to implement a high-quality program.

In several sections the application was not responsive to the questions asked or the criteria. For example, the applicant did not address plans for school culture, disciplinary system, and student engagement in the Student Experience section. The applicant did not provide clear, well organized information regarding diploma pathways; systems to address students at risk; ensuring preparation for college and career success; and supports for successful transition from Grade 9 in the High School section. The application did not describe efforts to build community/parent support, address roles that parents have taken in the school's development, or describe in the Family and Community Engagement section how information about the school has been shared.

Each of these concerns raises questions about the applicant's preparation and capacity to implement the proposed program.

PEOPLE

The Community School

RATING:

Does Not Meet the Standard

Plan Summary:

The applicant has a governing board of six people with backgrounds in education, business development, juvenile justice, law, and mental health. The desired board size is 11 members. The board will have four committees: (1) Finance, (2) Compliance and Risk Management, (3) Academic Resilience and Performance, and (4) Clinical Resilience and Performance. The management team includes a CEO/executive director, director of academics, clinical director, dean of students, school operations manager, and business manager. All staff members must successfully participate in an initial training that focuses on integration based on positive differentiation, the tenets of trauma-informed practices and environment, and ongoing job-embedded professional development.

The Community School will seek a number of community partnerships, including high school principals, local charter management organization leaders, the special education and student services department(s) of OPSB, The Metropolitan Human Services District, The Center for Resilience, Tulane Medical School, Louisiana State University Medical School, Opportunity NOW, and the State Department of Juvenile Justice Services.

Analysis:

The People section does not meet the standard because many parts of this section neglected to provide required information and/or did not provide sufficient detail and evidence to clearly communicate the applicant's plans. Due to a lack of detail in the written application, this analysis is based primarily on capacity interview responses.

The application stated that the board will have six members but stated in the Request for Clarification that the board will have 11 members. However, three members of the current board are proposed school employees. No information was provided about transitioning from a founding board to a governing board, desired board composition, recruitment and selection of future board members, parent representation, orientation for new members, ongoing board development for all members, or how the board's strengths and weaknesses will be assessed.

The application did not enumerate board powers and duties, so it is unclear if the board has a thorough understanding of their responsibilities, including school leader evaluation, and open records and open meetings, which were not addressed. When asked during the interview about board responsibilities, the board's vice president stated that the board's responsibility is to follow the mission, hold everyone accountable, and engage the community. The applicant's lack of knowledge of key board responsibilities raises concerns about the board's ability to provide effective oversight of the proposed school.

The staffing plan is not clear because there is a lack of alignment among the organizational chart, staffing plan, and budget. For example, the organizational chart and staffing plan include interventionists and social workers but these positions are not evident in the budget. Additionally, the job descriptions did not include all essential information and responsibilities necessary to implement the school's plans. Further, the application acknowledged that there is a severe shortage of qualified professionals for the proposed student population but did not provide a recruitment plan.

It is not evident that the proposed school leader has an established track record of success with the proposed student population. Although the application identified academic programs for which the proposed school leader has been responsible, student performance data to demonstrate the leader's record of improving student achievement and/or ability to develop a high-performing team of teachers across multiple years were not provided.

The program appears to rely heavily on mission-critical partners but the partners named throughout the application and during the interview are not consistent and no contracts or memoranda of agreement have been executed. Each of these concerns raises questions about the applicant's preparation and capacity to implement the proposed program.

OPERATIONS

The Community School

RATING:

Does Not Meet the Standard

Plan Summary:

The facilities plan is a longitudinal plan that incorporates an incubation period followed by three distinct phases based on operational need and financial projection: (1) entering an agreement with the school district to renovate and occupy a vacant school building; (2) sharing a space temporarily with an existing, operating school; and (3) renting a space adequate for Year 1. An agreement with the local school district to occupy a school that is currently vacant at 3301 Sullen Place is the primary facility plan.

The school is planning to contract with 4th Sector Solutions for financial services. The start-up budget includes \$335,000 from the Walton Family Foundation and an HHT Fellowship, and a \$50,000 Innovative Education Programs Grant. Clinical operations will generate revenue as a certified community-based mental and behavioral health clinic; and the suspension abatement program will generate revenue on a per-pupil basis. The majority of expenditures are allocated for instruction and support services salaries.

Analysis:

The Operations section does not meet the standard because thorough information and specific detail were missing from several parts of this section and the applicant was not responsive to all the application questions or criteria. Due to a lack of detail in the written application, this analysis is based primarily on capacity interview responses.

It is not evident that the applicant has a sound facility plan. When asked during the interview if a facility had been identified, the applicant stated that an unused school district elementary school has been identified but the applicant has not talked to the school district about using the property.

The application included detailed information regarding the school's financial services plan, including contracting for back-office financial support with 4th Sector Solutions and hiring a qualified school business manager. However, no information was provided regarding cost-cutting measures if the school has a budget shortfall; the roles of the governing board and the school site leadership in the budgeting process; accounting and control systems; securing the annual audit; financial transparency; or awarding contracts. The Budget Narrative (Attachment 24) was not provided, as required. The absence of required information raises questions about the applicant's capacity to implement the proposed program and be fiscally responsible.

The budget included start-up funds from the Walton Family Foundation and the HHT Fellowship but the applicant stated during the interview that funds have not been awarded. The budget also noted \$10,000 in start-up funds from six schools but the applicant stated during the interview that these funds are not secured. The school's financial plan includes accessing Medicare reimbursement and fees from families, which raises significant concerns. The lack of supporting evidence raises concerns about the viability of the applicant's plan.

Finally, several aspects of the budget (Attachment 23) raise questions and concerns. For example, the salary structure does not seem realistic and it is unclear how salaries were determined. The executive assistant and office manager are to be paid the same rate as teachers, which does not seem reasonable or aligned with local salary structures. Custodial salaries seem quite high and the estimate of the facility lease does not seem reasonable (.4 percent of school revenue). These issues raise concerns about the fiscal viability of the proposed plan.

Each of these concerns raises questions about the applicant's preparation and capacity to implement the proposed program.

EVALUATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Evaluator's Name

Dr. Iris Palazesi

Dr. Palazesi is an independent education consultant specializing in the areas of charter school applications, grant applications, and educational research. She has worked with clients to secure more than \$21 million in grant awards and more than 80 approved charter school applications. Dr. Palazesi served on the board of directors of a high-performing charter school in Tallahassee, Florida, for nine years, including four years as board chair. Dr. Palazesi has also worked for the Florida Department of Education as Program Specialist for Gifted Students, Supervisor of Exceptional Student Education Services, and Interim Administrator for Title I. Prior to moving to Florida, Dr. Palazesi was a university professor at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and Thomas University in Thomasville, Georgia. Dr. Palazesi earned her Bachelor degree in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois ; her Master degree in Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago; and her Doctorate degree from the University of Illinois.

Evaluator's Name

Anthony Oliver

Anthony Oliver is currently an assistant principal in the Jefferson County School System in Birmingham, Alabama. Most recently, Anthony served as executive director at Breakthrough Birmingham, an education nonprofit dedicated to providing high-quality academic programming to underserved students and preparing the next generation of teachers. Anthony has also served as a high school mathematics teacher and coach, and has worked as a principal intern at Newton North High School where he worked to create access to challenging academic curriculum for African American students and students from low socioeconomic classes. Anthony holds a Bachelor in mathematics from the Virginia Military Institute, an Master in secondary education - mathematics curriculum and instruction from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and a Master of Education in school leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Evaluator's Name

Wanda Guillame

Wanda Guillame is an educational consultant providing support to schools and districts in the areas of instructional and leadership coaching, professional development, and school and district turnaround. In addition, she collaborates with state and local education agencies to offer charter school evaluation and recommendation expertise for authorizers in need of internal capacity to assess the organizational, operational, and educational rigor of charter school applications. Wanda has served as a teacher, principal and chief academic officer, and is a leader in building capacity among school leadership teams and developing innovative strategies to turn around failing schools. She holds a Bachelor in Elementary Education from Loyola University, a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Administration from the University of New Orleans, and holds an Educational Leader Level 3 certification for the State of Louisiana.



ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
2018 CHARTER SCHOOL RFC
Request for Clarification

OVERVIEW

After completing a detailed review of the written application, the evaluation team has identified areas where clarification is required in order to fully evaluate the proposal. The Request for Clarification (RFC) is meant to ensure an applicant provides the best articulation of their plan. The RFC is an opportunity to provide **clarification** in writing, but is **not an opportunity to present new information**. Finally, it is not meant to offer an applicant an opportunity to revise their entire application or to replace the in-person interview.

The RFC may address the following issues, among others:

- Sections of the proposal are in contradiction with one another;
- Rubric section cannot be scored due to lack of information; or
- Financial forms have errors that prevent meaningful evaluation.

All responses to the Request for Clarification must be uploaded to Fluid Review by 12:00pm CT on Wednesday, October 3, 2018. The evaluation team will consider all elements of the application when developing their final recommendation reports.

YOU MUST USE THIS FORM TO PREPARE YOUR RESPONSES.

Incorrectly formatted submissions, or submissions received after this deadline, will not be assessed by OPSB staff or the evaluation team or otherwise be considered in the application evaluation process. No opportunity to correct submissions will be given.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR RESPONSE

- 1 Carefully review the RFC from the evaluation team below and address each question listed for each applicable section in the corresponding box labeled "Applicant Response." You **may not** submit additional information beyond what is requested. Any additional information submitted will not be reviewed by the evaluation team. **NUMBER** your responses in accordance with the question numbers posed by the evaluation team.
- 2 All responses must be provided as a narrative in the correct box labeled "Applicant Response" with the following **two** exceptions:
 - a If you have added additional board members, or have identified a school leader since submitting your initial application, attach a current resume.
 - b If specific questions are asked about your budget workbook, you have the option of submitting an updated **Financial Plan Workbook** (Attachment 16). If you decide to submit an updated workbook, **ALL** sheets in the workbook must be included, regardless of whether or not they were updated. Additionally, you **MUST** clearly indicate in your narrative responses how the workbook has been updated to address the questions and concerns identified by the evaluation team.
- 3 When you have completed this form, save as a PDF using the naming convention "OPSB_APPLICANT NAME_RFC.pdf" and upload the document to Fluid Review.



- 4 Once you have compiled (if applicable) updated leadership team information, **save your documents as a SINGLE PDF file**, using the naming convention "OPSB_APPLICANT NAME_UPDATED Leadership.pdf" and upload the document to Fluid Review.
- 5 If you are submitting an updated Financial Plan workbook, save it as a MS Excel document (.xls or .xlsx ONLY), using the convention "OPSB_APPLICANT NAME_UPDATED Budget" and upload the document to Fluid Review.

ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
2018 CHARTER SCHOOL RFA
 Request for Clarification

Applicant Group: Community Exceptional Children's Services Centers
Proposed School Name: The Community School

Leadership Team Update	
Have there been any changes to your leadership team (including additions or resignations from the governing board, school leader, etc.) since you filed your initial application? <input type="checkbox"/> YES x NO	
If YES, please list each individual involved here and BRIEFLY explain the circumstances for the addition or departure of the individual. For each new member of the leadership team listed, attach a current resume. For new board members, also attach a completed, signed Board Member Information Form.	
APPLICANT RESPONSE:	

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Application Section	Information Requested by Review Team
Section I: School	
Enrollment Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please provide the estimated total number of students that could be served at The Community School. Please list the school's enrollment procedures.
APPLICANT RESPONSE:	<p>I. The estimated total number of students that could be served at THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will average 90 students per grade level.</p> <p>II. Enrollment Procedures</p> <p>THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL is an open enrollment school. All students in the city are welcome to attend through the OneAPP process. Students with a demonstrated need for the unique services provided at THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will be given priority based upon the severity, documentation of the duration, intensity and frequency of one or more of the characteristics of the disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders. Well documented evidence of these characteristics impeding the child's academic progress must be demonstrated before intake. Records from MTSS and SLC teams</p>

coupled with an interview with the student and parent(s) are essential components of this process. Students with a recent request for evaluation may be given priority in this process. Many students who will be enrolled through this process may have been deemed chronically disruptive, truant, and/or over aged. This population will account for more than 10% of the school's population.

Students with existing IEPs may be referred by their base school or other placement through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. A member of the leadership team of THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will attend all transfer and intake IEPs initiated from other schools, agencies and facilities. An IEP team may consider services at THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL for a child based upon documentation of the severity, duration, frequency, and intensity of one or more of the characteristics of the disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). This documentation must include prior extension of less restrictive services and data that indicate such services have not enabled the child to benefit educationally. Students coming from hospitals and residential facilities must have a medical treatment plan in place prior to initiating the intake process at THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL. Students with existing IEPs will account for 75% of the school's population.

Students who have been deemed chronic disruptions in their base schools, transitioning from judicial placements, homeschools and homebound students may also be considered. This population will account for 10% of the school's population.

Finally, students may attend THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL through its suspension abatement program. This program allows participating schools to refer students in lieu of suspension. Students participating in this program will have access to the full range of services provided by THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL including counseling and therapy and all related wrap around services.

Typically, all students entering THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL become fully enrolled. Depending on the student's plan of progression and/or IEP, a student may move between placements for dual enrollment, enrollment and extracurricular activities as deemed appropriate. In some cases, schools will pay a daily rate for students participating in the suspension abatement program. Typically, this program runs 4-6 weeks. Students participate in the same initial intake process as all other students attending THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL including a comprehensive psychological and educational screening. During the 4-6 week program, students are afforded the opportunity to continue working on coursework to meet the requirements for courses they are taking at their base school. In addition, these students are introduced to a social/emotional learning curriculum that includes peer mediation and conflict management training. Students who

	<p>successfully complete the program will be trained Peer Mediators. They will receive a certificate of completion, a sports coat that identifies them as Peer Mediators and a Coach to keep track of their progress when they return to their base schools. Students are expected to build Peer Mediation Programs at their base schools upon their return. In some cases, students attending the suspension abatement program may elect to transfer to THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL. All are welcome.</p> <p>THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL is uniquely situated to provide day treatment, family services, prevention and service coordination for court involved students. Having a dedicated liaison working directly with local and state- based juvenile justice agencies, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL is able to provide services tailored to meet the individual needs of children. Given THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL'S city-wide platform, it is uniquely situated to work with local schools to help kids who may demonstrate behavior or academic needs that are traditional characteristics of a student at risk of not completing high school or becoming part of the juvenile justice system. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL's embedded Functional Family Therapy (FFT) provides high-quality, tailored, family counseling and intervention for all attending scholars. This may include regular home visits to work with the student and the student's family to address issues that may be at the center of the disruptive behavior.</p>
<p>Special Student Populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school plan to identify and/or provide gifted/talented services?
<p>APPLICANT RESPONSE:</p>	<p>THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will provide a range of services to meet the needs of students. This includes identification of and services for gifted/talented students. Specifically, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will provide gifted/talented services in visual and performing arts in conjunction with its music and art therapy programming.</p>
<p>Family & Community Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please list any parents involved in the development of the application or the school. • Please list the steps in the school's grievance process.
<p>APPLICANT RESPONSE:</p>	<p>I. 127 parents, guardians and students participated in the generation of this application. Each participant completed a questionnaire identifying the needs of their community and the type of school they believed would best meet their needs.</p> <p>II. Grievance procedures under Section 504 and Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) are aligned with local, state and federal guidelines. Disability based harassment includes unwelcome conduct based on an individual's (e.g., student's) actual or perceived</p>

disability. Harassers can be students, school staff, or even someone visiting the school, such as a student or employee from another school. Disability harassment can take many forms, including slurs, taunts, stereotypes, or name-calling, as well as disability motivated physical threats, attacks, or other hateful conduct.

Grievances may be submitted by students, parents/guardians, and employees who allege disability based discriminatory action by an employees, students, and third parties. The following procedures apply to such grievances:

Grievances must be submitted to the appropriate "School Leader or Designee" within 180 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.

The person filing the grievance ("complainant") may appeal the decision of the School Leader or Designee by writing to the Chief Executive Officer within 15 days of receiving the School Leader's decision. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL assures that the appeal shall be conducted in an impartial manner by an impartial decision-maker. The CEO (or designee) shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after receiving the complainant's appeal.

If the investigation yields a determination that discrimination has occurred, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL shall take affirmative steps to prevent recurrence of such discrimination and appropriately address discriminatory effects, if any, on the complainant and others.

The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

Retaliation is prohibited against any person involved in the grievance or investigation process, including the complainant or any other participant.

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL shall keep the complaint and the investigation confidential to the extent provided by applicable federal and Louisiana law.

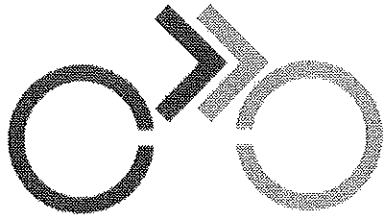
The School Leader may request in writing an extension of decision time lines if received by the complainant within 20 days of the School Leader's receipt of the complaint. The request must include reasons for the request. The extension request may not exceed 10 days.

The complainant may request in writing an extension of appeal time lines if received by the School Leader within 10 days of the complainant's receipt of the School Leader's decision. The request must include reasons for the request. The School Leader's decision to grant the extension and, if granted, its duration is final.

	Once a complaint has been received by the School Leader, Winter/Christmas holiday break time shall not be included in the calculation of any grievance time line.
Section II: People	
Governing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please clarify the desired governing board size and the desired experience and/or skill sets of potential governing board members.
APPLICANT RESPONSE:	The desired governing board size is 11. This number will give the Board consistency as some offices reach term limits. We value a wealth of diversity on our Board. The experience and/or skill sets of potential governing board members include: finance, business management, political capital, health and human services, juvenile justice and education reform.
Section III: Operations	
Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please clarify whether the school identified a facility, and if so, provide the address. • Please clarify whether the school is planning to purchase or lease a facility.
APPLICANT RESPONSE:	<p>The facilities plan is dynamic. It allows for adequate planning to mitigate any potential threats to the success of the project. The facilities plan is a longitudinal plan that incorporates an incubation period followed by three distinct phases. Each phase is based on operational need and financial projection. The plan provides for 3 scenarios: 1) entering an agreement with the school district to renovate and occupy a vacant school building, 2) sharing a space temporarily with an existing, operating school and 3) renting a space adequate for year 1. Ideally, an agreement with the local school district to occupy a school that is currently vacant at 3301 Sullen Place is the primary facility plan. The building will require some initial renovations and repairs before it could be ready for business. District officials suggest that we plan at least 3 months for renovation.</p> <p>Incubation period - Months 0-9 Projected cost for operation and maintenance of facilities services: \$139, 932.75 - \$208,055.00</p> <p>THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will operate a single campus during this period adequately situated to serve up to 150 students and a staff of up to 20 personnel. Ideally, this space will be shared with an existing school or an office space. During this time, the school's leadership will be able to focus on putting the necessary systems in place to support the academic model and testing those systems. During this time, the school's leadership will be able to realistically project needs in all three areas of the school: General Academic Operations, Clinical Operations, and Suspension Abatement Program. Each of</p>

	<p>these areas will produce revenue. During this time, a site will be selected for relocation based upon revenue projections and enrollment.</p> <p>Phase I - Months 9-12 Projected cost for operation and maintenance of facilities services: \$208,055.00 - \$303,660.00 THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will operate a single campus during this period adequately situated to serve up to 200 students and a staff of up to 50 personnel. This will be a single school site designed specifically to meet the unique needs of THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL. There are several sites to consider that belong to the local school district. Many of these sites will require moderate preparation before they are ready for occupancy. The school district will help to make the selected site ready for occupancy. Enrollment during this phase will not exceed 200 students in order to allow for any needed preparation of the building.</p> <p>Phase II - Months 12-24 Projected cost for operation and maintenance of facilities services: \$208,055.00 - \$303,660.00 THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will operate a single campus during this period adequately situated to serve up to 300 students and a staff of up to 60 personnel. Enrollment during this period will not exceed 300 students. All renovations and preparation needed to support up to 300 students and a staff of up to 60 personnel will be finalized during this phase.</p> <p>Phase III - Months 24-36 Projected cost for operation and maintenance of facilities services: \$208,055.00 - \$303,660.00 THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL will operate a single campus during this period adequately situated to serve up to 400 students and a staff of up to 60 personnel. During this time, enrollment will not exceed 400 students. All equipment, renovations and preparations needed will be completed during this phase.</p>
<p>Financial Readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please provide any agreement the school currently has with 4th Sector.
<p>APPLICANT RESPONSE:</p>	<p>Currently, we do not have a formal agreement with 4Ss. We have had preliminary conversations as we have been going through this charter process for more than a year now. We are poised to have a meeting no later than November 5, 2018 to enter into a formal agreement in anticipation of the authorization of a charter.</p>

ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD



SCHOOL PROSPECTUS FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TANDEM LEARNING PARTNERS

May 1, 2018

FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PROSPECTUS SUBMITTED BY **Community Exceptional Children's Services Centers**

FOR PURPOSES OF PREPARING AN APPLICATION TO THE ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

AS EVALUATED BY:

Morgan Carter Ripski

William Haft

BACKGROUND

The School Prospectus review provides an indication of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the proposal's core elements. It is essential that the plan's foundation be sound for purposes of application approval and ultimately for operation of a quality school. This report provides an early formative review of and feedback on the core elements prior to submission of a full charter application. The prospectus process is independent of the full application. Although this evaluation is designed to inform development of the full application, it cannot assure the way evaluators will view full application.

Overall, the prospectus requires the applicant to present a concise, coherent blueprint for a school that will be educationally, organizationally, and financially successful. The prospectus has three parts:

Prospectus Part	Purpose
School Founders	Present the backgrounds, experience, and skills that the founding group possesses and identify opportunities for further strengthening the founding team. Demonstrate capacity to develop and operate a successful school.
School Vision	Describe the vision for the school environment, the educational program, and the role of the school in the New Orleans community. Present a coherent, compelling vision for what the school will be.
School Management and Finances	Demonstrate a sound understanding of the school's management and financial needs and a realistic plan for meeting those needs such that the school has promise to be well managed and financially viable.

EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Individual assessment. Evaluators read and rated the complete prospectus individually.
2. Develop consensus. Evaluators discussed their judgments on each element of the prospectus and reached consensus on each rating to ensure consistent application of the standards and criteria.
3. Written report. The evaluator drafted the following report in order to document their assessment as formative guidance to the applicant.
4. Debrief meeting. The evaluators meet with each applicant that wishes to explain and discuss the written report.



EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluators used criteria that follow the content of the Louisiana DOE's charter application criteria. The purpose is to keep the review standards as close as possible to the ones to which the full application will be subject. There is some variation due to the inherently different context of reviewing what amounts to a synopsis of the full application.

RATINGS

The ratings are designed to provide the reader an immediate sense of the degree to which each part provides a sound foundation for relevant parts of the full application.

- Presents a strong foundation
- Requires additional attention
- Signals significant problems or shortcomings



SPRING 2018 SCHOOL PROSPECTUS: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Applicant Name:

Community Exceptional Children's Services Centers

School Name:

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Proposed Location/Neighborhood:

New Orleans

Academic Model:

Therapeutic day school, Alternative school, and Community-based health

Enrollment Projections:

ACADEMIC YEAR	PLANNED NUMBER OF STUDENTS	GRADES SERVED
2019-20	110	9-12
2020-21	195	9-12
2021-22	295	9-12
2022-23	330	9-12
2023-24	385	9-12
At Capacity	TBD	9-12



FOUNDING GROUP

	Presents a strong foundation	Requires additional attention	Signals significant problems or shortcomings
Governing Board	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PRIMARY STRENGTHS

- The founding team is comprised of highly experienced educators with particular depth in special education.
- The governing board has adopted a committee structure that aligns with the vision and goals of the organization.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The prospectus does not identify capacity gaps in the governing board; a review of the enclosed information suggests several potential needs such as financial management, fundraising, facilities management, and charter school start up.
- The prospectus does not sufficiently articulate individual qualifications, particularly for the school leader and board committee leads for their proposed roles.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The prospectus presented foundational information that could lead to a strong charter application. The proposed leader appears to have deep connections in the community and experience serving the proposed student population. The founding governance team indicates expertise in educating and supporting special student populations.

The response to this part of the prospectus failed to identify remaining needs for governing board capacity. A review of the information presented, primarily resumes, indicates that financial management experience and expertise appears to be a gap. A full application should provide a narrative description of the proposed school leader's specific skills and experiences qualifying him for the role of managing this unique program. In addition, explain how each member of the board will contribute by articulating their relevant competencies and experience for each committee and to providing specific descriptions of committee goals and responsibilities.



FOUNDING GROUP REVIEW CRITERIA

Governing Board	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The founding group demonstrates understanding of its governance needs. • The founding group demonstrates understanding of current strengths, particularly with respect to academics, finances, legal issues, management and operations, and community relations. • The founding group demonstrates understanding of remaining needs in governance capacity is actively engaged toward meeting those needs.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each of the following areas, there is at least one board member able to provide expertise – academics, finances, legal issues, management and operations, and community relations.
School Leadership	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The founding group has a clear understanding of the necessary leadership capacities that will lead to success. The school leader / leadership team provides evidence of <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevant prior experience; 2) The ability to establish measurable, ambitious goals that support a larger vision; and 3) The ability to present the vision, develop a culture, and manage a team toward meeting the goals.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leader establishes measurable, ambitious goals that support a larger vision that they have established for their organization. • The school leader demonstrates that they were able to translate the vision and goals for their organization into a plan- a series of specific actions. • The leader demonstrates that the staff collaborated to identify barriers to success and solutions to put the organization back on track towards meeting their goals.



SCHOOL VISION

	Presents a strong foundation	Requires additional attention	Signals significant problems or shortcomings
Mission and Vision	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
District Needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PRIMARY STRENGTHS

- The core principles of the school, rooted in the seven domains of Trauma Informed Care, are poignant, detailed, and clear.
- The goal of becoming the "central repository for the city's special education and alternative education resources" is compelling.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Who is the direct customer? OPSB, families, or partner schools? What is the evidence of demand?
- Full application should address specific educational outcome objectives.
- Be prepared to better explain programmatic aspects of the school model such as the curriculum content and coordination with "cooperating" and "base" schools.
- Is CECSC an existing organization with a track record of success? Discuss.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The school vision and core principles based on an "alternative school program providing therapeutic services" are compelling. The vision to offer support for students up to age 25 ranging from "self-contained classrooms" to "5 or fewer hours of center-based services per week" (p. 4) is clear. A tiered system for meeting individual student needs makes sense in theory but lacks particulars for implementation. What are the educational and social emotional outcome expectations for each level and long term (e.g., End of Course results, graduation and college matriculation rates)? What curricula will you use for core academic courses? How does suspension abatement work? How can the school work with children who have aged out of the K-12 system?

A full application will need to better explain implementation and provide specific detail about partnerships with "cooperating" and "base" schools. For example, it is unclear how a school would refer a student to the Community School and whether the school would need to hold a seat for the student's return. The prospectus describes instances in which students will receive services from both the Community School and a "cooperating school" including with CECSC staff located at the cooperating school, but does not address the nature of shared service arrangements and logistics. Cooperating schools will have a variety of educational philosophies and programs. How will the Community School ensure programmatic and implementation alignment?



SCHOOL VISION REVIEW CRITERIA

Mission and Vision	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision clearly articulates a problem and links it to student outcomes. The mission statement identifies the role of the school in addressing the problem that the school seeks to address.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem the applicant group is trying to solve exists and can be shown to exist with data. The applicant group is trying to solve a problem related to student outcomes. The applicant group can prove that the identified problem is in fact necessary to address by describing the negative outcomes that result from the problem. The mission statement identifies the role of the school in addressing the problem that the school seeks to address.
Educational Program	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant group logically demonstrates that, by realizing its mission and vision, the school would effectively address the stated problem.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant group proposes a school that solves a problem related to student outcomes that is shown to exist with data or is in response to demonstrated demand for a particular school model.
Partnerships	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed partnerships are deliberate and thoughtful in their relevance to program implementation, and the applicants can show tangible planning and progress for developing them.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader demonstrates that they establish and maintain relationships with both colleagues and external stakeholders that contribute to their organization's ability to meet its goals.
District Needs	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan demonstrates understanding of District needs and makes a compelling case that the model will fulfill priorities the District has identified for improving public education, including providing families with access to a diverse set of options. If the school aims to build a distinctive program or serve a particular population, the purpose and methodology are clear and compelling.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A



SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND FINANCES

	Presents a strong foundation	Requires additional attention	Signals significant problems or shortcomings	N/A
School Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management Organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Budget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PRIMARY STRENGTHS

- The proposed management structure is coherent and maps to the educational program and vision of the organization.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Revenue assumptions appear to be based on 100% of per pupil allocations despite the school's referral-based rolling enrollment model that would likely require revenue sharing.
- Explain enrollment projections from 110 in Y1 to 385 in Y5.
- Clarify the reporting relationships amongst the leadership team and include details about collaboration across the team (i.e., meeting structure and frequency).

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The School Management and Finances section outlines a management team that aligns with the proposed school model. Be prepared to clarify the reporting relationship between each senior team member. For example, how do the Clinical Director and Dean of Students roles relate to each other as members of the administrative team? Do all of the roles described on pages 13-15 report directly to the CEO? If so, what is the rationale for this flat structure and how will the CEO manage it effectively?

As presented, the budget does not appear to be viable. It relies on per pupil MFP dollars as a central revenue stream, and the program is designed to receive and return students throughout the year, yet it assumes a full year of per-pupil funding for each enrollment. This assumption appears unrealistic. A number of other items in the budget raise questions: (1) the revenue projections show 20% enrollment from Jefferson Parish, but a multi-parish model is not described in the narrative, (2) some core administrative staff are only budgeted for 6 months in year 1, (3) the number of teaching staff appears insufficient for the number of students and target student population, (4) the assumed number of buses is insufficient for the number of students, target population, and likely geographic spread, and (5) the proposed 10% 403B match is likely unsustainable. Be prepared to elaborate on budget assumptions for the school partnership model.



SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND FINANCES REVIEW CRITERIA

School Management	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The founding group has developed a coherent management structure. • The founding group understands the key skills, experience, and competencies it needs in its school leader and has either identified a capable leader or has a sound plan and prospects for doing so.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identified leader has managed a school, a team of teachers, or an academic program. • The leader has established a track record of improving student achievement and/or provides sufficient data to demonstrate the leader's ability to develop a high performing team of teachers across multiple years. • The school leader has held past leadership positions in which they held a high level of responsibility for the operations and/or finances of a given organization. • The leader has established a track record of leading operationally and/or financially viable organizations.
Management Organization (if applicable)	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board demonstrates independence by articulating a clear vision and strong accountability provisions. • The management organization does not control board composition or decision-making.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board articulates a set of standards that the school leader or ESP must satisfy in order to keep the school on track to achieve its vision. • The board provides logical evidence that the school will achieve its student goals if the school leader or ESP satisfies the standards set forth by the board. • The board has a logical decision-making framework and process to support and hold the school leader accountable according to a set of standards that will further the school's mission. • The board maintains independence from the ESP by articulating strong accountability provisions and avoiding opportunities for the ESP to gain leverage over the board. • The ESP cannot control board membership. • The ESP contract does not allow for any form of leverage – including but not limited to severance fees and facilities ownership – by which the ESP can ensure renewal of their contract.



Budget	
Prospectus Review Criteria	<p>Response demonstrates understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variables that will determine financial viability and sustainability. • Market rates and other relevant criteria for facilities, personnel, and other primary cost centers. • Supplemental funding needs and opportunities. <p>To the extent that the founding group has developed an optional start-up and Y1 budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections are based on accurate, conservative, and legally compliant assumptions. • Funds from external sources are demonstrably reasonable. • No essential services are funded at amounts that would preclude the applicant group from implementing their plan. • The plan can sustain realistic budget shortfalls without compromising mission critical expenses.
Corresponding OPSB Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections are based on accurate, conservative, and legally compliant assumptions. • All funds from external sources are demonstrated to be reasonably expected. • No essential services are funded at amounts that would preclude the applicant group from implementing their plan. • The charter applicant group protects mission critical expenses when faced with budget cuts.



ABOUT TANDEM LEARNING

Tandem Learning is committed to preparing school leaders and governing boards; school systems and management organizations; authorizers, funders, and lenders to make decisions that will improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and to help schools implement those decisions well.

Resourceful. We ground our work in the recognition that schools operate with limited resources. Each decision about people, time, and money makes a difference to what we accomplish minute by minute and year by year. The best decisions often require a combination of objectivity, creativity, and courage.

Collaborative. We work collaboratively with stakeholders and with particular attention to how choices will affect the teachers and school leaders to whom we entrust and place responsibility for success.

Education. We believe that education can take many shapes and forms. There is no one best way, but that there are right and wrong ways based on an understanding of where children are, belief in what they can become, and deliberate planning and action to provide a pathway from here to there.

PROSPECTUS EVALUATORS

William Haft is a teacher, lawyer, and educator. He is the managing partner of Tandem Learning Partners. Prior to founding Tandem Learning, his work for 15 years had been in charter school authorizing. He founded and led the professional services division at the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) where, among other things, he was responsible for running charter application processes for authorizers including the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, Washington Charter School Commission, and Orleans Parish School Board; designing and leading NACSA's process for conducting formative authorizer evaluations; and advising dozens of authorizers on the development and implementation of performance-based accountability systems. At NACSA, he managed an annual budget of \$1.5M to \$2M. As a practitioner, William has conducted trainings, developed resources, and advised on education reform across the U.S. as well as for New Zealand's Ministry of Education, the Southern Delhi Municipal Corporation in New Delhi, India, and the United Kingdom's Department for Education. Prior to NACSA, William worked as an education lawyer in Washington, D.C. and, for eight years, as a classroom teacher. He has served on the governing boards of high performing charter schools and is currently on the founding boards of the National Charter School Collaborative and Wildflower Montessori School – New York. His own education includes Carleton College (B.A.), Harvard Law School (J.D.), and Arizona State University (M. Ed. Administration).



Morgan Carter Ripski is an independent consultant and the principal of Champe Carter Consulting, LLC. In the past three years, she has worked with charter schools, charter management organizations, school authorizers, donors, and entrepreneurs to plan and implement scaling strategies, build fundraising plans and teams in support of growth, and manage projects. Specifically, her consulting work has included supporting a therapeutic day school as it transformed from a district-managed program to an independent nonprofit, developing a collaborative, vertical communications process for a national nonprofit during a radical programmatic shift, and designing a new curriculum for emerging school leaders of color entering an entrepreneurial fellowship program. Previously, Morgan served as the president for Collegiate Academies, where she led strategic growth planning for the charter management organization. In that role, she secured nine new charters, authored and executed strategic growth plans, and procured \$13.3M to support the CMO's schools and their growth. Morgan also served as the executive director of the Foundation for Science and Math Education and the communications and development director for New Schools for New Orleans. Morgan holds a master's degree from Stanford University and a Bachelor of Arts from Bates College. She lives with her husband and two sons in New Orleans.

