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Transformation Overview

(1)Please identify the type(s) of transformation (e.g., full takeovers, reconfigurations) that your organization is prepared to undertake.

The transformation of ReNEW Accelerated High School (RAHS) to New Orleans Accelerated High School (NOAH) will be a ***full takeover***.

(2)Will all currently enrolled students be able to re-enroll next year? If your proposal does not provide for all currently-enrolled students to remain at the school, please provide a rationale for this decision, and explain how your organization will work to communicate with families in order to ensure that all impacted students are able to access high-quality schools.

Yes; all students currently enrolled at RAHS will be able to re-enroll at NOAH.

Evidence of Academic Program Success

Narrative

(1) Provide a brief narrative describing the organization's history, including its development and growth, opening and operating high-quality schools, and its interest in a transformation.

Educators for Quality Alternatives (EQA) was founded in 2009 to investigate and propose remedies to the unacceptably low graduation rate in New Orleans. Through extensive discussion, visits to successful alternative programs across the country, and thorough reviews of the research, EQA determined that one solution was to open a small, non-traditional high school. The school's design would be built upon the most promising strategies EQA had uncovered in its research.

This decision prompted founding leadership Elizabeth Ostberg and Valerie Bodet to write and submit a charter application to open the first NET Charter High School. The application was approved by BESE in December of 2010, and the school was slated to open in the fall of 2011. The first year of The NET was run as a pilot program inside of the Joseph S. Clark High School in the Treme´ neighborhood. In its pilot year, The NET had a student body of approximately sixty and a staff of eight. Upon completion of the 2011-2012 school year, eight students earned their high school diploma and NET students' average pass rate of the End of Course exams outpaced those at other comparable programs in the city. Demand for additional seats in the school's unique program was high.

EQA had spent the inaugural year piloting its model, searching for a larger school building and raising the additional funds required to both move to a new location and serve a population that would nearly double in size. They secured a building located at 1614 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard in the heart of Central City. This would become the first NET school's permanent home, opening its doors to 150 students in the fall of 2012.

Over the next five years, The NET:Central City fully implemented the model EQA had put forth in its charter, and student results climbed, demonstrating the efficacy of the school. Between 2012 and 2017, 189 students graduated, and average passage of required exams increased nearly every year. The school added a carpentry and construction program, expanded its offerings for students with severe behavioral disorders, and improved its processes for evaluation and Special Education services. Additionally, The NET built community partnerships to provide mental health services, diverse options for internships, and post-graduation opportunities.

At the same time that the school was working to consistently improve and streamline its daily operations, EQA was engaged with community stakeholders in policy work at the state and local level, advocating for

improved supports for its students. This work led to the adoption of an alternative school accountability rubric by BESE in 2014 and expulsion and differentiated funding increases in Orleans Parish.

In 2017 EQA's board launched a second campus: The NET:Gentilly. The decision to expand was driven by demand: each year there were more students attempting to enroll at The NET:Central City than there were seats available and a large number of students were living far from Central City in New Orleans East.

With the opening of The NET:Gentilly, EQA expected to focus their energy primarily on improving operation of the two NET schools for the near future. However, in the spring of 2018, Elizabeth Ostberg was approached by leaders at RAHS about the possibility of transferring their school to the EQA network. Currently RAHS is the only alternative school and only high school in ReNEW's large CMO, and RAHS's leadership was seeking more specialized support from a network that is focused solely on alternative education. After careful consideration, EQA's board agreed to take on RAHS's transformation in order to:

- Ensure seats remain available for struggling students in New Orleans
- Improve student outcomes by increasing the quality of programming at the school
- Leverage the consolidation of the city's alternative schools to improve student recruiting and placement, expand staff development, and increase support services to students

By combining the best of RAHS with that of the NET school model and EQA's mission and strategic supports, EQA seeks to transform the school into a highly responsive and effective setting for students who have struggled. Re-opening the school as the New Orleans Alternative High School (NOAH), EQA will take another vital step in decreasing the city's dropout rate and thus improving outcomes for everyone in New Orleans.

Summary of Other Programs

(2) Provide a summary describing the other transformation school(s) or program(s) operated, managed, or supported by this organization. The summary should describe key design elements of the school(s) or program(s), including mission, curriculum model or whole-school design, grade span, and governance model. The summary should clearly reflect the implemented elements of the school(s) or program(s) that are similar to the proposed charter school as well as any substantive differences.

Educators for Quality Alternatives currently operates two charter high schools in New Orleans: The NET:Central City and The NET:Gentilly. Both schools are designated as alternative programs and serve students in grades 9 through 12 who are overage and/or have struggled in a traditional setting. The mission of each school is the same: *to provide struggling high school students with the skills, confidence, and experiences necessary to succeed in the education and career paths of their choice.*

Both schools were started from scratch and while EQA has not previously lead a transformation school, , the similarity in students served and the philosophical alignment of the leaders and programs make EQA confident that it can successfully manage this new challenge.

Educational Program

Key Tenets of Transformation Model

(1)What are the key tenets of your transformation model? Please identify the research base or other rationale supporting each identified tenet.

As outlined in various portions of this application, the proposed transformation of ReNEW Accelerated High School into EQA's network of schools is a unique opportunity. Rather than entering the relationship as a mandate due to a school's failure, RAHS has sought partnership with EQA based on the strength of the organization's work in running The NET schools. RAHS is not in need of a hard reset, rather it requires

focused, aligned leadership that can assist the school in taking its performance to the next level. Its current operator, ReNEW Schools, agrees that it is not best positioned to support RAHS as it is the only alternative school and only high school in their network and therefore they struggle to allot it the necessary time, resources, and energy. Meanwhile EQA's unique focus on alternative high schools and history of strong achievement in this arena predict improved outcomes for students at the transformed NOAH.

Despite this uniquely proactive and positive condition, EQA is cognizant there are still difficulties inherent in a transformation situation. EQA proposes using elements of The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) best practices for change management[1] as a framework for guiding its transformation efforts. This entails:

1. **Establishment of a Clear Vision**: As USAID lays out: "Change must have a purpose with which staff identifies." The purpose for this transformation is directly aligned to EQA's vision. This being that: *The City of New Orleans becomes a beacon of high quality education for students who have been expelled, have dropped out, or have struggled in a traditional environment. Through the creation of innovative and effective programs that provide life-changing education and opportunities for our students, we will serve as an exemplar for other communities, making better outcomes possible for all young people.* Similarly, this transformation is directly aligned to RAHS goals of improving outcomes for its students. This alignment in vision will serve as leadership's north star, guiding decision making during the transformation period.

2. **Involve Senior Leadership:** As detailed in other portions of this application, leaders both at The NET Schools and at RAHS are already involved in advocating for and planning for this transformation process. Their investment, input and insight throughout the process are key to its success.

3. **Development of a Change Management Plan**: RAHS will continue under the auspices of ReNEW for the 2019-2020 school year, and during this time EQA leadership will work closely with RAHS leaders to message the transition to staff, students and community stakeholders and invest them in the changes to come. Details on this work are discussed here.

4. **Clear and Open Communication :** A key to high staff retention at The NET schools has been high levels of transparency and communication. This include clarity on the ways decisions are made by leadership and the ways staff can influence those decisions. Research supports both input in and clarity about the "why" behind a particular choice[2] leads to greater buy-in from stakeholders. At EQA, staff understand that decisions are made through consideration of variety of inputs. *(See Table 1*) They also staff understand that this type of decision-making relies on both their commitment to get involved in the process as well as their ability to see multiple sides and compromise when appropriate.

Table 1

Data	Discussions
• Student achievement data • Student work & student growth • Student & Staff Surveys • Family and City needs and changes • External mandates • Results of internal pilot initiatives	• Individual discussions with students & staff • Group feedback sessions with students & staff • SWOT analysis • External critical friends

5. **Provision of Support and Resources Necessary:** While the USAID approach is focused on working across international lines, its lessons on provision of necessary infrastructure are valuable in making

this transformation successful. In order for NOAH to implement change and improve systems over time, they will need support, knowledge, and accountability from EQA leadership. This relationship will allow RAHS access to improved resources and systems quickly.

Responsiveness to Student Needs

(2)How will the educational model be responsive to the student needs, while maintaining the fidelity of the organizations educational program?

The entire purpose of the educational model proposed for NOAH is to successfully respond to students with extraordinary needs. As detailed in our application, all EQA schools are designed as a Tier 2 Intervention setting as defined under a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. RtI is a research-based and highly recommended framework for ensuring that all learners receive the support they need to be successful.[3] Tier 2 interventions are deemed appropriate for students for whom school-wide initiatives have not proven effective. EQA operates their schools under the premise that a traditional approach to high school can be considered a Tier 1 environment in which this population struggles. Therefore, the alternative approaches taken by EQA schools are necessary to better serve our demographic. Implementation of this element of school design at NOAH will ensure that not only is high quality, LDOE-vetted Tier 1 curricula being offered, but that approaches, systems and structure are in place to support students to master it.

Equitable Achievement for All Students

(3)How will your transformation model support equitable achievement for all students? Please specifically identify how your model will support the learning of students with disabilities, English language learners, and other "at-risk" student populations (as this is defined in state law).

Based on historical demographics of enrollment at both NET schools, the majority of students who attend NOAH will likely be "at risk" as Louisiana state law[4] defines the term. To address their needs, EQA schools use the comprehensive RtI system and school-wide interventions described in the application narrative. In addition, EQA has spent considerable time, resources, and expertise developing strong programming and procedures for the evaluation and support of students referred to Special Education, and for other specific population needs such as homebound instruction.

Currently RAHS has a lower identified Special Education population than each of the NET schools. EQA postulates that with stronger RtI and a more robust Pupil Appraisal system, this number will likely increase. This is because the Special Education identification model in place at EQA schools is designed to identify and evaluate students who may have spent years slipping through the cracks. Often, students at EQA schools have attended ten or more schools over their academic career. This mobility, combined with struggles with truancy and behavior can result in a failure to identify students who are in need of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The small size of the student body at EQA schools, combined with the school's rigorous approach to ongoing data collection and analysis allows for more students to be appropriately identified and referred for evaluation. EQA is excited to partner with staff at NOAH to help them improve upon their existing Special Education identification systems.

Both students who arrive at NOAH with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and those who are identified later through the school's Pupil Appraisal process will be serviced by a team of both full-time staff and contracted experts. These service providers will deliver targeted support to students including, but not limited to:

- Small group instruction in math or literacy
- Push-in support for those requiring extra help in class
- Speech & Language therapy

- Individual and group counseling
- Any additional therapies or interventions as the IEP specifies (Occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.)

All of these supports will be tailored to align with the exceptionalities and required minutes detailed on students' IEPs. This will ensure that NOAH provides intervention for all students in need and that it maintains rigorous compliance with IDEA rules and regulations.

In addition, EQA will provide supports and services to students who may not be Special Education but still require unique supports to make progress in the general curriculum. Table 2 outlines some of the supports that will be made available at NOAH once it joins the EQA network.

Table 2

Program	Description
Homebound Services	EQA sends qualified teachers to students' homes multiple times each week in order to ensure that the or she has continued access to high quality instruction while they are unable to attend school. NOAH will provide students with laptop computers and other supplies necessary to successfully engage both in online coursework as well as one on one teaching sessions with their homebound instructor. Eligibility* for homebound instruction is decided by the School Building Level Committee. **Possible reasons for a student needing homebound instruction include, but are not limited to: pregnancy and post-partum recovery, surgery or other medical issue, or severe depression or anxiety.*
Non-Native English Speakers Services	Students who are identified as ELL at EQA schools participate in a blend of direct English instruction and immersion. This provides access to the same Tier 1 curriculum and integration with their English speaking peers while ensuring the appropriate supports. Supports include translation devices, ELL push-in/co-teachers, additional tutoring, and English language classes. These strategies have been identified as a best practice both by the LDOE[5] and experts in the field.[6] In addition to these academic supports, EQA works with community partners to insure ELL students have access to native-language speaking counselors and legal advocacy as needed.
Daycare Services	Approximately 20% of EQA students are parenting and lack of stable childcare can be a major impediment to attending school regularly. NOAH already has a partnership with an onsite early childcare facility. Should this facility move, NOAH students will be able to access the onsite daycare currently being piloted at the NET:Gentilly.

The very purpose of EQA's schools is increase at-risk students' access to a high school diploma by creating a responsive environment and individualized interventions. NOAH will join this crusade upon its transformation to the EQA network.

Managing the Transition

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

Transition & First Year of Operation

EQA and ReNEW are well positioned to have a smooth school transition because of the unique nature of this transformation. RAHS and ReNEW leaders reached out to EQA in the Spring of 2018 to discuss a partnership, and since then, leaders at both organizations have been collaborating regularly. To date, planning conversations have happened at Board, CMO, school leadership and staff levels. These have included weekly

meetings with the EQA Executive Director and RAHS school leaders; monthly meetings with the EQA Executive Director and ReNEW CEO; and piloting a variety of joint initiatives including:

- Joint student recruiting efforts including media campaigns and events
- Joint monthly leadership development program
- Joint project-based learning teacher collaborative

While the last two have not explicitly been about the transformation, they have been an important opportunity to build familiarity and trust, identify programmatic strengths and growth areas, and develop staff and leaders. Currently the school leaders have been partnering with EQA in developing this application and have asked EQA to provide consultative support in developing the budget, staffing model and priorities for the 2019-2020 school year.

As this is a voluntary rather than forced transition, the focus will be on maintaining as much stability for students and staff as possible, honoring the positive initiatives currently in the school community, and improving the areas that are currently causing stress to students and staff. All current students will be engaged throughout the transition so they and their families are aware of what structures and expectations will remain the same and what will shift. Because the current RAHS leaders and most of the staff are expected to stay, the location is stable, and the programmatic offerings will not substantially change, the majority of students are expected to view the transition as minimally invasive and remain enrolled.

Ensuring Sufficient Enrollment

Recruiting additional students, however, will be a major focus for the 2019-20 year and beyond. RAHS's enrollment has declined significantly in recent years ,and EQA has already started to support their recruitment efforts. EQA has successfully enrolled or over-enrolled each of its schools since 2011 following a similar work plan. *(See Table 3)*

Table 3

Activity	**Responsible**	**Timeline**
Advocating with and providing information to One App, Family Centers, Youth Opportunity Center and other school district entities	Executive Director and Operations Director	Ongoing
Develop marketing materials	Operations Director	Spring & Summer 2020
Social media outreach	Operations Director	Spring & Summer 2020
Advocating with and providing information to community partners including, but not limited to: NORD, LCCR, juvenile and criminal court judges, health and mental health clinics, libraries, etc.	EQA & NOAH leadership	Ongoing
School leader and school counselor meetings with all middle and high schools in New Orleans to insure they are aware of NOAH as a high quality option for their struggling students	EQA & NOAH leadership	2019-2020
Neighborhood Outreach	NOAH leadership & staff	Spring & Summer 2020

Prior student, alumni and family Outreach	NOAH leadership & staff	Spring & Summer 2020
Home visits. Meeting with interested or referred families and students at their homes has been one of EQA's most productive recruitment strategies.	NOAH leadership & staff	Spring & Summer 2020

There is substantial data[7] [8] indicating that there are many more young people out of school in New Orleans than there are seats in The NETs and NOAH. Thus, EQA leaders are confident that the declining enrollment at RAHS is not due to lack of demand and that with an increase in the quality of programming and a targeted focus on recruitment, NOAH's enrollment numbers can be consistently reached.

Positive School and Staff Culture

Under the current Principal, RAHS has worked hard to create a positive school climate and culture. The success of these efforts can be seen in the increased school pride espoused by students and staff and in the improved staff retention. EQA seeks to expand on RAHS strategies like daily Advisories and its annual talent shows and establish a trauma-informed community of care that uses Restorative Practices and relationships based interventions. These are vital for a student body that struggles significantly with behavioral and mental health challenges and who have not been successful in a traditional school environment.[9] The main components of this shift will be:

- Establishing buy-in to restorative practices through sharing research and training
- Training on and managing systems for implementation
- Developing staff skillfulness
- Educating students and families
- Monitoring and analyzing data in order to continually improve practice

Additional community building practices from The NET and other successful alternative programs will be adapted including weekly classroom circles, inductions, and town halls.

While EQA has committed to maintaining or raising salaries and establishing universal retirement, health benefits, hours, and number of days worked may shift along with some individual and school-wide expectations. In all cases, change is difficult, and EQA anticipates losing some staff members before or during the transition. However, the majority of staff are expected to stay because of the stability of the leadership team, EQA's experience building aligned and effective staffs, and the improvements they will experience in student growth and achievement.

The current RAHS leaders have set ambitious goals for themselves and their students and are aligned with EQA's high expectations for constant improvement and growth. In fact, this drive is what led them to seek out the partnership with EQA. However, one area that RAHS leaders have identified as a struggle is aligning the whole building around their mission, vision, and goals. This alignment is a critical component of setting and maintaining high expectations for individual and collective production and growth. As this is an area of strength for The NETs, EQA looks forward to being able to provide effective strategic support to NOAH leaders.

EQA will establish the same cycle of alignment and continuous improvement that it has successfully used to build both the organization and the two NET schools. *(See Fig. 1)*

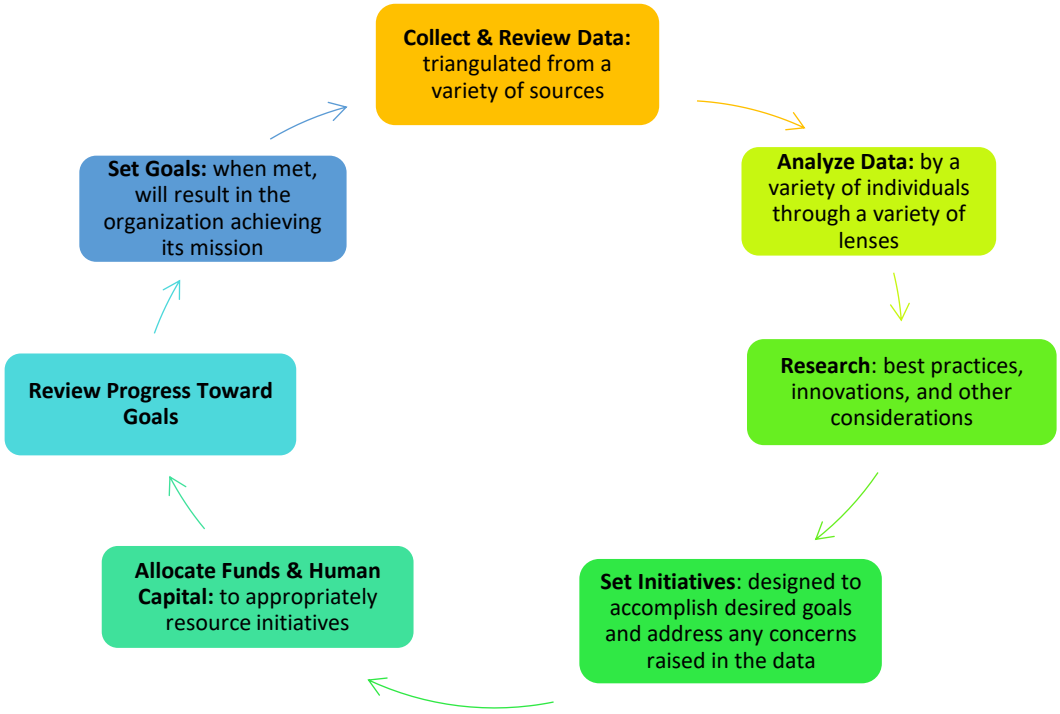


Figure 1

This starts with transparently collecting and analyzing data including, but not limited to:

- Staff surveys
- Parent and student surveys
- Behavior data
- Academic data
- Student work
- Pilot results

Each semester, EQA and NOAH leaders will develop and share The State of NOAH, a half-day workshop that includes all staff members in a process of reviewing data, aligning around priorities, kicking off initiatives, celebrating success, and planning for challenges. On an individual level, NOAH leaders will meet each semester with each staff member to complete a Professional Map. As described in the main section of this application, the Professional Map system is designed to insure continual alignment and skill development of EQA staff.

EQA will also work to support NOAH staff in adoption of The NET schools' approach to decision making and conflict resolution. All staff in EQA schools understand that as members of the network's community they are responsible for the community's success and outcomes. To build a shared understanding of this responsibility, EQA has developed 10 expectations of all adults in the building:

1.**Answering surveys** (input is confidential; results are public)

2.**Participating in conversations** (I will better understand the decision & my questions will improve the plan)

3.**Reaching out** (open door policies only work if I walk through them)

4.**Participating in opportunities/solutions** (Exp: If I am concerned about lack of social activities then I should get involved with the social activities committee)

5.**Holding colleagues/leaders accountable** (Exp: Leadership 360 interviews)

6.**Recognizing there are multiple perspectives** (the decision maker is getting feedback from multiple sources so the decision/end product probably won't look exactly like what you suggested but that makes your input even more valuable)

7. **Assuming** best intentions (we are all here for the students)

8.Considering my **impact** (regardless of how I meant something, if it bothers you, I need to address it)

9.**Reaching Out & Asking** questions (I don't know where you are coming from until I ask)

10.**Mediating** difference (Individuals in conflict actively mediate their differences)

While it takes time to build relationships so that individual staff members trust this process, it has been highly successful in attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse and committed staff dedicated to building an effective collegial community. Combined with the adoption of EQA's effective communication practices including a Daily Morning Briefing to all staff from the Principal and a Weekly Wrap Up to all staff from the Executive Director, this clarity of vision is expected to support a positive staff transition.

School Operations

Staff Recruitment & Retention

(1)Provide a brief addition to your staffing plan, explaining what additional steps you will take to recruit and retain highly-effective teachers and non-classroom staff.

In order to recruit and select the strongest staff, EQA has developed a set of best practices for its NET schools which will be replicated at NOAH. *(See Table 4)*

Table 4

Job Design
• Job clarity and alignment are often overlooked in schools and nonprofits particularly as position responsibilities shift over time. This can lead to dueling expectations, confusion, and ultimately dissatisfaction. Thus, for each new position *and* for each established position which is vacant, leaders and staff at EQA schools spend time reviewing, discussing, and crafting the job responsibilities to make sure it accurately reflects the position needed. Considering who the position manages, who it is managed by, and who is has consultative responsibilities with is vital for clarity of communication once the position is filled. Equally important is developing expected goals for the position. • A job description, position FAQs, professional map, selection rubric, and selection process are all then created and shared with applicants.
Internal Promotions, Local & National Recruiting
• Filling vacancies with internal candidates brings a lot of advantages. In most cases, positions have been sourced both internally and externally simultaneously in order to insure the best pool from which to pull. • Because the work at NOAH and the NET is unique, EQA prioritizes extensive recruiting through both traditional and nontraditional means. Candidates are recruited through advertising and through extensive community contacts and network development.

Intensive Selection Process
• EQA's selection process is designed to expose applicants to the school, its mission, vision, and students, and to give leaders information about the applicant's alignment and skillfulness. Each position has a selection rubric, and follows a process that is crafted based on the position. It generally includes: Initial screening for alignment, In-depth interview for skillfulness and experience, Technical project to gauge skillfulness, School Visit and reflection, Reference Checks. • Internal candidates generally complete a modified selection process. However, even for them, the process plays a very important dual role: first it exposes the candidate to a deeper study of the position, responsibilities, and realities. As in most workplaces, staff are not usually fully sure what each other "do" and what the rewards and challenges for each other's positions are. Completing this process either excites the individual more about the position or sometimes leads them to self-select out. Second, it provides a platform for important discussions about alignment, goals, strengths, and growth areas and insures that if the candidate gets the position that both the individual and their future manager have already started the process of developing supports for the position.
Staff Input, Appreciation, & Recognition
Staff input at EQA schools includes, but is not limited to: • Staff surveys, results of which are shared with staff • All staff involvement in problem-solving initiatives and project development • Invitations to lead committees, activities, and initiatives • Manager consulting with staff on all critical questions Staff appreciation and recognitions are vital for retaining effective staff members.[10] At EQA these include, but are not limited to: • Staff meals • Teacher Appreciation Week" activities • Managers write notes/emails/"shout outs" to staff members daily • Individual staff support plans which all staff to focus on things important to them • Weekly "shout outs" in faculty meetings • Colleague-nominated "staff of the cycle" awards • Three-month, 1 year, 3 year, and 5 year formal recognitions & gifts • Retirement & promotion recognitions & gifts

Additional Financial Resources

(2) Provide a brief addition to your budget and budget narrative, explaining any additional financial resources you have received or anticipate receiving to support transformation efforts. Has your school applied for LDE School Redesign Funding, or does your organization intend to apply?

In addition to applying for the Charter School Program fund and the Walton Family Foundation fund as described in the Budget Narrative, EQA will reach out local partners including, but not limited to:

- New Schools for New Orleans
- The Booth Bricker Foundation
- The Keller Foundation
- Baptist Community Ministries

These and similar entities have been important supporters of EQA's work in the past and EQA is confident that it will be able to raise additional funding.

RAHS is in the midst of a School Redesign Funding grant. NOAH will continue with the curriculum and professional development initiatives implemented with this funding.

Metrics & Goals

Data, Goal Setting, and Progress Monitoring

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

Data & Goal Setting

As outlined in the main application, EQA engages in a robust strategic planning and goal-setting process for both the organization as a whole and for each of its schools. NOAH will join in this process once it is a part of the EQA network. The goals set will be aligned both to OPSB's Alternative Accountability rubric and other quality indicators as identified by EQA's Board and Executive Director with input from NOAH school leadership.

The data utilized to set these goals will include:

- 2018-2020 state testing results from RAHS
- 2018-2020 student growth data gleaned from MAP testing at RAHS
- 2018-2020 behavioral data from RAHS
- 2018-2020 RAHS performance on the OPSB Alternative Accountability rubric
- Information from staff and student surveys (both from RAHS and NET schools)

Progress Monitoring

All EQA schools engage in regular progress monitoring, both at the school and organization level. Upon joining the network, NOAH will engage in the same processes. This includes:

- **Weekly Leadership Meetings:** The Executive Director will meet weekly with NOAH leadership. These meetings provide protected time to review progress and address concerns. A structured but responsive agenda system drives these meetings to ensure they are a productive balance of immediate troubleshooting and proactive planning.

- **Weekly Instructional Team Meetings:** To ensure a rigorous focus on academic achievement and growth, the EQA Executive Director, school principals, and senior instructional leaders meet weekly to review progress and address concerns. These meetings are also important opportunities for skill development through observation debriefs, student work reviews, and other professional development.

- **Robust On-Site Presence:** Particularly in the first years of the school's transformation, EQA leadership will spend significant time on NOAH's campus. This will allow for collection of anecdotal evidence that can be used to supplement numbers and surveys and will also assist in building relationships and rapport with NOAH staff, students, and families.

- **Formal Performance Management:** All EQA employees engage in Professional Map conversations three times during the year. At the leadership level, these are excellent opportunities to dive in to

data and progress in a more in-depth way than can be accomplished during weekly meetings. This provides set times throughout the year when staff can celebrate wins and make shifts necessary to address gaps.

- **State of NOAH**: These semester reflections are prepared by the Executive Director and school leadership at each EQA school. Developing these presentations requires a thorough examination of progress or lack thereof towards all stated goals and initiatives. For NOAH, these will include goals related to the success of the transformation. The State of Noah are important opportunities to build trust and alignment through publicly soliciting and acknowledging staff insight, feedback, questions and concerns.

Risk Mitigation

Before agreeing to this transformation, EQA worked to identify potential risks and to take steps to mitigate them. EQA's board weighed carefully the benefits and drawbacks to expanding the organization so significantly and so quickly after the addition of The NET:Gentilly. Ultimately, the benefit of the transformation for young people in New Orleans convinced the Board that the transformation was worth the inherent risks.

Financial stability is always vital to consider in an expansion. Fortunately because of the nature of the transformation, EQA has considerable information on RAHS's current and historic financials. Combining this with EQA's ten year experience managing The NETs through times of fewer and greater resources means EQA can accurately anticipate and plan for financial challenges.

Finding effective aligned leaders is another major consideration in an expansion. Again, the unique nature of this transformation has alleviated this concern as the RAHS principal and academic leader are a part of the transition team.

Addressing Lack of Progress

EQA schools work with the most vulnerable young people in city. For them, New Orleans is often a place as lacking in resources as it is overflowing with stressors. Thus ,just as each individual student's progress is not perfectly linear, nor can NOAH's progress be expected to be. In the same way that EQA schools create individual support plans for students, the network implements thoughtful improvement plans at the staff, building, and organizational level when progress is uneven or lagging.

At the staff level, this might look like having "Areas of Concern" identified on their Professional Growth Maps, with concrete next steps. Failure to meet the criteria of the plan could result in more intensive support, changes to the position or even termination. Similarly, if it becomes clear an area of the school is not making progress then the leadership at NOAH and EQA's Executive Director will work with the Board of Directors to create a plan for improvement. EQA has successfully implemented plans of this type before, notably after a dip in standardized test scores and other indicators at The NET:Central City in the 2016-2017 school year. EQA leadership engaged in a deep analysis of relevant data, and created a robust plan which led to improvements in the 2017-2018 school year. *(see Appendix T1)*

Finally, if insufficient progress is detected across multiple schools or areas, the Board is responsible for holding the Executive Director accountable. This process is detailed in the main application.

Other Transformations

(2) How has your organization operated a transformation school previously? If applicable, what lessons have you learned, and how have they informed changes in your practice and in this proposal. Additionally, provide specific measures of success of previous transformations that your organization has operated.

Not Applicable.

Community Engagement

Community Voice & Needs

(1)In what ways will you include community voice in the planning for the transformation? Describe in detail how you will be responsive to the community needs, include any meetings you plan to facilitate along with the content to be discussed.

The school community has been an integral part of identifying needs and planning for the future, and both organizations have had, and will continue to have, extensive opportunities for planning and community input on multiple levels.

During the 2019-2020 school year, RAHS and EQA leaders plan the engagement activities outlined in Table 5.

Table 5

Month	Activities	Stakeholders
June-July 2019	Strategic planning retreat for 19-20 and 20-21	EQA Leaders, NET leaders RAHS leaders
August	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
September	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
October	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
November	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
December	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
January	Joint leadership training Staff survey Staff visioning forum Student visioning forum	EQA & RAHS middle leaders RAHS Staff RAHS Staff and EQA Leaders RAHS Students, Staff and EQA leaders
February	Joint leadership training program Parent outreach and events	EQA & RAHS middle leaders RAHS staff and EQA staff
March	Joint leadership training program	EQA & RAHS middle leaders
April	Joint leadership training RAHS Student engagement • Logo & Branding development • Vision development	RAHS Students, staff, EQA leaders

	Staff visioning forum Staffing decisions for 2019-20	RAHS staff, leaders, EQA leaders
May	Joint leadership training Parent survey Parent forums Student survey Student forums	EQA & RAHS middle leaders RAHS Parents RAHS Parents RAHS Students RAHS Students
June	Joint leadership training Strategic planning for 20-21 Student recruiting	EQA Leaders NET leaders RAHS leaders
July	Joint staff training Student recruiting Neighborhood engagement	EQA & NOAH staff EQA & NOAH staff EQA & NOAH staff
August 2020	Joint staff celebrations Joint Summer Graduation	EQA & NOAH staff EQA & NOAH students
September 2020	Community Open House Family Open House	Neighbors and community supporters NOAH students and families

Stakeholder Engagement

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

Parents, Guardians & Families

Note: *For the purpose of this application, the term parent/guardian is used to describe students' families. However, for many NOAH students their legal parents or guardians may not be the adults currently overseeing their care and/or the most influential figures in their lives. Thus at NOAH the term "parent/guardian" will be understood to be the adult who is significant in the student's life, including but not limited to parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, older siblings and community mentors (such as religious leaders).*

Research shows a strong correlation between family involvement and student academic achievement, behavior, attendance and persistence.[11] Family-school partnerships are one of the most powerful tools educators can develop to promote higher academic achievement, a more cohesive classroom and curriculum, and an infrastructure of caring adults working together on students' behalf.[12] Therefore, it is vital that the school respect and engage families as important partners in facilitating students' success at NOAH.

To understand the current landscape, it is important to note that RAHS staff identify family and neighborhood perception of the school and engagement with the school as "more positive than negative" and "improving." During the 2018-19 school year, RAHS held two open houses for families and asked parents to sign up to volunteer for school events. While they were pleased with the turnout for the open houses, few parents volunteered.

Because of their work with similar demographics, EQA is familiar with these challenges. Families may be initially distrustful or even hostile toward school leaders and staff whom they perceive as representative of the education establishment. Many of the students' parents may harbor a sense that schools, teachers and administrators do not understand their children, their needs or their aspirations. Such an attitude could stem from parents' own poor schooling experiences or their children's repeated struggles at a variety of schools.[13] It is incumbent upon EQA and NOAH leadership, therefore, to work together to build a foundation of solid trust and to engage families effectively in order to support student achievement.

In its transformation effort, EQA will combine the best practices developed by The NET schools with those in place at RAHS. Every staff member at NOAH will receive training on communicating with and engaging parents and families, and each will be responsible for building and maintaining relationships with students' parents and families. Building such relationships takes time and a multilayered approach; parents must feel comfortable and welcomed, they must be empowered to engage, and they must have multiple and diverse opportunities for involvement.[14]

NOAH will welcome, empower, and involve families through:

- **Physical layout and friendly greetings**:
  School staff will welcome parents and community members into the school and give visitors immediate attention. A comfortable space will be available for anyone who must wait for an appointment with a staff member or student. Just as students will experience NOAH as a respectful place, so will parents and family members.
- **Frequent communication:**
  NOAH leaders and faculty will use the school's website, newsletters, and phone calls to inform families about school-wide news and the progress of their students. The school data system will allow parents to access information about student attendance, grades and progress via the web. Computers will be available at the school for families with limited access at home, and NOAH will assist parents in navigating the SIS. All families will have the cell phone numbers and email addresses of the school principal, administrators, and teachers. Parents and families will be personally invited to school functions and always encouraged to participate.
- **Home visits:**
  During enrollment and throughout the school year, NOAH staff will meet students and families at their homes to build relationships, share information about the program, and support families in accessing resources/services as needed.
- **Student intake process:**
  After enrollment at NOAH, all students will participate in an intense orientation and intake process. Parents/guardians will be invited to an orientation session where they will receive an introduction to the campus and learn about the school's expectations for each student and parent, students' particular coursework, and a general daily schedule. Parents will also be involved from the outset in developing their children's academic and career plans. Engaging parents at the earliest possible opportunity increases the likelihood that they will remain engaged over the course of their children's educational process. While every effort will be made to include all families (including sending personal invitations and providing transportation and refreshments), no student will be denied enrollment for lack of parent participation in orientation or intake.
- **Social service support:**
  By providing parents access to information on health, mental health and other social services, NOAH's social worker will help families support their students' achievement.
- **Volunteering:**
  The school will invite parents to help with school projects as appropriate, from painting to IT support. Should a parent possess a particular skill set that would enhance the school's educational offerings, NOAH will seek to engage that individual meaningfully into instruction. Such volunteer opportunities will enrich

and help personalize the learning experience for all students. While all families will be encouraged to volunteer and have multiple opportunities to do so, no student will be penalized for lack of parent involvement.

- **Internships:**
  The school will work with parents as appropriate to arrange internships at their places of business.

NOAH will involve parents and community members in school administration and governance through the following:

- **Board Membership:** As required by OPSB policy, at least one an alumni or parent of an alumni from EQA's schools will sit on the governing board.
- **Family and Community Council:** NOAH will establish a Family and Community Council as an official voice for parents, family members, community members, and alumni. The council will provide support to students and the school, and advocate for and provide information to other families.
- **Quality/Satisfaction Evaluations:**
  NOAH will operate with an "Open-door" policy encouraging parents and community members to share concerns and suggestions regarding the school. In addition, formal evaluations and surveys will be distributed annually and summary results will be shared with the community.

Community Surrounding the School

RAHS leaders have identified neighborhood response to the school as "improving" particularly after the school organized a food bank and health fair event that brought the neighbors and students into contact with each other in a positive way. In addition, RAHS leaders spoke of their attempts to be responsive to neighbors' concerns.

EQA has had similar experiences with neighbors at both its NET schools and has established a good reputation by being responsive, communicating frequently, and developing opportunities for students and neighbors to engage in positive ways. To reassure neighbors that their input will continue to be valued and their concerns responded to quickly during and after the transition, EQA and NOAH leaders will walk the neighborhood, introducing themselves and providing contact information.

In addition, EQA will launch a series of positive neighborhood events-- either organizing another foodbank/health fair or providing another service in which neighbors can interact with the students in a positive way.

As a high school, and particularly one that serves older students, the students themselves are one of the most important stakeholders to engage in the transformation process. Starting in January 2020, EQA and RAHS leaders will launch a series of opportunities for input including, but not limited to:

- Regular School-wide communication and introductions to insure open communication and decrease rumors and misconceptions from spreading
- Including current student leaders in strategic visioning sessions with staff and families
- Establishing a student advisory group to provide guidance to leaders during the transition
- Developing trainings and leadership opportunities for students to be ambassadors of restorative practices
- Launching a bi-annual student survey to capture students' evaluation of the school

EQA approaches this transformation with a deep respect for RAHS' many stakeholders. The goal of this transformation is to enhance rather than disrupt the school community and EQA is excited to partner with students, staff and families to do so.

Appendices

T1: NET:Central City Improvement Plan

NET:Central City Improvement Plan 2017-2018

Introduction

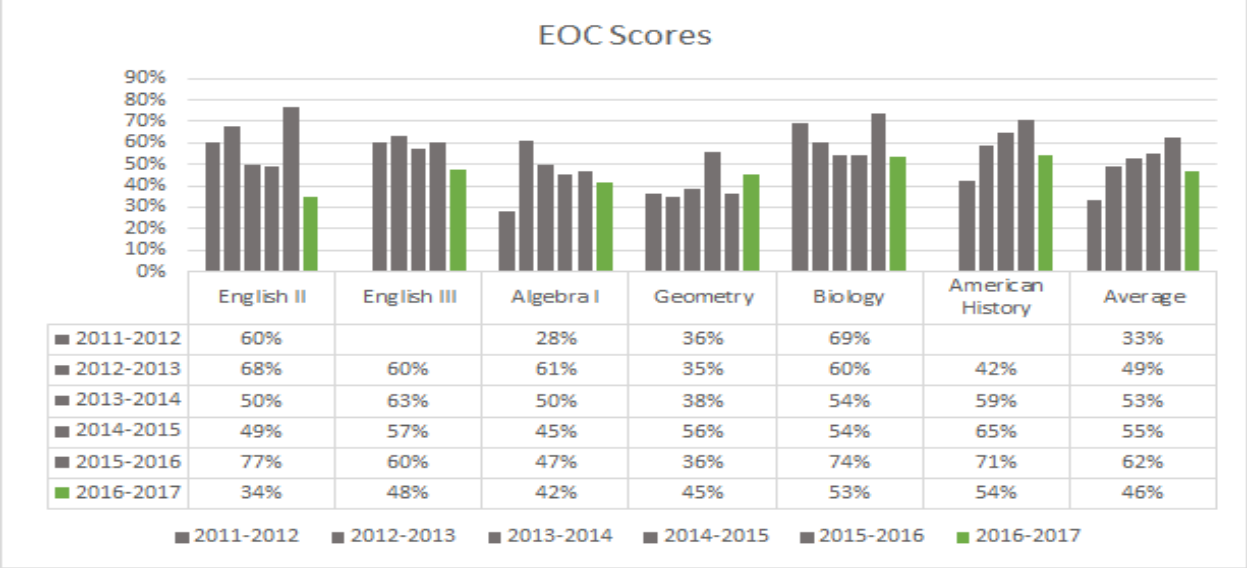
EQA and The NET have a history of setting rigorous, aspirational goals both on the individual and organizational level. As we are committed to serving severely struggling students in a challenging environment, we often fall short of fully accomplishing each of our goals. Furthermore, because of the school's small size and the great volatility of our population, achievement statistics are expected to fluctuate from semester to semester and year to year. However, taking all this into account, we have always achieved a high level of success and have demonstrated significant overall growth year on year.

This year, in contrast, The NET is not on track to achieve adequate progress toward several key goals including EOC Passage, Credit Attainment, and Literacy and Math Growth. Over the last month, the NET leadership and staff have engaged in a rigorous process to determine potential causes of this drop in performance and to design targeted responses to remediate it.

Goals and Progress

The NET's promise to students and families is *to provide struggling high school students the skills, confidence, and experience necessary to succeed in the education and career paths of their choice.* The first step in future success is earning their high school diploma which means *staying in school, building literacy and math skills, earning credits, passing EOC exams, and graduating.* Therefore The NET is held accountable by the state to success in the following indicators:

EOC Passage



	English II	English III	Algebra I	Geometry	Biology	American History	Average
2011-2012	60%		28%	36%	69%		33%
2012-2013	68%	60%	61%	35%	60%	42%	49%
2013-2014	50%	63%	50%	38%	54%	59%	53%
2014-2015	49%	57%	45%	56%	54%	65%	55%
2015-2016	77%	60%	47%	36%	74%	71%	62%
2016-2017	34%	48%	42%	45%	53%	54%	46%

Credit Attainment

2014-2015	**65% of students earned 3+ credits semester**
2015-2016	**67% of students earned 3+ credits semester**
2016-2017	**48% of students earned 3+ credits semester**

Literacy & Math Growth

Average Growth	Literacy	Math
2014-2015	1	2
2015-2016	1	1
2016-2017	0.48	0.69

Student Stability
This indicator will be calculated after the start of the 2017-18 school year as it is predicated on year-on-year enrollment.

Graduation Rate
This indicator will be calculated after the August graduation.

Analysis

Drops in performance are seen across multiple indicators, multiple subjects, and multiple classrooms. In addition, the majority of staff have worked at The NET previously and achieved stronger results. Therefore, we do not believe the drops should be contributed to individual performance and thus cannot be addressed by individual personnel change.

Instead, we have sought to analyze factors which may have had a school-wide effect. To better understand the results and what might have led to them, leaders engaged in the following exercises: Student-by-student Score Analysis, Teacher Interviews, Staff Survey Results Analysis, Student Survey Results Analysis, External Leader Interviews, and a Staff Feedback Session.

Student by Student Score Analysis
A comprehensive analysis for each student's class grades, attendance, STAR scores, behavior, and EOC scores was completed, separately, by the individual teachers and the Executive Director and was compared to score predictions teachers had made earlier in the Spring. This analysis revealed:

- While many students struggle with behaviors which interfere with their academic growth--mostly because they leave class frequently--most are identified and

receiving supports. There was a small group of such students of whom staff were aware, but for whom plans to address their behavior had not been created, were not being followed through, or were started too late to impact class success. *These students' failure raises questions about clarity of accountability around "owning" students and student plans and the rigor with which we insure students are making progress on their plans.*

- Teachers expressed concern about a small group of students who were not referred to the SBLC team despite concerns regarding their learning or comprehension abilities.. *While by far the smallest group-- approximately 3-- these students' failure raises questions about the speed and quality of student identification systems.*
- A small group of students who, based on all class and skill evidence, were making adequate progress. *These students' failure raises questions about curriculum rigor and alignment.*

Teacher Interviews

Leaders met with each teacher to review their student-level analysis and to seek their insight on the year. While not every teacher experienced or endorsed each of the following, some common themes emerged:

- All classrooms set expectations and some engaged in deliberate, ongoing community building activities, but most did not prioritize this.
- Deans and leaders were quick to respond to "big" behavior issues, but not as quick or effective with changing lower-level, ongoing student issues (walking out of class, refusing to work, etc.).
- Similarly, for students with ongoing, pervasive academic, behavioral, or attendance issues, plans and supports took a long time to kick in. Some felt more immediate, and substantial interventions should have been in place (such as rescheduling the student to another class)
- During the second semester, teachers made a greater attempt to weave EOC preparation into the course from day one. Correspondingly, they did not "blitz" EOC prep at the end of the semester as much as in previous semesters.
- Teachers were teaching toward the designated Learning Targets but did not develop systems for students to internalize or track their own progress toward these Learning Targets.
- Teachers valued Achieve 3000 and ALEKs as helpful tools for skills development and test prep but didn't think they always implemented them effectively.
- Teachers talked about the difficulty of teaching mixed-ability/mixed-level classes. *Suggestions included: leveling students by skill level or EOC test or time at The NET; developing "pre-requisite" classes that could serve to prep students prior to going into an EOC course; developing test prep "boot camps".*
- Teachers reported not receiving as much coaching and support as in the past. Teachers also reported receiving fewer observations.

Staff Survey Results Analysis

The Spring Staff survey focused on Staff Efficacy and questions regarding professional growth, development, and support.

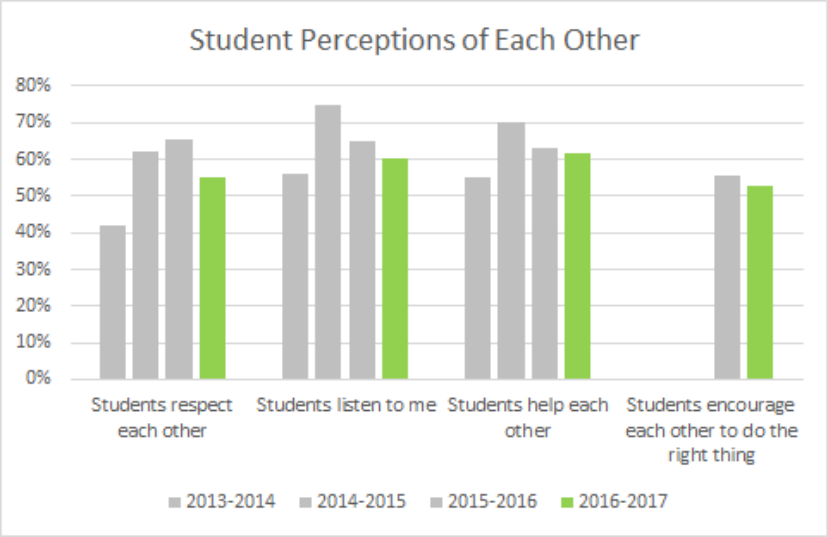
Depending upon the question, 2-4 respondents (out of 19) indicated low efficacy regarding supporting students academically and behaviorally. *While these respondents may include the staff members who are not returning, it raises questions regarding staff alignment to the*

mission and the extent to which staff members feel equipped and supported to be successful with difficult students.

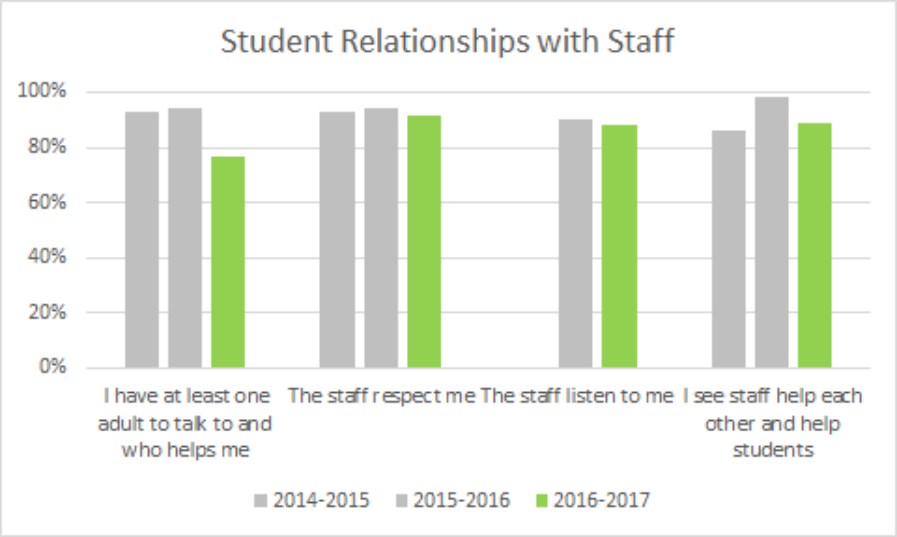
Staff asked for more training on positive classroom management strategies and working with families. The majority of staff asked for more workshops, classroom visits and feedback. Two-thirds asked for more observations.

Student Survey Results Analysis
Overall, student survey results were positive, with students highlighting their growth and appreciating their relationships. In particular, students rated their internships and the Next Steps program highly.

However, there were some some drops in the reported quality of student to student relationships. *This speaks to a concern about the frequency and quality of community building both in and outside of the classrooms.*



More concerningly, there were drops in the reported quality of staff-student relationships, an area the school has always prioritized and excelled in. More than in any other year, there were students who reported not having an adult they connected with. While overall scores continue to be very high for a high school, because research shows that a connection with a caring adult at school dramatically impacts the likelihood of a student graduating, *addressing this is a priority.*



External Leader Interviews
Along with meeting with board members with education experience, the Executive Director met with school and curriculum and instruction leaders from across the city including the principals at ReNew and JCFA. Some schools reported a dip in English II and Algebra I scores but did not share comprehensive data so it is not yet possible to see if city-wide or state-wide trends occurred. Perspectives on The NET's data and suggested responses varied but advice coalesced around:

- Most schools go through dips like this at some point in their development. They are most often associated with changes in leadership-- including temporary changes-- illnesses, maternity leave, etc.
- Unless all indicators including student work, observations, and evaluations indicate a clear and persistent pattern of lack of individual performance, replacing teachers and leaders is more likely to impede progress rather than improve it.
- Coaching is a difficult-to-implement-well, but highly impactful, lever even for strong teachers. While some leaders suggested using outside organizations to improving coaching (such as Relay or A-NET), others felt those were a waste of resources. *Having a single, consistent coach who meets with each teacher weekly and does frequent observations and engages in more intensive practices like whisper coaching, video analysis, co-teaching, and modeling, was strongly promoted.*
- Data driven instruction practices are also a highly impactful lever. Leaders talked about the impact for *increasing leaders' attention on developing high quality interim assessments and working with teachers to analyze the data and develop targeted re-teaching plans*.

Staff Feedback Session
After completing the reviews above, leaders presented a draft analysis and proposal to the full staff to solicit feedback. Major feedback included:
Culture

- Concerns about students not "buying-in." Some students not see this as a "real school" and thus don't take engaging with the school and academics seriously. *A variety of suggestions proposed on how to improve student connection and engagement including: more project based learning (like the summer), fewer opt-out options for Town Hall and other community building opportunities, restructuring Friday classes.*

- Concerns about an increase in students being high at school. *Staff requested a review of policies and procedures around this.*
- *A desire for greater clarity on school handbook, specifically expectations when students are out of the classroom.*

Individual Student Support

- *Requests for better "loop closing" to insure that restorative conversations are deeper, more timely and involve all applicable parties.*
- Concerns about students being pulled out of class for counseling, academic interventions etc.
- Consideration of different ways to *more quickly identify students for supports*
- Consideration of different ways to set up "caseloads" to insure students don't fall through the cracks: *increase advisory meetings, decrease size of advisories, spread caseload across all adults in the building, etc.*

Curriculum

- Concerns about changes to the state standards and EOC exams. *Desire for time and support for re-writing curriculum to address these changes.*
- Suggestions for investing and preparing students for the EOC exams including *rethinking Exhibitions to improve rigor, changing Cycle.3 so all staff and students are focused on test prep.*

Coaching and Development

- Suggestions for professional development time including *setting school-wide instructional strategies; analyzing data and making classroom and individual level plans; increase department-level meetings*
- Request for increases in observations including *peer observations*

Proposed Response

The extensive analysis and discussions have yielded dozens of suggestions for best practices and improvements which are distilled into four major charges:

- Improve **school culture** to create a more supportive community of which students feel more ownership.
- Improve **individual student support** to insure every student receives the appropriate supports and there is clear adult accountability for follow through on student plans.
- Address changes to **curriculum** proactively and increase focus on data driven instructional practices.
- Increase **coaching** particular through increased observations and professional development.

Below are initiatives aimed at addressing each of these four charges. Some initiatives are already underway while others require more research and design work.

School-wide and Classroom Culture

*Improve **school culture** to create a more supportive community of which students feel more ownership.*

- Decrease number of students from an average of 165-170 to 150. This will make it easier to know every student and build a tight community
- Rewrite Student Handbook with an emphasis on reviewing policies and procedures such as the "Under the Influence" policy and class attendance policy.
- Training for staff around substance abuse, research and strategies in recovery model, and harm reduction, to develop common messaging to students

- Increase staff training on classroom-based community building, set expectations and hold teachers accountable for the quantity and quality of community building activities in each classroom.
- Consider bringing/bringing back school-wide community building initiatives such as Peer Mediation program, Excursion Days, Clubs, etc.
- Developing language and initiative which invest students in the community and academic achievement such as EOC prep weeks, peer tutors, etc.
- Provide more training on and support for classroom management strategies and plans
- Develop additional opportunities for staff and students to learn about and engage with restorative practices including skits, role playing, Lost at School book study, advanced CRA training, etc.
- Greater accountability for the quantity and quality of "loop closing" including Principal reviewing ACL daily, 2x daily ACL check ins, weekly dean meetings, dean professional development (potentially across schools), more training and support for teachers in integrating into the process
- Continue to research and develop school-wide social emotional programs what can provide community with common language and strategies for social emotional growth.

Individual Student Support

*Improve **individual student support** to insure every student receives the appropriate supports and there is clear adult accountability for follow through on student plans.*

- Decrease number of students from an average of 165-170 to 150. This will make it easier to develop student-specific plans and hold adults accountable for student progress on the plans.
- Hire two new teachers with Special Education experience to provide class supports, student interventions. These teachers will also take some of the compliance responsibilities from the Special Education Coordinator allowing her to increase her support for teachers and students.
- Outsource 504 evaluation and paperwork to a consultant so that Academic Dean can focus more on student plans and teacher coaching around differentiation rather than paperwork.
- Consider use of "Resource Room" intervention model
- Return to the Principal managing the SBLC process and developing appropriate changes to identification and referral systems.
- Consider replicating success of Tier IV working group for Tier III behavior students to improve the efficiency, efficacy, and accountability of the FBA and BIP process.
- Research and implement improved interventions for groups which have been identified as underserved: young students, students who skip specific classes, and students who are entering in the middle of semesters.
- Increase the responsibilities of Operations Director and Data & Enrollment Coordinator for the logistical aspects of progress monitoring and scheduling so that the Principal, Academic Dean, and Special Education Coordinator can increase the quantity and quality of their analysis and intervention design of progress monitoring and scheduling.
- Continue to research advisory and case management systems for potential future implementation.
- Tighten accountability to insure each student is meticulously tracked and his or her progress is "owned" by a leader.

Curriculum Alignment

*Address changes to **curriculum** proactively and increase focus on data driven instructional practices.*

- Coaches and teachers will rewrite the appropriate curricula to address new state standards and new EOC exams. Support from the state, other schools, and, if needed, consultants will be sought.
- Coaches and teachers will review Learning Targets and work to develop systems so that students "own" tracking their progress towards these Learning Targets. Leverage Act 833 portfolios to help students connect with EOC standards.
- Leaders will research and pilot systems for EOC integration and EOC prep including such possibilities as: dividing students by English test prep, using last week of semester as EOC only prep, increased practice on testing platform.
- Improving the quality and quantity of interim assessments used in all classes. Developing improved systems for reviewing data from these assessments and developing re-teaching expectations. Consider daily standards based checks for understanding and review.
- Develop co-taught and "pre-EOC" courses such as co-teaching Biology and piloting a pre-Algebra course.
- Research and develop systems for better implementing ALEKs and Achieve 3000 intervention programs.

Coaching and Development

*Increase **coaching,** particularly through increased observations and professional development.*

- Increase coaches and divide teachers among the two Academic Deans and the Principal to insure intensive, targeted support.
- Develop an Instructional Team across both schools to leverage the diverse strengths of the Principals and Academic Deans and develop coherent visions for high quality instruction. The Instructional Team will meet weekly.
- Shorten school schedule by 1 block (ending at 5pm instead of 6:30) to insure that leaders have more time to meet, plan, and engage in development. This time will be structured on a weekly and monthly basis.
- Mandatory coaches observation schedule with observations and feedback sessions shared with teachers, Instructional Team, and supervisors.
- Develop coaches' toolbox by piloting use of co-teaching, modeling, video observations, student feedback, and immediate feedback. Pilots will be planned and results shared with teachers, Instructional Team, and supervisors.
- Continue to develop professional development calendars that address the many needs and learning preferences of a diverse staff.
- Institute peer observation and feedback systems

Implications and Next Steps

Improving academic outcomes will not occur overnight and will not be the result of any single factor, decision or program. In addition, because the state is releasing new EOC exams in almost all subject areas, comparing 2016-17 EOC results and 2017-18 EOC results will be an unreliable measure of growth or success. These serious concerns aside, The NET:Central City is committed to improving academic outcomes and ,thus, will continue to analyze and improve this plan and implement the initiatives above.

Leadership Implications

While all of the leaders for 2017-18 have been incubating for their positions (and thus have the same titles) their responsibilities will significantly increase in 2017-18 when the Executive Director and the individuals in "co-positions" move to NET:Gentilly. The team's execution on the

above initiatives and improvement of student achievement will require considerable skill and effort. To support the leadership transition, the following considerations have been taken:

Additional Capacity

- The Director of Operations will be added to the NET:Central City leadership team (to manage operational and pupil progression responsibilities formerly handled by the Principal, Academic Dean and/or Dean of Students respectively)
- A third Academic Dean will be added to the NET's instructional team
- A consultant will be hired to manage the 504 evaluation process (formerly the responsibility of the Academic Dean)
- The Receptionist will take on the role of Attendance Monitor (formerly the responsibility of the Dean of Students)

Job Design

- Considerable time has, and will continue to be, taken to insure clarity of responsibilities and accountability
- A Staff Leave Schedule has been designed to designate support from Data & Enrollment and Special Education for certain tasks and to clarify the responsibilities of the leadership team around school breaks

Support

- Joint training for the Instructional Team, Dean Teams, and Leadership Teams will be designed by the Executive Director
- Resources will be sought for an external consultant to provide leadership training and coaching

Staffing & Financial Implications

In an organization of finite resources, all changes involve resource shifts and tradeoffs.

Advisory:

- Decreasing the number of students will mean shrinking the teaching staff by one Advisor (one Advisor is leaving so this will not result in any lay offs).

Next Steps Program:

- The Next Steps Coordinator will be split across The NET:Central City and NET:Gentilly. Rather than hiring an additional individual for NET:Gentilly (only a 20%FTE was budgeted originally) the NET:Central City Next Steps Coordinator and Assistant Principal will manage the program at NET:Gentilly

504 Coordinator

- Hiring someone part time to manage 504 evaluations will cost approximately $10,000 which is offset by cuts to professional development, curriculum, and student activities line items.

Long Term Financial Stability

- Because many of the supports to NET:Central City are subsidized by NET:Gentilly's start up status (third Academic Dean, Operations Director etc.), over the next five years, resources are expected to decrease. To maintain quality, leaders and staff effectiveness will need to increase proportionally to the tapering off of these additional resources

Next Steps

At this stage, the team seeks feedback from the EQA Board to support with their planning during their Strategic Planning Retreat at the end of June. During the retreat, leaders will flesh

out the design of each initiative, distribute resources, and develop trainings in anticipation of the start of the 2017-18 school year.

Endnotes

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