



Spring 2019 Charter School Application

Spring 2019 Charter RFA: Completeness Check Exp. Operator

Name of Nonprofit Corporation:	Crescent City Schools
Names of Proposed Schools:	CCS4, CCS5
Name of Primary Contact:	Kate Mehok

ITEM	RESPONSE	COMMENTS
Application Type	Type 1	
Operator Track	Transformation – Full Takeover	

Location	Item	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Letter of Intent	Letter of Intent	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eligibility Determination	Eligibility Determination Forms	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Copies of Current LA Teacher Certifications	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Charter Board Member Resumes	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Charter Board Background Checks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Full Application	Executive Summary (2-Page Limit)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	1: School/Portfolio Workbook	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2: Most recent Financial Audit	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3: Litigation documentation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4: Weekly Student Schedule	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5: Daily schedule (9 th – 12 th grade only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	6: Pupil Progression Plan	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7: School Calendar (9 th -12 th grade only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	8: CEO and Board Chair Succession Plan	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	9: Organizational Chart (CMO and School Level)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	10: Charter Board Roles	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11: School Leader Evaluation Tool	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12: Qualified Business Manager/ Financial Manager Resume	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	13: Financial Manager Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	14: Financial Template	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	15: Budget Narrative	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	16: ESP Contract (If applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	17: ESP Audit (If applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	18: CEO: Job Description and either resume or recruitment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
19: CAO: Job Description and either resume or recruitment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X		



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	20: Director of Special Education: Job Description and either resume or recruitment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	21: CFO and/or COO: Job Description and either resume or recruitment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	22: School leadership team job descriptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	23: School leadership redacted & leadership tea resumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
	24: Authorizer Approval (for non-OPSB charters awarded, but not in operation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	



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Experienced Operator Application

Applications should include only the information requested below, saved in a single PDF file. Please clearly label each section of your application with headings that match the headings of the application. Applications should be no more than 40 pages, excluding the requested attachments, which should be no more than 200 pages. There are no page limits for individual sections except for the Executive Summary.

The finances template should be submitted as an excel file. All background checks should be submitted in a single PDF file. The eligibility form should be submitted as a PDF file as well.

The purpose of this application is to assess the readiness of charter applicants to produce high-quality student outcomes that meet, if not exceed, the expectations that charter schools must achieve to remain in operation.

Executive Summary

Provide a two-page overview of your proposed network, including:

- (1) The outcomes you will achieve;
- (2) The key components of your scale strategy; and
- (3) Your approach to mitigating the threats most likely to hinder your success.

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

The mission of Crescent City Schools is to support and develop open enrollment charter schools that raise student achievement and prepare students for college. **Established in 2010, Crescent City Schools was founded on the belief that all students deserve great schools.** Crescent City Schools is a Charter Management Organization (CMO) founded by two veteran educators, Kate Mehok and Julie Lause, in order to address the specific need of transforming failing schools. Crescent City Schools currently serves more than 2,200 students across three schools in New Orleans: Harriet Tubman Charter School (Algiers), Akili Academy (Upper Ninth Ward), and Paul Habans Charter School (Algiers). Over the last eight years, Crescent City Schools has transformed its two Algiers-based elementary school, Harriet Tubman Charter School and Paul Habans Charter School, and put both schools on the path towards excellence. For the past two years, all three schools in the CCS network have received a grade of "A" for student growth, demonstrating that our model meets students where they are and pushes them towards significant academic growth.

Crescent City Schools seeks to replicate our educational model at Harriet Tubman Charter School and use it to transform two additional schools, CCS4 and CCS5, in New Orleans. As a network of open enrollment schools, we serve a population that is 99% minority, 94% economically disadvantaged, 7% limited English proficient, and 15% special education. Crescent City Schools expects to serve a student population at CCS4 and CCS5 that is similar to the overall student population served by our network, although we do anticipate that our special education percentage will be closer to the 12% (the average for the city as a whole).

Crescent City Schools is designed to effectively educate children who are considered "at-risk." We implement



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many of the same strategies that have been effective in other urban school settings at each of our schools. We supplement the comprehensive curriculum with research-based programs and curriculum materials designed to meet the needs of students who are academically behind. In addition, our daily schedule includes time to focus on foundational math and reading skills as well as classes that focus on standards mastery. These options allow academically “at-risk” students to make multiple grade-levels of progress in one year, mastering foundational skills while also progressing through state standards. Additionally, our extended day allows for daily one-on-one tutoring and remediation designed to meet the needs of each individual child. Crescent City Schools’ entire approach to education is one that addresses meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failure. The school’s philosophy of helping students achieve academic success through hard work and a longer school day and year is specifically tailored to students who are struggling academically or behaviorally when they arrive at the school.

In addition to meeting and addressing students’ needs for academic remediation, CCS4 and CCS5 will share another important, foundational goal with Tubman: to meet students where they are and push them to be their best selves. CCS4 and CCS5 will strive to encourage students’ passion and enthusiasm for learning, a goal that assumes different forms for various grade bands. For its youngest scholars, those in kindergarten, first, and second grade, CCS4 and CCS5 will offer a Montessori-inspired curriculum that is unique in the city. This approach, described more fully below, strives to promote students’ curiosity about, and ability to create connections to, the world around them. For older students, CCS4 and CCS5 will structure its middle school program to help students find academic and extracurricular pursuits that are personally gratifying. Because of this belief, students are offered a wide range of enrichment activities, including physical education, music, art, and drama. CCS4 and CCS5 middle school students will be given the opportunity to participate in a clubs program, where they can pursue non-academic passions. CCS4 and CCS5 will also have an after-school sports and arts program, where we offer several team sports, drumline, and dance. When paired with efforts of teachers to make classrooms as engaging as possible, these types of enrichment programs create an environment that inspires students to be committed and connected to academic pursuits.

Crescent City Schools believes, in the broadest sense, that the school is the location where the transformation of society takes place. We take this societal role seriously, endeavoring to create life-changing educational experiences for students and, through this work, transform a city. The mission of CCS4 and CCS5 would reinforce this belief: Students at CCS4 and CCS5 will build the academic skills, personal values, and intellectual habits of mind to succeed in high school, college, and beyond. With integrity and pride, students and teachers will focus on results and develop personal and social responsibility to build a better New Orleans for themselves and us all. Crescent City Schools believes it is the responsibility of each of our schools to provide an outstanding, high-quality education for every child who walks through the door. It is our responsibility to make the difference despite all the challenges that a child presents. Poor preparation, family struggles, societal need, and conditions of poverty are not excuses we use to account for lower performance. Instead, we will build a school around our students, knowing they may come to us with these factors. Our approach is to structure a school that will meet every child at his/her unique level of academic performance and push them to succeed at the highest level. Although Crescent City Schools operates PreK-8 schools, preparing our students for college is a critical part of our mission, as we believe that a college education is paramount to achieving a life of choice and opportunity. Across all three of our schools, each classroom is named for the alma mater of its teacher and students develop fierce pride and a sense of loyalty for their specific classroom/university from the earliest grades. As students transition from seventh to eighth grade, there is a staff member at each of our schools who provides parents and students alike with guidance and support around the high school application process. This includes parent orientations/info sessions, school visits, help with the citywide enrollment process, and support in preparing applications. We have seen tremendous success as a result of our efforts. In 2018, more than 63% of eighth graders enrolled in high-performing high schools, which we define as schools that are A’s or B’s and/or send 85% or more of graduates to



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college. CCS4 and CC5 will also prioritize the college-preparatory aspect of its curriculum and set similar goals around eighth graders enrollment in high-performing high schools.

Since Crescent City Schools already operates three PreK-8th grade schools in New Orleans, we already have a well-established central office team. We believe that resources are best kept at the school level and will continue to work to keep our CMO Central Office team as lean as possible while we seek to provide optimum service and support to our schools. The addition of a fourth and fifth school to the CCS network will necessitate the addition of a Chief Academic Officer to manage the CCS Director of Instruction and work directly with the school-based DCIs and School Principals at CCS4 and CCS5 to focus on raising student achievement by providing high-quality curriculum and consistent observation and feedback to teachers. As a reminder, we currently centralize and will continue to centralize the following: Recruiting and initial screening of all candidates; Human Resources benefits administration; Development and Communications; Finances; Evaluations.

Crescent City Schools believes that the most effective way to ensure success in transforming a school is to empower the principal to make decisions in the building and then support them as they implement their vision. The role of the CMO Central office staff is to do the bulleted things above and then support the School Leader as needed. As mentioned in our start-up plan, the CCS Director of Human Capital will support the CCS4 and CCS5 School Leaders in recruiting and hiring of people. The CCS Chief Operating Officer will support on all things finance and will also lend his support to the School Leaders and the respective Directors of Finance and Operations as they make operational decisions regarding recruiting, buses, food service, classroom layout, facilities, etc.

Past School Performance

In your proposal overview, you provided performance data on the schools your organization currently operates or has previously operated. Please provide a brief accompanying narrative that describes your organization's success educating a similar demographic population to the population you intend to educate in Louisiana. Please note that the charter authorizer(s) to which you applied, or the Department may contact your other authorizers.

In addition, describe the causes that led to and the current status of:

- (1) Any performance deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to authorizer intervention;
- (2) Any litigation involving your organization or a school that you operate; and,
- (3) Any material audit findings for your organization or a school that you operate.

Attachment 1: School/Portfolio Workbook

Attachment 2: Most Recent Financial Audit

Attachment 3: Litigation Documentation

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

Past Success

Because Crescent City Schools is seeking to do a fourth and fifth turnaround in New Orleans of an existing open enrollment charter school, we expect the demographics of CCS4 and CCS5 to generally mirror the demographics of Tubman, Akili, and Habans. We have demonstrated success with this population as evidenced by the past academic performance of our schools and students.

Harriet Tubman Charter School, the first school in the Crescent City Schools network, opened in 2011 and moved from a grade of F to a grade of C in its second year of operations. In 2015, its fourth year of operations, Tubman



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moved from 27th to 5th in the K-8 school rankings for the Recovery School District. As a result of students' performance on state exams, Tubman is in the midst of a six-year charter renewal, awarded by the Louisiana Department of Education in 2016. In 2017, Akili Academy, the second school in the Crescent City Schools network, was one of only seven K-8 schools in the city to grow a letter grade and boasted the second highest growth of all K-8 schools in the city. As a result of its students' achievements, Akili received a School Performance Score of 70, moved from a D to C grade, and was given a six-year renewal of its charter. Paul Habans Charter School, which was a failing school when Crescent City Schools assumed operations, has improved its School Performance Score by 25 points in the past three years and received a three-year renewal of its charter in 2017 due to its students' academic progress. Additionally, in 2016-2017, all three schools in the CCS network received a Progress Letter Grade Equivalent of A for student academic growth/progress. Out of 78 schools in the city, including those with selective admissions policies, the schools in the CCS network ranked 12, 14, and 20 in the city for student academic growth.

In 2017-2018, all three schools in the CCS network continued to be A growth schools. All schools were also C schools for student assessment. Additionally, Habans ranked first, out of all public K-8 schools in the city, for student growth in ELA, and sixth in student growth in Math, and all three schools in the CCS network were in the top 10 for student growth in ELA in 2017-2018. **This level of academic achievement across our network is a direct result of the work and effort put in by our students and exceptional educators.**

School Name	ELA		Math	
	Ranking*	% Meeting Growth Target	Ranking*	% Meeting Growth Target
Paul Habans Charter School	1	64%	6	58%
Akili Academy	3	60%	11	55%
Harriet Tubman Charter School	9	56%	27	44%
Louisiana Statewide		48%		43%

*out of all K-8 schools in Orleans Parish

CCS continues to pursue excellence and is working to become B and A grade schools in terms of overall School Performance Scores. All schools in the CCS network were authorized by the Recovery School District and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Compliance

Crescent City Schools has never experienced any deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to authorizer intervention.

Litigation

The lawsuit is still pending, so there is no further information we can provide at this time. Crescent City Schools has denied any responsibility or liability, and we do not believe we will be held liable in this matter. We note that "[t]he duty to ensure the safety of students prior to the time the bus arrives and after the school bus drops them off at their designated bus stops rests solely with the students themselves and their parents. The liability of school board and its employees for injuries to students exists only when the school board has actual custody of the students entrusted to their care." See *Cavalier v. Ward*, 723 So.2d 480 (La. App. 1 Cir. 9/25/1998). In this matter, students were crossing the street to their designated bus stop and were not in the custody of the Crescent City Schools. Furthermore, pursuant to our contract with our transportation service provider, we have tendered our



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defense and requested indemnity from said provider. Therefore, we believe that the Crescent City Schools should not be held liable in this matter.

Findings

Crescent City Schools has never had any material audit findings.

Academics

- (1) Describe the academic needs of the student population you propose to serve. Explain how you will set, and measure progress towards, performance goals that put your students on a path towards achieving your vision. Include your plan to gather baseline data necessary to establish goals.
- (2) For all core content and mission-related subject areas:
 - a. Identify the curricula that your school will use and your reasons for these choices;
 - b. Identify the interim assessments you will use and how these align to the curricula;
 - c. Describe your professional development plans for teachers and how they connect to the curricula and assessments.
- (3) Describe the system by which your instructional staff will design interventions for all students. If you are applying for a virtual school, additionally describe the system by which struggling students will receive in-person instruction, including the location for providing these services, the transportation services that will be available, and a plan for evaluating struggling students.
- (4) If you are proposing a specialized school, describe the concrete structures, policies, and practices that will differentiate your school from options already available to the community you propose to serve.
- (5) [Applicable to applicants proposing to serve grades 9-12] Provide an example of a daily schedule for a student attending your school as well as your school's academic calendar.

Attachment 4: Weekly Student Schedule

Attachment 6: Pupil Progression Plan

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

Academic needs

Over the last ten years, New Orleans schools have improved at a tremendous rate. In 2000, only 21% of New Orleans students were proficient on state tests. By 2014, that number had risen to 61%, demonstrating an unprecedented growth in student achievement [Here](#). The achievement for black students in New Orleans grew at an even greater rate, and by 2014, they were outperforming their state peers, with 59% of black students achieving proficiency in New Orleans compared to only 54% of black students statewide. The number of students attending persistently failing schools in New Orleans fell from 64% in 2005 to 28% in 2016. Despite the unparalleled growth, there are still many students not achieving at basic levels, and as the state has raised its expectations, requiring a "Mastery" score on LEAP to demonstrate proficiency when previously a "Basic" score was sufficient, students are being asked to demonstrate achievement at an even high level. On the Spring 2017 LEAP test, student performance in English in grades 3rd-8th grade was 34% at Mastery and in math Mastery performance was 25%. Furthermore, there are still students attending subpar schools. In 2016 28% of students in New Orleans attended D, F or T (transformation schools). [Here](#). Students attending those schools tended to be more minority and more low income than the rest of the students in New Orleans (LDOE webinar).

During the 2016-2017 school year, 52% of K-8 students in Algiers attended a D or F school (data provided by



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OPSB). Of those schools, several have been languishing as D's or F's for over a decade showing little improvement. Over the last seven years, Crescent City Schools has transformed two elementary school in Algiers, Harriet Tubman and Paul Habans, and put both schools on the path towards excellence.

We seek to replicate our model at Harriet Tubman Charter School and use it to transform two additional schools in New Orleans. As a network of open enrollment schools, we serve a student population that is 99% minority, 94% economically disadvantaged, 6% limited English proficient, and 16% special education. Crescent City Schools expects to serve a student population at CCS4 and CCS5 that is generally similar to this student population, although we do anticipate that our special education percentage will be closer to the 12% that is the city average.

Setting and measuring progress/putting goals in place that put students on path to success

The initial term of the CCS4 and CCS5 transformation charters will be five years, so we have set ambitious but realistic goals to achieve that full transformation by Year 5. It is our experience that slow measured progress is the key to sustainable achievement and so we have drawn on that experience to set goals for CCS4 and CCS5.

Attendance Goals:

We understand the relationship between a child's attendance and his/her achievement. Our student support team will work to ensure our students come to school using the following plan:

1. Personal calls for every absence. (Document in Schoolrunner)
2. 3 absences: Truancy intervention letter from social work to family (Document in Schoolrunner)
3. 5 absences: meeting or home visit from the social worker
4. 10 absences: referral to Orleans Parish Youth Opportunity Center
5. 10 absences: mention possible retention at Trimester 2 report card meeting.

Based on the daily attendance at our schools in Algiers and the Upper Ninth Ward, we anticipate that our transformation schools will have a 90% daily attendance when we transform it. We report on attendance at our Data Days and reward homerooms and grade levels where attendance is improving and/or meeting the end of year expectations.

Attendance	Year #1	Year#2	Year#3	Year#4	Year#5
Average daily attendance	91%	92%	93%	94%	95%

Attrition of Students

We understand that retention of students year to year is a sign of school stability and we want to ensure that our families are committed to our mission at CCS4 and CCS5 and return year after year. However, as a network that operates school on both the Westbank and Eastbank of New Orleans, we recognize that student movement functions differently depending on location. On the Westbank of New Orleans, a family can move down the block and end up in Jefferson Parish. So we know that a school located on the Westbank could have higher mobility on than an Eastbank counterpart. Yearly attrition at across our network in 2018 ranged from 16% at Akili Academy (5 percentage points of which was an out of district move) to 21% at Harriet Tubman Charter School (9 percentage points of which was an out of district move). Based on these numbers, we would set the following yearly attrition goals for both CCS4 and CC5:

Attrition	Year #1	Year#2	Year#3	Year#4	Year#5



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Total	20%	19%	18%	17%	15%
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Internal Reading Tests:

We believe that students that read on grade level are more likely to be successful in high school and attend college. We designed our CCS4 and CCS5 program to include daily phonic instruction in K-2nd grade and provide daily reading intervention to students in grades 3rd-8th grade because we know the importance of reading (see Core Program Elements section beginning on page 11 for more details). Because of the emphasis we place on this work, we track reading performance throughout the entire year. We will measure each incoming CCS4 and CCS5 student's reading level using either the STEP tool (K-3) or Fountas & Pinnell tool (4th-8th) in August of the first academic year and then track growth at least two times throughout the year including end of year measure. Based on our work in turnaround schools we assume that 40% of students will be reading on grade level at the beginning of the (respective) years when we transform CCS4 and CCS5.

Reading Level	Year #1	Year#2	Year#3	Year#4	Year#5
Percent of students who read on grade level or who made 1.5 years of growth.	50%	60%	65%	70%	75%

State LEAP test performance:

We anticipate we will transform school that have a D letter grade, so for goal setting purposes we are assuming we are inheriting a school where 50% of students are achieving Basic or Above on LEAP tests, and 15% of students are Mastery and Above. We have set goals that are attainable and will put CCS4 and CCS5 on the path towards being at least a B school at the end of its initial charter term.

LEAP Test	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Percent Basic & Above	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%
Percent Mastery & Above	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%

High School Acceptance:

As an organization that runs PreK-8 schools, we know it is important that we support our families to make informed high school decisions when they apply to and matriculate into 9th grade. The Counselor works individually with every family in 8th grade to support each student's application to high school. Like all Crescent City Schools, CCS4 and CCS5 will organize visits to high schools for our 7th and 8th grade parents and students, as well as host evening events where families can come to CCS4 and CCS5 and meet representatives from high school in the city. It is our hope that every family will chose a "high performing high school" to attend. The CCS internal definition of "high performing high school" is a school that has an A or B letter grade and/or sends 80% of graduates to college. For 2018, more than 63% of all CCS eighth graders attended a high performing high school.

Plan to gather baseline data



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In terms of gathering baseline data, and using that data to set goals for students' academic success, CCS4 and CCS5 teachers will utilize the same systems employed across the network in order to monitor student learning. Teachers at CCS4 and CCS5 will use assessments to inform their planning and teaching. Before the school year begins, all students will be assessed for their reading level using Fountas and Pinnell or STEP assessments and students will be assessed in math using iReady. All students in K-2nd grade take MAP, a norm-referenced test that will allow us to track students' progress over time and in comparison to same-grade peers across the country. Data from these assessments guides our placement of students in intervention groups and allows us to tailor each child's education program to their specific needs.

Additionally, teachers will be using a gradebook that is organized around state standards. Each portion of a student's test, for example, will be graded and entered into the gradebook separately and by standard. This way, teachers can see quickly who has mastered which standard and which students need additional work in which areas. This also eliminates confusion for parents when the grade in the class is linked more closely to mastery of skills. At CCS4 and CCS5, student performance on assessments and classroom work will be recorded in each student's academic grade, which will allow clear communication to families about student performance.

Teachers will plan their curriculum for the year by beginning with the end in mind. Because the LEAP will be our final assessment of skills mastered, teachers will study the test to determine which skills and knowledge are assessed most frequently and what kind of rigor is necessary to master the standards tested. Rather than assisting teachers to "teach to the test," this practice enables teachers to prepare students appropriately so that at the end of the year the LEAP actually assesses the standards and skills rather than our students' familiarity with the test format and question stems.

Assessment will be a regular part of each classroom teacher's planning each week. When teachers turn in their lesson plans to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, they will be required to have planned their assessments for the week. Teachers will use assessments to determine their own instructional progress as well as the progress of their students. Using anecdotal evidence, exit quizzes, skill quizzes, and unit tests in their classroom, teachers will determine whether students are meeting achievement goals for the subject area.

When we use formative assessments systematically, we can determine the learning needs of our students on a daily basis. They also help inform teachers of the effectiveness of their teaching. Interim assessments help determine student progress on mastery of standards and inform teachers in their future planning.

With interim assessments, teachers will be able to immediately identify the students that need extra help toward particular standards. In addition, teachers will easily identify what standards need to be re-taught or reviewed more rigorously. Our belief is that no matter the curriculum used, the state standards should guide instruction and the level of rigor on the LEAP should guide the kinds of problems and questions students see in their classrooms throughout the year. While students must work on basic skills, the LEAP rarely ask strictly computational or explicit information questions. To address this, students will do plenty of multiplication problems, but they will also tackle word problems and inferential questions to increase the rigor in our daily instruction. By familiarizing themselves with the Louisiana state standards, teachers will be able to challenge students and prepare them to apply their knowledge on LEAP

Results from our interim assessments will be transformed into data to use in teacher conversations following each administration of the assessment. A full data day¹ following the assessments is built into the school calendar so

¹ This format for evaluating data is taken from the work of Paul Bambrick-Santoyo. His book, *Driven By Data*, (2010) is a reference book of best practices in using data to drive instruction in schools.



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teachers have time to analyze the data, reflect on their teaching practice, and make a plan for re-teaching standards not mastered. This process is designed to help teachers tailor their academic assessments to the LEAP assessments so that, come spring, the Quarterly assessments enable us to make our instruction more relevant during the year. Teachers will be held accountable for producing results inside their classroom. Students will need to make progress towards basic or mastery-level achievement on the LEAP, and teachers will reflect on this progress quarterly. By the time the students take the LEAP, teachers should be able to predict their scores because they are so familiar with their students' progress.

Another benefit is that regular LEAP-like assessments improve teaching: data on student performance can impact lesson design as well as help teachers understand what they have taught well and what they need to re-teach. A re-teaching week is built into the schedule after each data day, allowing teachers the chance to plan for a review of standards not mastered. This cycle of teach, assess, and re-teach forms the basis of our instructional program and allows teachers to fine-tune their teaching.

Curricula/Interim Assessments/Professional Development for Teachers

Crescent City Schools is focused on preparing our students for high school, college, and beyond. Our unwavering faith in our students' potential, as well as our commitment to developing effective and inspiring educators builds the fundamental basis for our instructional model. The core program at CCS schools includes educational elements we believe dramatically raise student achievement, create a culture of respect and joy, and maximize the efforts of school-based leadership. These elements are based on practices in urban, high-performing public schools whose students are achieving at the highest levels.² These Core Program Elements are:

- High Expectations for Academics and Behavior
- Instructional Models That Have Proven Results
- A Structured and Orderly Learning Environment
- Healthy Environment, Healthy Relationships for Learning and Teaching
- Outstanding Teachers and Outstanding Support
- Common Values for Character, Leadership, and Responsibility
- Rigorous Goals that Motivate
- College Focus From the Start
- Partnership With Parents
- Enrichment With a Purpose

High Expectations for Academics and Behavior

We have the highest expectations of our students because we believe in the unlimited potential of each child. We believe that every student that enters our building can learn and succeed in a high-performing academic environment.³ A culture that communicates high expectations must counteract the negative messages our students may have received, as well as their potential erroneous beliefs about their abilities. Having high expectations for each student means understanding the absolute standard a child must reach, and building an engaging academic program that motivates students to persevere in the face of adversity. High standards are not used, in our case, to weed out or dismiss students who are not achieving. Instead, high standards push students to improve the quality of their work, work hard to meet a new challenge, and reach beyond what they had thought

² Our instructional model and academic philosophy are based on the best practices from the following high-performing urban charter schools: KIPP schools (NYC, DC, and New Orleans), North Star Academy (Newark, NJ), Roxbury Prep (Boston, MA), Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School (Boston, MA), and Mastery Charter Schools (Philadelphia, PA). All of these schools have outperformed their district and comparable public school benchmarks.

³ Samuel Casey Carter, *No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools*, The Heritage Foundation (2000); U.S. Department of Education, *Successful Charter Schools* (2004).



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possible. High expectations will give students a standard to reach for with talented and inspiring educators to assist them along the way.

We believe that high expectations for quality must be in place for students to produce the quality of work that will take them to college and beyond. Students at CCS4 and CCS5 will work toward being independent learners, students who can tackle problems on their own and who are motivated to produce the highest-quality work. Developing a strong work ethic in students for both their class work and their homework is also essential to achieving this vision. Teachers will help students to develop the habit of completing quality work on-time. Students who fail to hand in homework, or who hand in unfinished or poor quality work, will miss desirable activities in order to complete or redo their work.

We also must institute the appropriate learning program for each child in order to fulfill our own promise of high expectations. We don't believe learning ability, special education status, or emotional need is an excuse to deliver a sub-standard program. We know that most of our students will begin the school year significantly behind academically, and determining their academic needs through diagnostic testing will allow us to tailor the academic program for each child. We believe in meeting an absolute standard, but also believe in creating measurable goals along the way that inspire and motivate students to keep working hard. These goals are incorporated into the diagnostic testing that students will take throughout the year to measure progress. We aim to inspire our students to believe in themselves and, through our highly effective academic program, achieve more than they have previously thought possible.

Instructional Models that Have Proven Results

CCS4 and CCS5 are committed to implementing programs, curriculum, and school structures that have proven results in high-performing schools across the country.⁴ We do not plan to experiment with school-created curricula. Very few of our lessons will be scripted, but they will be grounded in proven curriculum and guided by relevant assessment to determine progress. We have seen innovative curriculum fall short when the only assessment to judge the standard is the LEAP test. By that time, it's too late to make a difference for students, and experimenting like that fails them. Without grounding the curriculum in a high standard, the teacher is left without perspective on the specific goals his or her students need to reach.

We are, fundamentally, a results-driven organization, and this means that we will implement programs, curricula, and structures that are research-based and grounded in results. Through innovation and creativity are values that have their place, we have seen too many schools waste the efforts of teachers with potential by allowing classroom innovation but providing little guidance about what works in other high-performing schools. We will not bank our school's success on the practice of simply hiring gifted teachers without expecting them to need guidance and support. Even gifted educators need to be guided toward best practice, and in order to work together as a team, we will expect all teachers to follow the instructional methods we have determined as most important for school transformation.

Our instructional methods are all based on well-established best practices in high-performing schools across the country and our own experiences. These include whole-school instructional methods adopted for use as an entire school, as well as classroom best practices that will be used by all teaching staff. These include:

⁴ Our instructional model and academic philosophy are based on the best practices from the following high-performing urban charter schools: KIPP schools (NYC, DC, and New Orleans), North Star Academy (Newark, NJ), Roxbury Prep (Boston, MA), Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School (Boston, MA), and Mastery Charter Schools (Philadelphia, PA). All of these schools have outperformed their district and comparable public school benchmarks.



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Whole-School Instructional Methods

- Standards-Based, Aligned Curriculum
- Focus on Planning
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Explicitly Teach Habits of Mind (explained further in the Culture Section)
- Tiered-Based Grouping and Instructional Organization
- Multi-Layered System of Intervention

Classroom Instructional Methods

- Instructional Consistency
- Lesson Cycle with Guided and Independent Practice
- Spiraling Every Day
- Daily Use of Data
- Purposeful Homework

Whole School Instructional Methods

These instructional methods will be implemented at the school level, with responsibility for execution residing with school leadership.

Standards-Based, Aligned Curriculum

Louisiana Student Standards guide the curriculum and help teachers determine what to teach so that students master the expectations for each grade level. It is extremely important that teachers in a K-8 school are aligning their teaching to state standards, so that teachers know what material students have learned and mastered in previous grades, know what material they are responsible for getting students to master in the current grade, and know what new academic content students will face in upcoming grades. Without a united focus on standards, schools cannot provide a comprehensive K-8 approach to education.

Teachers at CCS4 and CCS5 will use a standards-based, aligned curriculum, which is formed by breaking the state standards down into units of study and using the LEAP assessment guides to determine the areas of greatest priority for each subject and grade. Teaching with the state standards ensures that students are prepared for state assessments with the level of rigor needed to apply their knowledge. Additionally, teachers will familiarize themselves with the format and type of test questions and use these same types of questions on their own weekly classroom assessments. Crescent City Schools uses a common schedule of assessed standards to allow for collaboration among teachers.

While the curriculum is aligned to the state standards, it is also aligned to LEAP360 assessments which are given three times a year. These assessments allow us to track student mastery towards state standards, but also generate comparative data that give us a sense of how our school is progressing compared to other schools in the city.

Focus on Planning

Strong planning is the catalyst to great lesson implementation. Teachers at CCS4 and CCS5 will be trained on how to use the lesson and unit planning process to maximize their effort in the classroom. Though we will use a variety of purchased curriculum to support the teaching of standards-based objectives, all lesson planning is done by teachers with the Louisiana Student Standards as our guide. At the beginning of the year, teachers plan their yearly units to ensure overall coverage of the standards. Long-term planning is completed before the school year



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begins and done horizontally and vertically to ensure instruction is aligned over the course of a student's time at the school. All teachers will lesson plan with the support of school leadership and build assessment of skills taught into their school year.

The Directors of Curriculum and Instruction (one for grades K-2, one for grades 3-5, and one for grades 6-8) will be responsible for training and supporting staff on using the lesson and unit plan format for CCS4 and CCS5. In addition, the DCIs will read and give feedback on all lesson plans, ensuring that high-quality lessons are in place before students enter the building. For beginning teachers, we will expect each part of the day to be scripted out in entirety. This practice is used to develop teachers' awareness of each item that goes into a lesson, including giving directions, managing transitions, and collecting the exit ticket. Too often, poor planning leads to chaos in the classroom when materials are missing or students aren't given proper directions. Scripting each item out, though time consuming, will help our newest teachers build their delivery skills. DCIs will also observe and meet with teachers to coach on instructional methods.

In addition, teachers have ample planning time built into the school day to ensure that the planning process is prioritized and supported by the school leadership. Several different types of meetings must take place, including:

- Department (subject area) meetings
- Team (grade level) meetings
- Student Support (SST) or School Building Level Committee (SBLC) meetings⁵
- Division (either K-2, 3-5, or 6-8) meetings
- Whole school meetings
- Parent Meetings
- Individual coaching meetings with the DCI
- Individual meetings with School Leader
- Planning meetings for events, trips, or assemblies

English Language Arts

CCS4 and CCS5 are committed to providing a balanced approach to literacy for all students. Regardless of level, all students will participate in each aspect of the English language arts program, which include each element of literacy in the table below.

	Element	Description
Word Study and Reading Acquisition	Phonemic Awareness	The ability to hear and tell the difference between words, sounds and syllables in speech and the ability to alter and rearrange sounds to create new words. Four elements: rhyme, hearing syllables, blending, and segmentation.
	Phonics	Instructional approach that emphasizes the relationship between letters and their sounds that are used in writing and reading.

⁵ A School Building Level Committee (SBLC) consists of the students' parents or legal guardians, CCS staff, and outside experts/specialists as necessary. The SBLC will collectively review and analyze all screening data, including intervention results, to determine the most beneficial option for the student.



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	Symbol Imagery (Spelling & Sight Words)	Teaching the pattern and meaning elements of words.
	Fluency	The ability to read a text accurately and smoothly, with an appropriate level of speed.
	Vocabulary	Develop students' word knowledge and language acquisition.
	Reading Books	Introducing and reinforcing concepts about print, structure of a text, and conventions around reading books.
Reading Strategies and Comprehension	Comprehension	Instruction in understanding a text's explicit (right there) information and infer deeper meaning. Comprehension skills include: retelling, making connections, making predictions, summarizing, inferring, and comparing and contrasting.
	Literature Study	Instruction in exploring literature. Exposure to important and significant literary works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, myth, folktale, and other genres. Skills include: identifying character traits, understanding author's purpose, genre study, literary devices and elements, as well as those above.
	Independent Reading	Allows students a chance to read books of their own choice, at their level. Develops students' fluency and reading comprehension skills, as well as a love of reading.
Writing	Core Writing	Instruction in writing narrative and expository passages using the writing process (pre-writing, planning, drafting, conferencing, editing, revising, publishing). Skills include: planning, organization, using standard English conventions, having a point of view (author's craft.)
	Creative Writing	Instruction in using various genres of writing to express ideas, emotions, and an author's purpose. Same skills as above.
	Grammar	Learning the conventions of the English language, including punctuation, syntax, and grammar rules.
	Handwriting	Practicing handwriting conventions.

It is our goal to produce excellent readers, writers, and thinkers, and to that end we must provide all aspects of a literacy program to each child. Lowest-level students should not be placed exclusively in phonics "until they can read." There are ways to give them opportunities to discuss text, process ideas, and explore literature before they



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are reading on or near grade level. Especially for older students who have gaps in their reading development, we must move forward, for instance, with literary analysis while we patch the holes in their phonemic awareness. We must always keep the standard in mind while we are providing remediation or else we run the risk of short-changing students. The farther behind the student, the more work we must do to ensure that they meet our 8th grade goal of passing the LEAP at Mastery or Above.

Our Program Principles include the following components:

- *Deliberate Approach to Reading.* We understand that reading is a complex enterprise so we ensure students have access to phonics, phonemic awareness, shared reading, guided reading, and read aloud.
- *Universal Screening* of all students and frequent (quarterly) progress monitoring and intervention based on screening results.
- *Layers of Intervention* support to help Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III students to improve quickly.
- *Initial training* in our core and intervention reading programs, and ongoing professional development and instructional monitoring by Directors of Curriculum and Instruction.

This approach ensures that each child is getting the full complement of English language arts curriculum, as well as appropriate interventions where needed.

Deliberate Approach to Reading

We know that students learn to read in a variety of ways and so we must ensure they are exposed to a variety to methods to entice and teach them the skills of reading. We understand that reading is a complex enterprise so we ensure students have access to phonics, phonemic awareness, shared reading, guided reading, and read aloud.

Universal Screening

Our core reading program begins with universal screenings. Performance on standardized tests is not enough to determine where readers struggle. A separate assessment of reading level must be used to determine a reader's grade level equivalent in both decoding and comprehension. To correctly assess specific difficulties, the assessment must involve the student reading aloud to the teacher. Though time consuming, we believe this is the best way to assess each child's reading level with accuracy. We have chosen University of Chicago's STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress) Assessment to assess our readers in grades K-3.⁶ We have chosen the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment to determine reading level for students in grades 4-8.⁷ Administered one-on-one, these benchmarking systems are comprehensive, and include diagnostic assessments for reading fluency, phonemic awareness, letter names, early literacy behaviors, phonics and word analysis, high frequency word reading, vocabulary knowledge, and comprehension within, beyond, and about the text. Fountas and Pinnell and STEP both have several levels (letters or numbers) designated for each grade level. This allows teachers to see more incremental progress within the grade level assessment. It includes a goal for beginning and ending the school year, which allows teachers to head toward a target for each of their students. Both of these assessments allow teachers to easily match students to appropriate-level text, making a seamless connection between ongoing progress monitoring, guided reading instruction, and appropriate curriculum for each child.

Every six weeks, students are benchmarked again using the STEP and Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarking system. Progress is monitored and students who are not progressing are moved into more intensive intervention. In addition, quarterly formative assessments in reading assess K-3 students' skills in letter recognition, vowel and consonant sounds, sight word recall, word attack, reading readiness, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

⁶ <http://uei.uchicago.edu/innovation/step/>

⁷ http://www.heinemann.com/fountasandpinnell/BAS2_Overview.aspx



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These assessments are created by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and are based on the Scope and Sequence for each quarter. These help teachers track progress on taught standards and skills. Report cards are standards-based, and communicate to parents the specific skills and standards that students need to work on.

In addition to the ongoing benchmarking using the universal screenings, students in Tier II and Tier III intervention programs have more regular monitoring based on the program they are using. Direct Instruction and Corrective Reading have built in weekly progress monitoring, and Leveled Literacy Instruction includes progress monitoring during each session.

Layers of Intervention

Following universal screenings, students identified who are two or more grade levels behind on the Benchmark Assessment are given more specific screenings to determine student deficiencies. We then narrow down the specific intervention that is necessary for each individual student. We follow a tiered approach to intervention, with Tier 1 being classroom instruction and moderate accommodations for on-level learners. Because most of our students will be more than 2 grade levels behind, our classroom instruction allows for Tier 2 daily instruction in English language arts. Tier 3 instruction is specifically pull-out instruction designed for small groups of students to practice basic phonemic awareness or reading strategies with a specialist.

A description of the tiered intervention system in ELA is as follows:

<p>Tier 1 Classroom Instruction</p>	<p>Grades K-2: Daily work in both foundational skills (phonics, phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency and spelling/writing) and comprehension of complex text (vocabulary, comprehension, knowledge development and Literature study), following the LA Student Standards.</p> <p>Grades 3-8: Daily work in Comprehension of complex text (vocabulary, comprehension, knowledge development and Literature study), following the LA Student Standards.</p>
<p>Tier 2 Push-in Services</p>	<p>Students who are 1-2 years behind in reading receive pull-out phonics instruction using CKLA Foundational Skills (grades K-2) or Phonics Blitz (grades 3-8). Pull-out Intervention instruction is delivered by a second reading teacher, or interventionist four-five days each week in groups of 6-8 students. Oral reading, phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency work is achieved during this time.</p>
<p>Tier 3 Pull-out Intervention</p>	<p>Students who are more than 2 years behind also receive pull out phonics intervention using a more intensive Tier 3 phonics program in an even smaller group setting. We use Phonics Boost for Tier 3 remediation. Lesson components include oral reading, phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency. Lessons take place in groups of no more than 6 students and are designed to last for 20-24 weeks depending on the entry level of the student. Each lesson takes 45 minutes, groups meet four-five days a week and are taught by reading interventionists and special education teachers who are trained in early literacy work with our lowest level students to ensure that they are getting the most intensive and targeted support.</p>

In order to fully embrace the demands of the Common Core State Standards, our schools embrace a literacy framework that develops student’s literacy skills in a multi-faceted way. Students are taught:



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1. **How to read and write**
2. **How to learn from reading**
3. **How to write and speak about their reading and learning**

K-2 ELA Curriculum

Learning How to Read and Write	Reading to Learn and Writing/Speaking about Learning
Foundational Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Knowledge Skills Strand* • Montessori Curriculum “Rainbow Boxes” 	Integrated text-dependent read aloud, discussion and writing lessons at or above grade level text (70 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wit & Wisdom*

*Both of these curriculums received a Tier 1 rating from the LDOE website.

Grades 3rd-8th ELA

Learning How to Read and Write	Reading to Learn and Writing/Speaking about Learning
Intervention Block (45 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned to fluency data from the Fountas & Pinnell Assessment • Below grade level readers get <i>Phonics Blitz</i> or <i>Phonics Boost</i> daily • On and above grade level readers get “extension work” and read novels at their level 	Integrated text-dependent read aloud, discussion and writing lessons at or above grade level text (70 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wit & Wisdom/*

*Wit & Wisdom received a Tier 1 rating from the LDOE

Initial Training and Follow Up Support

Extensive professional development is available that is both instructive on administering the benchmark test and transformative for reading teachers. Because it involves testing students on multiple components and listening to students read, reading teachers become experts in assessing student progress and understanding appropriate levels for each child. Ongoing professional development is conducted in literacy. After each benchmark test, a data day is reserved for analyzing data and making plans for re-teaching. Ongoing professional coaching is provided by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to ensure that curriculum is being implemented effectively.

Math

It has been the experience of the founders of Crescent City Schools that many of the problems students have regarding math in the later elementary grades stem from the fact that students did not develop their understanding of number sense in the early grades. Furthermore, in the rush to “catch students up” in the later grades many schools focus their energies on developing students recall of facts and procedures while failing to develop each individual student’s understanding of mathematical concepts. It is the belief of Crescent City Schools that students at all grade levels need ample time to explore mathematical concepts in depth in order to develop their own conceptual understanding of mathematical ideas. Children are naturally curious about math and the mathematics curricula implemented by CCS4 and CCS5 will stimulate that curiosity in order to help students master complex mathematical ideas.



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The primary math curriculum for grades K-8 is Eureka Math, a Tier 1 Curriculum as judged by the Louisiana Department of Education. Eureka Math follows the focus and coherence of the Common Core State Standards and carefully sequences the mathematical progressions into expertly crafted instructional modules.

Lessons include the following components:

1. Fluency
 - Designed to promote automaticity by engaging students in practice in ways that get their adrenaline flowing
2. Application Problems
 - Designed to help students understand how to choose and apply the correct mathematics concept to solve real world problems.
3. Concept development
 - The primary lesson component, in which new learning is introduced.
4. Debrief
 - Students' metacognition is developed by helping them make connections between parts of the lesson, concepts, strategies, and tools on their own. Key vocabulary is introduced or drawn out to help students appropriately name the learning they describe.

Through this balanced approach to lesson design Eureka Math supports the development of an increasingly complex understanding of the mathematical concepts and topics within the Common Core Learning Standards. Fluency, concept development, and application, all components of instructional rigor demanded by the CCSS are layered to help teachers guide students through the mathematics. Each lesson is structured to incorporate fluency activities along with the development of conceptual understanding, procedural skills, and problem solving.

All students receive 70 minutes a day of math instruction using Eureka Math. All students in grades 3-8 take the iReady math and ELA screening tests at the beginning of the year, and those students who fall below grade level receive intervention in either math or ELA or both through the iReady program.

Science⁸

Over the last few years the LDOE has worked to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards and has slowly been producing scope and sequences and curriculum guides to support schools to help students achieve those standards. Crescent City Schools is using the Amplify Science Curriculum to support instruction in grades 3-8 and CCS4 and CCS5 will use those same resources.

Social Studies⁹

During the 2016-2017 school year the LDOE produced new social studies curriculum and rolled out a new online assessment. CCS4 and CC5 will use those resources produced by the LDOE.

Intervention for all students

In a traditional setting, tiered groupings are used to deliver interventions to students who are falling behind. Please see chart below which describes the practice of using a tiered approach.

We will be using this approach at CCS4 and CC5. However, we know that the majority of our students in these transformations will qualify for Tier II, meaning that they are up to two years behind in grade level. Our academic

⁸ Klentschy, M., Garrison, L., and Amoral, O., *Four-Year Comparison of Student Achievement Data 1995-1999*, Valle Imperial Project in Science (VIPS): National Science Foundation Grant #ESI-9731274.

⁹ <http://www.coreknowledge.org/>



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program is designed to meet the needs of a majority-Tier II-school, with classroom instruction and interventions delivered to the majority of students. Please see each academic area below for more specific information on the tiered approach.

Tier	Benchmark	Intervention	Usual %
Tier I	On grade level falling behind in mastery of subject area standards.	Differentiation inside the classroom with core curriculum.	100% of the class
Tier II	Between a year and two years behind needs additional intervention to either 1) remediate uneven learning or 2) master standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental instruction in fundamental skills to “patch the holes” in learning or practice basic skills. • Extra help or tutoring to master standards. (Repetition of instruction in small group.) • Weekly ongoing assessment of skills learned to monitor progress. 	10-20% of the class
Tier III	More than two years behind needs intensive intervention to either 1) remediate uneven learning or 2) master standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group intensive intervention in fundamental skills. • One-on-one instruction. • Daily assessment of skills learned to monitor progress and, if there is no progress, potentially refer for evaluation for learning issues. 	5% of the class

Multi-layered system of intervention

Students with needs that extend beyond the standard curriculum will receive intervention that is tailored to their needs. Small group instruction, pull out or push-in services, and ongoing assessment of needs will be conducted. Students who do not demonstrate improvement with intervention systems will be referred for evaluation for special education services. However, our focus is on early intervention to increase student achievement and regular assessment to determine student needs so to limit the number of student referrals.

K12 Montessori Program

Drawn from the work at Tubman, CCS4 and CCS5 plan to offer its K-1-2 students an innovative Montessori inspired classroom. Each school will have six K-1-2 combined aged classrooms, with two teachers serving 30 students with 10 kindergarteners, 10 first graders and 10 second graders in each classroom. This K-1-2 school day provides students with two significant blocks (2 hours each) of independent work time on a daily basis. Each two-hour block, known as a “Workshop Block” gives students the time and space for student-driven work and study, enabling them to engage deeply with projects and learning materials. The experiential projects and activities are designed to be visually appealing, engaging, interactive, and self-correcting (designed to allow students to determine themselves if they have correctly finished a work). Each of these projects and activities are available on shelves around the room and during student independent work time students choose the “works” (another Montessori term) that appeal to them from the shelves and bring them to their individual work area to complete. Student record all of this data in their personal notebook or on their personalized learning worksheet. The shelves contain works that are tied to standards from PreK to grade 4, which enables students to progress when they are ready/interested in the available works and provides students with agency and choice surrounding what, when,



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and how they learn. Inspired by Montessori, students have their own work mats and use those mats to keep their work organized. The use of individual mats develops in students a pride of ownership and teaches them to care for their environment.

During the independent blocks there is one “Head Down” teacher, whose sole focus is on working with 10 students in a small group time. In the morning the “Head Down” teacher teaches ELA using the Core Knowledge Curriculum and in the afternoon the “Head Down” teacher teaches math using the Eureka Math curriculum. In a two-hour block of time, the teacher might pull 2 groups that day while the rest of the class is working independently. Each student in the class gets between 3-4 lessons a week in both ELA and math. The second teacher is the “Head Up” teacher. This teacher’s focus is on the remaining 20 students and their role is to help connect students to their work and monitor the quality of that work during their independent time. When a student is finished with a work, that student signals to the teacher that their work is ready to be checked by moving his/her magnet on a board and then returning to his/her work station. The child then takes a book from his/her book sack and reads independently until the teacher is available. The Head Up teacher then reviews the student work (which is tied to a particular standard) and highlights the student’s worksheet in green (if the student has mastered the lesson) or yellow (if the student needs to continue working on the project). Each Wednesday, teachers review students’ work, both the work they accomplished in their ELA and math lessons, and the work they completed independently and plan both groupings and work standards practice for the next week. Teachers are easily able to see what students are drawn to/what works peak their interest, as well as where they are in need of greater support and guidance. Students choose where they work, whether it is on the rug, at various tables throughout the room, or on the floor using one of their personal mats. As part of promoting student agency, students eat snack when they are hungry, drink water when they are thirsty (pitchers are in the rooms) and go to the bathroom when they need and not at a set time. At any time during independent work, students make their own decisions about what they want to do.

Tubman piloted this program at its campus for 2016-2017 school year and saw an increase in student engagement, a decrease in Time Out Center visits, and an increase in MAP achievement. As we continue to look to build a diversity of options for families, Crescent City Schools believes that this innovative program provides a unique approach to education and we are eager to expand it to CCS4 and CCS5.

Middle School Program

Routines and schedules are important in the middle school. Each day, scholars will arrive through the same MS entrance where they greet and shake hands with as many staff members as possible. After arrival, students eat breakfast, get prepared for the day, and settle into school in college-name homerooms. In these homerooms, teachers establish a culture where they can have students work together to practice and live the values and habits of mind. In classes, students have opportunities to earn “Fab Five” and “class points” that are linked to their class efforts to live out the values and habits.

After homeroom, students participate in Math, ELA, Social Studies, and Science classes with 30 students or less in each of those classes. All students participate in an “intervention” block during which they get an opportunity to work in groups as small as 6 students on targeted reading or math skills or extension classes if students are on grade level. Students also participate in enrichment classes (music, drama, PE, and computers) Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. To round out their day, students attend either a culture class, where they learn study skills, adolescent growth and development, and current events, or a personalized learning lab, where they work on a student “dashboard” to improve typing skills or complete assignments assigned by their classroom teachers.

Wednesdays are a short day which is really special for students. On Wednesday students complete assessments, attend team meetings, and participate in clubs. Team meeting is when all of the students on the 5/6 team and on the 7/8 team meet in the “Team Room” for teacher-led activities. Some weeks, this activities involve playing silly



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games as a homeroom to honor the “Values Olympics” or participating in a pie-eating contest in honor of “Pi Day.” Other weeks, teachers work to do deliberate team building through meet-and-greets or small group discussions. Teachers will also teach lessons relevant to current events like Black History Month or school-related lessons like “Why my behavior matters.”

At Harriet Tubman Charter School (the model on which CCS4 and CCS5 will be based), the school offers 24 clubs that are led by teachers who are passionate about the club topic that they lead. CCS4 and CCS5 will proceed similarly. Some of the clubs are athletic (soccer, football, girls running), some are creative/arts-focused (origami, fashion design, recording and beatmaking, drama), and other clubs focus on students’ futures (female entrepreneurs, world travelers, future teachers). Students participate in clubs that are mixed by grade and gender and are intentionally designed to be small. Clubs are small so that teachers can build relationships with students, students can build relationships with each other, and both teachers and students can totally geek out over the passions and interests! Students pick two clubs to try each school year. Wednesdays are so popular among Tubman students, the school often has 100% attendance in middle school on those days.

The Aurora Program

As a network committed to operating open enrollment charter schools, we strongly believe that: 1) schools should serve *all* students, including those with special needs, and 2) schools should offer students with special needs the opportunity to be educated in a variety of settings. In order to serve all students in a setting that best supports their learning, we offer several learning environments at each of our schools. These options include inclusion in the general education classroom, resource rooms, and self-contained classrooms. All of our schools offer these settings, and 99% of our students can be successful in one of these settings. However, for the remaining 1% of students, many of whom are in kindergarten through third grade, school is simply overwhelming and they are not prospering. Crescent City Schools’s solution to the challenges faced by its most vulnerable students was to create the Aurora Program in 2016-2017. The Aurora Program is a highly individualized program designed to meet the unique needs of children with documented emotional and behavioral concerns that are significantly impacting the child’s ability to be successful in his/her regular school setting.

The Aurora school day runs from 9:00 am-3:00 pm and includes ample time for academic work, social and emotional learning, and enrichment classes. Breakfast, lunch and snack provided. The program has a small student to teacher ratio (8:1) as well as full time paraprofessional support in each classroom. We house the Aurora Program off site, in the former Habans building in Algiers. Currently 18 students from all three Crescent City Schools attend that program and the CCS4 and CCS5 students will have access it to as well.

Growth Plan

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

Attachment 8: CEO and Board Chair Succession Plan



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

Student Characteristics

As a network that operates three, PreK-8th grade open enrollment charter school in Algiers and Upper Ninth Ward, we currently serve the following student populations (see below). We anticipate that CCS4 and CCS5 will have similar student demographics to our current schools.

Harriet Tubman Charter School

Student population 909* (as of October 1, 2018)

Student Ethnicity:

Black	86%	Limited English Proficient (LEP)	6%
Hispanic	10%	Special Education	15%
Asian	0%	504	8%
White	1%	Economically Disadvantaged	93%
Multiracial	2%	Homeless	10%

*Tubman's numbers reflect its K-8 students, as its PreK students are located at Clara's Little Lambs

Akili Academy

Student population 625 (as of October 1, 2018)

Student Ethnicity:

Black	96%	Limited English Proficient (LEP)	1%
Hispanic	2%	Special Education	20%
Asian	0%	504	4%
White	1%	Economically Disadvantaged	94%
Multiracial	0%	Homeless	6%

Paul Habans Charter School

Student population 716 (as of October 1, 2018)

Student Ethnicity:

Black	89%	Limited English Proficient (LEP)	9%
Hispanic	8%	Special Education	13%
Asian	1%	504	7%
White	1%	Economically Disadvantaged	96%
Multiracial	1%	Homeless	9%

As we pursue more turnaround work in New Orleans, and anticipate future student populations to be generally similar to the student populations we currently serve, the needs of the student populations of CCS4 and CCS5 will likely be very similar to the needs of our students at Tubman, Akili, and Habans. These needs are described in the "Academics" section of this application (page 7).

Number of schools to be opened over the next five years

Over the next five years, Crescent City Schools plans on opening the two schools described in this application: CCS4 and CCS5. We do not have plans to open any additional schools beyond CCS4 and CCS5. Below is a chart of our growth plans over the next five years:



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Year	Tubman	Akili*	Habans	CCS4	CCS5	Total
2018-2019	900 K-8	622 PreK-8	700 PreK-8			2222
2019-2020	1110 PreK-8th	600 PreK-8	780 PreK-8			2590
2020-2021	1110 PreK-8th	570 PreK-8th	780 PreK-8	580 PreK-8		3040
2021-2022	1110 PreK-8th	540 PreK-8th	780 PreK-8	580 PreK-8	580 PreK-8	3590
2022-2023	1110 PreK-8th	540 PreK-8th	780 PreK-8	580 PreK-8	580 PreK-8	3590

*With the decreasing cohort sizes in the city, and a building that was only built for two sections a grade but has been accommodating three, CCS believes that the right decision is to begin decreasing our kindergarten numbers at Akili in 2019-2020, which will result in fewer students attending Akili in the upcoming years.

We anticipate that CCS4 would open in 2020-2021 and that CCS5 would open no earlier than 2021-2022, although the opening of CCS5 will be contingent on the need of the city and the timing of the transformation of the school to which Crescent City Schools would be assigned.

Proposed Educational Model at CCS4 and CCS5

CCS plans to replicate the educational model and program operated at Harriet Tubman Charter School. This would consist of the Core Program Elements (described in the Academics section beginning on page 11 of this application). In addition to the Core Program Elements, Whole-School and Classroom Instructional methods, the CCS4 and CC5 model would also include a Montessori-inspired program for its Kindergarten, first, and second grade students, a Middle School Program, and access to the Aurora Program.

K12 Montessori Program

Drawn from the work at Tubman, CCS4 and CCS5 plan to offer its K-1-2 students an innovative Montessori inspired classroom. Each school will have six K-1-2 combined aged classrooms, with two teachers serving 30 students with 10 kindergarteners, 10 first graders and 10 second graders in each classroom. This K-1-2 school day provides students with two significant blocks (2 hours each) of independent work time on a daily basis. Each two-hour block, known as a “Workshop Block” gives students the time and space for student-driven work and study, enabling them to engage deeply with projects and learning materials. The experiential projects and activities are designed to be visually appealing, engaging, interactive, and self-correcting (designed to allow students to determine themselves if they have correctly finished a work). Each of these projects and activities are available on shelves around the room and during student independent work time students choose the “works” (another Montessori term) that appeal to them from the shelves and bring them to their individual work area to complete. Student record all of this data in their personal notebook or on their personalized learning worksheet. The shelves contain works that are tied to standards from PreK to grade 4, which enables students to progress when they are ready/interested in the available works and provides students with agency and choice surrounding what, when, and how they learn. Inspired by Montessori, students have their own work mats and use those mats to keep their work organized. The use of individual mats develops in students a pride of ownership and teaches them to care for their environment.

During the independent blocks there is one “Head Down” teacher, whose sole focus is on working with 10



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students in a small group time. In the morning the “Head Down” teacher teaches ELA using the Core Knowledge Curriculum and in the afternoon the “Head Down” teacher teaches math using the Eureka Math curriculum. In a two-hour block of time, the teacher might pull 2 groups that day while the rest of the class is working independently. Each student in the class gets between 3-4 lessons a week in both ELA and math. The second teacher is the “Head Up” teacher. This teacher’s focus is on the remaining 20 students and their role is to help connect students to their work and monitor the quality of that work during their independent time. When a student is finished with a work, that student signals to the teacher that their work is ready to be checked by moving his/her magnet on a board and then returning to his/her work station. The child then takes a book from his/her book sack and reads independently until the teacher is available. The Head Up teacher then reviews the student work (which is tied to a particular standard) and highlights the student’s worksheet in green (if the student has mastered the lesson) or yellow (if the student needs to continue working on the project). Each Wednesday, teachers review students’ work, both the work they accomplished in their ELA and math lessons, and the work they completed independently and plan both groupings and work standards practice for the next week. Teachers are easily able to see what students are drawn to/what works peak their interest, as well as where they are in need of greater support and guidance. Students choose where they work, whether it is on the rug, at various tables throughout the room, or on the floor using one of their personal mats. As part of promoting student agency, students eat snack when they are hungry, drink water when they are thirsty (pitchers are in the rooms) and go to the bathroom when they need and not at a set time. At any time during independent work, students make their own decisions about what they want to do.

Tubman piloted this program at its campus for 2016-2017 school year and saw an increase in student engagement, a decrease in Time Out Center visits, and an increase in MAP achievement. As we continue to look to build a diversity of options for families, Crescent City Schools believes that this innovative program provides a unique approach to education and we are eager to expand it to CCS4 and CCS5.

Middle School Program

Routines and schedules are important in the middle school. Each day, scholars will arrive through the same MS entrance where they greet and shake hands with as many staff members as possible. After arrival, students eat breakfast, get prepared for the day, and settle into school in college-name homerooms. In these homerooms, teachers establish a culture where they can have students work together to practice and live the values and habits of mind. In classes, students have opportunities to earn “Fab Five” and “class points” that are linked to their class efforts to live out the values and habits.

After homeroom, students participate in Math, ELA, Social Studies, and Science classes with 30 students or less in each of those classes. All students participate in an “intervention” block during which they get an opportunity to work in groups as small as 6 students on targeted reading or math skills or extension classes if students are on grade level. Students also participate in enrichment classes (music, drama, PE, and computers) Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. To round out their day, students attend either a culture class, where they learn study skills, adolescent growth and development, and current events, or a personalized learning lab, where they work on a student “dashboard” to improve typing skills or complete assignments assigned by their classroom teachers.

Wednesdays are a short day which is really special for students. On Wednesday students complete assessments, attend team meetings, and participate in clubs. Team meeting is when all of the students on the 5/6 team and on the 7/8 team meet in the “Team Room” for teacher-led activities. Some weeks, this activities involve playing silly games as a homeroom to honor the “Values Olympics” or participating in a pie-eating contest in honor of “Pi Day.” Other weeks, teachers work to do deliberate team building through meet-and-greets or small group discussions. Teachers will also teach lessons relevant to current events like Black History Month or school-related lessons like “Why my behavior matters.”



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At Harriet Tubman Charter School (the model on which CCS4 and CCS5 will be based), the school offers 24 clubs that are led by teachers who are passionate about the club topic that they lead. CCS4 and CCS5 will proceed similarly. Some of the clubs are athletic (soccer, football, girls running), some are creative/arts-focused (origami, fashion design, recording and beatmaking, drama), and other clubs focus on students' futures (female entrepreneurs, world travelers, future teachers). Students participate in clubs that are mixed by grade and gender and are intentionally designed to be small. Clubs are small so that teachers can build relationships with students, students can build relationships with each other, and both teachers and students can totally geek out over the passions and interests! Students pick two clubs to try each school year. Wednesdays are so popular among Tubman students, the school often has 100% attendance in middle school on those days.

Aurora Program

As a network committed to operating open enrollment charter schools, we strongly believe that: 1) schools should serve *all* students, including those with special needs, and 2) schools should offer students with special needs the opportunity to be educated in a variety of settings. In order to serve all students in a setting that best supports their learning, we offer several learning environments at each of our schools. These options include inclusion in the general education classroom, resource rooms, and self-contained classrooms. All of our schools offer these settings, and 99% of our students can be successful in one of these settings. However, for the remaining 1% of students, many of whom are in kindergarten through third grade, school is simply overwhelming and they are not prospering. Crescent City Schools's solution to the challenges faced by its most vulnerable students was to create the Aurora Program in 2016-2017. The Aurora Program is a highly individualized program designed to meet the unique needs of children with documented emotional and behavioral concerns that are significantly impacting the child's ability to be successful in his/her regular school setting.

The Aurora school day runs from 9:00 am-3:00 pm and includes ample time for academic work, social and emotional learning, and enrichment classes. Breakfast, lunch and snack provided. The program has a small student to teacher ratio (8:1) as well as full time paraprofessional support in each classroom. We house the Aurora Program off site, in the former Habans building in Algiers. Currently 18 students from all three Crescent City Schools attend that program and CCS4 and CCS5 students will have access to it as well.

Scale Strategy & Risk Mitigation

[This section does not apply to Louisiana-based operators that run multiple schools and are only applying to operate one or two additional new schools]

- (1) Describe the steps that you will take to scale your model to new sites, including the people involved and the resources contributed both by the parent organization and the new school(s).
- (2) *[Applicable to groups that operate schools in other states]* Compare your efforts to scale operations to Louisiana to past scale efforts in other states.
- (3) Identify the greatest new threats to your success and the steps you will take to minimize the possibility that the threats you identified will prevent you from achieving your targeted outcomes.

Attachment 9: Organizational Chart (CMO and School Level)

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

N/A: Crescent City Schools currently operates three schools and is applying to operate two additional schools.



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Board Readiness

- (1) Describe the roles necessary on the board, the responsibilities that align with each role, and identify who will play that role on the board.
- (2) Describe how the board will monitor the school's overall performance.
- (3) Describe the steps the board will take to evaluate the school leader. Specifically, describe:
 - The information the board will collect;
 - The systems by which the board will collect information;
 - The standards - including and in addition to student performance goals- the board will use to evaluate information it collects; and,
 - The process by which the board will evaluate information and make decisions.
- (4) Describe the process by which your board identifies potential conflicts of interest before making decisions.
- (5) Develop the process by which you will develop and train your board.
- (6) *[Applicable to groups applying to open a school in a region they do not currently operate in]* Describe your plan for obtaining regional board representation for your proposed school(s).

Attachment 10: Charter Board Roles Template

Attachment 11: School Leader Evaluation Tool

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

The job of the board of the Crescent City Schools Charter Management Organization is two-fold: to govern the organization to ensure the financial and academic success of its schools and to hire, manage, and evaluate the CEO of Crescent City Schools, Kate Mehok. The CEO hires and manages all principals in the Crescent City Schools network and will manage the School Leaders of CCS4 and CCS5. The board of Crescent City Schools is comprised of a diverse set of individuals with expertise in the areas of legal, administration, educational, financial, and community relations. The bylaws of the organization dictate that board must be composed of no fewer than five and no more than fifteen individuals who serve 2-year terms renewable for a maximum of six terms. The CCS board currently has 11 members, 9 of whom reside in Orleans Parish. Officers include the Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Those officers are elected yearly and can serve a maximum of 4 years in the same office.

The full board meets monthly at least ten times a year (often there are no meetings in December and July), and those meeting schedules are set every June and published on the CCS website, and made available to all media outlets. The Finance Committee is comprised of the treasurer and additional board members with expertise or interest in finance. That committee meets monthly and those meeting schedules are set every June and published on the CCS website. In that meeting finance committee members review the monthly financials presented by the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and ensure that that the organization is spending public dollars responsibly by keeping to the approved June budget. The other two committees that meet regularly are Governance, and External Relations. The Human Capital Committee meets as needed. Meeting days/times are posted to our website and proper notice is given to the public and media. Each board member at CCS must be a member of at least one committee.

As Crescent City Schools operates schools that reside in two distinct neighborhoods (Algiers and the Upper 9th Ward), we work to have neighborhood representation on the board and want board members who live in the neighborhoods we serve. CCS rotates meeting locations among its current three schools and will add CCS4 and CCS5 to the rotation so families and community members can easily access meetings and get their voices heard



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without having to travel across the city. All committee meeting agendas and monthly board agendas are posted on the front door of all CCS schools so families and community members are informed about the content of meetings. Currently, CCS has two parent representatives on its board. The current policy for selecting new board members is as follows:

- Board members submit names to the Governance Committee along with the interested person's resume.
- A member of the Governance Committee reaches out to the interested party and meets with that person to describe the work of CCS and the requirements for CCS board members.
- The prospective board member meets with the CEO at one of the CCS schools, tours the school, and talks with the CEO about the work of Crescent City Schools
- The prospective board member attends a Committee Meeting
- The prospective board member attends a Full Board Meeting and meets other board members
- The Board chair schedules a follow-up meeting.
- The new member is voted on to a two-year term the June board meeting.

Each year the board has a mandatory August full-day retreat for all members that is a public meeting. That is the time for the board to review the last fiscal year and measure school performance against goals, create strategic priorities for the new school year, and recommit to the work of governing Crescent City Schools. If a board member has joined the board in June, this is their introduction to the CCS board and organizations. Board members suggest topics and the Board Chair works closely with the CEO and other members of the Governance Committee to plan the six-hour agenda and secure outside presenters. Both the COO and the Director of Development attend this meeting to present and work with the board. The board uses this time to increase its capacity. Over the last eight years speakers have included the following:

- Board Chair of Mastery Charter School in Philadelphia who presented on how a board goes from governing one school to governing many schools while maintaining a high bar for excellence
- Executive Director of Louisiana Public Charter School Association (LAPCA) who presented on open meeting laws and legal requirements for public charter boards
- Head of Democrats for Education Reform who presented on legislative issues at the state that affect charters
- Policy Director at LAPCA who presented on the process for return to OPSB.
- OPSB elected board member who spoke to the board about his vision for unification of schools.

In addition, all CCS board members are required to take part in a one-hour yearly ethics training and must fill out Tier 3 financial forms, and conflict of Interest forms each spring. These requirements serve to remind board members of their legal obligations and allow them to reflect on any potential conflict of interests that may have developed over the last year. It is the responsibility of the board chair to investigate any potential conflict of interest that may relate to a specific board vote and board members know they are to recuse themselves on any vote if they have any conflicts of interest

CEO Evaluation:

Each summer the board evaluates the work of the CEO and Crescent City Schools using the following process:

- May-The Director of Human Capital sends a survey to all board members, principals, and members of the CMO central team asking for feedback on the CEO's work. She compiles those responses into a Powerpoint that she shares with the board chair.
- June-The CEO completes a self-evaluation where she reflects on the progress towards the approved CCS goals.



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- July-The Director of Human Capital shares the results of the CEO survey and the CEO self-evaluation with the board chair. The board chair meets with the CEO to share with her the evaluation.
- August-The CEO presents to the board on yearly goals at the annual board retreat that includes state testing data and fields questions from board members. The board chair shares the results of the CEO evaluation with the board. The board gives feedback directly to the CEO. The board then makes the decision to offer employment to the CEO for an additional year.

The board of Crescent City Schools has always taken its work as a public body overseeing public schools very seriously. The board has worked to ensure it follows all open meeting laws, and conducts business in a transparent fashion in front of the public. In recognition of that work, in 2014 the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools awarded JP Hymel and the Board of Crescent City Schools its "Excellence in Governance Award" at its annual conference in Baton Rouge.

Financial Readiness

- (1) Do you plan to use a financial manager or a back-office service provider? If the entity that will provide your financial services has been chosen, please provide its name.
- (2) To whom will your financial manager or back-office service provider report: the school leader or the board?
- (3) Describe your approach to budgeting, including an explanation of your approach to cutting costs if faced (as schools so often are) with a budget shortfall.
- (4) Describe the accounting and control systems you will install, including essential checks, balances, and segregation of duties. Please indicate how a culture of proper financial controls and reporting will become an essential component of your organizational culture

Attachment 12: Qualified Business Manager/ Financial Manager Resume

Attachment 13: Financial Manager Contract

Attachment 14: Financial Template

Attachment 15: Budget Narrative Template

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

Christopher Hines, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Crescent City Schools, will serve as the Lead School Business Administrator for CCS4 and CCS5. Mr. Hines has held his current position for over six years and serves as the Lead School Business Administrator for the three schools currently in the Crescent City Schools network. Prior to joining Crescent City Schools, Mr. Hines was the founding Director of Finance & Operations at Eva Moskowitz's Success Charter Schools network in New York City. He has an M.B.A and a J.D. from Yale University and a B.A. from Vanderbilt University. Mr. Hines is also within the timeframe allotted for LASBO certification as specified in BESE Bulletin 1929. Mr. Hines reports to Kate Mehok, the Chief Executive Officer of Crescent City Schools. He also reports out to the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors at its monthly meeting.

Crescent City Schools uses QuickBooks online as its main accounting system. Each school has its own instance in QuickBooks so that revenues and expenses are easily segregated by school. Crescent City Schools employs a Director of Finance (DF) at the CMO and a Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) at each school. The DF reports to Chris Hines, the COO. The COO coaches the DFO and supports him/her, but the DFO reports to the School Leader, as all people that work in the school building report to the School Leader. Crescent City Schools has a history of strong accounting and control systems and has never been the subject of an audit finding.



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Accounts Payable

Invoices are approved by the DFO or COO. The DF cuts checks. The Principal or CEO signs all checks and ACH bill pay approvals.

Deposits

The Office Manager receives checks and stamps them "For Deposit Only." The Office Manager collects cash student fees. The Office Manager and DFO jointly count the cash and checks and write a deposit slip and cash box reconciliation form. The COO makes bank deposits.

Credit Cards

All expenditures must be approved by someone with spending authority (Principal, DFO, CEO, COO). Receipts are submitted monthly and checked against the statement.

Payroll

The DFO submits changes to the DF. The DF prepares a payroll verification. The DFO and COO confirm the verification is correct. The DF process payroll. The Principal or CEO receives and opens the payroll packets.

Month Close

The COO performs all bank reconciliations. They are then approved by the Principal and DFO. The DF performs all credit card reconciliations. They are then approved by the Principal, DFO, and COO. The Principal and DFO verify all payroll packets. The COO reviews all insurance bills. An outside, independent accountant is also engaged to review the organization's financial books regularly throughout the year.

Specific financial reporting operations are described below.

Budget Process

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) begins working with the school Principal and Director of Finance & Operations (DFO) each January to create the next year's budget. The COO prepares a schedule of expected revenues and certain fixed costs (insurance, authorizer fees, etc.). The Principal and DFO then work together to develop the rest of the budget (staffing plan, facilities, transportation, etc.). A first draft of the budget is shared with the Finance Committee at its March meeting. Feedback is directed through the COO back to the Principal and DFO who are able to incorporate it into the next draft that is shared with the Finance Committee in May. This draft is available to the public for inspection and comment and shared at a public hearing before it is voted on by the full Board of Directors in June.

Audit

The Board of Directors contracts with an outside, independent firm to perform its legally-required annual audit of financial and administrative operations of the school. The Finance Committee of the Board conducts an RFP process to select an auditing firm at least once every three years. The Committee brings its recommendation to the full Board of Directors who ultimately selects the auditing firm. The firm reports to the Finance Committee, and the Committee brings the report to the full Board.

Transparency

Crescent City Schools has always abided by its legal requirements for financial transparency. During the budgeting process, the proposed budgets are made available for public inspection at least 15 days prior to the date of adoption in the schools' offices. A public hearing on the budget is conducted prior to the Board meeting at which the budget is adopted. Public notice is published in the journal of record (both online and in print) alerting the



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public to the availability of the proposed budget for inspection, the public hearing, and the adoption meeting. An opportunity for public comments to be heard is provided at both the public hearing and the adoption meeting. Public notice is also published once the budget adoption process is complete.

The organization's annual audit and the schools' annual financial reports are submitted to its authorizer as required and available for public inspection at the schools.

The Finance Committee meets monthly. These meetings are open to the public. The schedule of meetings is posted on the Crescent City Schools website at the beginning of each school year and inside each school office. Agendas are posted online and in the office of each school at least 1 business day before each meeting.

Board Fiduciary Obligations

The Board of Directors of Crescent City Schools understands that one of its primary functions is oversight of the organization's finances. The Board has selected a Finance Committee made up of professionals with deep finance and accounting experience to lead in fulfilling this obligation. The Finance Committee meets monthly with the Chief Operating Officer and looks at detailed financial reports that include for each school and the CMO: balance sheet, statement of activities, budget-to-actual comparisons, accounts payable and accounts receivable details, and updated financial forecasts. The Board Treasurer then reports highlighted and summarized information to the full Board at its monthly Board meetings. Included in this summarized report are all of the measures that are part of the authorizer's financial measures.

The Board also approves the organization's Finance Policies & Procedures Manual and is heavily involved in the budgeting and annual audit process, as described above.

Leadership/Management

The Chief Operating Officer meets monthly with the school Principal and Director of Finance and Operations. At this meeting, they go through the detailed board reports described above, and they also look at more specific measures of controllable costs and revenues (food service, overtime, utilities, supply purchases, etc.). At these meetings, they work to ensure they are on track to meet their financial goals or develop plans to get back on track if necessary. The COO meets weekly with the CEO to discuss all things related to operations and finance in the Crescent City Schools network.

Educational Service Provider {If applicable}

- (1) If your non-profit plans to use an Educational Service Provider (ESP), please provide as an additional appendix a copy of the ESP contract that your non-profit board will sign with the ESP that you have selected. Additionally, please provide an independent audit of the ESP as part of that additional appendix.

Attachement 16 : ESP Contract (If applicable)

Attachement 17 : ESP Audit (If applicable)

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

N/A



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School Leadership Team Capacity {If applicable}

[Not applicable to groups that have operated two or more schools for at least three years each] Note that the application should not refer to the experiences of an Educational Service Provider or another company (such as a back-office service provider) that will provide services to the school. All responses in this section must speak specifically to the school leadership team that will oversee the operation of the proposed school.

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

N/A