Response to Chicago Public Schools Request for New Educational Options Schools

Submitted

by

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Contents

Connected Futures Academies
Executive Summary

Connected Future Academies (CFA) is a three year multiple career pathways educational options high school for students' ages 16-21. CFA's mission to prepare youth who have not been successful, or have not found value, in the traditional high school setting to excel in college, a rewarding career and life. CFA will implement a rigorous common core aligned curriculum and blended learning approach that will effectively incorporate the philosophy of early college by providing dual enrollment / dual credit with the City Colleges of Chicago. CFA's focus on maintaining a positive school culture, strong and thorough character development program, and a comprehensive transition from high school to postsecondary education/vocational careers pathways. Preparation and focus will build CFA students' tenacity, confidence and leadership skills that come alongside rigorous academic preparation to ensure student achievement. The culture of CFA will stress a personalized approach to education, with targeted and data-driven instruction that builds competencies in core subjects, as well as the 21st century skills that young people need to move forward and thrive in the world beyond secondary school.

The CFA approach is specifically crafted around research based restorative practices specifically targeting low achieving, disconnected and former drop out students acknowledging it takes a "collective and concerted effort" to turnaround low performing and returning dropout students. The Academy team that is assigned to students at their point of entry will be their support/management team from point of entry until graduation. Students will leave CFA confident and well prepared to transition into postsecondary education/vocation-career employment.

CFA's partnerships with Lumity and the Gateway to College National Network will enhance our ability to train and develop our staff to meet the unique social and emotional needs of our students, as well as providing an opportunity to expose and develop them for opportunities in STEM related careers. Gateway to College national network provides an opportunity for us to be supported by experienced practitioners and national experts from across the country. Lumity's work of exposing youth to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers will inspire CFA students to stay in school, find a meaningful career path, and ultimately, a satisfying job.

Over the course of five years CFA will expand to five campuses with a total number of 165 students enrolled at each campus. CFA will begin with two campuses enrolling 165 at each start up campus. The academic goals that we have set for our students will graduate prepared to meet the challenges of postsecondary education and pursue vocational/career pathways.

- 75% of CFA Graduates will be prepared to enter City Colleges without need of remediation
- 80% of CFA Graduates will have earned 20 or more college credits by completion of their high school diploma
- 65% of CFA Graduates will have earned an industry recognized training certificate by completion of their high school diploma

CFA based its location selection process on multiple factors and determined that a need for new options for educating off-track and out of school youth in high need areas and communities:

1. Community proximity to a City College of Chicago campus and
2. A concentration of need of low-medium skill employees and
3. In need of development support.

CFA is proposing an education options charter school that will serve disconnected students (off-track learners and dropouts) in the Chatham/Greater Grand Crossing and Grand Boulevard neighborhoods on Chicago's South Side. Our vision is to create a rich learning environment where disconnected students are motivated to reconnect by simultaneously earning a high school diploma, career certification, and college credit. The measure of our success will be our ability to combine blended learning technologies, proven direct instructional practices and culturally relevant experiences into an arrangement that creates a welcoming learning environment that motivates students to persist to graduation and beyond.

Section 1:
Family and Community Engagement and Support

1.1 Targeted Community Research, Feedback, and Fit

a. Background of the Targeted Communit (ies)

> **Q. What are the targeted communit(ies) within the intended recruitment boundary of the proposed school or program? Provide the following information about the neighborhood(s) within the recruitment boundary:**
> --**Total number of residents**
> --**Number of school-aged children**
> --**Demographics**
> --**Average level of educational attainment**
> --**Median or average family income**
> --**Median or average housing cost**
> --**Unemployment rate**

CFA has identified two target communities on the South side of Chicago for its initial campuses: Greater Grand Crossing /Chatham and Grand Boulevard Neighborhoods, areas 38, 44 and 69 on the Map in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1. Map of Chicago Communities

AREA #	COMMUNITY	AREA #	COMMUNITY
1	Rogers Park	40	Washington Park
2	West Ridge	41	Hyde Park
3	Uptown	42	Woodlawn
4	Lincoln Square	43	South Shore
5	North Center	44	Chatham
6	Lake View	45	Avalon Park
7	Lincoln Park	46	South Chicago
8	Near North Side	47	Burnside
9	Edison Park	48	Calumet Heights
10	Norwood Park	49	Roseland
11	Jefferson Park	50	Pullman
12	Forest Glen	51	South Deering
13	North Park	52	East Side
14	Albany Park	53	West Pullman
15	Portage Park	54	Riverdale
16	Irving Park	55	Hegewisch
17	Dunning	56	Garfield Ridge
18	Montclare	57	Archer Heights
19	Belmont Cragin	58	Brighton Park
20	Hermosa	59	Mckinley Park
21	Avondale	60	Bridgeport
22	Logan Square	61	New City
23	Humboldt Park	62	West Elsdon
24	West Town	63	Gage Park
25	Austin	64	Clearing
26	West Garfield Park	65	West Lawn
27	East Garfield Park	66	Chicago Lawn
28	Near West Side	67	West Englewood
29	North Lawndale	68	Englewood
30	South Lawndale	69	Greater Grand Crossing
31	Lower West Side	70	Ashburn
32	Loop	71	Auburn Gresham
33	Near South Side	72	Beverly
34	Armour Square	73	Washington Heights
35	Douglas	74	Mount Greenwood
36	Oakland	75	Morgan Park
37	Fuller Park	76	Ohare
38	Grand Boulevard	77	Edgewater
39	Kenwood		

Even though these communities may be distinct, they have many high need characteristics that translate to needs for services for disconnected youth (CPS Options School Gap Analysis, February 2015). Both communities are predominately African American with a long history of working class families, and each has undergone significant transitions in recent years. Table 1.1.1 provides information about CFA's target neighborhoods.

Table 1.1.1 CFA Target Neighborhood Information			
Characteristic	**Greater Grand Crossing**	**Chatham**	**Grand Boulevard**
Total number of residents	32,286	30,769	22,337
Number of school-aged children	9,653	7,693	6098
Demographics	97.2% African American	97.6% African American	94.6% African American
Average level of educational attainment(>high school)[1]	>16.9%	>14%	>18%
Median or average household income	$27,875	$30,444	$23,513
Median or average housing cost			
Unemployment rate[3]	23%	24%	24.3%

Source: Esri Forecasts for 2013, Accessed March 15, 2015 at http://www.esri.com/data/esri_data/explore-data.

CFA desires to operate a charter and, as such, is not required to identify attendance boundaries. Therefore, attendance boundaries are not included. We propose two initial sites, one of which will be located in each of the two target communities.

> **Q. Provide a brief historical context of the neighborhood(s) within the proposed recruitment boundary. Include information that your design team believes is important to understand in order to serve the targeted student population and community residents.**

CFA has had and will have additional conversations with constituents of each of its community locations. CFA has worked with and will continue to work with a faith based representatives (pastors) in each community. Each target community has been identified by Chicago Public Schools as in need of an Options School, and/or is an area where synergies can be developed with business partners (for example Chatham Business Association). CFA locations were also selected based on ease of access to City College Campuses that will facilitate dual enrollment for our students. CFA, in partnership with the designated faith based community partner, will conduct meetings with public officials in whose districts our planned sites are. These meetings will be designed to elicit support and input from the community and will include elected state and local officials, CPS representatives, and community representatives, and our faith based community partners.

Greater Grand Crossing

The Greater Grand Crossing area was historically created by the railroads that intersect the community. Greater Grand Crossing is a predominantly residential community with over 66% of its housing stock consisting of rental units (ESRI Neighborhood profile).[1] Today Grand Crossing is identified with extreme poverty (over 44% of families live below the poverty level).

Based upon the CPS Seat Need Map, Greater Grand Crossing is a high need community. Greater Grand Crossing neighborhood is served by the schools shown in Table 1.1.2. The table also provides data that verifies need to serve disconnected youth in the area:

Table 1.1.2. Schools in Greater Grand Crossing Neighborhood and Selected Demographics					
School	Graduation Rate[1](5-year)	Drop out Rate[1] (annual)	% Homeless[2]	Chronic Truancy Rate[2]	% Low Income[1]
Simeon Career Academy	80.6%	2.1%	21.6%	49.8%	93%
CICS Ralph Ellison (Charter)	77.4%	1.7%	NA	NA	94%
Perspectives Charter – Calumet Technology	66.2%	6.2%	NA	NA	94.5%
Gary Comer College Prep (Charter)	69.9%	3.1%	NA	NA	90%
Hirsch Metropolitan High School	47.9%	25.4%	39.6%	100%	98.9%
Hyde Park Academy High School	53.2%	2.2%	20.6%	90%	97%

[1]Data from Chicago Public Schools 2014, [2]Data from ISBE School Report Card 2014, NA-Not Available

Grand Boulevard

Grand Boulevard has been predominately African American since the 1930s. The community was once a thriving center, part of which is now called Bronzeville. Grand Boulevard, during the 40s and 50s, was

the cultural mecca of Black Chicago, home to the famous Regal Theater and other night life destinations that lined 43rd and 47th Streets. From the 1960s through the 1990s, Grand Boulevard had the distinction of containing the densiest population of public housing in the country (Encyclopedia of Chicago History). Today Grand Boulevard is identified by extreme poverty with over 51% of families living below the poverty level (ESRI Neighborhood profile).

Based upon the CPS Seat Need Map, Grand Boulevard is a moderate need community. Grand Boulevard is served by the the schools shown in Table 1.1.3. The table also provides selected demographics that verify the need to serve disconnected youth.

Table 1.1.3. Schools in Grand Boulevard Neighborhood and Selected Demographics					
School	Graduation Rate[1] (5-year)	Drop out Rate[1] (annual)	%Home-less[2]	Chronic Truancy Rate[2]	% Low Income[1]
Tilden Career Community Academy	58.8%	4.7%	50.9%	80.7%	95.6%
ACE Technical Charter High School	75.5%	0.2%	29.4%	54.9%	96.2%
Dyett High School	48.5%	8.0%	35.2%	100%	100%
DuSable Leadership (Charter)	67.1%	7.7%	NA	NA	NA
Bronzeville Scholastic Academy High School	83.7%	0.8%	5.5%	70.4%	96.0%
Williams Prep School of Medicine	93.2%	5.8%	12.4%	72.8%	95.7%
Phillips Academy High School	49.6%	0.4%	28.5%	87.1%	95.4%

[1]Data from Chicago Public Schools 2014, [2]Data from ISBE School Report Card 2014, NA-Not Available

b. Community Research

> **Q. Do any members of the design team have ties to the targeted communit(ies) within the recruitment boundary? When first planning to conduct outreach in the targeted communit(ies), with whom did the design team connect to enhance its understanding of the targeted communit(ies), and develop an outreach plan? What existing community meetings, events, or volunteer opportunities have members of the design team attended to make additional connections and enhance members' understanding of the targeted communit(ies)?**

None of the CFA team members are residents of the identified communities. All team members are long term residents of the metro Chicago area. The targeted communities were originally identified utilizing the 2013 Chicago Public Schools Seat Gap Analysis for Education Options.

CFA's initial outreach was through conversations with members of the faith based community. Theseconversations suggested the need for strategies to serve youth that are disconnected from traditional community support systems in education and social service.

CFA, with support from faith-based partners in each of the identified communities, will coordinate community meetings throughout the RFP process. Conversations dating back to the 2013 RFP cycle have been conducted with local elected officials. Conversations with primarily the alderman representing each community will commence from April 8th through the Tier 2 submission deadline. Based upon conversation with the aldermanic representatives, additional outreach will be made to other elected officials as well as community based organizations. CFA will use aldermanic meetings and meetings hosted by our faith-based supporters to inform, engage and seek input from community residents. Additionally, CFA will engage as many community organizations as possible.

Assets and Needs

> **Q. What are the assets within the targeted communit(ies)? What do community members identify as educational and support needs in the community? What methods and sources did your design team use to identify existing assets and educational and support needs in the community?**

Beyond the faith based community, which is a primary resource, each community has social service programs and one of the communities has an active and vibrant business association.

As part of our community informational meetings, CFA will assess other available assets and use available survey tools to determine other community assets.

c. Community Fit

> **Q. Based on the outreach and research that your design team has conducted, why does your team believe that the proposed school or program is a good fit for the targeted communit(ies)? How will the proposed school or program contribute to the existing assets in the targeted communities and help meet educational and support needs?**

The educational philosophy, program approach and relationship to community anchors make CFA both an asset and a good fit our target communities. As hereinafter described in the academic and community outreach sections, the ongoing relationship to the faith based community and opportunities to engage families and other community leaders will promote CFA's ultimate success.

1.2 Notification to the Community of Proposed New School or Program

a. Elected Officials

The *Notification to the Community of Proposed New School or Program* section asks applicants to provide evidence of having notified all elected officials, key community organizations and stakeholders, as well as interacted with, and sought feedback from, community residents via on the ground outreach efforts.

Q. Provide evidence of having conducted (or describe plans to conduct) outreach to all of the aldermen, state representatives, and state senators within the proposed recruitment boundary:
--Requesting a meeting (if meeting(s) have already taken place, list the dates, times, and person(s) with whom the design team met)
--Attending the elected officials' Ward or District nights
--Sending formal notification of the proposed school or program either by email or letter

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CFA has continued dialogue with elected officials since its 2013 submittal. As part of our 2015-2016 submittal, CFA will conduct extensive outreach during the Tier 2 phase. CFA will coordinate and conduct meetings with:

Greater Grand Crossing	Grand Boulevard
Alderman Roderick Sawyer	Alderman Pat Dowell
County Commissioner Stanley Moore	County Commissioner Jerry Butler
State Representative Elgie Sims, Jr.	State Representative Ken Dunkin
State Senator Donne Trotter	State Senator Mattie Hunter

Table 1.2.1 shows meetings/discussions have been held to date.

Table 1.2.1. Meetings/Discussions Held to Date				
Official	Staff Member	Date	Time	CFA Representative
Ald Sawyer		3-19-2015		Allen Carter
Ald Dowell	Allyson Allyson	3-26-2014	3:00 pm	T.J. Crawford

CFA, in partnership with our elected officials, will utilize social media, email, flyers and handouts to inform constituents of our progress and intent to educate disconnected youth. We will utilize forums and regular ward or community meetings of elected officials to communicate our intent and to solicit feedback.

b. Community Organizations and Stakeholders

Q. List the key individuals or organizations in the neighborhood with whom your design team has met to discuss the educational vision for the proposed new school/campus.

CFA, has identified the organizations shown in Table 1.2.2 as entities with which to discuss our intentions to operate a school for disconnected youth in the indentified communities.

Table 1.2.2. Community Contact Listing for Greater Grand Crossing and Grand Boulevard

Organization	Contact	Address
Grand Boulevard Federation		
South Side Organizing Together	Ebonee Stevenson	602 E. 61st St.
Maktub Chicago Development, LLC	Gihan Foreman	4554 S. Lake Park
Anti-Eviction Campaign	J.R. Fleming	
Blacks In Green	Naomi Davis	
Affinity Community Services		1424 E. 53rd St.
Community Outreach Volunteers	Tonny Lumu	400 W. 76th St.
South Siders Organized for Unity and Liberation	Byron Hobbs	6400 S. Kimbark
Southside Solidarity Network (U of C)		
Congregational Church of Park Manor	Rev. Michelle Hughes	7000 S. King Dr.

Gathering Point Community Council	Richard Wooten	400 W. 76th St.
Business and Economic Revitalization Association		200 E. 75th St.
St. Bernard Housing Development Corporation		326 W. 64th St.
Gary Comer Youth Center	Ayoka Samuels	7200 S. Ingleside Ave.
UJIMA Overnight Youth Center	Flora Koppel	7320 S. Yale
Institute of Women Today	Angela Hicks, Exec. Dir.	7315 S. Yale
Southside Youth Council Committee	Bobby Johnson	50 W. 71st St.
Guardians, Inc.		419 E. 75th St.
Global Girls, Inc.	Marvinetta Woodley	8151 S. Chicago
AGORA Community Services	Mary Jones	1831 E. 79th St.
Urban Development Corporation		550 E. 50th Pl
AKARAMA Foundation		6220 S. Ingleside
Dovetail Project	Sheldon Smith	716 E. 47th St.
Coderspace	Demond Drummond	
KLEO Community Family Center	Torrey Barrett	119 E. Garfield

Details about and products of these contacts will be presented as a part of our Tier 2 submission.

Community Forums (Required)

> **Q. Describe the structure of the community forums that your design team has held to discuss the school model with residents and seek their feedback on the educational vision for the proposed school.**

CFA will conduct two (2) community forums in addition to the CPS forums to elicit feedback on key components of the CFA model.

On the Ground Outreach

> **Q. Discuss the various on-the-ground outreach activities that your design team conducted. In which geographic areas in the recruitment boundary did your team's outreach activities take place? Which members of your design team participated in outreach activities? Who else did your design team enlist to help conduct outreach in the neighborhoods (e.g., advisors, collaborators, supporters, paid staff)? What materials and information did representatives of your team share with community members to discuss the educational vision for the proposed school or program? What questions did your team ask community residents?**

On-the-ground outreach will be conducted/coordinated primarily by our faith based partners. We will canvass the neighborhoods within three blocks of our desired location to introduce our efforts and to invite community residents and business owners to meetings coordinated by the local elected officials and other interested parties (i.e. our faith-based partners).

The community engagement objectives below will be the lenses through which we will project our vision to the community. CFA will:

- **strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities** for students to influence what happens in their communities
- **shape and influence** the development and delivery of quality education and policies that reflect local needs and priorities
- **manage and coordinate** engagement activities to ensure consistency, quality and partner participation
- **provide opportunities** for participation for all, particularly people and groups that are often left out of community engagement activities
- **listen to communities and ensure feedback** to participants about the outcomes of consultation and engagement
- provide **variety and flexibility and choice** in community engagement activities
- **Listen and learn from our own and others' experience** and share community engagement skills and knowledge of putting the citizen at the heart of decision-making.

Our proposed community engagement strategy supports our vision to create a rich learning environment where disconnected students are motivated to reconnect by simultaneously earning a high school diploma, career certification, and college credit. We will promote this vision throughout our target communities and use it as a focus for all engagement activities, policies and processes. The awareness that CFA proposed to provide disconnected learners with a high school diploma while simultaneously preparing them for post secondary education and career options, we believe, will be a a

welcoming motivator for our target communities to welcome CFA to the community because we will be meeting currently unmet needs.

We will develop a detailed action plan that outlines how we will achieve our community engagement objectives. We will continuously monitor and review the action plan to ensure that it is flexible and evolving and responds to the changing needs of our communities.

CFA will include parents, students and community members in its ongoing success:

- Regularly ask people what they think about CFA, for example through annual student, parent and teacher surveys.
- Consult people about our priorities through residents' surveys, focus groups and meetings with partners.
- Set up committees, where people (including students and their parents) will be able to take part in consultation and decision-making,
- Encourage and help other organizations and partners to share our approach, so the community understands and supports our mission.
- Make sure people have meaningful input into major strategies and plans, such as the student development strategy.
- Involve people who often are left out, for instance through forums for economically disadvantaged and 16-21 year olds.
- Consult with more people online, via websites
- Include engagement as part of all our planning
- Learn from others and share knowledge about how to include people in decision-making
- Train staff, to develop the skills to engage with the community

c. Community Feedback

Q. In your design team's various interactions with elected officials, community organizations, and stakeholders, what were some of the reactions to the proposed school or program? What suggestions did community members have for the proposed school or program?

1.3 Community Support

Informal conversations with community representatives about the proposed schools reveal a high degree of receptivity. Additional formal interactions will be conducted in the future and we will provide evidence as part of our Tier 2 submittal.

a. Elected Officials

> **Q. List any elected officials who support the proposed school or program. If the applicant included a table in Section 2.1.a., the applicant may choose to add a column entitled Letters of Support to indicate whether or not the elected official supports the proposed school or program.**

CFA will seek elected official support and provide evidence as part of our Tier 2 submittal.

b. Community Organizations and Stakeholders

> **Q. List community-based organizations or stakeholders (required), or citywide organizations (optional),that support the proposed school, or program. Attach letters of support that explain the basis for their support for the proposed school or program.**

CFA has secured support of Lumity and City Colleges of Chicago. Additional community based supporters will be garnered and documentation will be provided as part of our Tier 2 submittal.

c. Partnerships

> **Q. Describe the coalition of partners and collaborators that your design team has formed in the targeted communit(ies) who can provide support services for the school's students and families once in operation. Describe any community-based partnerships you are proposing for the new school (required) and partnerships with citywide organizations (optional). Provide letters of support from these organizations. Explain whose responsibility it will be leading up to school/program opening and once the school or program is in operation to oversee these partnerships.**

CFA has established relationships with 2 community churches (New Covenant and St. Paul). These faith-based entities will provide student recruitment support, mentors and student crisis support (i.e., food, emergency financial aid, etc). We have established a partnership with Lumity. Lumity will support internships and tech training opportunities. CFA will utilize City Colleges of Chicago's policy of allowing public school students access to classes through dual credit and dual enrollment opportunities. On a national level, CFA has garnered the support of Gateway to College; Gateway will provide staff training and development support, as well as access to a nationwide community of practitioners working to ensure that youth and adults successfully matriculate in community colleges across the country.

d. Family and Community Members

Support of Community Members

> **Q. Please provide signatures of support from individuals residing within proximity to the school site.**

CFA will solicit and submit signatures for petitions as part of our Tier 2 submittal.

> **Q. Who are some of the champions of the proposed school or program in the targeted communit(ies)? Provide any personalized letters of support from families and/or community members, outlining why they believe the proposed school or program will be an asset to the community.**

In addition to documentation from our faith-based partners who have proven to be champions for our school, CFA will submit evidence of additional community supporters as a part of our Tier 2 submittal.

e. Risk Factors

> **Q. Based on your design team's interactions with elected officials, community organizations, and stakeholders, families, and community members, who in the community is opposed to the proposed school or program? What is your understanding of why they are opposed to the proposed school or program?**

CFA will elaborate on risk factors as part of our Tier 2 submittal.

1.4 Continued Family and Community Engagement

The *Continued Family and Community Engagement* section asks applicants to outline continued family and community outreach leading up to school opening, highlight services and supports the school will provide to the community once in operation, and describe mechanisms for continued family and community input into the school.

a. Continued Outreach

> **Q. What is your design team's continued community engagement plan from the time of submission of proposal materials leading up to the opening of the school?**

b. Community Support

> **Q.** How will the proposed school or program contribute to the community? What services will it provide to families of students and/or community residents more broadly?

c. Community Input

> **Q. What formalized mechanism(s) will the proposed school or program have for families/guardians and the community to be involved in the governance of the school and/or to provide regular feedback to the Board of Directors?**

Section 2:
Academic Capacity

2.1 Mission, Vision, and Culture

a. Mission and Vision

> **Q. State the mission and vision of the proposed school or program. The mission and vision statements should provide the foundation for the entire proposal and be reflected throughout all sections.**

Mission

Connected Futures Academies (CFA) will prepare youth who have not been successful, or have not found value, in the traditional high school setting to excel in college, a rewarding career and life. To accomplish this mission, we will follow the Early College model that blends high school and college preparation into a rigorous accelerated program that compresses the time it takes to complete high school and up to one year of college into approximately three years.

Vision

CFA is a proposed alternative charter school that will serve disconnected students (off-track and out-of-school learners) in the Chatham/Greater Grand Crossing and Grand Boulevard neighborhoods on Chicago's South Side. Our vision is to create a rich learning environment where disconnected students are motivated to reconnect by simultaneously earning a high school diploma, career certification, and college credit. The measure of our success will be our ability to combine blended learning technologies, proven direct instructional practices and culturally relevant experiences into an arrangement that creates a welcoming learning environment that motivates students to persist to graduation and beyond.

b. Educational Philosophy

> **Q. Briefly describe the educational philosophy of the proposed school or program. Identify the design team's core beliefs and values about education, and explain how these priorities inform the school or program's key program and design components. Provide a clear rationale for these design components, and cite research that demonstrates these components are successful with similar student populations.**

Our philosophy embraces the belief that learning environments are most effective when framed around four essential constructs that embrace the *who, what/where, why and how* of instruction. The following describes the fundamental features of our four core beliefs:

4. Who--we believe that disconnected youth can seamlessly reconnect when the learning environment embraces the unique intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of the learners.

5. What—we believe that a rigorous, career-oriented, blended curriculum that allows for flexibility in instructional delivery motivates disconnected youth to persist to graduation and beyond.

6. Why—we believe students taught to set and monitor career goals readily become intensely aware of the need to claim and control their learning and their motivation to achieve increases.

7. How/Where —we believe that learning comes easier when instruction centers on larger culturally relevant questions and allows for flexibility in delivery modes.

These four philosophical tenets advance CFA's core belief that *a rigorous, career-oriented, blended curriculum (what) that simultaneously prepares learners for college and a career (why) and is flexible enough for delivery in multiple receptive and safe settings (how/where) by competent faculty that seamlessly integrates cultural relevancy in learning activities will motivate disconnected youth (who) to persist to graduation.* Figure 2.1.1 graphically illustrates CFA's four beliefs that contribute to our core belief.

Figure 2.1.1. Graphic Illustration of CFA's Core Beliefs
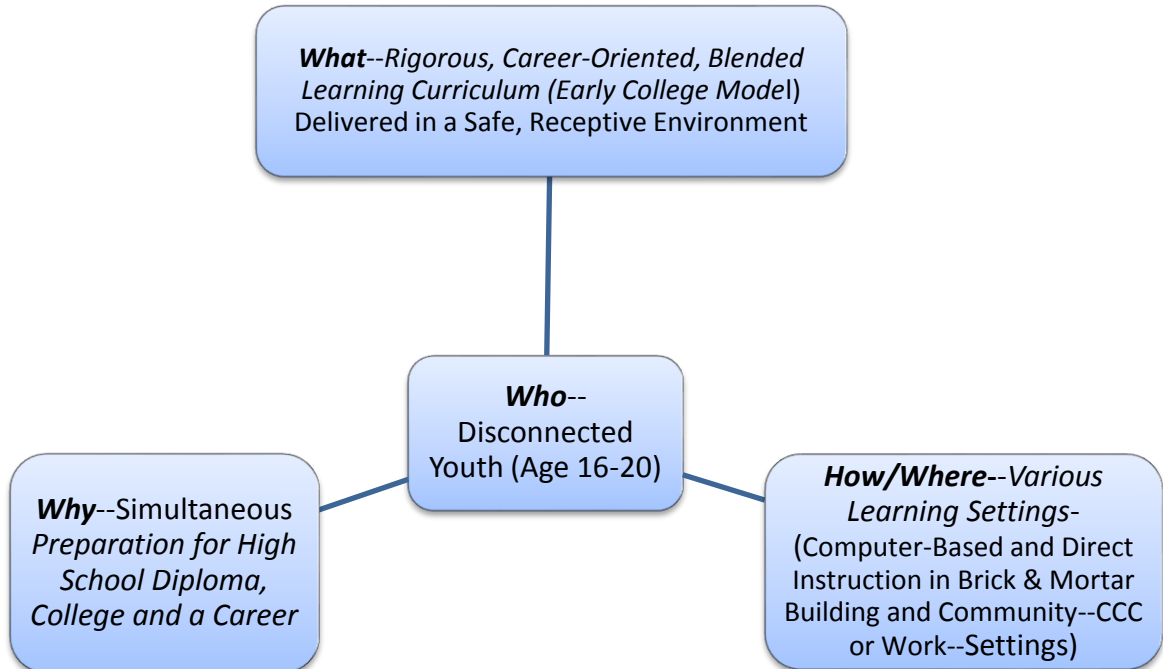
Note: Design is a modified version from Staker and Horn, http://www.christenseninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Classifying-K-12-blended-learning.pdf, p. 15.

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At CFA, both teachers and learners will have a clear understanding of the identity (who) of our target population. Teachers remain abreast of disconnected students' individual needs as well as factors the contributed to their disconnected status. As stated previously, our target population is disconnected youth (off track and out-of-school youth) age 16-20. Dropping out usually has roots in students becoming off track. The problems usually start in the 9th grade but can surface later. Ninth graders who accumulate fewer credits than those required for promotion to 10th grade are candidates to drop out. Freshmen, however, are usually not automatically considered off track if they fail one core academic courses, or if they have not completed exactly one-quarter of the credits required for graduation by the end of their first year of high school. For this reason, CFA will serve youth age 16-20, the younger of which in this age range are usually sophomores. At CFA, we believe that those under age 16 are usually freshman and still can accumulate the credits necessary for promotion to 10th grade. Later grades (11th and 12th) offer some, but not much, flexibility for the time needed to catch up. Thus, CFA targets the population age 16 and over, who often become discouraged and drop out as soon as the law permits.

The work of Heppen and Therriault (2013) informs CFA's conception of factors that contribute to the needs of disconnected youth. 2 Accordingly, major contributing factors are:

1. Increasing dis-involvement in school; often attributed to little family and peer encouragement and support for school success
2. Extenuating life circumstances; for example, they may have medical problems, take an outside job to help support the family, or get pregnant.
3. General boredom and dissatisfaction with school; caused by curriculum to be boring and irrelevant to their needs or becoming discourage by teacher reactions and behaviors.
4. Actual or perceived incompatibility with peers; resulting from being an older age than classmates
5. Lack of psychological attachment to the school
6. Emotional and behavioral problems; that result in trouble getting along with classmates and others,
7. Actual or perceived unsafe **school environment,** viewed as too dangerous or restrictive.[3]

With an awareness of the needs of each student and their contributing factors and the belief--that disconnected youth can seamlessly reconnect when the learning environment addresses the unique intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of the learners, CFA teachers will guide students each step along the path to post-secondary success, whether it is career or college.

The work of the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) in their Universal Design for Learning (UDL) influences our philosophy. CAST provides important references for our philosophical backdrops of who, what, how (where) and why. The center set forth three important principles for designing and implementing an effective learning environment for special populations such as our disconnected students.[4] CAST proposed the following three design principles and labeled them UDL Guidelines:

- **Principle I**: Provide Multiple Means of Representation (the "what" of learning)
- **Principle II**: Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression (the "how (where)" of learning)

- **Principle III**: Provide Multiple Means of Engagement (the "why" of learning)5

The passages that follow discuss these principles and explain how CFA's proposed design aligns with each.

UDL Principle I: Instruction Should **Provide Multiple Means of Representation (the "what" of learning)**

This principle recognizes that learners differ in the ways they perceive and comprehend information presented to them. Three frames for this principle are (1) Perception, (2) Language, Expression and Symbols and (3) Comprehension. Instructional manipulatives that allow students to visualize, use auditory and verbal expressions, and think about what they learned address a wide variety of needs. CAST notes that there is no one optimal representation for all learners so providing options is essential.[6] For example, those with sensory disabilities (e.g., blindness or deafness); learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia); language or cultural differences, and so forth may all require different ways of approaching content. Others may simply grasp information quicker or more efficiently through visual or auditory means rather than printed text. Learning transfers more readily when students are exposed to many representations. Numerous depictions allow students to make connections within, as well as between, concepts.

As discussed in **Section 2.4, Curriculum and Instruction**, of this proposal, our curriculum ensures rigor through alignment with the Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards, and College Readiness Standards. In preparation for these demands, CFA will use multiple means to approach and deliver content. Our faculty will employ an array of techniques (language, mathematical expressions and symbols) to facilitate learning. We believe that technology offers many benefits to students when paired with great teachers. Our blended learning arrangement allows for adaptive online content that permis each student the opportunity to spend a portion of the day working on instruction that is tailored to that student's exact instructional needs. This arrangement allows us to create a very personalized student experience. Technology will help us to enable student autonomy creating a learned driven environment where students can pursue their individualized interests aligned with goals that are set collaboratively with teachers. Online data systems allow both teachers and students to track the students' progress against the goals students set. On-screen and in-person teachers will use a variety of modalities, digital and other tools (e.g., verbal, audio, visual) and representations (e.g., concrete, manipulative, graphical, symbolic) to introduce critical concepts and help students understand content, complete assignments, and build essential skills. Our curriculum simultaneously prepares them for college and a career. The flexibility and variety of options to which CFA will expose learners will inherently motivate them to learn, increase their chances of success and facilitate their persistence to graduation. *We believe that students taught to set and monitor college and career goals develop a keen awareness of the need to claim and control their own learning, and they are motivate to achieve.* This belief rests on UDL Principle I. Each student at CFA will have a personalized learning plan that outlines an individualized path toward his or her goal. Students will be asked to set goals that ensure college and career readiness and will be coached to adjust them upward based on specific academic and career aspirations. Students will lead conferences with parents and teachers about their progress toward their

goals. Our learning environment will inherently lay the foundation for college and career success and help them to become contributing members of society.

UDL Principle II: Instruction Should **Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression (the "how" of learning)**

Principle II recognizes that learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know. The three frames for this principle are (1) Physical Action; (2) Expression and communication; and (3) Executive function. For example, individuals with significant movement impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have language barriers and so forth, approach learning tasks very differently. Some may be able to express themselves well in written text but not speech and vice versa. Action and expression require strategies, practice, and organization, and this is another area where learners can differ. [7]

Our belief *that disconnected youth can seamlessly reconnect when the learning environment addresses their unique intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of the learners* rests on UDL Principle II.

CFA's learning environment will rest on the understanding that successful learning is dependent on the availability of a variety of venues for action and expression. Our technology-based model will allow classroom teachers located in a CFA's brick and mortar building to rotate between groups of students for intense attention and or independent online as needs dictate. With this arrangement, CFA assumes a one-to-one ratio of student to device, so all students may access their online coursework when and if needed. Career and content area instructor will lead face-to-face or 1 to 1 with students in workshops, projects, small groups or individualized instruction.

Principle III: Instruction Should **Provide Multiple Means of Engagement (the "why" of learning)**

Principal III recognizes that the "affect" represents a crucial element in learning, and learners differ markedly in the ways they can actively engage and be motivated to learn. The three constructs upon which Principle III rests are (1) Recruiting interest, (2) Sustaining effort and persistence and (3) Regulating one's self or self-regulation. Many factors influence individual variations in the "affect," including neurology, culture, personal relevancy, subjectivity, and background knowledge, along with a variety of other factors presented in UDL guidelines. Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty while others may disengage quickly, even becoming frightened, by those aspects, preferring strict routine. Some learners might like to work <u>alone</u> while others prefer to work with their peers.

Research shows that there is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts, but providing multiple options for engagement is essential.[8] We believe that *our rigorous career-oriented blended curriculum, which allows flexibility in instructional delivery, will motivate disconnected youth to persist to graduation.* This belief rests on UDL Principle III. To this end, CFA will include computer-based instruction, online instruction, direct instruction in a small group and 1:1 settings among our array of engagement venues. Our students will have the opportunity to spend part

of their day in a virtual learning environment--completing coursework online--part of their time in one-to-one direct instruction arrangements, and part of their day participating in small groups--either direct instruction or peer instructional arrangements with group members. Our instructors will provide tutoring, review quizzes, assign grades, and confirm that students are actively engaged in courses, to ensure that students master concepts and can apply what they learned. Blended learning will be integral to our core curriculum. Our learning arrangements will include online and face-to-face platforms that allow for flexible scheduling as well as for learning to culminate in dual (CFA/CCC) enrollment and credit. Year two and Three students who are prepared to do so will enroll in career preparation courses offered at City College of Chicago (CCC) sites. CCC instructors will lead dual enrollment courses. CFA faculty members who previously approved by the CCC may also teach dual-enrollment courses. Students who successfully complete dual-enrollment courses will receive high school and college credit. CCC instructors will lead dual enrollment courses. CFA faculty members who CCC approves may also teach dual-enrollment courses. Students who complete dual-enrollment courses successfully will receive high school and college credit.

CFA will place strong emphases on using cultural relevancy as an integrating context for teaching and learning. This emphasis aligns with UDL Principle III, which acknowledges that the "affect" represents a crucial element in learning. We subscribe to the definition of *culturally relevant* (*aka* cultural responsive) teaching that the Institute for Education Services set forth. The Institute defines c*ulturally relevant teaching* as *employing instructional practices and resources that reflect the culture, values, customs, and beliefs of students (i.e., help to connect what is to be learned with the students' own lives)*.[9] Ladson-Billings adds theoretical depth to the Institute's definition. Culturally relevant teaching, she notes, is a pedagogy that recognizes and celebrates the student's culture and strives to incorporate the student's experience as "official content. Ladson-Billings uses the term "culturally relevant" to juxtapose "assimilationists" theorist. On the one hand, assimilationists maintain that the purpose of teaching is to help students fit into the existing social order. [10] Constructivists, on the other hand, believe that learners should construct their individual understanding and knowledge of the world, by experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. Along these lines, we believe that information presented within the context of the student's environment provides a personal base from which student learning takes root as well as links to scaffold connections. The connecting lines in Figure 1 (above) *depict our belief that learning comes easier when activities center on larger essential questions that are culturally relevant to students' lives, families, communities, and their interests.*

CFA's Blended Learning Model

Our blended learning model will afford students the opportunity to receive a high school diploma using a combination of computer-based instruction, direct instruction and other flexible arrangements that allow learners a degree of control over the time, place and path of instruction. Following this definition, blended learning will be *integral* t, but not the entire, CFA's curriculum. It will serve as the backbone upon which core (reading and math) instructional activities rest. Staker and Horn [11] (2012) suggest that the most critical aspect of blended learning is flexibility that allows the student to have a degree of control of time, place, path, and/or pace. They suggest the following controls:

- **Time**: Learning is not restricted to the school day or the school year.
- **Place**: Learning is not restricted to the walls of the classroom.
- **Path**: Learning is not restricted to the pedagogy used by the teacher. Interactive and adaptive software allows students to learn [in a method customized to their needs].
- **Pace**: Learning is not restricted to the pace of an entire classroom of students.

The desire to provide some flexibility in the control the student has over learning offers rationale for the flexible blended learning model we plan to implement at CFA. The following provides operational details for our model.

Student Control of Time and Place of Learning: CFA will employ a Flex Blended Learning Model that allows for individual student rotation. Figure 2-2 provides a representation of our model. Within the proposed arrangements, we will deliver content and instruction in a brick and mortar classroom/laboratory setting with options for delivery at of-site settings. We will use computer-based/online instruction that affords students opportunities to control the *time* and *place* of their individual learning. For core subjects, they will use technology independently as well as engage in 1:1 and small group direct instructional arrangements. They will develop career skills in classrooms, laboratories, and community settings. Specifically, engagement in computer based instruction, direct instruction, 1:1 and small group arrangements will allow them go gain college credit via dual CFA/CCC credit provisions. Individualized service learning experiences will provide them extended opportunities to immerse in the surrounding community.

Our blended model will feature an extended school year, a Saturday Academy for students who are behind, and an after-school academy for struggling students. Our model will require reinforcement of learning through the integration of culturally relevant activities into all subjects. Baker and Digiovanni found that integrating culturally relevancy in teaching helped students achieve greater understandings of curriculum materials as well as find relevant ways to connect new knowledge to previous knowledge.[12]   To integrate cultural relevancy in all courses, including English, math, science, and social science courses, CFA teachers will be required to develop a broad knowledge about the less publicly visible but very significant contributions of ethnic groups in English, science, technology, medicine, math, ecology, etc. Our instructors will engage students in individualized learning, 1:1 and group sessions to integrate culturally relevant knowledge into core and career subjects. We will have a Blended Learning Coordinator at each site, who among other duties will oversee school-hour, after-hour and community activities. Figure 2.1.2 presents our Flex Blended Learning Model.

Figure 2.1.2. CFA's Flex Blended Learning Model
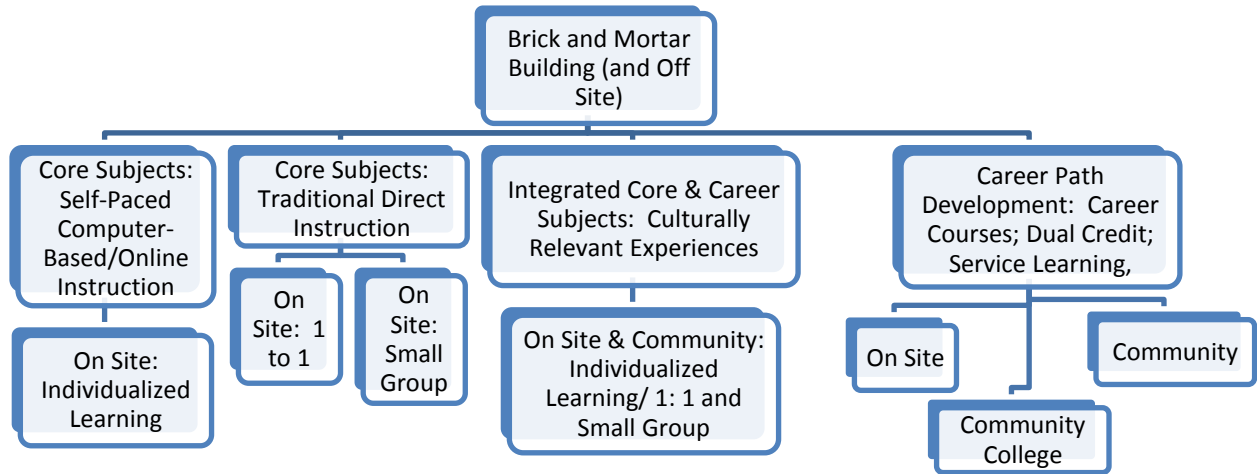
Student Control of Path of Learning: Our curriculum will allow students to follow selected career paths. Over the three-year period, we will offer career paths for students to develop skills and knowledge neeeded for success in given career-focused industry, including Allied Health; Manufacturing; Green Construction; Hospitality; and Technology. In this respect, they will have a degree of control over their learning path.

Student Control of Pace of Learning: Students will have some control over the pace of their learning. They will be able to move among learning modalities in a classroom/laboratory with a teacher of record on site to oversee the movement. The teacher of record, assisted by classroom monitors or other adults, will provide face-to-face support on a flexible and adaptive, as needed, basis through small group instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, etc. Figure 2.1.3 presents a typical design for a CFA classroom/laboratory arrangement.

Figure 2.1.3. CFA Classroom/Laboratory Design
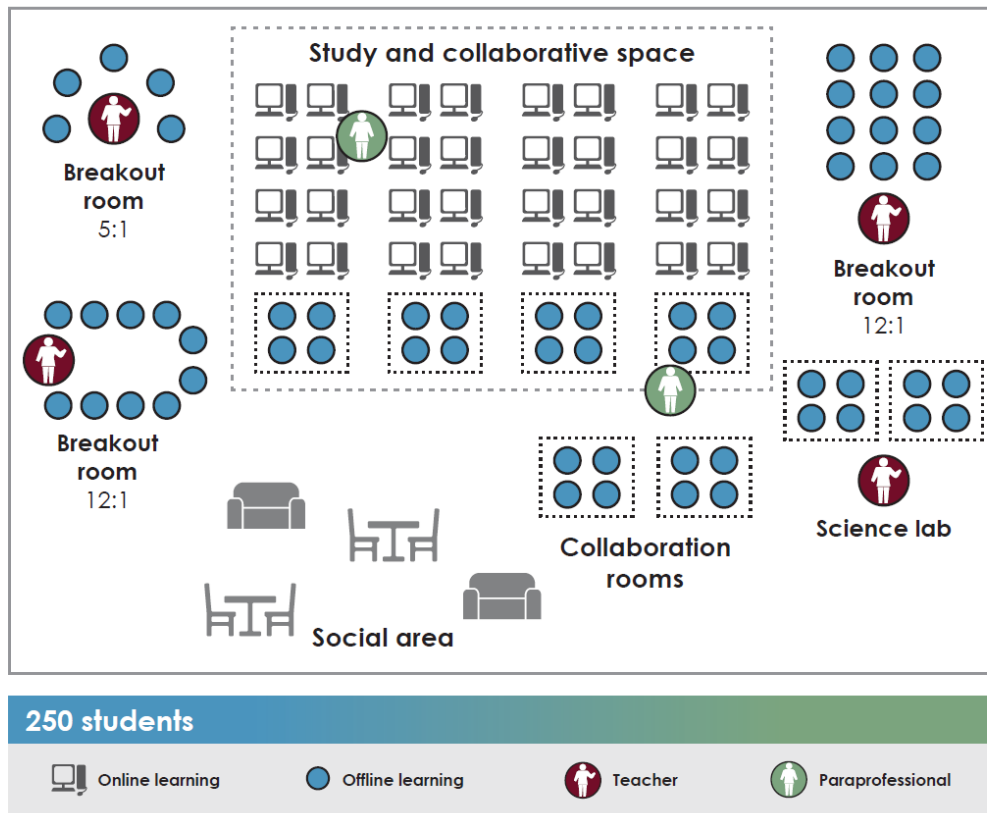
Each of our five planned CFA's campuses will adopt a blended learning model and will collaborate with a City Colleges of Chicago to provide dual enrollment opportunities for students who qualify. Teachers and mentors will work with students to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in a given career-focused industry, including Allied Health, Manufacturing, Green Construction, Hospitality, and Technology. Table 2.1.4 provides our preliminary plan to partner with community colleges and the career focus at each campus.

Table 2.1.4. Proposed CFA Partner Campuses and Career Foci				
Campus	**Year Open (Actual)**	**Location (where available)**	**Career Focus**	**Partner**
Campus 1	FY17	Greater Grand Crossing	Hospitality	Kennedy King College
Campus 2	FY18	Grand Boulevard	Construction	Dawson
Campus 3	FY19	Chicago Lawn	Manufacturing	Daley College
Campus 4	FY20	N/A	TBD	TBD
Campus 5	FY21	N/A	TBD	TBD

Through the aforementioned descriptive lens, we will design, assess and refine the frames that structure our educational environment, thereby enhancing our capacity to accomplish our mission. At CFA, we will use the above constructs to assess continuously the extent to which our atmosphere remains positive. When evidence reveals the contrary, we will immediately make adjustments in operations to rectify situations.

c. Description of Culture

> **Q. Describe the culture of the proposed school or program. What are the systems, traditions, and policies that the school or program will implement to achieve this culture? Who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of these systems, traditions, and policies? Any responsibilities assigned to staff members with regard to promoting and monitoring positive school culture should be cited in the attached comprehensive organizational chart and job descriptions.**

At the foundation of every great school is a strong, coherent culture. At CFA, we envision a culture that inspires all students to strive for the highest academic success and to pursue career interest in depth. We believe a balanced focus on achievement and the passionate pursuit of a career will motivate and cultivate a positive academic environment that emphasizes community and collaboration. Research supports the importance of globally considering the motivation and well-being of learners, faculty, staff, administrators and the community when framing a school's culture. In his Organizational Health Inventory for Secondary Schools (OHI-S), Wayne Hoy described *a healthy school environment as one where the institution, administration, teachers, students and the community are in harmony, and the school meets functional needs of all as the institution successfully copes with disruptive outside forces as*

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it directs its energies toward fulfilling its mission.[13] So individuals within the school foster positive collaborations among each as well as among external community entities, including parents, faith-based groups, community-based organizations, and governmental agencies to gain support for and advance the needs of learners. Titles for Hoy's characterization of components of a healthy school appear in Column 1 of Table 2.1.2. CFA will maintain a positive internal school culture by adhering to Hoy's organizational health inventory. CFA's culture will be one that draws teachers, staff, administrator, students and the community into a cordial relationship where they love the school and enjoy being a part of it. We at CFA will remember, continuously verbalize and adhere to the CFA Culture Formulas shown in Column 2 of Table 2.1.2. These formulas correlate with Hoy's OHI-S characterizations,[14] and CFA will use them as dimensions to self-assess continuously to determine the extent to which our school culture is positive and remains that way.

Table 2.1.2. Core Components of Connected Futures Academies' Culture		
Hoy's OHI-S	CFA's Culture Formulas	Definitive Components of the CFA School Culture
Academic Success	Rigorous Academic+ Career Preparation = Success	CFA's faculty will guide our students as they set high, but realistic and achievable goals. We will recruit, hire and retain outstanding classroom teachers who believe that students can achieve. Students will correspondingly believe they can achieve and will work hard to reach their goals. Our faculty and leadership team will build a fiercely positive school culture that holds faculty, staff and students to high expectations through positive reinforcement.
Healthy, Safe Environment	Safety + Structure + Joy = Student Learning	At CFA, we ensure that students feel safe and secure, physically, emotionally, and intellectually, through clear directions and structures, reliable school routines informed by our high behavioral expectations, and a secure facility. School and community support teams will ensure that learning occurs in a healthy, safe, socially responsible, receptive and positive environment.
Community/Civic Development:	Parent + School + Community Partnerships = Student Achievement	CFA will provide multiple avenues through which we proactively engage and develop strong partnerships with families and communicate on a daily basis. Our students will productively engage in the community activities that will contribute to them becoming productive members of the broader society. CFA's activities will foster social welfare and economic development through partnerships that reach out to parents, employers, the community and City Colleges of Chicago (CCC). Our Relationship Managers (RM) will oversee and facilitate positive, receptive relationships within the school and between the school and the

		broader community.
Integrity and Moral Character	Strength of Character + High Morals = Lifelong Success	CFA students will understand that in order to succeed they must possess high morals and strength of character expressed in our BE GREAT motto. In addition to academic abilities, we will explicitly develop in our students' the social/emotional skills necessary for lifelong success. Our faculty, staff and administrators will maintain and model high moral and integrity standards. They will clearly communicate their high expectations among each other, to the student body and the community. There will be a sense of trust, confidence, enthusiasm, and friendliness among CFA teachers, students, parents and community entities. CFA staff, parents and community will cooperatively monitor our learners to ensure their academic as well as their social and emotional well-being. Teachers feel good about each other, and they will feel a sense of accomplishment from their jobs as well. Each CFA principal will work persuasively and effectively with his or her superiors, governmental and community entities to secure the resources to accomplish successfully the school goals, yet simultaneously demonstrates independence in thought and action. Our Leadership Team will build a fiercely positive school culture that holds staff and students to high expectations through positive reinforcement.
Initiating Structure	Data + Data + Data = Decisions that Foster Student Success	CFA will use data to provide immediate individualized supports for any students struggling with a subject or skill. This action will to ensure that "no one is left behind" and that students master all skills as they prepare and college, careers and beyond.

Within the descriptive lens set forth in Table 2.1.2, our Culture Team comprised of the education director , site director, an instructor from each content area, the social worker, the resource specialists and the transistion specialist, will continuously foster a positive school culture that will enable us to meet our organizational and academic goals. The education director will oversee the development and implementation of and adherence to the CFA school culture at all CFA schools (See the Comprehensive Organizational Chart in the Attachments Section.)

d. Post-Secondary Opportunity Readiness

CFA will utilize the early college model. Through our partnership with Gateway to College National Network (GtCNN or GtC), we will offer robust dual-enrollment opportunities to ensure that all students leave the program college ready. They will demonstrate readiness by enrolling directly in transfer-level city college courses while simultaneously enrolled at CFA and completing requirements for their high school diploma.

CFA staff will receive training and support from GtCNN for the use of GtCNN's Post-secondary Readiness Framework. GtCNN recognizes that becoming college ready is a process. This process involves students developing attitudes, behaviors, and skills for college success over-time through thoughtful and intentional experiences that allow opportunities for practice and feedback. We use the term "college ready" to describe readiness for any postsecondary educational experience, including community college, university or vocational training, any setting where students can earn a degree, certificate, or license. A student's choice of degree, program of study, or career interest may require more in depth knowledge in a particular area, but we believe the attitudes, behaviors, and skills necessary for success in these settings extend beyond any single context and are relevant to all students.

Most of the current literature describes college readiness as a binary measure. For example, ACT ("ACT's college readiness," 2008) defines college readiness as the level of academic achievement a student needs to be ready to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in credit-bearing first-year postsecondary courses. Students are college ready or they are not. We view becoming college ready as a multi-dimensional process, a continuum of attitudes, behaviors, and skills students are working toward over time to increase their ability to be successful in a postsecondary setting. Because we advocate a multi-dimensional construct for college readiness, we consider it critical to examine where students are on the continuum of college readiness rather than focus on a single snapshot that represents one particular point in their learning.

Defining college readiness as multi-dimensional and a continuum acknowledges that students come to CFA at various places on the continuum and bring attitudes, behaviors, and skills that support college success as well as others that do not. Students, especially first generation college students, may not have a realistic understanding of what is necessary for success in college. The experiences of this program are specifically designed to increase students' understanding of what it means to be college

ready, identify their level of college readiness and support them in acquiring the attitudes, skills information and behaviors needed to experience post-secondary success.

Framework Description

CFA will utilize the Gateway to College Post-secondary Readiness Framework as the foundation for how our students will engage in postsecondary learning. This framework consists of five dimensions:

- Higher Order Critical Thinking: developing key cognitive strategies to approach advanced subject matter and critical thinking.
- Course Content: writing and research skills engage students in learning techniques and key concepts for subject area disciplines.
- Learning Behaviors: assisting students in self-regulation and support their ability to comprehend material and complete academic tasks successfully.
- College Culture: understanding education in a college context provides the information necessary to understand how college operates as a system and culture.
- Meta-Cognitive Factors: contributing to the overall success of students, these factors are attitudes, behaviors, motivations, skills, and perceptions students need for both academic and personal achievement.

Each dimension guides the daily experiences of students as they prepare for and engage in postsecondary learning. The structure is specific enough to be quantified and yet broad enough to align with any curriculum. Students will participate in multiple overlapping learning experiences including the following: self-assessment, goal setting, integrated project-based learning, college foundations course, and the development of a learning portfolio. The narratives that follow give a brief definition of these experiences.

Self-Assessment

The GtCNN uses a GtC Post-Secondary Readiness Rubric, which is a tool aligned to the dimensions of the readiness framework that engages students in self- assessing where they are on the continuum of college readiness. It provides students and program staff, with specific information on skills, attitudes, information, and behaviors students possess and need to develop to become more college ready.

Goal Setting

Results from the readiness rubric are used to establish goals that support college readiness. Students will work to achieve these goals and create artifacts of their learning that they will include in their learning portfolio.

Integrated Project-based Learning

The GtCNN uses integrated project-based learning to engage students in intelligent behaviors and participate in intellectual activities that support the development of skills attitudes and behaviors that build readiness. A well-designed and implemented project-based learning experience facilitates

students' building problem solving and critical thinking skills including analysis, synthesis and evaluation; the higher-order critical thinking dimension of the framework. Through this experience, instructors help students practice and develop the habit of critical thinking and other skills such as time management, personal organization and appropriate communication with teachers and peers, which incorporates the dimension of learning behaviors. The learning from this experience will also contribute to the portfolio.

College Foundations Coursework

The College Foundations course helps students understand the expectations and culture of college. This experience is its own course, or it can be integrated into another academic subject. CFA will integrate college foundations coursework into our Career Pathways courses for Year 2 and Year 3 students. Through exposure to dimensions of college culture, students will learn about financial requirements, completing college applications, writing application essays, registration, and other aspects of the post-secondary experience. Students will also visit participate in visits to post-secondary environments, including classrooms, of colleges, universities, and trade and specialty schools, to better understand the variety of post-secondary options.

Learning Portfolio

Instructors incorporate the creation of a learning portfolio into the curriculum. Over the course of the academic term, students will contribute artifacts to the portfolio using the College Readiness Goal Sheet as a guide for the content. Assignments and requirements from the instructor will also add to the content. Developing the portfolio is a collaborative effort between the instructor and the resource specialists. Although this is a collaborative effort, the teacher aides will shepherd this process through regular check-ins, feedback, and assistance. The ongoing support of both the instructor and the teacher aides will ensure a quality experience and outcome for students.

Supporting Staff Implementation of College Supports

Effective implementation of the post-secondary readiness framework requires the integration of holistic student support; a researched based approach to serving youth that involves a high level of student support. We will accomplish holistic student through the combined and orchestrated efforts of college support staff identified herein as resource specialists, skilled instructors and transition specialists.

In the context of preparing students for accomplishment during and beyond their time in high school, resource specialists, instructors and transition specialists develop a deep understanding of college readiness among CFA students based on the GtCNN post-secondary framework. The support staff member will work in concert with one another to help students see college attainment as a multi-faceted process, incorporating components that can be explained as the acquisition of attitudes, behaviors, information, and skills of which they can develop to realize post-secondary success.

> **Q. Describe the specific programs and supports, beyond academic curricula, that the proposed school will provide to expose and prepare students for various post-secondary careers. Describe the process that will be implemented for students to develop a plan to graduation and postsecondary readiness. Who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of post-secondary career readiness supports? Which staff members will support these efforts? Any responsibilities assigned to staff members with regard to promoting post-secondary career readiness should be cited in the attached comprehensive organizational chart and job descriptions.**

CFA has entered into a partnership with Lumity, a local nonprofit organization which mobilizes the corporate and nonprofit community to make Chicagoland a better place to live and work by providing a robust range of services, including, the STEM career readiness program, among many others. Lumity's activities rest on a theory that states: "If a student gets hands-on exposure to information about STEM careers and workplaces and learns how to be an engaged team member, then that student will be better prepared to choose an educational and post-graduation path that will lead to a sustainable livelihood and career."

CFA will collaborate with Lumity professionals, to delivery Lumity's STEM Career Readiness program, which includes experiential learning, computer digital literacy, and interpersonal skills training. Lumity's STEM career readiness program will augment CFA's classroom curriculum and provide soft-skills training to help students prepare for post-graduation and a career.

The STEM career readiness program provides the following components:

> **STEM Talks** — Lumity's dynamic STEM professionals coach youth who experienced challenges (gangs, drugs, teen pregnancy, loss of parent/sibling, poverty). Learners are engaged in sessions where they share their stories in an engaging way. These sessions serve the critical purpose of encouraging students that it is not too late to make good choices and to get an education. Interaction with someone who has walked in his or her shoes helps expand a student's vision of what is possible and demonstrates the importance of resiliency. In preparation for the talk, students research the individual and develop three high quality questions that they ask afterwards to encourage interaction between the speaker and students and helps the students learn how to engage others and network.

> **Career Site Visits** — Lumity will assist CFA in exposing students are to opportunities that inspire them to consider the possibilities for STEM careers. A group of up to 20 students will have an opportunity to see STEM in action by touring a workplace, talking first hand with staff, getting hands-on experience with a problem-solving activity and generally experience the workplace culture firsthand. Lumity will correlate relationships between CFA and the company, thinking through the learning objectives and hosting the site visit. In preparation for the visit, students research the company and employees, participate in the site visit, and develop three high quality questions posed and addressed during the visit. This teaches students to prepare for a meeting.

> **Real World Projects** —Students get hands-on experience with solving problems faced in the workplace, while being exposed to common and cutting edge technologies used today. Working under the direction of technology experts, students practice working on a technology project (e.g., design a mobile app, provide a technology assessment, build/enhance a website, or set up a CRM).

Projects encourage teamwork, enhanced communications, strategic thinking, and time management skills. Projects range in duration and frequency, based on the school, corporate partner and project.

Career Readiness Training —Students get career readiness skills which includes career interest assessment, resume writing, creating LinkedIn profile, and financial literacy. Lumity will introduce students to MyColLife ([What is MyColLife)](#) to research postsecondary career opportunities. The technology is:

- FREE to students, counselors, parents and high schools
- 100% FERPA compliant
- Best-practiced aligned skills profiler that matches students to careers, job postings and scholarships
- External-facing student portfolio is live and allows students to share their work quickly and easily
- Already populated with 15K students and growing at a rate of 85%
- Mobile app for Android in May 2015 and iPhone in June 2015
- Cloud storage is included in the free model

STEM Saturday— Lumity pairs teams of 10 students with a corporate partner to implement a three-month STEM-related service learning project for a local nonprofit or small business of their choice. The corporate partner coaches their student teams on team roles as well as the computer science project (e.g., technology assessments, Wi-Fi mapping, website programming and mobile app). Over the 3-month period of the project, students experience three of the team roles to discover what they like and dislike doing (See Attachment for Team Roles). Teams compete for scholarships for post-secondary programs and/or technology. The competition is based on student attendance, team dynamics, team presentations, client feedback and the final product.

Below are examples of the tasks each team works on:

- Identifying a neighborhood (client) with poor web presence
- Meeting with client to analyze needs and collect business requirements
- Strategizing how to enhance the client's web presence
- Creating a plan for the client
- Presenting enhancement plan to client
- Writing a Statement of Work (SOW)
- Creating timelines, budgets, benchmarks
- Experiencing a range of project team roles
- Executing the plan
- Presenting the final product

In project-based learning:

- Each team analyzes the need, establishes and/or enhances their client's web presence
- Students receive guidance from the corporate volunteers and program leaders

- Students earn service learning credits for their contributions
- In teamwork:
    - Students learn to be an engaged and empowering team member
    - Students nominate candidates for the team roles and vote on who will assume the various roles
    - Corporate volunteers and Lumity coach students on their roles and students learn how to give and receive feedback responsibly
    - Roles rotate to allow students the opportunity to hold at least three roles during the project

A primary outcome is to increase exposure and interest in technology based careers, and to prepare youth for the workforce with an emphasis on technology jobs, which is the fastest growing job sector in Chicago. Lumity is administering pre- and post-surveys to students from experiential learning opportunities (STEM Talks, career site visits, real-world projects, etc.) Lumity also tracks a variety of program information such as volunteer hours, students served, projects completed, as well as collect survey information from educators and participating corporate partners.

The evaluation consist of a mixed method approach that relies on qualitative and quantitative research to assess impacts. The goal of the evaluation is to understand how the initiatives in the schools have impacted students' job placement prospects, career paths, interest in STEM fields, and other goals the stakeholders identify. In conducting the evaluation, a key objective is to understand which models of engaging students with STEM are most effective in leading to job placement, with a goal of scaling successful models to help create a larger, more diverse and skilled workforce.

A team of 5 employees at Accenture are working with Lumity to design, implement, monitor and summarize the outcomes of the STEM program for enhancements and dissemination.

Track Record

2014 Summer Youth Technology Employment Program

Lumity operated a youth employment program funded by DCEO. Working under the direction of skill-based volunteers, youth worked in teams to complete a technology assessment for nonprofits. The youth rotated through roles (e.g., project manager, data analyst, etc.), were exposed to STEM professionals via speaker series, career site visits and learned soft skills utilizing operating agreements, CARE Profile and other tools to help them learn about growth vs fixed mindset, self-fulfilling prophecy, drama triangle and giving/receiving feedback.

Program outcomes included:

- Out of the starting 34 youth, 31 successfully completed the Internship (91% retention)
- Increased interest in a STEM-related career by 55%
- 23 youth requested an optional mentor

- At the youth's request, the program was extended and the group met on Saturdays until the grant end date of September 30

The Assistant Principal at Amundsen High School reported: "One of our students was struggling in school with attendance and his academics. He participated in the summer program with Lumity and through that program gained a lot of confidence and as a result that carried over to his school work and his school life. His attendance has greatly improved, his grades have greatly improved and he's turned into a fabulous young man."

Amundsen Program

Based on the success of the summer program, Lumity was invited to collaborate with Amundsen High School on a comprehensive STEM Career Readiness program, which is being integrated into the classroom curriculum and delivered to 222 students.

The Principal at Amundsen reported, "The Lumity program really brings so many different options to our students. Everything from material resources to experiences out in the field working with corporations to an opportunity to build one-to-one relationships with individuals who have been successful in a STEM field."

One of the teachers shared the following email, "I am just finishing grading the Self-Fulfilling Projects that the AVID students completed last week as part of the Lumity curriculum. There were some really great ones! I really wanted to share the attached one with you. It was written by a student who cut all the time last semester. She has made drastic changes this 3rd quarter and is showing up to class on time everyday."

Tracking

Q. Specify the methods that the school or program will employ to track student/alumni college acceptance and persistence rates, as well as student/alumni employment post-graduation from your school or program. Identify who is responsible for monitoring and overseeing tracking efforts.

As a way to identify, monitor and support the social, emotional and physical needs of our disconnected youth, GtCNN will assist CFA by using its internal database tool to collect data and track the following measures: attendance, persistence, academic success, and credentials earned. The tool:

- Tracks <u>attendance</u> based on local requirements and existing methods.
- Calculates <u>persistence</u> based on enrollment term-to-term and year-to-year.
- Measures a<u>cademic success</u> by GPA and credits at entry and those earned during throughout the students tenure at CFA or "During GtC." Individual course grades and credits attempted are also tracked and measured.
- Tracks the following <u>credentials</u> achieved either "During GtC" or "Post GtC": high school diploma, AA, certificate, and BA. "Post GtC" credentials are reported as learned from continued student contact and through the National Student Clearinghouse.

A detailed description for how GtCNN tracks and monitors college acceptance and persistence rates is provided in the "Monitoring" section below.

e. Social, Emotional, and Physical Health

Student Profile

> **Q. Describe the anticipated social, emotional, and physical health needs of the targeted student population. Provide research and/or evidence to support these anticipated needs.**

Our target population is disconnected youth (off track and out-of-school youth) age 16-21. Risk of dropping out usually has roots in students becoming off track. The problems usually start in the 9th grade but can surface later. Ninth graders who accumulate fewer credits than those required for promotion to 10th grade are candidates to drop out. Freshmen, however, are usually not automatically considered off track if they fail one core academic courses, or if they have not completed exactly one-quarter of the credits required for graduation by the end of their first year of high school. For this reason, CFA will serve youth age 16-21, the younger of which in this age range are usually sophomores. Numerous social, emotional and physical factors contribute to youth becoming disconnected. The work of Heppen and Therriault (2013) informs CFA's conception of factors that contribute to the needs of disconnected youth. [15] Accordingly, major contributing factors, restated are:

1. **Increasing dis-involvement in school;** often attributed to little family and peer encouragement and support for school success
2. **Extenuating life circumstances;** for example, they may have medical problems, take an outside job to help support the family, or get pregnant.
3. **General boredom and dissatisfaction with school;** caused by curriculum to be boring and irrelevant to their needs or becoming discourage by teacher reactions and behaviors.
4. **Actual or perceived incompatibility with peers**; resulting from being an older age than classmates
5. **Lack of psychological attachment to the school**
6. **Emotional and behavioral problems;** that result in trouble getting along with classmates and others,
7. **Actual or perceived unsafe school environment,** viewed as too dangerous or restrictive.[16]

Learners with these social, emotional and physical characteristics share traits with students served by our partner organization, Gateway to College (GtC) National Network. Gateway's students are 16 to 21 year-olds and have left high school without a diploma or are behind in credits for their age and grade-level. They typically have a GPA of 2.0 or below. Using its model for addressing social, emotional and physical needs of disconnected youth, GtC will collaborate with CFA to address these issues. Their model involves having new students complete a survey that provides context about their goals and their needs. The survey results indicate a wide range of challenges that could affect a student's academic performance, including "frequent moving," "homelessness," "conflicts with work," "too many family responsibilities," and many others. From field test results, Gateway has found that more than 50% of

GtC students report six or more challenges. Students include foster youth, adjudicated youth, English language learners, teen parents, homeless students, students who need to accommodate work or family responsibilities, and students who feel they did not fit well in a traditional high school setting. For these students it is often not enough to change the approach to their education but rather to change the entire context of their education.

Monitoring

> **Q. Explain how the school or program will identify and monitor individual students' social, emotional, and physical health needs on an ongoing basis at the school or program. Describe the management and data collection systems the school or program will implement for the purposes of screening, diagnosing, and progress monitoring students' non-academic needs. Describe any non-academic goals that the school or program may set for students, how they will be measured, and by whom. Who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of these efforts? Any responsibilities assigned to staff members with regard to identifying, monitoring, and supporting the anticipated social, emotional, and physical health needs of students, should be cited in the attached comprehensive organizational chart and job descriptions.**

CFA will enroll in a term-by–term Network Membership Agreement to participate in the GtC program. The GtC database is live and the GtCNN Measurement & Evaluation team is able to monitor which programs are falling behind in reporting data and who may need assistance and follow up. The team provides trainings, tutorials, and new faculty onboarding to help programs report their student data timely and accurately.

Through its New Student Survey (administered to students within their first month in the program) students participate in a research-based survey. This study polls and tracks student demographic information including, family stress, barriers, academic history and self-perceptions. At the end of each academic year, students complete Satisfaction Survey. Information gathered includes demographics, living situation, experiences that affected their ability to be successful in school, and information about their experience in the program. Comparing individual student responses allows GtCNN to see how the model has affected important academic attitudes and behaviors. GtCNN then compares this pre and post-data to determine where progress has been made and how the student's sense of self, belonging, and college and career-going identity have changed.

GtCNN will regularly analyze and report on our programmatic outcomes. They will use these analyses to help CFA grow and improve our results, as needed. GtCNN publishes an internal data book annually that will report on our enrollment numbers, student success, demographics, persistence, and graduation rates—among other metrics. The company also operates GatewayLive, an intra-network wiki, which enables connectivity among their sites. They are equipped to collect, analyze, and disseminate new understandings about America's under-served youth and a five-year record of success. The company has programs throughout U.S. that serves thousands of students as well as robust and well-managed data collection processes. We believe that GtCNN is uniquely positioned to collect valuable and accurate data about our under-served youth.

> **Q. Describe the programs, resources, and services (internal and external) that the proposed school or program will provide in order to promote students' social, emotional, and physical health. Describe how your school or program will help students develop the capacity required to succeed, such as learning to advocate for themselves, taking responsibility for their learning, and developing resilience in the face of challenges. Describe how one-on-one counseling will be used to support youth development and students' social, emotional, and physical health needs. How will this fit into the school day to minimize interference with time in the classroom? Explain how the proposed school or program will meet the needs of students in at-risk situations, including (but not limited to), homelessness, low achievement, poverty, behavioral issues, truancy, drugs, pregnancy, and emotional issues.**

GtC Learning Communities—School Social Worker, Resource Specialists, Transition Specialists and instructors, who will receive training from GtCNN staff, will provide wrap-around support throughout each student's time in program. This support helps improve retention, persistence and academic outcomes. (See the Comprehensive Organizational Chart in the Attachments Section.)

The learning community and network of peer support that we will create combined with a relationship with the work of the resource and transition specialists will help to improve retention, persistence, and academic outcomes. In a study on the impact of learning communities in a community college setting, Vincent Tinto[17] along with Bailey and Alfonso[18] argue "learning communities promote persistence by facilitating the creation of supportive peer groups among students, encouraging shared learning, and giving students the opportunity to actively participate in knowledge creation." The dual-credit aspect of GtC is supported by research by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities,[19] which suggests in a 2002 policy briefing that dual enrollment may reduce high school dropout rates, increase student aspirations, and decrease the amount of remediation needed by incoming college students. Past research also suggests that one reason effective dual-enrollment programs that serve at-risk student populations reduce the high school dropout rate is they provide students the opportunity to be academically challenged and partake in more engaging coursework[20]—an opportunity that may not have been present in some traditional K-12 settings, and one that is embedded in GtC instruction and support.

GtC Holistic Student Support. In line with CFA's philosophy, the Gateway to College National Network believes that every student has the capacity to become a successful college student. GtC subscribe to principles of Holistic Student Support. So, in addition to facilitating effective teaching practices in the classroom, GtCNN ensures that enrollees receive holistic support rooted in an ecological framework and developmental approach from their entire program team.

The ecological framework posits that growth is influenced by a variety of contexts, including individuals, experience and the strength of the connections between the contexts. For GtCNN students, this may include school experiences, peers, family responsibilities, cultural heritage, work experiences of parents and guardians and, more broadly, neighborhoods, communities, and the economic health of those places. This developmental approach asserts that success in learning comes from mastery of incremental steps. For GtCNN students, these are specifically the steps needed to be a successful college

student. These five principles are the foundation of GtCNN's philosophy on supporting students in their individual growth and success:

- Caring Relationships
- Safe Environments
- Strengths-Based Mindset
- Solution-Focused Approach
- Community Connections

Caring Relationships

Interactions with adults who respond in a caring, honest, respectful, and attentive manner provide groundwork for the development of trusting, genuine relationships and create the potential for dynamic change. Team members use an intrusive advising approach, regularly and proactively reach out to students in order to provide support and guidance. With the foundation of a strong, caring relationship, team members are able to empower students to become academically successful.

Safe Environments

Safety, including physical, emotional, cultural, and identity exploration, is important to adolescent (and human) development. A sense of belonging, strong relationships with adults and peers, and physically safe environments all contribute to creating an optimal learning experience.

Team members foster a learning community where students feel safe expressing themselves, taking risks, making mistakes, and supporting each other. Providing a space where students can take risks and learn about themselves and others is core to providing a successful learning environment.

Strengths-Based Mindset

Students' individual strengths are deeply rooted in their culture and past experiences and are nurtured, built on, and used as the basis to work toward future successes. Students are taught to recognize both internal and external strengths and understand such traits are not fixed; rather, they can be developed and built on with a growth mindset. Team members not only focus on students' assets, but empowering students to recognize their own strengths and building on them for future successes. Furthermore, they understand the challenges students have overcome and, more importantly, the resilient characteristics they possess.

Solution-Focused Approach

Relationships with students are grounded in respect, hope, and empowerment. Team members use a scaffold learning approach where incremental steps to reach goals or solutions are actively taught and celebrated. Student-driven solutions are encouraged. Instead of "fixing problems," team members collaborate and facilitate conversations that help students construct solutions. Students are recognized as experts in their own lives and the drivers of change. GtCNN students understand there is no one

correct course of action toward building a solution, and small changes matter. As a result, students are encouraged to focus on the future.

Community Connections

Community support refers to all of the support systems available to students. This includes, but is not limited to, family, friends, religious and cultural organizations, and campus and social service resources. Faculty and staff welcome students' existing systems, including family (however students define their families) and other caring adults, to support, encourage, and empower students to succeed. Team members assist students in effectively engaging with on campus opportunities and resources, as well as community support services, creating comprehensive wrap around services. Students learn to build relationships and access the resources and opportunities available to them to help them be successful. They are also provided with opportunities to give back to their communities through volunteer work and service learning. In this way, students are encouraged to see themselves as having a valuable and necessary role to play in the community at large as well as an active and necessary role to play in their own educational success.

In the context of preparing students for accomplishment in and beyond their current experience, resource specialists, instructors and transition specialists develop a deep understanding of college readiness based on the post-secondary framework. These professionals work in concert with one another and other actors in the social, emotional, and physical health learning community to help students see college attainment as a multi-faceted process, incorporating components that can be explained as the acquisition of attitudes, behaviors, information, and skills of which they can develop to realize post-secondary success.

Century Skills (Social- Emotional Cognitive Competencies)

> **Describe the programs, resources, and services (internal and external) that the proposed school or program will provide in order to help students develop 21 century skills. Describe the instructional strategies that will be used and how all classroom instructors will incorporate teaching these skills into their lesson plans. Describe how you will train teachers to incorporate these skills into their instructional strategies, and lesson plans. Indicate how you will hold teachers accountable for addressing these skills. If implementing a specific curriculum, describe how students will learn new skill concepts and how to apply them across settings.**

A foundational component for engaging students in post-secondary success is the development of a growth mindset. CFA will collaborate with its partners, GtCNN and Lumity, to ensure that faculty are trained on the skills needed to foster a Growth Mindset among all students. The growth mindset helps students and those who support them recognize that skill and ability is acquired through dedication and effort. This perspective creates an understanding that achievement is possible for anyone. A growth mindset is embedded in the meta-cognitive dimension of our framework; it is also an aspect of learning behaviors. Educators can then acknowledge all students as "college material," and students are empowered to recognize the agency they have in their achievement. Teaching students the growth mindset supports the persistence and resilience they will need for academic and life success.

In addition to Lumity's STEM readiness program, Lumity offers Career Readiness Skills, in which students learn concepts and use tools to enhance their interpersonal skills. These concepts are integrated into the overall philosophy of the school and are used to recruit, hire and orient employees to the school. By using the Operating Agreements and the career readiness tools, instructors will be able to prepare students become more conscious and aware of their thoughts and emotions and receive coaching and feedback in the moment to reward responsible choices and to address challenges. Open discussions are held so the entire classroom can learn and grow by others' experiences.

Confidentiality is an Operating Agreement as well as a concept taught. Other agreements include:

- Naming Emotions: the power of being aware of our feelings and interactions with others (Fear, Hurt, Anger, Sad and Joy)
- Growth vs. Fixed Mindset: exercising your free will makes your brain stronger
- CARE Profile: self-survey for better understanding of yourself and how you relate to others
- Teamwork: how CARE profiles impact teamwork
- The People We Meet: importance of first impressions, eye contact, handshakes, introductions and connecting
- The Drama Triangle: how to recognize when you're stuck in one and how to get out
- Self-fulfilling Prophecy: how stinking thinking can ruin your day
- Learning from Mistakes: the path most people take on their way to success
- Social Contagion: how others can rub off on you
- Your Personal Brand: what your words and actions tell others
- Giving and Receiving Feedback: how to give and get the greatest gift
- Stress Management: maintaining your equilibrium

This content is taught in the classroom independently and/or is integrated with a Real-World Project.

f. Behavior Management and Safety

Approach

> **Q. What is the proposed school or program's approach to student discipline and classroom management? If an ALOP program or contract school, how will the school or program integrate and implement the CPS Student Code of Conduct into its behavior and discipline plan, including an emphasis on restorative practices? If a charter school, what behavioral system will the school use? Outline the system of incremental consequences for both positive and negative behavior, as well as the school's plan for supporting positive behavior, and responding to inappropriate behavior when it occurs. Explain how accommodations and modifications to the discipline system will be made to meet the needs of diverse learners.**
>
> ***If proposing a blended learning model:***
>
> **Include the codes of conduct for online courses, and/or the digital components of coursework that take place within and outside the brick-and-mortar building. Explain how these codes of conduct will be enforced.**

Our goal is to operate a school program in which students are intrinsically motivated to behave appropriately and engage in their work. We realize, however, that discipline is sometimes necessary. When and if there is a need for correction, we will administer discipline with dignity and logic.
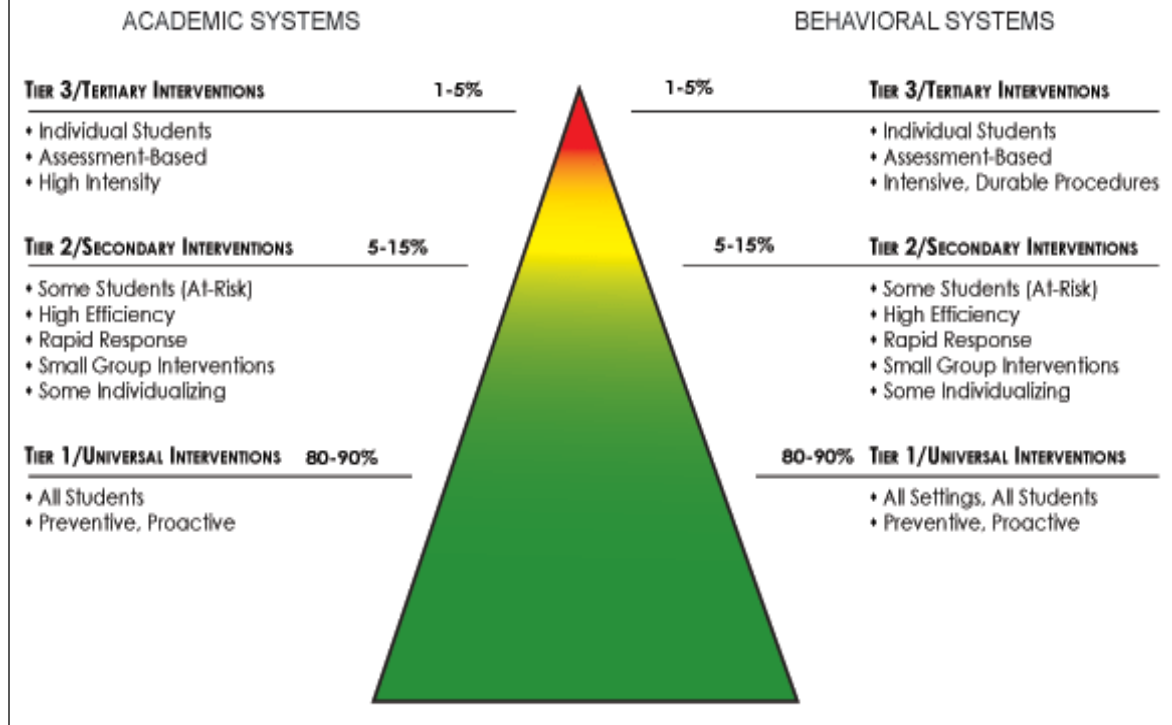
As a starting point to address discipline and other environmental barriers that can negatively influence student success, CFA will institute the principles and practices of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a proactive systems approach that establishes and fosters the behavioral and socio-cultural supports needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success. The PBIS system includes a range of intervention strategies designed to prevent the problem behavior while teaching socially appropriate alternative behaviors. The goal is an enhanced quality of life for individuals involved and their support providers in a variety of settings.

The key features of PBIS, as identified by a pioneer in the field, George Sugai and Robert Horner[21] include a prevention-focused continuum of support.

- Proactive instructional approaches to teaching and improving social behaviors
- Conceptually sound and empirically validated practices
- Systems change to support effective practices
- Data-based decision making.

To prepare our staff to implement positive intervention, CFA will use materials and training available through The Illinois PBIS Network.[22]   The Network provides comprehensive training and technical assistance program that assists schools in meeting Illinois' educational goals and mandates by integrating state school improvement initiatives including Systems of Support, Standards Aligned Curriculum, and Response to Intervention (RTI). It also assist schools in meeting mandates in Section 15(a) of the *Illinois' Children's Mental Health* Act (93-0495) which requires schools to develop and implement strategies to include the *ISBE Social and Emotional Learning Standards* in school curricula. This Act states that social and emotional development is the underpinnings to school readiness and academic success. PBIS focuses on assisting schools in developing structures for teaching expected behaviors and social skills, creating student behavioral and academic support systems, and applying data-based decision-making to discipline, academics, and social/emotional learning at the school, district, regional, and state levels. PBIS promotes the family and community involvement envisioned for CFA. It is also consistent with federal education mandates such as the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004* (IDEA 2004). PBIS integrates state school improvement initiatives including Systems of Support and Standards Aligned Curriculum. A key component of the PBIS System is the Response to Intervention Model (RTI), which will also be used extensively at CFA. The three-tiered system of support in the RTI model will be used to foster a cultural relevant curriculum that is delivered in a real world environment. (See the figure below)   The problem-solving process promoted in the RTI will enhances the capacity of schools to effectively address the social, emotional, academic and other needs of all students. The figure below shows components of each tier in the RTI model.

School-Wide Systems for Student Success: A Response to Intervention (RtI) Model

ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

BEHAVIORAL SYSTEMS

TIER 3/TERTIARY INTERVENTIONS   1-5%

• Individual Students
• Assessment-Based
• High Intensity

TIER 2/SECONDARY INTERVENTIONS   5-15%

• Some Students (At-Risk)
• High Efficiency
• Rapid Response
• Small Group Interventions
• Some Individualizing

TIER 1/UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS   80-90%

• All Students
• Preventive, Proactive

1-5%   **TIER 3/TERTIARY INTERVENTIONS**

• Individual Students
• Assessment-Based
• Intensive, Durable Procedures

5-15%   **TIER 2/SECONDARY INTERVENTIONS**

• Some Students (At-Risk)
• High Efficiency
• Rapid Response
• Small Group Interventions
• Some Individualizing

80-90%   **TIER 1/UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS**

• All Settings, All Students
• Preventive, Proactive

Supports

> **Q. How will the school identify students in need of targeted behavioral supports? Describe the multi-tiered system of prevention and intervention for behavioral supports that the school will implement for all students, including students in need of targeted supports.**

Following the RTI model, we will continuously ask students for feedback on areas of need. Observational data will serve as initial data points for problem behaviors. The multi-tiered system of prevention, described earlier, shows how we will implement a proactive, positive behavioral support system as a preventative measure and to build students' socio-emotional and problem-solving skills. If a student is referred for consistent and frequent behavior problems, a team of individuals including the school leader, social worker, teachers, parents, and the student will meet to:

• Identify the specific nature of the problem behavior
• Determine the underlying factors contributing to the problem behavior
• Plan for tiered interventions for the problem behavior
• Determine benchmarks and/or progress monitoring in improving the problem behavior.

> **Q. How will the school or program monitor the progress of behavioral interventions and determine whether they are succeeding in promoting positive student behavior? Who will be responsible for overseeing student discipline and behavioral interventions? Any responsibilities assigned to staff members with regard to overseeing student discipline and behavioral interventions should be cited in the attached comprehensive organizational chart and job descriptions.**

We will continuously ask students for feedback on areas of need. Observational data will serve as initial data points for problem behaviors. While instructors and other staff will identify discipline problems, the school social worker, community relations specialist oversee student discipline and behavioral interventions under the watchful eye of the site director and education director. With support from community social services agencies and the faith based community partners, these barriers will be addressed and impacted through partnerships with social service / mental health agencies.

Communication

> **Q. How will the school or program communicate behavior expectations to students and families? How will you communicate the corresponding consequences and rewards that accompany the behavior expectations?**

We will follow the Student Code of Conduct (SCC) set forth by Chicago Public Schools.23 We will distribute and explain the SCC's content to students and parents upon enrollment. The SCC includes consequences and rewards that accompany behavior expectations as well as safeguards to protect the rights of students with disabilities. We will also use CPS promotion and graduation policies. Please note, as we are using CPS policies; we have not included them in the attachments.

Using Lumity's Operating Agreements as career readiness tools (See Section 2.1.e), we will help students set expectations and simultaneously prepare then to become conscious and aware of their thoughts and emotions. Students receive two copies of the Operating Agreement and they are verbally reviewed as a class. Students are asked to think about why these rules are applicable in school and in the workplace. Students are asked to sign the Operating Agreement to demonstrate their willingness to live by them. The students turn in the signed agreement and keeps one for their records. When a student does not behave in accordance to an Operating Agreement, the student is reminded about the agreement. If the student continually breaks the agreement, the student is engaged in a one-on-one conversation and asked to determine the consequence. The instructor must agree that the consequence is appropriate to the infraction based upon CPS' SCC.

Exclusionary Discipline

> **Q. Please provide a preliminary list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school may be suspended or expelled. If an ALOP program or contract school, this must comply with CPS policies. What corrective, instructive, and/or restorative responses to misbehavior will the school implement prior to the use of exclusionary discipline?**

CFA will follow provisions set forth in CPS Student Code of Conduct at
http://policy.cps.edu/download.aspx?ID=263 and implement the corrective actions set forth therein.
See Attachment 2.1.f.

> **Q. Explain how the school will protect the rights of diverse learners in disciplinary actions and proceedings and afford due process for all students. Describe the appeals process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion. If an ALOP program or contract school, this must comply with CPS policies.**

In its School Public Policy Manual CPS' policies set forth provisions for administering discipline in a consistent and equitable manner, including due process for all students.   CFA will adhere to the provisions set forth on Pages 30-31 of the manual . See Attacment 2.1.f.

g. Family Involvement

Communication and Engagement

> **Q. Discuss strategies to provide clear and consistent communication to families about their students' progress, including families who do not speak English. How will the school engage families and caretakers in their child(ren)s' education? Describe the steps the school will take to promote family involvement in the event family engagement is difficult to acquire. Outline any requirements for families' involvement in their students' education.**

Transparency: Students, parents and teachers need to have a clear and shared understanding of how the school works and why; to respond to this need, we will prove an extensive and detailed web site that; (1) informs the school community of all school practices and protocols; (2) maintains a current calendar of events and activities; (3) provides direct access to teachers, course syllabi, student standing (password confidential), CFA resources and activities; (4) highlights student achievements and initiatives within the CFA community; (5) links to PowerSchool, a portal that provides parents/guardians access to real time data on their students' academic and behavioral performance.

Culturally Relevant/Real World Curricular Emphases: CFA will foster family involvement through instructional activities that place heavy emphases on using the community as an integrating context for learning. The culturally relevant, real world emphasis or our curriculum intricately ties our school to students' environment—their home and community. Activities in and out of the classroom will be driven by parental involvement that supports cultural relevancy and real-world foci. The following are additional ways in which we will engage parents in their child's education:

Parents fill out information cards at the start of each school year. Among the things listed on those cards are parents' special interest and talents as well as information about ancestors and relatives. As teachers plan units, they can call on those parents who specialize in fields related to the unit. Parents participate on school committees and as elected members of the school's site-based decision-making council. Because the curriculum is intricately intertwined with the student's cultural identity, parents can be involved in the lesson planning and curriculum development.

Parents, grandparents and other relatives participate in "Ancestor Day" activities.

- Operate a Parent's Resource Center where they have access to resources, materials to help teachers with special projects, one or two computers, and access to Powerschool and the Internet.
- Have parents identify community experts to serve as guest speakers for classes.
- Organize CFA Day to build ongoing relationships among community leaders, PTAs, businesses, churches, and government and to promote parental involvement in education.
- Hold a Technology Showcase night for parents. Have students demonstrate the projects they have developed for real-world classes.

Family Resources

> **Q. Describe any programs or resources that the school will provide specifically for families and caretakers. Will school staff or external organizations provide these services? How will the school or program cover the costs of services?**
>
> *If proposing a blended learning model:*
>
> *Specify any requirements or expectations for family involvement or support associated with the blended learning components of the educational program. In addition, specify any equipment that families will be responsible for obtaining and any technological support that families will be responsible for providing. Outline any unique requirements for family involvement, as well as any responsibilities for supplying technological equipment or support.*

While many of our students may be parents themselves and some may be somewhat estranged from their parents, we will provide activities and resources for families, including

- **Parent/Teacher Conferences** – These conferences will take place two times per year and be primarily, if not entirely, student-led. Students will present their goals and get valuable practice evaluating and articulating their own progress. This will give students a heightened sense of ownership over their academic lives and ideally create a student-led conversation with parents that can continue at home throughout the year.
- **Access to Technology** - In line with our focus on technology as a core part of our model, we will provide parents access to an online Parent Portal that tracks student progress/information and communicates with teachers and staff. We will also distribute any information from Internet Service Providers about discounted Internet access for low-income families.

CFA staff along with our partners, Lumity and Gateway to College Network will. provide these services.

2.2 Design Team Experience and Demonstrated Track Record in Driving Academic Success

The Design Team Experience and Demonstrated Track Record in Driving Academic Success section asks applicants to demonstrate that their design team, and/or existing school(s) or campus(es) have a history of sustained student academic success.

a Roles and Demonstrated Experience

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Qualifications

Q. Briefly describe the qualifications and experience of members of the design team in all areas that are key to successfully opening, managing, and sustaining a new school. This includes education, school leadership/administration, operations, finance, development, law, and ties to the proposed community.

If proposing a blended learning model:

Specify the experience that members of the design team have with blended and/or online learning.

If proposing a blended learning model:

At least one member of the design team has a proven track record implementing blended, and/or online learning in a school setting. If not direct experience with a similar program, identify academic experience, and/or experience with similar populations. Identify the training and support the team will receive to implement and evaluate the model with fidelity.

Role in Proposal Development

Q. Describe how the design team was formed, how frequently the design team meets, and how members collaborate with one another. Detail each design team member's contributions to the proposal and each member's proposed role in the school. Cite any advisors or consultants external to the founding group, and define their contributions to the development of the proposal, including their relevant experience and qualifications.

</div>

INTENTIONALLY DELETED PERSONAL INFORMATION

Gateway to College National Network

Gateway to College is a successful education program that helps out-of-school high school students as well as those on the verge of dropping out earn a high school diploma while also earning college credits. Gateway to College National Network (GtCNN) is a nonprofit organization that helps colleges and school districts work together to implement the model in their own communities. Its mission is to empower youth who have dropped out of high school or are not on track to graduate to earn a diploma and dual credit in a supportive college environment. GtCNN has started programs in and currently serves 42 communities in 22 states, partnering with more than 200 school districts.

GtCNN will provide training, technical assistance, instructional coaching, professional development, and program evaluation to CFA, including a 12-month planning phase, intensive support during the first two years of operation and continued TA and evaluation for as long as the CFA remains part of the network.

With a growing network of colleges and school district partners, GtCNN has attained experience that not only generates strong interest in the model across the country, but also provides a mechanism to disseminate new knowledge and best practices in the youth reengagement nationwide. Because the National Network has focused on data collection from the beginning, it is able to study results across a diverse network of programs to associate practice with student outcomes. GtCNN is closely connected to national efforts that address the needs facing opportunity youth and those connections provide

avenues for each of its network members to benefit via access to emerging program strategies and access to discussions of public policy.

Through its representative, Nick Mathern, GtCNN contributed directly to the development of the CFA program model, with particular attention to the focus on developing sections pertaining to the following:

- Social/emotional support staff
- College readiness framework
- Early college elements of the CFA model

Lumity

Lumity is the combination of two nonprofits: IT Resource Center and the Nonprofit Financial Center (NFC). Established by the Chicago Community Trust in 1984, IT Resource Center (ITRC) was created to expedite access to technologies available in corporations to nonprofits, and provide computer consulting and training to nonprofits. Also in 1984, the Donors Forum created NFC to provide bookkeeping, accounting, and finance services for nonprofits. In 2007, ITRC acquired NFC and changed its name to Lumity (illuminate + community).

Lumity has a long history of working with nonprofit partners and community organizations to eliminate the digital divide. Since 2002 Lumity has provided digital literacy programs to community technology centers (CTCs) in underserved communities. In 2010 Lumity became a certified Microsoft IT Academy Program provider and began training CTCs and schools on how to use the Microsoft IT Academy self-paced, self-learned online curriculum in an instructor-led, blended learning environment.

In 2013, Lumity completed CTC Connect, a two-year project to increase the capacity and sustainability of Community Technology Centers in partnership with the Smart Chicago Collaborative and the City of Chicago. As a result of the success of these CTC programs:

- 323 individuals gained employment during the two-year CTC Connect program.
- In year one, 143 individuals obtained jobs making an average of $15/hour; a year later, 135 were still employed.

An outcome of CTC Connect is the STEM Career Readiness Program, a program that exposes students to STEM-related careers, problem solving methods, workplace settings, and varied industries in order to inspire and prepare students for college and careers. Partnering with non-select public and charter schools, Community Technology Centers (CTCs) and area corporations to expose, inspire and prepare students to pursue a STEM-related career. Exposing Chicago's youth to STEM professionals is Lumity's strategy to inspire students to stay in school, find a meaningful career path, and ultimately, a satisfying job.

Through its representatives, Kara Kennedy and others, Lumity worked closely with CFA to design the overall philosophy and approach with a special focus on the career readiness, social and emotional

health and century skills for the students. Lumity will continue to partner with CFA through the planning phase to orient and prepare CFA employees and partners to implement, monitor and evaluate the Career Readiness, STEM Talks, Career Site Visits and Real World Projects.

b. Academic Track Record Serving Similar Student Populations

Q. Provide evidence demonstrating that the design team – whether an existing Chicago operator, existing national operator, or a new operator – has a proven track record of success driving academic achievement and growth for students similar to those the school expects to serve. Provide evidence demonstrating that the design team has successful experience meeting the social-emotional needs of a similar student population. For applicants that have no experience with a similar student population, provide evidence demonstrating success, and academic performance for the student population they currently serve (e.g. student growth on any national normed assessment product, attendance rate, dropout rate, graduation rate).

New operators

Identify members of the design team, and/or Founding Board who have provided academic expertise, or who will provide instructional leadership or support at the proposed school. Describe these individuals' experience and qualifications to implement the proposed educational plan. Provide quantitative evidence of their individual and/or collective track record (if applicable) driving student achievement with similar student populations.

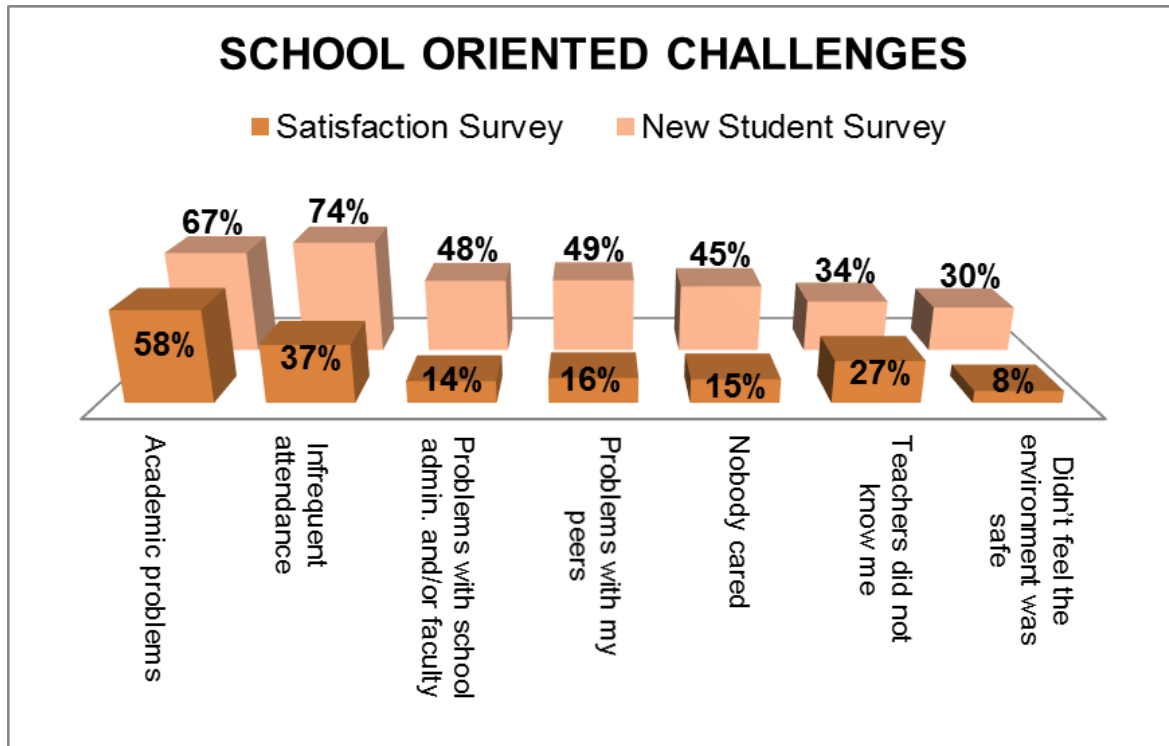**Provide demographic data on student populations served at previous schools, including the following (%):**
--Free- and reduced-price lunch (FRL)
--African American, Hispanic, Caucasian, Asian American, and other English Learners
--Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
--Students in Temporary Living Situations
--Members of the instructional leadership team who individually demonstrate strong track records of driving significant academic gains with similar student populations in a school setting.

New operators **have founding Board members with academic expertise and proposed**

Over the past decade, GtCNN has developed effective training and technical assistance strategies which facilitate programs that are effective for many kinds of students. Gateway students, despite enrolling at age 17, with an average high school GPA of 1.56 and fewer than half of the credits they need for a diploma, are making it through college courses with higher rates of success than many students entering with diplomas. Gateway's student population is predominantly low-income students and students of color, and young people who have faced many challenges including single parenting, homelessness, foster status, involvement in juvenile justice, and many other barriers to educational success. During the 2012-13 academic year, Gateway students enrolled in in more than 47,000 college credits. With an average cost of $118 per credit, this translates to over $5.5 million in scholarships to vulnerable students across the US. On average, graduates have earned 35 college credits and a third party study indicated that 73% of Gateway graduates continue with post-secondary education after completing the program.

Despite entering Gateway to College with an average GPA of 1.56, In AY 2013-2014, 39% of students earned a GPA above 3.0 in their high school courses during their first term. The average high school GPA for first term students was 2.45 during AY 2013-2014.

Gateway to College's participants complete a survey at the point of initial enrollment, which assesses their needs and expectations. Students are surveyed again after two semesters in the program. The following chart illustrates the students' perceived changes in a several school-relate challenges.

SCHOOL ORIENTED CHALLENGES

■ Satisfaction Survey   ■ New Student Survey

Challenge	New Student Survey	Satisfaction Survey
Academic problems	67%	58%
Infrequent attendance	74%	37%
Problems with school admin. and/or faculty	48%	14%
Problems with my peers	49%	16%
Nobody cared	45%	15%
Teachers did not know me	34%	27%
Didn't feel the environment was safe	30%	8%

Gateway to College programs serve a student population that is very similar to CFA. In 2013-14, Gateway to College National Network's programs served a student population that was a majority low-incomes students (because of the varied program structures and governance models, GtCNN does not college FRPL statistics). The 4,550 students enrolled in Gateway programs last years identified as 4.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 25% Black/African American, 28.6% Hispanic/Latino, 1.1% Native American, 36.2% Caucasian, 2.6% Multi-racial, and 2.3% identified with an ethnicity not listed here. Eight percent of students cited homelessness as one of the factors contributing to their challenges completing high school.

c. School Leadership

Q. Briefly describe the proposed instructional leadership structure.

Selecting Instructional Leaders

Q. If school leader(s) have been identified, provide the criteria used to select the proposed leader(s), including skills, qualifications, and characteristics. If school leadership has not been identified, describe the criteria that will be used to select the proposed leader(s), provide a timeline for identifying school leader(s), and specify whether past leadership experience is a requirement. For ALOP programs and contract schools, the school leader(s) must have a Type 75. In addition to holding a Type 75, ALOP and contract school leaders must be certified by ISBE as teacher evaluators in order to comply with PERA.

Experience

Q. If school leadership has been identified, provide evidence of each proposed leader's success in driving achievement with a similar student population. If any of the proposed school leader(s) do not have leadership experience in a school, cite any school leadership programs or fellowships that they have completed or will complete prior to school opening.
*If proposing a **blended learning** model:*
Specify the experience and successful student outcomes that instructional leader(s) have had with blended and/or online learning.
*If proposing a **blended learning** model:*
At least one of the instructional leader(s) has experience implementing with high levels of success blended and/or online learning in a school setting.

CFA intends to create a fairly flat leadership structure to ensure that each staff member has a voice in its decisions and growth. At the school level, the leadership team will be comprised of the principal and teachers. Experience of the school leadership team as well as well as the expected technological competencies of faculty and staff are provide in Attachment 2.1.c (Organizational Chart and Job Descriptions). The Blended Learning Coordinator who will report directly to the school leader will have experience implementing online learning in a school setting.

2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan

a. Educational Goals and Metrics

Q. Identify academic, non-academic, and mission-specific goals and metrics for the proposed school or program. Include a table that details the school's *quantifiable* goals, including targeted assessment scores, attendance levels, and additional metrics for each of its first five years of operation. Include goals for graduation rates, leading indicators (e.g., freshman on track), college acceptance and persistence rate, as well as goals related to post-secondary opportunity readiness. Sample goals and metrics tables are provided in Appendix 2. Describe how your design team determined these goals and why these goals are appropriate for the school's intended population.

*If proposing a **blended learning** model:*
What are the metrics of success for the blended learning components of the educational model?
*If proposing a **blended learning** model:*
The proposal specifies metrics of success for the blended learning components of the educational model.

a. Educational Goals and Metrics

All CFA students will undergo a series of assessments which include transcript analysis, STAR, COMPASS and ACT Tests. The data gathered from these assessments will be used to determine level placement and to drive instruction. For example, CFA will use the STAR to measures academic progress in English language arts, mathematics. It will also help us determine the skill level of the entering student and measure student growth. Instructors and counselors will also use STAR results to help students explore a range of career options and assist them in developing their coursework plan. Students who need additional assistance, as identified by the STAR and other assessments, will receive mentoring, tutoring and enrollment in Credit Recovery classes.

Our ultimate goal is to prepare students for college and careers. The comprehensive educational goals for CFA schools are:

- 75% of CFA Graduates will be prepared to enter City Colleges without need of remediation
- 80% of CFA Graduates will have earned 15 or more college credits by completion of their high school diploma
- 65% of CFA Graduates will have earned an industry recognized training certificate by completion of their high school diploma

CFA's assessment plan will comprehensively measure overall school growth and individual student growth. For school growth, we took into consideration state and local requirements and used these to identify benchmarks for a balanced plan that includes student academic growth, student participation and student attainment. To develop our educational goals and metrics for student growth, we reviewed results of similar local schools as well as schools throughout the country that served disconnected students and concluded that the performance indicators on CPS' School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) for Options Schools served our purpose. Table 2.3.a1 lists CPS' SQRP indicators, gives an approximation for CFA student growth, and projects attainment over a five-year period.

Table 2.3.a1. CFA School Measures (Options School) Quality Rating					
Performance Indicator	**Indicator Score & School Quality Rating Points (of 5 possible; 4.0+ is Good Standing)**				
	2015-16 Planning Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
STAR Indicator					
Average Growth Percentile on STAR - Reading	--	4	4.5	4.75	5
Average Growth Percentile on STAR - Math	--	5	5	5	5
Percent Making Growth Targets on STAR - Reading	--	5	5	5	5
Percent of Growth on STAR Math	--	5	5	5	5
Progress Towards High School Graduation Indicators					
1-Year Graduation Rate	--	5	5	5	5
Credit Attainment Rate	--	4	4.5	4.75	5
Stabilization Rate	--	4	4.5	4.75	5
Attendance Indicators					
Average Daily Attendance	--	4	4.5	4.75	5
Growth in Attendance Rate	--	4	4.5	4.75	5
School Quality Rating Total Points	--	4.4	4.7	4.9	5

Academic Growth Measures

We will measure individual student growth using the the COMPASS®, and ACT® testing systems. While our students will not be required to take the ACT® in to be admitted to a CCC institution, we will prepare them for and encourage them to take the test in case they wish to continue to a four-year college or university. We will also measure the percent of students who achieve a 21 or higher. This target was set based on the2013 average ACT® score of 20.7, which correlates with the average ACT score required for admission to colleges throughout the nation.24 We realize that achieving the average score and growth rate of peers does not ensure preparedness for post-secondary success if a student comes to us below grade level. Through Edgenuity®, we will offer COMPASS® and ACT® test preparation courses to help students prepare for college entry. Year 2 and Year 3 students will take both tests. The rationale is that if they do not perform successfully during Year 2, they will have a second chance during Year 3. Due to our personalized approach to instruction, we estimate increases in the percent of students making growth necessary to reach the 50th percentile by the end of a period of time (1 year) at CFA. Therefore, we will measure ourselves based on the percent of students making typical growth. To do this we will use a value added analysis based on the Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) model. The SGP model uses the mean (or median) score as a normative measure of aggregate growth. If the mean SGP after a second administration and time lapse is significantly greater than 50, then the group of students performed better than expected, on average. If the mean SGP is significantly less than 50, then

the group of students performed worse than expected, on average. Simple statistical tests will be used to determine if the mean SGPs for the two test are greater or less than 50. For the COMPASS®, we call this "catch up growth" for college readiness. Similarly, for the ACT®, we will offer courses to prepare students for the ACT Plan, which Year 2 students will take. One year later, these students will take the ACT test during their Year 3 at CFA. Using this data, we will determine if the mean SGP is significantly different for 50 in any subject area. If it is above 50, we call this "expected gain."

By incorporating a value added model component to the ACT® and COMPASS® tests, CFA is able to measure each student against his or her starting level in addition to his or her performance in relation to a fixed standard proficiency. This allows educators to view and reflect on student growth based on multiple indicators of progress reflecting academic performance, changes in learning readiness, engagement, educational and social goal attainment, cognitive growth as well as other aspects of achievement over time.

Students enrolled in Algebra II and or English III will be required to take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the computer-based K–12 assessment that measures competencies in Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy. The PARCC determines whether students are on track in their learning for success after high school.

We plan to offer dual enrollment primarily to Year 2 and Year 3 students who qualify for enrollment, based on successful completion of pre-requisite courses. Like CPS, we will measure ourselves both on student enrollment in such courses and their performance in the courses. Because we believe that communication and demonstrations are critical for post-secondary success, we will engage student writing projects and portfolio preparations. To ensure inter-rater reliability, we will develop school-wide writing rubrics for teachers to use to grade one another's student writing projects.

We will monitor 2-year college acceptance rates, Associate degree attainment and job placement. Through systems designed by Gateway to College, we will collectdata that allows us to follow our students during their college experience, as opposed to waiting for graduation. For example, GTC will administer a New Student Pre-Survey to all new students within their first month in the program and a Post-Student Satisfaction Survey annually to every student who has been enrolled in GtC at least two semesters. We realize that our metrics might need adjustments, and we are positioned to do so. We would expect our students to do well on any new measures reflecting such changes based on their experience at CFA.

Finally, with assistance from our partners (Gateway to College and Lumity) we will also administer a range of additional assessments including social/emotional surveys, career interest inventory, and learning styles inventory. We will use results of these assessments to construct interventions for under-performing students and address their need with tutoring, computer assisted skill building, and guided practice. Each CFA campus will monitor and review mid-quarter failure notices, grades on progress reports, and attendance reports to modify the instructional program of individual students. CFA will develop a reporting tool to track progress of skill acquisition. In accordance with the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), all CFA students will demonstrate "academic mastery" or accrue credit in all of the

core academic areas by the time of graduation. As determined by the student's ILP, in general, for non-special needs and non-limited English proficient (LEP) students, mastery" is defined as:

- Proficiency on all exit level progress reports or exhibitions,
- Passing all end of year assessments, portfolios and/or exhibits, or
- Passing using mastery-based grading. CFA students will be graded based on whether or not they can demonstrate mastery of common core state standards. Students will be allowed to resubmit assignments and tests as needed to reach mastery. This is intended to reinforce the growth mindset and have student persevere through challenging work.

Portfolios and exhibitions will be assessed using district-wide rubrics, with input from teachers across all content areas and outside community members. "Mastery" for special needs and LEP students will be defined appropriately according to their Individualized Education Plans and English proficiency levels.

Table 2.3.a2 summarizes CFA's measures and projected student performances.

Table 2.3.a2. CFA Academic Growth Measures									
Measure	**Benchmark**	**Grade Level**	**Frequency Reviewed**	**Goal/Target (% Pass Rate or Score)**					
				Plan-ning Year	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**Steady State**
COMPASS®	On-track" for college readiness	9-12	Annually	--	60%	65%	70%	75%	75%
COMPASS® Test	Catch Up Growth for College Readiness after one year	9-12	Annually	--	60%	65%	70%	75%	75%
ACT® PLAN	College ready	10-11	Annually	--	TBD	18*	21*	22*	23*
ACT® Test	Expected Gain after one year	11 & 12	Annually	--	55%	60%	65%	70%	70%
PARCC For Students Enrolled in Algebra II and or English III	Students Receiving Passing Score	11 & 12	Annually	--	65%	70%	75%	75%	75%
GtC New Student/Student Satisfaction Pre- and Post-Surveys	Highly Satisfied	All	Annually to students enrolled for at least two terms.	--	Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
College (2-Year and 4 Year) Acceptance Rate	75% of Completers by Year 5	12	Annually	--	NA	60%	70%	75%	75%
Completers Earning Industry Recognized Certificates	75% of Completers	12	Annually	--	NA	50%	55%	60%	65%

b. Student Assessment Plan

Assessment Plan

Q. Explain how the school will assess the progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole on the metrics identified in *Section 2.3.a. Educational Goals and Metrics,* over the course of the five-year contract. Create a table that details specific diagnostic, benchmark/interim, and summative assessments that will be used for each grade level – including the local and state required assessments – and specify the timing of their administration (*See Appendix 3 for sample Assessment Tables*).

Rationale

Q. Explain the rationale for selecting or developing the identified assessments, demonstrate the validity and reliability of any non-standardized assessments, and note alignment of assessments with state standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and/or Common Core State Standards.
*If proposing a **blended learning** model with non-automated online courses:*
–Explain how access to answers, explanations, and/or rubrics are made accessible to students.
*–If proposing a **blended learning** model with non-automated online courses:*
–Built-in course assessments are provided and access to answers, explanations, and/or rubrics are included in course materials and are easy for students to find.

CFA will personalize our curriculum by allowing students to work at their own pace using a combination of computer-based and direct instruction. Our personalized arrangement requires a shift in assessments, from teachers measuring learning to students evaluating and regulating their own learning. Research shows that assessment in a personalized learning environment should follow a four-step process. [25]

- The key to initializing student assessment within in a personalized learning environment is determining what a student knows. The assessment process begins with measuring prior knowledge, or determining what the student "brings to the table."
- The process continues with a determination of the students' goals and skills to be mastered. This phase of the assessment addresses inquires such as: What are the goals the goals of each student? Where does studying lead? How does the student want to use his learning? What does the student want to improve? Can the student communicate well in a group setting? Should the student add something to the study plan? Is the material or activity effective in learning? Etc.
- The third phase of assessment occurs during the learning process, commonly referred to as formative assessment. The student conducts this most influential assessments while he/she is learning. In other words, as a student learns, he or she is often inspired or find new ways of discovery. The idea is that doing personal assessments during the course of instruction is more effective than finding out how much the student has learned at the end.

- The final phase is summative assessment, or an end of period review. During this phase, students—sometimes with the assistance of teachers--determine if they mastered the necessary competencies during the instructional process. If students have not mastered the necessary skills, instruction is redesigned and repeated through individualized enrollments in Credit Recovery courses or otherwise.

Personalizing learning, in some respects, is an age-old concept. For generations, teachers have sought to design instruction to meet individual student needs—a manageable challenge when working with a relatively small group, but much more difficult for a class of 20 to 30 students. Our personalized learning environment will promote "student agency"— giving students more power through either digital tools or other means, accounting for how they learn best, what motivates them, and their academic goals.

Each student at CFA will have a personalized learning plan based on his or her academic, socio-emotional, and personal interest data. Students and their teachers will co-design the pathways to reach these goals, with measurable benchmarks to track progress. As students demonstrate mastery, they will have increased choice over what they learn and explore additional learning opportunities.

Technology offers effective digital tools that provide students with more choices on how to learn a lesson, thus empowering them through their own exercise of choice. The use of technology allows CFA to provide continuous personalized assessment in Edgenuity's® coursed included in our curriculum. Student needs trigger the following built-in student assessment for each Edgenuity® course:

- **Personal Learning Paths** tailored to each student's individual needs. Students follow a customized path that responds and adapts based on individual learning progress, motivation and goals. The information gathering process during this phase occurs in several ways. On screen and direct instructors will present background and content information and initiate activities and assignments that collect and compile background information. For example, our partners (Lumity and Gateway) will help develop and tailor personalized learning path for CFA students. Lumity's MyColLife program will help students investigate and select career paths— also, as soon as they enter CFA. Gateway to College National Network Post-Secondary Readiness Framework will prepare students for postsecondary experiences
- **Competency-based Progression** that allows each student to progress toward clearly defined goals and continually assesses the progression. Expert on-screen Edgenuity® teachers will deliver computer-based instruction that initiate and guide learning activities. These computer-based teachers will present learning objectives, explain concepts, model strategies, and provide relevant examples that help students transfer knowledge and make real-world connections. Each course includes access to answers, explanations and other course material to help students gage their individual progression. A student advances and earns credit as soon as he/she demonstrates mastery. Edgenuity® computer-based technology eliminates the need for textbooks thus allowing for economy; students will use tablets instead of textbooks. Edgeunity's® platform continuously engages students instead of requiring them to power down, thereby keeping them focused. If a student has mastered some of the content, he or she can

pretest unit-by-unit to determine what content he or she needs to learn. Many students lack self-direction skills when they graduate. Edgenuity® technology helps solve this problem by providing tools for translation, glossary, etc. as well as E-notes for note taking and study skills that help students become self-directed learners.

- **Learner Profiles** are available at all times for each student. Students always know where they stand and teacher has a dashboard at fingertip with real-time data. These up-to-date records keep students abreast of their strengths, needs, motivations and mastery goals. Adjustments to student instruction based on assessment data help to ensure an appropriate degree of challenge, with scaffolding support to help students persist in their efforts. Tools and activities for strengthening students' metacognitive skills in areas such as goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation help students learn to self-regulate. Students simultaneously have access during this phase on an as-needed basis to direct instruction in 1:1 or collaborative group arrangements. Face-to-face teachers will ensure that students understand the need to constantly gage the extent to which learning is occurring, and how to actually and constantly tweak goals, add activities, or improve standards based on what he or she is presently doing.

Table 2.3.b on the following page provides an overview of the assessment tools available to CFA students.

Table 2.3.b. Overview of Student Assessment at CFA				
Assessment Purpose	Tool	Grade	Source	Frequency
Diagnostic—Investigate College & Career Paths	MyColLife	Year 1	Lumity Partner Services	Varies
	National Network Post-Secondary Readiness Framework	Years 2 and 3	Gateway to College Partner Services	Varies
Formative--Check for Mastery of Grade Level Skills and Content	Online Exit Passes	All	Purchased—Embedded in Edgenuity® Online Content	Daily
	Performance Tasks	All	Teacher Created	2X week
Formative--Check for mastery of skills and content toward personalized learning plan	End of Lesson Assessment	All	Purchased—Embedded in Edgenuity® Online Content	2X Week
	Online Exit Passes	All	Teacher Created	Varies
	COMPASS Test Preparation	Years 2 & 3	Purchased—Embedded in Edgenuity® Online Content	Varies
	ACT Test Preparation	Years 2 & 3	Purchased—Embedded in Edgenuity® Online Content	Varies
Summative	PARCC Test	Year 2	State	Annually
	ACT Test	Year 3	ACT	Annually
	Course Final Exam/Capstone Projects	All	Teacher Created across CFA Schools	2 per year Per course
	COMPASS Test	Year 3	COMPASS	Annually

We will establish a school-wide standards-based grading structure and ensure that our students have a clear understanding of constitutes mastery across content areas. Our teacher teams will meet regularly. CFA teams organized into tthree broad categories – Core Subjects, STEM Job Preparation and Culturally-Relevant Humanities. The special education and intervention staff will work with the content teams to discuss how to best support students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. This collective responsibility will our capacity to meet the individual learning needs of all students while maintaining high expectations and rich learning experiences.

c. Data-Driven Programs and Instruction

> **Q. Describe how instructional leaders and teachers will collect and analyze the results of diagnostic, formative, benchmark/interim, and summative assessments to inform instruction, curricula, professional development, and other school supports. Explain the roles and responsibilities of the instructional leadership team in overseeing teachers' analysis of student data. Describe the formalized supports that will enable teachers to reflect on student progress and adjust their instruction accordingly.**
>
> *If proposing a* **blended learning** *model, specify within the response how:*
> *--Student information and assessment results will be shared and compared across different digital learning programs, and learning management systems*
> *--Teachers will examine assessment results and data from automated and teacher-led online learning to inform their instructional practices*
> *--The school will monitor the school's fidelity in implementing automated digital learning products according to the benchmarks and specifications set by the vendors*

CFA's data driven instruction model centers on the frequent and effective use of data to personalize instruction for students. We will use student mastery of standards, competencies and benchmarks identified in our curriculum to monitor student progress, guage the effectivenes of teachers as well as the effectiveness of the digital learning products used at CFA. We will rely heavily on Edgenuity's® online learning platform to collect real time data that teachers will use and analyze daily. The Edgenuity's ®system collects data on how each student is progressing and makes modifications in real time accordingly. Teachers can immediately see what every student in the class is doing. If three students are having problem with the same concept, the teacher can form a small group of the 3 learners, and work with them individually. For those who are mastering the content quickly, the instructor can assign these students special projects.

Our blended learning arrangement is flexible enough to allow students to work part of the day at the classroom and part of the day away from the classroom. Students always know where they stand and teacher has a dashboard at fingertip with real-time data. In Edgenuity courses, teachers do not have to grade papers and test any more. This frees up time for remedial and other needs of students.

Our model includes recurring "Data Days" during which teachers engage in professional development. These sessions will allow teachers to dive deeply into student performance data to analyze key trends,

identify targeted interventions, and share formative feedback on student performance. We will use the structures provided in Table 2.3.c. to review data results and make adjustments to our programs.

Table 2.3.c. CFA Data Driven Instruction Model		
Structure	**Frequency**	**Purpose**
Student goal setting	Weekly	• Create student ownership over learning • Monitor progress
Teacher End of Lesson Reviews for Each Student	Daily	• Collaborate on student performance data • Share formative feedback • Identify key trends • Identify target interventions
Collaborative planning meetings among teachers, special education staff, and assistant teachers	Weekly	• Review students' weekly goal-setting sheets and discuss any changes or adjustments that may be needed to meet student needs • Ongoing review of technology resources and analysis of student perseverance and independence • Ongoing support for horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum • Review progress monitoring data and review/plan for co-teaching to intensify intervention for struggling student • Prepare and discuss how to structure student-led conferences with specific guidelines for student portfolio reflection and demonstration of mastery

Education director check-in with each content area representative (instructor)	Weekly	• Review student data
		   • Discuss any additional support needed from outside the content area for specific students that came out of the teacher collaboration meeting
		   • Determine need for any additional instructional resources

Teacher Data Days led by education director	Monthly	• Conduct sessions that allow teachers to dive deeply into student performance data to analyze key trends
End of course review	2 per year	• Record course reflections based on final student achievement in the course

		• Record any suggested changes to the course for future years based on what worked/didn't work
Student-led Conferences	2 per year	• Create student ownership over learning • Engage family in student goals and progress
Portfolio Reflection	2 per year	• Student reflect on his/her progress as a learner • Create a real-time snapshot of student mastery
Board Review of Data	Each board meeting	• Monitor school progress • Identify any need for reallocation of resources to better serve students

2.4 Curriculum and Instruction

Curricula Selection and Supports

Q. Provide a brief description of the proposed curricula and supporting materials for each subject, and outline the rationale for curriculum development or selection decisions. How will the proposed curricula further the mission of the school? Explain how teachers will know what to teach, and when to teach it. Explain what curricular resources (e.g., curriculum maps, scope and sequences, pacing guides), and dedicated professional development will be provided to help teachers implement the curriculum. If an ALOP program, provide a sample curriculum map that specifically demonstrates how student learning will be accelerated while still filling learning gaps. Include a description of how your curriculum will accommodate students entering outside of traditional enrollment periods.

If proposing a blended learning model, include the following information as part of the response:
–Discuss whether content for the school's blended learning program will come from commercial vendors, open sources, and/or developed in-house. If a particular content provider has been selected, explain the rationale for why that provider was selected, compared to other vendors. Address any due diligence conducted in the selection process.
–Describe all technological equipment and services that will be required to implement the curricula, including hardware, software, connectivity, devices, and digital storage.
–Outline the methods and process that will be employed to ensure that the school selects the appropriate automated digital learning resources.

As previously stated, our philosophy advances the core belief that *a rigorous, career-oriented, blended curriculum (what) that simultaneously prepares learners for college and a career (why) and is flexible enough for delivery in multiple receptive and safe settings (how/where) by competent faculty that seamlessly integrates cultural relevancy in learning activities will motivate disconnected youth (who) to persist to graduation.* CFA will support this core belief with an integrated, culturally-relevant curriculum and instructional activities that drives achievement for all students. We believe that an effective curriculum teaches learners to solve comprehensive life problems that are relevant to their culture and prepares them for life experiences. Our CFA Teaching team will design and foster rich learning environment that develops the Knowledge, Skills and Aptitudes (KSA) needed for the high school

diploma, admission to college and secure productive employment.

a. Curriculum

Within our flexible blended learning environment, the CFA teaching team will leverage technology in ways that gain and maintain rigor, tailor instruction, and engage students in culturally relevant learning experiences in both core and elective ⬚ubjects.⬚Identified Carnegie Units that Illinois require for graduation according to subject area. We adhered to the following curriculum design steps:

1. Identified core and career preparatory elective courses that best suited our population and mission
2. Correlated core and elective courses with required Carnegie Units to arrive at CFA's curriculum
3. Correlated CFA's curriculum with CCSS, NGSS and College Readiness Standards
4. Researched blended learning platforms that suited our needs and ultimately selected Edgenuity® because of this commercial company's track record administering courses designed around CCSS, NGSS and College Readiness standards and experience with disconnected populations.
5. Identify existing curricula (Integrated Humanities Curriculum®) with courses deliverable via direct instruction from a culturally relevant stance.
6. Correlated Edgenuity® and Integrated Humanities Curriculum® courses with core and career readiness courses

The steps outlined above provide supportive rationale for curriculum development and material selection decisions.

We will use a blended learning arrangement to usher our curriculum. Technology-based and paper-based activities will comprise our hybrid environment. Our teachers will supplement computer-based learning activities with 1:1 tutoring and small group direct instruction. Integrated Humanities courses may include large group direct instructional arrangements. With computer-based Credit Recovery courses, our curriculum affords students the opportunity to catch up from the time they enter CFA to the time the exit. Using Gateway's New and Continuing Student Surveys, students will begin to plan their college/career path as soon as they enter CFA. Lumity's MyColLife program helps students investigate and select career paths—also, as soon as they enter CFA. These early supplemental programs help learners become aware of their metacognitive processes and co-designers of their own personalized learning paths. The opportunity to complete core courses (Math, Science and ELA) online through Edgenuity® or to get 1:1 or group assistance from teachers provides the flexibility needed for students take an active role in their learning as well as control the pace of learning. Using Chromebook applications, our students will track their own academic progress. Assistance provided through Gateway to College National Network Post-Secondary Readiness Framework will prepare students for postsecondary experiences. The ability start to prepare for the COMPASS® and ACT® tests as soon as they become acclimated to CFA positions students for success on these two assessment measures. Finally, the concept of cultural relevancy is integrated throughout the curriculum. We believe that

instruction that is relevant to students' life experiences increases interest and decrease inclinations for students to drop out. Thus, upon their arrival at CFA, students who need to bridge learning gaps in a particular subject area are enrolled in a culturally relevant Integrated Humanities course that focuses on the particular subject. The cultural relevancy focus continues throughout the learner's tenure at CFA. The entire social science program is delivered within a culturally relevant framework.

Table 2.4.1 on the following page lists salient features of our core curriculum and supplemental programs.

Table 2.4.1--CFA Schools Curriculum and Supplemental Programs						
Grade Level	**Math**	**Science**	**ELA**	**Social Science**	**Electives/ Career Pathways**	**Supplemental Programs**
Year 1	• Culturally Relevant Integrated Humanities —Math— Bridge Courses* • Mathematics ** • Credit Recovery**	• Culturally Relevant Integrated Humanities— Science— Bridge Courses* • Science I** • Credit Recovery**	• Culturally Relevant Reading and Writing-- Integrated Humanities —ELA— Bridge *Courses • English I** • Credit Recovery**	• Integrated Humanities® —Culturally Relevant World History* • Credit Recovery**	• Physical Education w/Health Education *and/or • Career Pathways** • Credit Recovery**	• Gateway to College New and Continuing Student Surveys*** • Chrome-book **** • Lumity MyColLife Technology* **
Year 2	• Mathematics II** • Algebra I** • Credit Recovery**	• Science II** • Biology with Lab** • Credit Recovery**	• English II** • Credit Recovery**	• Integrated Humanities ® — Culturally Relevant U.S. History* • Credit Recovery**	• Physical Education w/Health Education* and/or • Career Pathways** • Credit Recovery**	• Chromebook **** • COMPASS® Learning Tutor** • ACT® Test prepara-tion**
Year 3	• Algebra II** • Geometry** • Credit Recovery**	• College level Biology** or Physics** (CCC Course) • Credit Recovery**	• English III ** (Composi-tion or College English) • Credit Recovery**	• Integrated Humanities ® — Culturally Relevant U.S. Govern-ment* • Credit Recovery**	• Physical Education w/Health Educa-tion* and/or • Career Pathways** • Credit Recovery**	• Chrome-book **** • COMPASS® Learning Test** • ACT® Test ** • Gateway to College National Network Post-Secondary Readiness Frame-work***
• *Direct instruction **Computer-based Instruction Through Edgenuity® • ***Supplemental Direct Instruction ****Other Computer-based Instruction						

The passages that follow briefly describes resources and technology used in our core and supplemental programs.

COMPASS® Learning uses Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)-aligned test results to create personalized learning paths for students. After assigning the learning path, students complete a range of Compass Learning activities, based on research about student cognition and learning, that is linked directly to their MAP-identified learning needs. Compass also provides adaptive assessments to help identify students, who may need interventions. The Compass Learning Curriculum includes solutions for AP, college readiness, credit recovery, ELL/ESL, gifted and talented, response to intervention and summer/extended day.

Chromebooks will help develop individualized learning paths for students. Both assessment data and survey data (from student, teacher, and parent) data will be used in customizing an individualized learning plan. Applications that allowstudents to see their progress in real time on their dashboard will be secured for the Chromebooks. Effectiveness studies have shown that with such real-time applications, students advanced twice as fast in a given time than control groups doing similar activities (Havens, 2014)26

CFA Integrated Humanities (IH) Competencies are research-based competencies that CFA compiled to foster cultural relevancy through curriculum integration. Among the subjects that can be easily included are social sciences—including U.S. history, world history, economics, geography and sociology/anthropology—art, physical education, and career preparation. We will rely heavily on our humanities courses (World History, U. S. Government and U.S. History) to foster cultural relevancy across the CFA curriculum. The IH competencies will serve as bridging frames to integrate cultural relevancy into Year 1 core courses (English/Language Arts. Mathematics and the sciences). Sample CFA IH Competencies appear in Attachment 2.4.a. 2.

MyColLife –MyColLife technology that Lumity uses helps students investigate career opportunities. The technology is:

- Best-practiced aligned skills profiler that matches students to careers, job postings and scholarships
- FREE to students, counselors, parents and high schools
- 100% FERPA compliant
- Live external-facing student portfolio that allows students to share their work quickly and easily
- Already populated with 15K students and growing at a rate of 85%
- Mobile app for Android in May 2015 and iPhone in June 2015
- Cloud storage is included in the free model

Gateway to College Foundations Unit— We use the term "college ready" to describe readiness for any postsecondary educational experience, including community college, university or vocational training, any setting where students can earn a degree, certificate, or license. CFA will utilize the early college model, and through partnership with Gateway to College National Network (GtCNN), we will offer

robust dual-enrollment opportunities to ensure that all students leave the program college ready. They will demonstrate readiness by enrolling directly in college-level transfer courses while enrolled at CFA completing requirements for their high school diploma. CFA staff will receive training and support from GtCNN professionals for the use of their Post-secondary Readiness Framework. GtCNN includes experiences in their post-secondary readiness framework that involve students developing attitudes, behaviors, and skills for college success over-time through thoughtful and intentional experiences that allow opportunities for practice and feedback.

Gateway to College National Network (GtCNN or GtC) New and Continuing Student Surveys—GtCNN will administer New Student Survey (administered to students within their first month in the program) and a Continuing Student Satisfaction Survey (annually administered to every student who has been enrolled in the GtC program at least two semesters). Information gathered includes demographics, living situation, experiences that affected their ability to be successful in school, and information about their experience in the program. Comparing individual student responses will allow CFA to see how the CFA experience has affected important academic attitudes and behaviors.

Research Base

Q. Provide evidence that the proposed curricula are research-based and have been effective with students similar to those the school expects to serve. Also include a brief description of how these curricula will accelerate student learning to bring and/or keep students on track for college and post-secondary career readiness, highlighting any backwards-planning efforts, if relevant. If proposing an innovative educational model, present evidence, and/or a rationale for why your design team believes the educational model will drive student success with the targeted student population.

Curriculum Refinement

Q. Once the school is in operation, what is the process that the school will use to further develop the school's curriculum? Describe the procedures that school leaders and teachers will use to evaluate, review, and revise the curricula to ensure its continued effectiveness in driving academic achievement and growth for all students, its alignment to state standards, Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards, and/or College Readiness Standards. Describe how you will ensure alignment across grade levels.

Blended Learning

To ensure cultural relevancy in our program we will use curriculum integration (aka an interdisciplinary curriculum), especially in the humanities. There is a strong belief among those who support curriculum integration that schools must look at education as a process for developing abilities required by life in the 21st century from a global perspective, rather than as discrete, departmentalized subject matter (Fogerty, R, 1991 and Gehrke, N (1991).[27] In general, scholars who promote curriculum integration suggest that interdisciplinary curriculum designs include the following:

- A combination of subjects
- An emphasis on projects
- Sources that go beyond textbooks
- Relationships among concepts

- Thematic units as organizing principles
- Flexible schedules
- Flexible student groupingsd

CFA's IH courses will comprise each of the above elements. Our teaching team will possess both the experience and expertise to design and deliver a rigorous curriculum, using technology to cuts across subject-matter lines to bring various segments of the curriculum into meaningful association. Cooperatively, they will

1. develop model lessons that include cross-curricular activities and assessments;
2. develop enrichment or enhancement activities with a cross-curricular focus, including suggestions for cross-curricular "contacts" following each objective; and
3. develop assessment activities that are cross-curricular in nature, including sample planning wheels in all curriculum guides.

Our curriculum will follow an immersed model, where integration takes place both within the curriculum and within the learner. This means that the learner and the instructor does the integration. The job of CFA instructor will be to coach each student to view learning through the perspectives of his or her environment as he/she pursues a set college/career goal. This focus goal appears at the third level or top of the pyramid in Figure 2.4.1. Courses and activities selected for this level reflect competencies set forth in the College Readiness Standards. Some would say that the disadvantage of this model is that narrows the focus of the learner. CFA sees this perceived disadvantage as an advantage, because it provides a path to realistic endpoints, the high school diploma, admission to college and/or entry to the work world. The first and second levels of the pyramid represent the subjects in which Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards will be met.
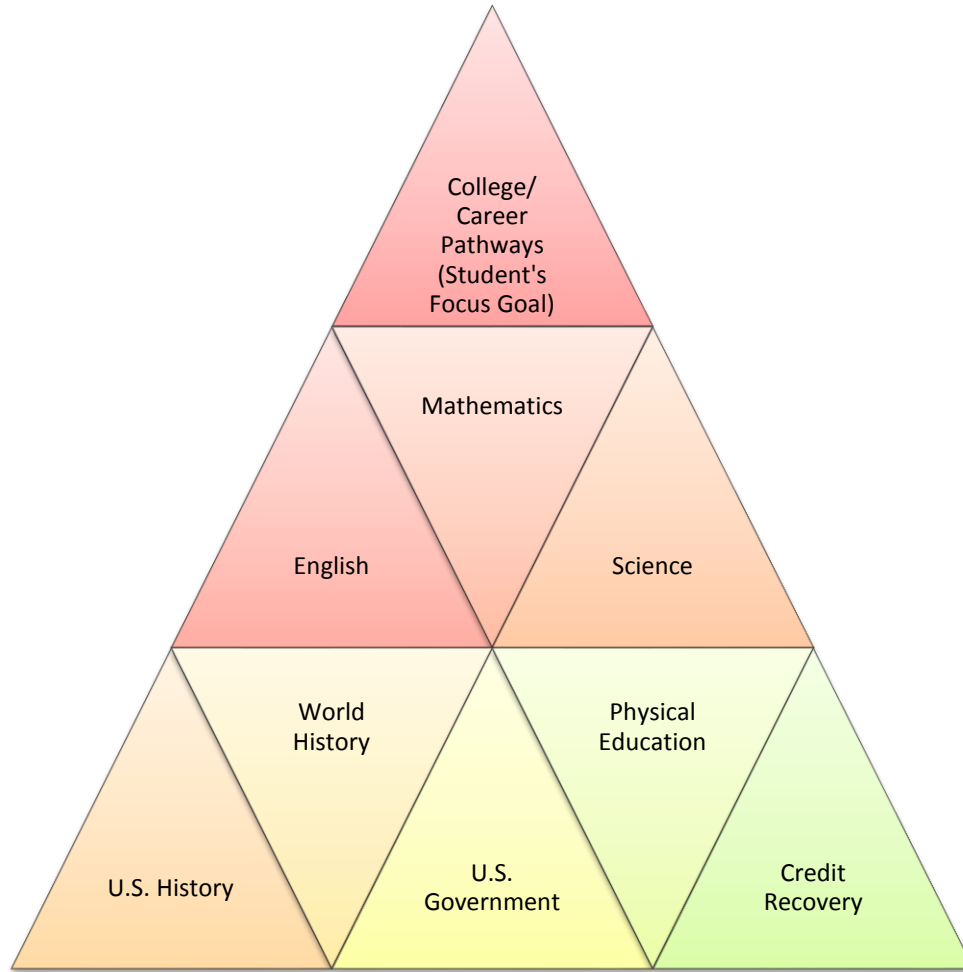
Figure 2.4.1. CFA's Immersed Curriculum Integration Model

Table 2.4.2 shows CFA's Curriculum Scope and Sequence Chart. In addition to listing subject areas and Carnegie units required for a high school diploma in Illinois, the table crosswalks courses in CFA's curriculum with blended learning courses available through Edgenuity® and Integrated Humanities courses that will follow the immersed curriculum integration model shown in in Figure 2.4.1. The table also shows dual credit courses offered in through Chicago Community Colleges. Information in the table provides a preliminary guide for teachers to know what to teach, and when in the student's tenure at CFA to teach it. Credit recovery courses are included at each level for each subject area. The opportunity to enroll in credit recovery courses will afford students who may fall behind the extra time needed to master the competencies for a particular course.

Subject Area & Carnegie Units	CPS Student Segment	CFA Year	CFA Curriculum	Correlated Edgenuity® Blended Learning Course	Dual Credit Course	Direct Instruction Course	Credits per Year
Table 2.4.2. CFA Curriculum Scope and Sequence Chart with Student Segments by Year and Blended Learning, Dual Credit and Direct Instruction Course Designations							
Language Arts 4 Credits	Young And Far	Year 1	• English I and /or • English II w/Writing • Credit Recovery	• Common Core English Language Arts 9 and/or • English Language Arts 10		Culturally Relevant Reading and Writing—CFA IH Essential Skills Competencies —ELA—Bridge Courses	1
	Old And Far	Year 2	• English II w/Writing and/or • College English • Credit Recovery	• Common Core English Language Arts 10 and/or • Expository and Applied and Writing			1-3
	Old And Close	Year 3	• College English • English I (CCC dual enrollment course) • Credit Recovery	• Expository and Applied Reading and Writing and/or • Classic Novel & Author Studies	College English I (substitute for Expository Reading and Writing)		1-4
Mathematics 4 Credits	Young And Far	Year 1	• Mathematics I • Credit Recovery	• Common Core Integrated Mathematics I and/or • Pre- Algebra I		Culturally Relevant—CFA IH Essential Skills Competencies —Math— Bridge Courses	1
	Old And Far	Year 2	• Mathematics I • Mathematics II • Algebra I • Credit Recovery	• Common Core Algebra I and /or • Mathematical Models with Applications			1-3
	Old And Close	Year 3	• Mathematics II • Algebra I • Algebra II • Geometry • Credit Recovery	• Algebra II (required) • Or Mathematical Models with Applications	College Algebra (substitute for Algebra II)		1-4
Science	Young And Far	Year 1	• Science I • Credit Recovery	Environmental Science or Biology Track I		Culturally Relevant-— CFA IH Essential Skills Competencies —Science—	1

						Bridge Courses	
3 Credits	Old And Far	Year 2	• Science I • Science II • Biology with Lab • Credit Recovery	• Biology Track II or • Chemistry for Health Careers Track or • AP Biology	Human Biology		1-3
	Old And Close	Year 3	• Science II • College level Biology or Physics (CCC Course) • Credit Recovery	• Physical Sciences with virtual lab or • Physics for Technology Track)			1-3
Social Science 2 Credits	Young And Far	Year 1	• Culturally Relevant World History • Credit Recovery			Integrated Humanities® — Culturally Relevant World History	1
	Old And Far	Year 2	• Culturally Relevant U.S. History • Credit Recovery			Integrated Humanities® — Culturally Relevant U.S. History	1-2
	Old And Close	Year 3	• American Government • Credit Recovery			Integrated Humanities® — Culturally Relevant U.S. Government	1-2
Physical Education 1 Credit Electives 4 Credits	Young And Far	Year 1	• Physical Education w/Health Education and/or • Career Pathways • Credit Recovery	(Career Pathways-- Select one or more .5 unit courses) • Career Planning & Development • Health Science Concepts • Medical Terminology • Career Explorations COMPASS® Test Preparation ACT® Preparation	Intro to Health Science or Technology Education	• Gateway to College New and Continuing Student Surveys • Lumity Career Readiness Training including MyColLife • Culturally Relevant Physical Education w/Health Education	1
	Old And Far	Year 2	• Physical Education w/Health Education and/or • Career Pathways • Credit Recovery	Career Pathways-- (Select one or more) • Career Planning & Development • Introduction to Pathways: Health Science; Business for Information Technology	• Computer Applications: Office® 2010	• Career Pathways Course -- includes Gateway to College Foundations Unit • Culturally Relevant	1-3

			• Computer Applications: Office®2010 COMPASS® Test Preparation ACT® Preparation		Physical Education w/Health Education	
Old And Close	Year 3	• Physical Education w/Health Education and/or • Career Pathways • Portfolios and Projects • Credit Recovery	Career Pathways— (Select one or more) • Pathways: Health Science; Business for Information Technology Certification • Projects in Game Design • Computer Science II COMPASS® Test ACT® Test	Computer Science II	• Career Pathways Course -- includes Gateway to College Foundations Unit • Physical Education w/Culturally Relevant Health Education • Portfolio/ Project Evaluation	1-4
Total for High School Diploma						18

Curricular Selection and Supports

Core subjects (English, math, science) content for CFA's blended learning environment will come from Edgenuity® (formerly e2020), a commercial vendor founded in 1998. Edgenuity® offers over 100 courses for grades 6–12 in English language arts, social studies, math, science, world languages, and general electives. The courses are implementable through a blended learning arrangement that is flexible enough for teachers to integrate culturally relevant direct instruction as needed. Edgenuity® also offers a full suite of career pathways and electives, test preparation solutions for national and state exams, and credit recovery courses. (See EdgenuityAccreditations andAffiliations at http://www.edgenuity.com/the-edgenuity-difference/accreditation/). Edgenuity® is accredited by AdvancED (See AdvanceED at http://www.advanc-ed.org/about-us), a non-profit, non-partisan organization that conducts rigorous, on-site external reviews of PreK-12 schools and school systems and has more than a hundred years of work in school accreditation. 28 We selected Edgenuity®'s because their track record, experience, tools and resources address the curricular, instructional and assessment components needed to help us accomplish our mission. Our mission, restated, to prepare youth who have not been successful or have not found value in the traditional high school setting for a rewarding career and life with a flexible curriculum offered within a blended learning, real-life, culturally relevant environment. Educational institutions that use Edgenuity's® curriculum attest that the courses can be implemented easily in alternative education settings that require flexible scheduling.29 In addition to

Edgenuity's® track record, CFA selected the platform because of the following design components: Alignment with standards, possibility of students recovering credits, Alignment Universal Design for Learning , Blended Learning Management System, Built-in Flexibility to Engage Students in Real Life Experiences, and Incorporation of Career and Technical Courses, Compass Preparation and Industry Certification. The passages that follow briefly describe each Edgenuity® feature.

Alignment with Standards

Edgenuity® aligns its courses with Common Core and other state standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards, and College Readiness Standards. Edgenuity® also offers a full suite of career pathways and electives, test preparation solutions for national and state exams, and credit recovery courses.   Each course includes challenging content, real-world activities, adaptable formative and summative assessments, and real-time feedback.[30] Edgenuity® courses can easily be implemented in alternative education settings that require flexible scheduling. Core courses reflect research-based instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. For example, the English Language/Arts courses include essays, speeches, memoirs, historical documents, and scientific articles. Through reading literary nonfiction, students gain insight into their world and themselves. The math courses give conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and application. Instruction connects the new to the known, building on students' existing mathematical knowledge and real-world intuition. Students explore multiple representations—including verbal descriptions, graphs and tables, and symbolic notation. Procedures are grounded in conceptual understanding, and students learn how and when to apply what they know. Each blended courses features rigorous, explicit instruction led by certified on-screen teachers. Motivating media-rich content keeps students engaged, and powerful interactive instructional tools help them build content knowledge and essential skills. Edgenuity's® courses focus on traditional scientific concepts and provide an overview of scientific principles and procedures with virtual labs, interactive simulations and models, and project-based activities designed to meet the Next Generation Science Standards. Courses in the curriculum address the span of educational goals in the College and Career Readiness Standards. The rigorous approach of the courses ensures that students in at each level are prepared for success in the work world.

Concept and Credit Recovery

Edgenuity® provides credit recovery courses that allow students to stay on track for on-time graduation. Students to take pretests designed to assess their mastery of content. Prescribed, self-paced learning follows pretesting, allowing students to spend more time on what they need and less time on content they have mastered. If a student meets CFA's passing threshold, he or she can place out of mastered content.. Content that students master on pretest is revisited on a cumulative tests and exams, providing additional opportunities to check for mastery.

Alignment Universal Design for Learning

As discussed extensively in the Educational Philosophy section, CFA subscribes to the University Design for Learning (UDL).   Recognizing that students can't simply be placed in front of a student and be

expected to develop skills needed for college and careers (Cavanaugh, 2013, p. 172)31, Edegenity grounds its courses in research following four evidence-based curriculum design principles:

- Instruction is systematic and explicit, designed to help students acquire, practice, and apply skills and knowledge.
- Courses promote deep learning and metacognition.
- Courses incorporate multimedia and graphic organizers in ways that reduce cognitive load and help students learn more effectively.
- Courses implement principles of Universal Design for Learning, incorporating multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement to meet students' individual needs.[32]

Blended Learning Management System

Edgenuity's® management system is conducive to a flexible blended learning arrangement. The system integrates research-based instructional practices that meet the needs of students who have not been successful or have not found value in the traditional school setting. The system also includes a number of tools and features to support effective implementation with off-track and previously dropped out learners. These tools are:

- Customizable assessment settings for time limits, grade weights, number of retakes, and passing thresholds;
- Clear graphical representations of student progress to help students stay on pace;
- A customizable assignment calendar to help students track the coursework they should be completing each day;
- Diagnostic and prescriptive capabilities to individualize student learning paths based on existing levels of mastery;
- Robust reporting to enable educators to monitor student engagement, progress, and achievement;
- Administrator tools to set teacher permissions, review teacher actions, and monitor student data;
- A web-based Family Portal to enable parents and guardians to monitor student learning from their computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Built-in Flexibility to Engage Students in Real Life Experiences

Customizing tools within the courses provide opportunities for students to manipulate their learning environment. For example, students can learn at their own pace, pause and rewind videos, mark up text, and take electronic notes. Cultural relevancy can be optimized through contemporary topics, thematic units, and application to real-world problems. Edgenuity® courses require students to interact with texts and ideas in order to summarize, clarify understanding, explain concepts, elaborate, and/or synthesize information. For example:

- In an English language arts lesson, students are asked to describe how Sojourner Truth uses personal experiences to make a logical and emotional case for women's rights.

- While reading a selection from Chief Joseph, students are prompted to paraphrase in their own words the central idea(s) of each paragraph, using the Edgenuity® sticky notes feature. This feature provides many opportunities for students to interact with texts in a variety of ways in Edgenuity® courses.
- In a biology course, after reviewing findings from an experiment, students are asked to go into detail about five problems that could have caused inconsistent results.

The character, objects, situations, etc., in the above bulleted lessons may be changed to make the lesson relevant and realistic to the learner's culture and experiences. Teachers also have the options to customize information the course settings (e.g., adjust the time allotted for assessments; change the grade weights for quizzes and exams) in order to make the level of challenge more appropriate for individual students. Students will use headphones in Edgenuity® courses to help reduce distractions.

Incorporates Career and Technical Courses, Compass Preparation and Industry Certification

Edgenuity®'s system provides relevant, engaging, career-relevant coursework are aligned to career and technical education (CTE) frameworks as well as to national technology standards. Including in their program are courses that not only orient students to careers and industry certification, but also provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of the course material by applying academic and technical skills to real-world tasks. The career focus provides students with a sense of direction that motivates them to achieve and to stay in school. Edgenuity® also provides a clear context and learning paths in ways that ignite student interest.

We will support our teachers in their efforts to implement our curriculum while simultaneously motivating our students to achieve at the highest level. To this end, we will:

- encourage them to require **rigor in all subjects** and support them in ways that they are able to enable students to see the usefulness of what they have been asked to learn.
- create supportive relationships where teachers provide students with the extra help needed to meet challenging course standards and providing the support necessary to relieve teachers who spend extra time with students from some of their assigned duties.
- encourage them to work with parents and students to set goals and help students take the right courses that prepare them for postsecondary studies and careers.
- Support what and how they teach by providing necessary planning time and professional development opportunities that align with school improvement plans.

CFA's Curriculum Matrix appears in Appendix 2.4.a.1. The matrix lists all required and elective courses. It also provides examples of how CFA will ensure correlation of our courses with the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and College Readiness Standards and CFA's Integrated Humanities Competencies. It also shows how teachers will integrate cultural relevancy into instructional activities.

b. Instructional Strategies

Our approach to instruction is built around students' mastery of content competencies, post-secondary readiness skills and career preparation competencies. All students will have individual improvement plans aligned to meet benchmarks that target rigorous preparation for the three mastery goals. To these ends, our CFA team will comprise the chief education officer (education director) site director, blended learning coordinator, special education teacher, teacher for each content area, social worker, resource specialists, and transition specialists will comprise the primary staff members at CFA. The site director will report to the chief education officer.

- Team members will collaboratively assess each student upon enrollment, working closely with the learner to develop an Individual Advancement Plan – IAP. The IAP will map out action plans to master high school completion benchmarks and transition to postsecondary education training and the work world. Academy support team members will meet one on one with students to review progress made during the month as outlined in the IAP and make adjustments as needed.

- Team members will create and maintain a learning environment that mimics a classroom, laboratory and workplace, which requires students to develop keen communication skills (ELA/writing), collaboration (team and self-development), critical thinking (higher order learning skills/math/reasoning and logic) and effective use of technology. Teams will actively promote the following team tenets:
- CFA support student knowledge and growth through "active, culturally-relevant learning".
- Technology is used to enhance learning
- Competence and quality are recognized and encouraged
- Students, faculty and staff support each other individually and in teams
- Learning happens inside and outside the classroom as well as throughout the community

Daily formative assessment will drive determinations of student mastery levels. Team members will review formative assessment outcomes weekly and align the data with instructional plans to assess the effectiveness our approach to learning. These reviews will drive, when needed, revisions in instructional plans and strategies to meet desired proficiency levels and benchmarks that prepare students for summative assessments. Summative assessments will be done monthly during Teacher Data Days. Mastery in the context areas and skills must be achieved by each student prior to advancing to the next level. At the end of each school year students are expected to master all of their learning goals as well as present evidence of the following:

- Technology literacy (STEM)
- Written and oral communications (ELA)
- Critical thinking and problem solving (Mathematics)
- Career preparation (Experiential Learning)

Together, our curriculum design, approach to instruction, and global assessment system will provide a personalized learning experience that prepares learners academically and developmentally, helping them make informed decisions on selecting and preparing for postsecondary education and career pathways while successfully obtaining their CPS diploma.

c. Specialized Instruction

Q. Describe how the curriculum/educational program of the proposed school will meet the needs of all enrolled students, including diverse learners and students who are English Learners (ELs).

Diverse Learners

Describe how the school or program will provide a continuum of services for students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities, in the least restrictive environment (LRE) possible. Explain what adjustments to curricula, and instructional programs/practices, the school will make to accommodate these students. How will the school monitor and evaluate the progress of diverse learners to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)? What actions will the faculty take prior to changing a student's LRE and/or IEP? How will the program identify or discontinue special education supports and services for individual

CFA is committed to meeting the needs of all students, including Special Needs and English Language Learners (ELL). The core elements of our school's design will be accessible to everyone, including advisory, academic and elective choice classes, varied course types and sizes, and technology-supported personalized learning. Our fundamental goal is to keep and serve all students well, and we will uphold our commitment to every student. All CFA faculty and staff will promote our philosophy of inclusion by providing:

- A collaborative environment that includes common planning time during the day for co-teachers
- Regular professional development on inclusion strategies, including co-teaching
- Communication channels between the Student Support Team, IEP team, Leadership Team and the entire faculty
- Robust assessment to determine the least restrictive environment based on student needs
- Training on PBIS as a proactive means to student discipline
- Curricular, technology and personnel resources to ensure teachers can meet the needs of all learners and
- Accountability measures for general and special educators, as well as IEP and Student Support Team members, to ensure we are all doing our best to serve all students.

Special Needs Students (with IEPs and Disabilities)--Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) will have access to the general education curriculum and receive services and/or supports within general education classrooms among their same age peers as indicated in their IEPs, ensuring that the requirement for serving the student in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is being met. CFA believes that students with disabilities thrive when educated to the maximum extent possible with their nondisabled peers; as such, we will implement effective co-teaching approaches and supports to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities. Our flexible scheduling and staffing makes it possible for students with IEPs to receive a personalized educational program. When pull-out services are required by an IEP, our flexible schedule makes it possible for students to receive services during planning and individual support time, not during core class time. Every student, including students with disabilities, will have access to the core academic program, including interdisciplinary project courses, as well as non-academic elective courses, advisory, school-wide meetings and extra-curricular activities.

CFA will not differentiate or discriminate against students with disabilities in any admission, enrollment or school practices. Students with IEPs will participate in interim assessments and standardized

assessments, with appropriate accommodations or modifications, unless their IEPs designate alternate assessments. All key elements of the physical environment, including classrooms and common spaces, will be accessible to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities will receive services, accommodations and modifications to the curriculum as dictated by their IEPs.

Special educators will work closely with general educators to make the appropriate accommodations and/or modifications by engaging in frequent communication, collaboration and grade team common planning. Special educators will collaborate with site directors to lead whole-school professional development sessions in order to build the skills of all teachers in accommodating and modifying plans and instruction for exceptional learners. On a regular basis, special education teachers will provide individual student and/or IEP progress reports during professional development. We will promote student ownership of their growth by involving students in monitoring their IEP goals and attending IEP meetings, allowing them to have input on the learning strategies that help them best.

CFA's program design meets the needs of diverse learners through the highly personalized, engaging, rigorous, and post-secondary and career- focused education. We anticipate a student population of over 95% free and reduced lunch eligibility, and we are acutely aware of the socioeconomic struggles that many of students face. Moreover, we are prepared for the reality that many of our students will face additional challenges that may include homelessness, truancy, low motivation, drugs, gang violence, poverty (including hunger), abuse, behavioral and emotional issues and pregnancy. We will have a social worker on staff beginning in our first year. As we expand, we plan to hire additional full-time counselors. Under the supervision of the site director, the social worker will counsel and support students and families in trying situations, as well as make necessary referrals to community organizations, health care providers, food pantries, housing services, and financial support groups. Strong adult relationships, a responsive social work team, and an engaging school day coupled with a demanding, supportive and resilient school environment will provide disconnected students with the supports they need to succeed.

Regarding homelessness students, CFA will maintain confidentiality to protect the privacy of students and their families. The school social worker, in cooperation with the site director, will work to provide services that meet the unique circumstances of temporary living situations. Specifically, students will be provided with school uniform assistance, transportation assistance (in the way of mass transit cards), individual counseling, and homework assistance. Social workers will work proactively with families to ensure students can attend school without interruption, making sure that homeless students do not become truant.

We will provide guidance and professional development to the staff to equip them with skills and strategies to deal with difficult situations regarding students. These staff members will provide day-to-day developmental and emotional support and refer students to the social work team when necessary. Our focus of advisory on the socio-emotional well-being of students and building of positive school culture will allow us to easily meet the needs of at-risk students.

The blended learning environment that we provide students through Edgenuity® incorporates several evidence-based practices that meet the needs of special needs students. For example, all computer-based courses:

- Provide Clear, Concise Instruction—Student have access to videos of highly qualified, certified teachers who deliver computer-based instruction, orienting students to the lesson's goals, grounding concepts in relevant real-life examples, teaching comprehension strategies, and offering clear and concise explanations of subject matter.
- Make Instruction Accessible--Students can direct instruction videos, explore interactive simulations, manipulatives and labs, write online journals and engage in other multiple learning modalities that develop and reinforce learning.
- Offer Scaffolds and Supports—Among the multiple tools and resources designed to support learning and made available to special needs students are.
  - embedded tools provide read-aloud support, transcripts and captions, definitions, and highlighting to help students access and organize content.
  - the newly enhanced eNotes enables students to synthesize information and record questions and observations in a digital notebook.
  - the eWriting environment scaffolds the writing process–from pre-writing to the final draft.
  - teachers can customize assessment settings for test time completion, passing threshold, and more.
- Model Learning Strategies—On screen teachers model learning, teaching student a wide variety of learning strategies such as self-monitoring, self-evaluation, goal setting, questioning, and self-explanation.

English Language Learners—Because of the demographics of our target community, we do not anticipate a large English Language Learner (ELL) population, but we are prepared to meet the needs of all ELL students who come to CFA. Since most ELL students would come to us already identified, we would work to assess their reading fluency as well as written and verbal skills right away. Our focus on literacy will help ELLs become fluent in English quickly. If we have ELL enrollees, we hire an ELL provider who will be responsible for ensuring that provisions are made to accommodate these students. Included among the ELL provider's duties will be to make provisions to accommodate and/or modify course materials, provide ELL instruction during individualized support, and "push-in" to general education classes to ensure ELLs make adequate progress. When and if needed, ELLs will be provided one-on-one tutoring during Teacher Planning and Student Individual Support time from 3:25 to 4:25 p.m. or the afterschool to ensure accelerated English acquisition. ELL students will never be separated from their fluent English-speaking peers, but will rather receive services and support within the general education classrooms in an inclusion model.

The blended learning arrangement that Edgenuity® provides for its courses ensures that English Language Learners can access and understand course content. All courses include these evidence based instructional strategies that help improve academic achievement among ELL's students:

- **Teach Vocabulary With Multiple Contexts**—students are taught vocabulary words in each course through computer-based and direct instruction. They have access to an embedded glossary tool that allows them to look up words and add them to personal word lists. They also learn to apply words in new context.
- **Provide Explicit Instruction**—Student have access to videos of highly qualified, certified teachers who deliver computer-based instruction, orienting students to the lesson's goals, grounding concepts in relevant real-life examples, teaching comprehension strategies, and offering clear and concise explanations of subject matter.
- **Activate Background Knowledge**--The beginning of each lesson connects students' prior knowledge to new content material. On-screen teachers model self-questioning strategies—such as prompting the student to ask the question: "What do I already know about this topic?" Students may also preview introductory material before they solve problems or read narrative or informational texts.
- **Use Native Language Strategically**—Students can material into translate text into Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, French, German, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, or Vietnamese. Additionally, students can hear text read aloud in English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, and Portuguese.

d. School Calendar/Schedule

Overview

Q. If a charter school, describe how innovations in the annual school calendar and daily schedule will be employed, and how they will enhance student achievement. If proposing a longer school day/year, describe how your design team has budgeted for overtime pay for faculty and staff, as appropriate. Describe how the contract school will implement and follow ISBE requirements for the minimum number of instruction days and minutes and how ALOP programs will implement and follow the required CPS school calendar, and the daily instructional requirements. Explain how you will accommodate continuous student enrollment, how the schedule will be organized to ensure that each semester students are able to take the courses needed to keep progressing toward graduation. Indicate how the program schedule will accommodate students with gaps in their transcripts.

CFA is proposes a school calendar that begins the last week in August and ends around the third or fourth week of June of the following year. It includes approximately 202 calendar days with a minimum of 176 attendance days. Initially, CFA's calendar and attendance days will approximately correlate with those shown on CPS's school calendar for 2016-2017 in Attachment 2.4.d1.

Our desire for the future is to extend to year-round educational programming, if supported by the state and the district. In which case, our academic calendar would be designed to provide a week long student break every 8 weeks, at the end of each quarter. Students would be required to attend in school for a minimum of 180 days of actual attendance and a maximum of 185 days, including not more than 4 institute days during a 12 month period. These breaks would allow concentrated blocks of time for instructional staff development and student progress performance reviews , detailed data analysis,

discussions regarding curriculum corrections, as well as extended time for training opportunities. Additionally, these professional development breaks will allow students additional time to complete independent projects and catch up work. We believe that our tudent population would benefit greatly from learning time extended over the summer months. This extension would allow for accelerating the time for completion and minimizing opportunities for students to lose focus by having an extend summer break.

> **Q.** *Teacher's Daily Schedule:* **Describe how a typical teacher's days will be structured, explicitly explaining times devoted to the core teaching assignments, planning, and other activities as applicable (such as before- or after-school electives, remediation, lunch duty, advisory group, etc.).**

Instructors' daily schedule will generally follow the student's schedule (shown in the table in Attachmment 2.4.d2), with instructional time, preparation time and lunch periods daily.   Instructors are scheduled to work 480 minutes per day, or 8 hours.   During this period, 180 minutes will be devoted to monitoring computer-based instruction within our blended-learning arrangement. Teachers will use this time for real-time monitoring of student progress and to provide one-to-one or direct instruction and attend to the special needs and other students who need personalized assistance.   Another 180 minutes will be devoted to direct instruction.   Teachers will use this time to foster Integrated Humanities competencies and while addressing our cultural relevance focus. Forty-five (45) minutes daily are allocated to teacher preparation. The final 30 minutes (3:50 to 4:20) is allocated to teacher group discussion and planning. The small number of instructional staff expected on startup will necessitate teacher rotation for lunch duty. As such, teachers will monitor breakfast time, transition time and lunch periods on an as-assigned rotational basis. Staff meetings will be held weekly after school to discuss activities and make general announcements.

In Years 2 and 3, CFA will consider other scheduling options that will take advantage of each campus's proximity to City Colleges. We will consider options that help us to create the college going culture, such as alternating block schedule.

> *Student's Daily Schedule:* **Describe how a typical student's day will be structured. In addition to daily classes, reference any time spent in elective courses, advisories, receiving social-emotional supports, after-school activities, etc.**
>
> *If proposing a blended learning model:*
> **--Specify what percentage of time students will engage in learning through digital mediums.**
> **--Why did your design team determine that percentage of time?**
> **--When time is not spent online, please describe how classroom time will be spent.**
> **--The daily schedule should articulate the mix of direct and online instruction.**
>
> *If proposing a blended learning model:*
> **--The proposal specifies the percentage of time students will engage in learning through digital mediums andprovides a clear rationale for designating that percentage of time.**

Student Daily Schedule

The proposed daily student schedule at CFA will run from 8:00-4:20 Monday through Friday. Our schedule follows a traditional 4 x 4 block schedule where students take four 90 minute classes every day. The final 30 minute session can be used on an as-needed basis for personalized instruction for

students who need individualized or small group assistance. Our blended learning model will follow the pattern shown in the table below. Students must arrive at 8:00 if they wish to be served breakfast. They will begin the first 90 minute session in computer-based classes in CFA's lab. After the first 90 minutes they will move to a 90-minute block of direct instruction. They will leave the second 90-minute block for lunch, served within two 25 minute blocks. They will start the third 90-minute block of direct instruction at 12:40 p.m.. The final 90-minute block will be computer-based instruction that begins at 2:15 and ends at 3:45. The final session of the day is a 30-minute session begins at 3:50 to 4:20. Five minutes will be allowed for transition time   Attendance for direct instruction sessions is inflexible or less flexible than computer-based sessions as students are required to be present to engage in the culturally relevant instructional activities during these sessions. We will allow flexibility in attendance in computer based sessions only for those students who are on target. The table in Attachment 2.4.d3 provides a sample students' daily schedule for CFA students.

The proposed design of our physical structure will allow for collaboration and inter-disciplinary work. As shown in the table above, classes will be scheduled so that students spend roughly 50% of their day in direct instruction including small group instruction led by a teacher, collaborative problem solving with smaller and larger peer groups, and Socratic seminars. The remaining 50% will be spent and on computer-based or on-line instruction. The mix and balance of activities can be personalized for each student based on his/her learning profile. At various points during the day, depending on student need and formative data, students can be grouped either heterogeneously or by skill level.

One of our goals is to cultivate student independence and perseverance where they take ownership of how they spend their time. One Teacher Planning and Student Individual Support session per week will be devoted to a student community meeting that is designed to motivate students and guide them as they set expectations and plans for the week. As part of the weekly cycle, students will set weekly goals that drive how they spend the flexible portions of their time within each block. Real-time monitoring of student progress will help to make this possible while ensuring that students do not fall behind and progress toward mastery of grade-level standards.

4. Talent Management

a. Recruitment and Staffing

Staffing Plan

Q. Discuss the rationale for the proposed staffing numbers and structure outlined in the attached five-year school staffing model and organizational chart. Cite teacher-student ratios for each type of teaching position. Attach job descriptions that outline roles and responsibilities of each of the instructional and non-instructional positions listed in the attached school-level organizational chart.

CFA's unique student population and instructional model will require us to recruit individuals who are aligned with our intense use of technology to facilitate the learning process. Our instructors will have to view themselves as collaborators and facilitators of the learning process, shifting the focus from being

teacher centered to one of student centered. CFA will seek out instructors that are motivated and excited to work with the our student population. It is important for all instructor to be willing to move beyond just the traditional teacher model and view themselves as motivators. CFA will look for instructors that have some experience or interesting the youth development field, from being camp counselor, AmeriCorps alumni, or individuals who have a demonstrated history of work with youth that fit our student profile.

We designed our staffing with multiple goals in mind. First, there must be adequate staff to provide critical relationships between adults and disconnected students who may require more intense support and feedback. Second, the model will use the expertise of certified teachers and other staff. Third, the model must be financially sustainable on public funds at capacity. Beyond their classroom duties, certified teachers will also be responsible conducting and facilitating staff professional development. Moreover, especially as CFA grows and expands during its foundational years, teachers will be integrally involved in refining and evolving our school model and curriculum. To identify and recruit teachers, we will rely on relationships with prestigious, reputable education organizations and target universities. For teaching positions outside of certified teachers, CFA will hire a mix of new and experienced teachers who may or may not be certified. These individuals will be recruited through referrals from colleagues, traditional job fairs, and the previously mentioned targeted universities.

We will rely heavily on computer-based instruction but realize that min-lessons and direct instruction on specific skills should happen in intimate groups where each student receives very personalized support and feedback when needed. Therefore, teacher/student ratios need to be small enough for the teacher to develop close relationships with both students and families. Our proposed faculty/student ratio for Year 1 is 1 to 21, or 8 faculty members per each 165 students (See CFA Budget). This ratio may increase/decrease over time, depending on the extent to which CFA meets its academic goals. Facilitation of things like on-line intervention programs can occur in larger groups.   Attachment 2.5.a1 provides our 5-year staffing plan, brief job descriptions for positons, and school level organizational chart.

Staffing during enrollment growth

Hiring Process

Q. Describe your design team's strategy, process, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff. Include the selection criteria, planned mix of experienced and new teachers, and any unique considerations needed to support the school design. Ensure that the teacher hiring timeline aligns with the curriculum development and professional development timelines.

If proposing a blended learning model:
--Explain what blended learning experience will be required when hiring faculty and administrators and why.

If proposing a blended learning model:
--Specify whether faculty and administrators will be required to have experience teaching in blended learning environments.

Given our model, we will recruit not only traditionally trained teachers but also professionals who are changing their careers to become teachers. We will seek individuals who have deep content knowledge, familiarity with technology and a broader set of experiences from which they can draw to address the needs of our student population. Since we plan to have a blended learning coordinator on staff who be responsible for professionally developing our faculty and staff and oversee their implementation of our blended learning model, we will not require that faculty and administrators have experience teaching in blended learning environments.

During the start-up phase, CFA will connect with university teacher preparation programs to solicit support in identifying alumni and/or new graduates that maybe interested in working with our student population. Additionally, we will seek out experienced educators who are working in or have worked in the alternative education field. The following provides our recruitment and staffing timeline:

January – March

- Refine CFA's teacher profile, partner with UIC, Chicago State, Saint Xavier, Roosevelt Universities, etc. to introduce, develop, and implement recruitment strategies
- Define candidate portfolio parameters
- Define video resume attributes
- Develop social media and web based presence with a focus on recruitment of staff

March

- Host "imagining" sessions at local CCC to introduce CFA core/career faculty to full or adjunct / part-time CCC instructors
- Initiate expanded recruitment efforts through traditional means, i.e. websites, print, career fairs, etc.

April – May

- Review resumes
- Conduct interviews,
  - Experienced instructors to submit videotaped teaching lesson.
  - New teacher to submit video resume
  - Face to face interviews (demonstrate passion)

We expect to attract teachers by building relationships with alternative certification programs, including Chicago Teaching Fellows, NUTEACH and Teach for America. For content area teachers such as Chemistry, Physics and Calculus, we will seek practicing seasoned professionals in the field seeking either to be teachers on a part-time basis, similar to adjunct professors at universities, or desiring to switch careers and become full-time teachers.

Hiring recommendations will be made by the certified teachers to the site manager with final approval from the education director, managing director and CFA Board. Initial hiring recommendations will

come jointly from the education and site manager. Contingent hiring will be done until a candidate complies with all CPS and state laws for hiring campus personnel. As CFA grows, it is expected that more accountability for hire of staff will shift to the site director an campus instructional teams to ensure appropriate fit and team dynamics.

Compensation

Q. Discuss the proposed salary ranges and benefits (including pensions), listed in the attached budget, and explain any financial incentives or rewards that may be included in the compensation system. Explain how the salary and benefit plans will enable the school to compete with other schools to attract and retain high-quality staff.

CFA salaries will be competitive with the charter school community We believe that individuals that seek out opportunities to work with our students will be motivated not just by financial remuneration but more by the working environment and passion to motivate our students.

We established our compensation system after conducting extensive research into the Chicago charter school employment market. Our staffing goals are to:

- Attract, develop and retain the best teachers to build a pipeline of teacher leaders
- Reward overall performance and the success of the CFA model
- Develop a culture of appreciation and professionalism

To accomplish these goals we:

- Set starting salaries to be in line with or above other Chicago charter schools
- create a teacher career path to motivate development and growth

Salary ranges:

- The salary range for teachers is $45,000 to $65,000 with an average salary of $55,000
- The salary for teacher aides average $30,000
- All other positions are pegged to match or exceed the 50% percentile for other charter schools.

Benefit rates are established to align with the average benefits for other charter schools.

b. Professional Development

Student achievement is inextricably linked to teacher quality. Professional development at CFA Schools will be designed to cultivate instructional talent and build capacity. The overall goal is to develop and retain the best teachers, nurture a culture of ongoing professional learning and collaboration, and build a pipeline for teacher leaders.

The CFA plan for professional development is based partly on the research of Douglas Reeves[33,] from the Center for Performance Assessment, on performance in high poverty schools. Reeves studied "90/90/90 Schools, " or schools with the following characteristics: 1) More than 90% of the students are

eligible for free and reduced lunch, 2) More than 90% of the students are from ethnic minorities, and 3) More than 90% of the students met or achieved high academic standards. Among these highly successful schools, Reeves found five common practices, and the professional development goals at CFA will aim to build and reinforce these techniques.

1. A focus on academic achievement
2. Clear curriculum choices
3. Frequent assessment of student progress and multiple opportunities for improvement
4. An emphasis on nonfiction writing
5. Collaborative scoring of student work (evidence-based argumentation across grade levels and content areas)

Approach

Q. Describe the school's goals and strategy for ongoing professional development (PD), including whole staff development, grade-level/department/course teams, and instructional coaching. Explain how you will provide teachers with content-specific PD, given the small teaching staff in Options schools. Describe whether the PD will be provided in-house or if the school will engage with outside partners, such as the Office of Education Options at CPS. Identify the ways in which you will allow your teachers and leaders to collaborate within a larger community. What will the areas of emphasis be when developing this Professional Learning Community? Identify which staff members will be responsible for overseeing PD opportunities.

If proposing a blended learning model, explain how PD will support teachers:
--To effectively use technological instructional materials and resources, including how to blend online/digital teaching with in-person instruction
--To actively examine assessment results and data from digital and online learning, and use that data to inform their blended learning and in-person instructional practices

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CFA will possibly be 90% free or reduced lunch or 90% minority. Analysis has found, "consistent application of the 90/90/90 techniques holds promise for improving student achievement and closing the equity gap in schools of any demographic description."[1] Therefore, our collaborative planning and PD activities stem from this research. CFA will adopt Reeves' five common practices as our guideline for professional development. To this end, we will initiate and follow the plan shown in Table 2.5.1 below.

Table 2.5.1. Ongoing Structure for Professional Development	
Structure	**Description**
Summer Independent Curriculum Planning	• The director of education will ensure that teachers modify their plans and course materials for our blended learning and integrated curriculum. • The director of education will meet with new teachers to introduce them to the curriculum • New teachers are given curriculum from courses developed by the education director with the freedom to

	adjust as long they retain the pacing to standards
Summer Collaborative Planning	• 3 weeks of training for all teachers; Led by the director of education . Part of this time will be used for independent curriculum planning
Weekly collaborative planning (includes SPED teachers)	• 90 minutes per week • Coordination of weekly schedule and assignments • Curriculum refinement across subjects (STEM, Integrated Humanities with Culturally Relevant Focus)

In addition to the above activities, we will conduct the following professional development sessions throughout the year:

Technology and Social/Emotional Competence

Lumity will assist CFA with professional development by providing teachers with training on how to utilize a self-paced, self-learned curriculum as a facilitated, blended learning experience for computer-based courses. The organization will include preparation for levels of training from basic to advanced computer skills literacy. Lumity will provide teachers with the tools needed to train students on STEM technologies, ranging from basic knowledge through advanced certification. Lumity's program includes: access to a wide variety of services, curricula and certifications that may or may not be used at CFA; extensive teaching resources; Microsoft E-Learning courses for educators and students; software licenses for lab and classroom use; a wide range of instruction, from basics to high-level programming.

Delivering Integrated, Culturally Relevant Instruction

CFA will engage the services of professionals to help faculty design and deliver instruction around interdisciplinary themes, enabling students to apply what they learn in one course to their learning in other courses. Faculty will become proficient focus on "What do students need to know and be able to do to be successful college students or workers in a specific career? Outcomes in culturally relevant courses delivered around interdisciplinary themes will define what students will be able to do "out there," once they complete a class rather than what they will do in class. Professional development sessions will familiarize faculty on developing abilities among students to articulate the intended outcome(s) for all learning experiences and describe how those outcomes are relevant to their goals and life experiences. Faculty should intentionally design all instructional activities in these courses to help students understand the concepts or develop the skills required to achieve an intended college or career goal rather than to "cover" a body of information. Faculty will follow CFA's *Guidelines for Integrating Cultural Relevancy into Instruction*, included as Attachment b, as a model for design culturally relevant instructional activities.

Principals of Teaching and Learning

The GtC Network will support our professional development efforts through face-to-face training, webinars, brown bag trainings, referrals to resources, tailored data analysis, and peer learning. CFA will engage the services of Gateway to College National Network (GtCNN) to conduct professional

development sessions on best practices in teaching and learning, including those used in GtCNN programs. GtC will lead:

1. **Rigor and Focus Sessions** that increase awareness among CFA instructors on determining student ability levels and tailoring learning challenges to the student's developmental level. They will help instructors cultivate an "ethic of excellence" in which students develop habits and internal standards for producing high quality work which, in turn, serves as a source of pride. They will show teachers how to hold students to high expectations while offering high levels of encouragement and support, enabling students to meet expectations, gain confidence as learners, and view themselves as belonging in high school and college, thereby setting the stage for success.

2. **Relationships - Collaborative, Inclusive Learning Communities** sessions to fostering an attitude and environment among faculty and staff that values and respects the individual differences of students. They will guide faculty on ways to involve students in building build a supportive communities that live within and outside of the classroom (e.g., in study groups).

3. **Relevance - Project-based, Active Learning** sessions to help instructors develop knowledge, understanding, and skills through active engagement with meaningful, interdisciplinary, collaborative projects or driving questions, rather than through disconnected, isolated assignments.

4. **Meaningful Learning Experience Sessions** that help faculty research and readily draw on the student's previous experiences as they design instruction. They should be able to make the learning process explicit so students are able to recognize connections between new learning and existing concepts and skills. They will then be able to design instructional activities with enough flexibility to provide students with opportunities to learn in ways that are meaningful to them and learn about culturally relevant topics.

5. **Assessment Sessions** that develop and refine competencies needed to do the following: 1) design projects and other performance tasks that provide evidence that the student is capable of achieving the intended outcome(s); 2) help them develop and use rubrics as well determine "what is good" for a particular skill or project and differentiate between high quality and poor work; 3) become proficient in data-based decision-making to effectively guide the improvement of student and program outcomes; 4) and use the Cycle of Inquiry to analyze aggregate measures of student progress, including course success rates and student success on the comprehensive campus.

Data-driven planning

Q. Describe how the PD plan (including both internal and external PD opportunities) will be driven by data to improve teaching and learning, as well as school performance.

Our Professional Development model will include recurring "Data Days" during which teachers engage in professional development. These sessions will allow teachers to dive deep into student performance data to analyze key trends, identify targeted interventions, and share formative feedback on student performance. In addition to "Data Days," faculty and staff will hold weekly sessions to conduct the

activities shown in Table 2.5.2 below. See Appendix 2.5.b for CFA's global professional development plan.

Table 2.5.2. Weekly Professional Development Plan	
PD Session	Description
Weekly collaborative planning for all teachers	• 2 hours every Friday or on Weekend • Review students' weekly progress and discuss any changes or adjustments that may be needed to meet student needs • Ongoing review of technology resources and analysis of student perseverance and independence • Ongoing support for horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum • Prepare for and discuss how to structure student-led conferences with guidelines for student portfolio reflection and demonstration of mastery • Sharing of strong instructional practices • Collective review of student writing to norm use of common rubrics

Evaluating effectiveness

Q. Describe the process for evaluating the efficacy of the PD.

c. Teacher Induction

Q. Describe the induction program for new and existing teachers. Discuss how this program will prepare teachers to deliver the proposed curriculum, utilize instructional strategies, and differentiate instruction. Include the number of hours/days of PD to be included in the induction program.

c. Teacher Induction

New teacher induction will occur during the three weeks before school begins. This development is designed to orient new staff members to the professional culture, norms, and existing systems and structures of operation. This initial workshop will kick off a comprehensive, cohesive, multi-year professional development program to support teachers on strengthening and honing upon their pedagogical content skills in the context of a technology-enabled, student-centered learning model.

At CFA, new teachers (instructors) will primarily be responsible for: contributing to core curriculum; curating banks of differentiated instructional activities; closely monitoring student data and intervening/accelerating based on data; providing timely feedback to students and parents on students' progress toward mastery via technology; and delivering instruction. To assist them in successfully executing these action items, all new teachers will work collaboratively with a with the education director to design and implement the curriculum. The education director will provide ongoing support

on organizational logistics. Both the education director and site director will observe teaching practices and the site director will provide feedback to teachers throughout the year.

d. Professional Culture

Q. Describe the professional culture of the new school, including how the school will establish and maintain this culture and how it will contribute to staff retention. Discuss how faculty and staff will be involved in school-level decisions and in developing initiatives.

We hope to create a professional culture in our school that is philosophically aligned with the mission of our school and inspires staff to go beyond the call of duty to engage and empower students. According to the Association of American Educators, there are four basic areas relating to the professional culture of a school. These include ethical treatment: 1) toward students, 2) toward the work of educators, 3) toward colleagues, and 4) toward the community.34 Building from this frame of reference and following the design of our formula-based school culture development plan, all faculty and staff will encourage people to be present, enjoy their work, learn from others and share with others. Our staff will model this professional culture for our students and it will become the "CFA WAY."

Additionally, it is critical that the "CFA WAY" is rooted in a strong ethical foundation that takes on a continued life of growth. Along these lines, we will develop a Employee Handbook that includes a Code of Ethics that includes what we expect faculty and staff to do and not to do. Once we have identified and hired our teachers, they will thorough familiarize themselves with Handbook. We will devote a professional development day to how to prevent/deal with Code/Handbook violations. This full day of professional development will provide staff a chance to discuss or expand and improve upon this Code. The day would also be interspersed with fun, team-building activities facilitated by motivational speakers and culture-building consultants. The intent would be to motivate, inspire, energize, and build collegiality among faculty and staff. This day would set the tone for future meetings and underscore the continuous need for and value of communicating, collaborating and in ensuring positive outcomes for our students.

In the beginning, our school staff will be a small, close-knit group of individuals working as a team to develop our innovative, scalable, and sustainable school model. We will allow have ample opportunity to give and receive informal feedback. We will also build formalized systems to survey staff on their attitudes, beliefs, level of satisfaction, and needs. Teacher surveys, retention rates, and student surveys will be used to gauge the success of our work in creating a professional culture that is intrinsically motivating and rewarding. Consistent monitoring and focus on staff morale will , we believe, limit staff turnover and significantly contribute to a positive professional culture.

To make school-level decisions and develop new initiatives, we will enact the following process for involving faculty and staff:
1. Identify the need/issue – review various quantitative and qualitative data
2. Form committees (a cross-section of staff, students, parents, and community members)

3. Research best/effective practices for dealing with the identified need/issue (may include visiting other schools, meeting with a larger subset of stakeholders, bringing experts to the school building for professional development)
4. Create a draft plan to solve the problem or meet the needs
5. Present the draft plan to the school community and get feedback (have structured meetings, a streamlined process for collecting and implementing suggestions for improvement, and a timeline for next steps)
6. Follow-up (communicate the process, have open dialogue, implement the plan, collect data, and revise as necessary).

We believe this process helps create ownership, buy-in, and responsibility within a school community and increases the probability of success of school change initiatives.

e. Evaluation

> **Q. Discuss how school leadership will monitor and evaluate faculty and staff performance. Describe the processes, protocols, framework/criteria, and/or tools that will be used for conducting evaluations, delivering feedback, and coaching teachers. If a contract school or ALOP, indicate how the teacher evaluation system is in compliance with PERA (see http://www.isbe.net/pera/ for more information). Specify who is responsible for overseeing these procedures.**
>
> *If proposing a blended learning model:*
> *Explain how teacher evaluation procedures – including observations, coaching and/or modeling, and analysis of student data (including from blended learning programs) – will be adapted for blended learning and online teachers.*

In keeping with the collaborative culture of CFA, faculty and staff evaluation will be characterized by formal evaluations from school leadership and ongoing peer feedback / coaching and individually crafted growth goals.

CFA staff will be a small, close-knit group of individuals comprising school leaders, teachers, a social worker, a resource specialist and a transition specialist. This small group will cooperatively develop a formal rubric for teacher evaluation which will be used across all CFA schools.

To guide our evaluation, we will use the four domains set forth in Charlotte Danielson[35] Framework for Teaching:

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation	Domain 2: Classroom Environment
1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students	2b Establishing a Culture for Learning
1c Setting Instructional Outcomes	2c Managing Classroom Procedures
1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources	2d Managing Student Behavior
1e Designing Coherent Instruction	2e Organizing Physical Space

1f Designing Student Assessments	
Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities 4a Reflecting on Teaching 4b Maintaining Accurate Records 4c Communicating with Families 4d Participating in a Professional Community 4e Growing and Developing Professionally 4f Showing Professionalism	**Domain 3: Instruction** 3a Communicating With Students 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c Engaging Students in Learning 3d Using Assessment in Instruction 3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

We realize that our model is non-traditional and therefore even Danielson's domains and rubrics, while proven and used extensively, will need to be tailored to fit our school's flexible blended learning arrangement. For example tailoring might include:

1. **Planning and Preparation** – This will be a particularly iterative process as school leadership and teachers build and refine the school model and curriculum. Planning and preparing instruction will require a particularly high degree of comfort with technology, as well as the ability to manage students engaged in varied activities simultaneously.
2. **Classroom Environment** – CFA's classroom environment will be built around a heavy focus on technology and encourage student independence. This inherently creates a different culture of learning, and the classroom space itself will look different than traditional schools. Our teaching staff will need the ability to manage this type of classroom and be able to create space to motivate each student to take ownership of their learning and education.
3. **Instruction** – Instruction at CFA will require teachers to be comfortable engaging and communicating with students via technology. They will need to be able to adapt traditional pedagogical methods to the heavy use of technology within a classroom/laboratory arrangement.
4. **Professional Responsibilities** – CFA's evaluation model will centered on the idea that teachers are the key drivers of success. As such, our approach to professional responsibilities will be intentionally collective and primarily directed by teaching staff.

CFA's teachers will also be encouraged and empowered to take ownership of their growth and development, setting individual personal goals and share them with peers and school leaders. Progress towards these goals will be assessed throughout the year – facilitated and tracked by peer coaching

Professional development will primarily be planned, guided, conducted by by both CFA's internal teaching staff and external firms such as Lumity and Gateway to College. The rationale for using internal teaching staff to conduct professional development sessions is based on our firm belied that teachers possess subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and most importantly, pedagogical content knowledge and therefore can serve as an immense source of knowledge for their peers.

Using performance indicators on CPS' School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) for Options Schools as our frame of reference, CFA teachers participate in two formal evaluations conducted each year by the school leader with input from the teachers. While this official and formally documented communication only happens twice a year, CFA school leaders are expected be in classrooms observing teaching and culture every day. Given this, any statements made in the formal evaluation document should not be a surprise to CFA teachers and instead should be the culmination of ongoing dialogue throughout the year, both with peers and school leaders.

Section 3: Operational Capacity

3.1 General Operations

a. Operational Plan, Goals, and Metrics

> **Q. Explain how non-academic services will be managed once the proposed school or program is in operation. In a table, identify quantitative operational metrics and goals for the proposed school or program for each of its first five years of operation. Discuss how these metrics will be used to monitor progress. Identify who is responsible for overseeing the school or programs operation.**

CFA will staff a centralized team that will plan, implement, and oversee non-academic services such that our campus staff can focus squarely on academic services. Non-academic services that will be provided for all campuses include budget, accounting, procurement, facility operations (custodial, repair, and maintenance), food service, information technology, human resources, payroll, and risk management.

The day-to-day management of all non-academic services (Table 3.1.a.1) is the responsibility of the Director of Finance & Operations (DFO), who will report to the Managing Director/CEO (See organizational chart in Appendices). The DFO, with the approval of the Board of Directors, will establish internal controls and financial and operational policies and procedures. Processes for non-academic services will be developed by the DFO and accomplished with a combination of in-house services and external contractors, overseen by the DFO.

Table 3.1.a1 Non-Academic Services

In-House Services	Contracted Services
Budget and Financial Planning	Audit
Bookkeeping and Bank Reconciliations	Legal
Procurement and Payables	Payroll Processing
Human Resources	Insurance
Information Technology	Food Service
Security	Custodial & Maintenance
Printing and Office Operations	Waste Removal & Grounds

Initially, the DFO will be supported by a Payroll & A/P Clerk to provide for and oversee these services. As CFA expands and grows its campuses, the centralized staff to support non-academic services will grow to include an Accounting Manager, Budget Manager, HR Manager and Operations Manager, all overseen by the DFO.

In order to ensure that non-academic services are properly supporting the campuses and their mission, CFA will track operational goals and metrics, with the primary goals and metrics outlined on the following page in Table 3.1.a.2.

Table 3.1.a2. CFA's Primary Operational Goals and Metrics								
Goal	Metric	Area	Owner	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Strong Financial Condition	Balanced Budget	Financial Services	DFO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strong Financial Condition	Change in Net Assets	Financial Services	DFO	> $0	> $0	> $0	> $0	> $0

Strong Financial Condition	Average Days of Cash	Financial Services	DFO	30	60	90	120	120
Strong Financial Practices	Compliance with Debt Obligations	Financial Services	DFO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strong Financial Practices	Audit Findings	Financial Services	DFO	None	None	None	None	None
Strong Financial Practices	Financial Statement Reporting	Financial Services	DFO	Mnthly	Mnthly	Mnthly	Mnthly	Mnthly
Strong Teacher Retention	% of High Performing Teachers Returning	Academic Services & HR	Campus Leadership	80%	85%	90%	90%	90%
High Student Demand	# of Applicants Per Seat	Academic Services & Comm'ty Outreach	Managing Director & Campus Leadership	1.5	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Consistent Network Availability	Network Uptime	Operations	Ops Manager	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Supportive Facility Condition	Staff Survey: Maintenance & Cleaning	Operations	DFO	90% positive	90% positive	90% positive	90% positive	90% positive

CFA leadership will provide the board and respective board committees with periodic reporting on these goals and metrics. By leveraging the board committee structure to adopt these goals and monitor performance outcomes against these goals, the board will hold CFA management accountable for expected quality of operational services and drive improvements, as necessary.

CFA will utilize PowerSchool as our student information system. PowerSchool will be used to track student demographic information, class scheduling, attendance, etc. Educational content will be delivered by Edgenuity®, an online content and blended learning provider. We will rely heavily on Edgenuity's® online learning platform to collect real time data that teachers will use and analyze student progress daily. The Director of Operations in conjunction with site directors will ensure that CFA provides sufficient technology support to ensure minimal downtown.

b. Start-up Plan

Having been part of establishing new schools in the past, the Managing Director/CEO along with other members of the CFA team are fully prepared for the challenging and important task of successfully opening a new school, and in CFA's case, two campuses in the first year.

Ultimately, the Managing Director/CEO is responsible for ensuring a successful launch of CFA campuses. During the planning year, a DFO and Campus Leadership positions will be staffed in addition to the Managing Director/CEO, from January through August before school openings. Along with these staff members, board members will also play a role in assisting with the start-up of the organization. A full list of tasks for school start up can be found in the Appendix 3.1.b.

c. Transportation

Most CFA students will ultimately be responsible for choosing their daily means of transportation to and from CFA campuses. These students will have the option to travel to and from school by means of walking, biking, private transportation, or public transportation, as each campus will be accessible

through the use of Chicago public transportation services. Ensuring that we meet the transportation needs of all of our students, staff Aides/Mentors will discuss the transportation options with students at the beginning of each school year to be sure each student's transportation needs are met. CFA will ensure that adequate transportation is provided to students with disabilities, low-income students, and students in temporary living situations:

- *Students with Disabilities*: Students with disabilities that inhibit their ability to travel to and from school will be provided bus services through CPS. If the need for transportation services is not already indicated in the student's IEP, the determination of needed transportation will be made through IEP development.
- *Low-Income Students*: CFA will make students and families aware of the Parent/Guardian State Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Program (found in the Illinois School Code at 105 ILCS 5/29-5.2). This way, eligible families will be able to apply for transportation cost relief. In cases where reliable transportation is still not available to these students, CFA will provide transportation resources in the form of subsided public transportation vouchers.
- *Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS)*: CPS offers Educational Support for eligible STLS through the guaranteed right to transportation to go to and from the school as long as she or he is in a temporary living situation or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year. A CFA staff member will be responsible for the appropriate contact with CPS personnel regarding coordinating this transportation and communicating with eligible students.

d. ADA Compliance

Q. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and require accessibility in all aspects of school or program operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology. Briefly describe the processes the school or program will implement to ensure ADA compliance. For additional information on ADA compliance requirements, see the ADA Guidelines & Services document located in the Resources Section of the ONS website, www.cps.edu/2014RFP.

CFA will develop all necessary policies and procedures to be in full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability and require accessibility in all aspects of school operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology. This process will be overseen by the CEO and the Director of Finance and Operations and informed by legal counsel. The ADA Policies and Procedures will be in place by the end of first quarter of the implementation phase.

Table 3.1.d. shows ADA compliance activities and responsible staff members.

Table 3.1.d. ADA Compliance		
ADA Compliance Activity	**Description**	**Staff Member Responsible**
Employment Practices, including addressing accommodations in hiring and employment	CFA will adopt employment policies that forbid employment-related discrimination on the basis of disability. CFA will consider all candidates, regardless of disability, that are qualified and can perform the job with or without accommodations.	Managing Director & Board
Policies, Practices & Procedures, including making reasonable modifications if necessary to accommodate persons with disabilities	Accommodations will be provided to employees in order to perform their position duties. Activities and meetings will be scheduled in locations that ensure that all invited employees have accessibility to participate.	Managing Director & Director of Finance and Operations
Buildings & Activities, including ensuring relocation of activities from any inaccessible room or space identified on the ADA report and obtaining accommodations for parents or visitors to school events who have hearing or visual impairments	CFA will ask that parents and visitors make a request for meeting accommodation within 2 days of a meeting or activity. CFA will provide the necessary accommodations.	Managing Director & Director of Finance and Operations
Communications & IT, including insuring that the proposed school website and all information technology in the proposed school, including hardware, software, and web-based applications are accessible to persons with disabilities	CFA will document the need for assistive technologies in each student's IEP and will report it to CPS Department of Diverse Learners. CFA will accommodate employees requiring special technology to perform duties accommodations.	Managing Director & Director of Finance and Operations

3.2 Student Engagement

a. Recruitment and Retention

> **Q. Discuss strategies to recruit and retain the targeted student population. How will the school attract and retain all students, including diverse learners, EL students, and students in temporary living situations? Name specific partnerships your school would build in order to connect prospective students to your school. Identify which staff member will be responsible for recruitment and retention. Provide evidence that the proposed strategies have proven effective with your identified target population. If you do not have a track record, describe a logical, reasonable plan for finding and engaging your target population (i.e., out-of-school youth). Explain the evidence you have that the components of your plan will be successful.**

CFA will utilize a variety of methods and media to attract and recruit a broad range of youth throughout the communities it will serve. Each method and all recruitment materials and media will include information regarding CFA's ability to serve students with disabilities. Recruitment activities will include:

- Participation in the Annual CPS High School Fair
- CFA's website listing of campuses
- Inclusion on CPS' listing of alternative schools
- Inform traditional high schools of CFA's ability to serve and focus on serving high risk students
- Inform local churches and community and service organizations
- Distribution of flyers and brochures throughout neighborhoods and at schools
- Advertise in community newspapers
- Distribution of literature to local community organizations and churches
- Advertise on public transportation, local radio stations, cable access channels and public affairs stations
- Utilization social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

CFA will recruit citywide and will make special effort to ensure all student are welcome regardless of any special circumstances.

b. Individual Success Plan

> **Q. Upon enrollment, describe how staff will work to establish and maintain individual success plans (ISP) and work with students to set academic, behavior, attendance, and transition goals. How will you monitor the progress of ISPs? Who will be part of the process? How often will updates be made? How will you evaluate the quality of? Who will monitor that they are being implemented with fidelity?**

During the initial enrollment period of the student, the Resource Specialist and mentor team will conduct transcript analysis to determine where students are in meeting credit requirements toward graduation. Students' credits will be accepted based upon demonstrated performance on initial

placement assessments. In conjunction with the site director, Individual Learning Plans (ILP) or ISP will be created to clearly determine a student's career interest and what it will take to prepare him or her for post-secondary success. The role of the Resource Specialist is detailed in the job descriptions provided in Attachment 2.1.e. Utilizing GtCNN proprietary data system, the Resource Specialist in conjunction with the teaching staff will monitor weekly progress across the continuum of academic, social, emotional, and physical health of students. It is the site director's responsibility to monitor quality of the implementation of the GtCNN system.

c. Student Intake and Orientation

> **Q. Describe your intake process for prospective students and the orientation process for incoming students, including those who will enter at various times throughout the year. Indicate how you will ensure that students become acclimated to the school or program culture and expectations. For students who enter in a group at the beginning of the year, detail the number of days, the staffing plan, and the overall curriculum for your orientation process. For intake throughout the year, describe your staffing plan for intake and orientation.**

CFA will officially enroll students on the quarter plan. Prior to enrollment, students who have been accepted through the Enrollment process and completed all requirements for registration will participate in a weeklong orientation where they will be introduced to the expectations of new students, career / interest inventories, academic assessments, development of the ILP and finally course enrollment. Students will attend half-days for this registration/orientation process. The site director and resource specialist will oversee the orientation process.

d. Application, Enrollment, and Registration Policies

> **Q. Describe the proposed school or program's application, enrollment, and registration policies and procedures for all students, recognizing that some of your students will be entering at various times throughout the school year. Your policies and procedures should address admissions, lottery (for charter schools), waiting list, withdrawals, and transfers. Outline the requirements for families and students to apply to the proposed school or program, explain how the proposed school or program will conduct its lottery or manage its waiting list, if over-subscribed, and specify how students will register once enrolled. Explain how the proposed school or program will ensure that the application, enrollment, and registration policies are in compliance with the Charter School Law and or Illinois School Code.**

Admission and Program Entrance Requirements

For the purposes of admission into the Charter, CFA accepts enrollment of any pupil who resides within the City of Chicago (Board of Education District #299), is 16-21 years of age, at risk or has dropped out or formally withdrawn from his or her former school. Priority for enrollment is given to pupils who were enrolled in the previous year, unless expelled for cause, neighborhood youth and siblings of students currently enrolled. Students who have reached the age of 21 before the beginning of the academic year may not enroll in CFA. Likewise, students who are under the age of 16 at the beginning of the school

year may not enroll in CFA. If the student turns 21 during the school year, s/he may remain in enrollment for the rest of that year only.

Notwithstanding the above admission and program requirements, CFA shall operate at all times in accordance with the Charter Schools Law and all other applicable Federal and State laws from which the Charter School is not otherwise exempt, and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, marital status or need for special education services. All campus program entrance criteria must include the following non-discrimination/ Equal Employment Opportunity & Fair hiring language: "Campus does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, marital status or need for special education services."

Students interested in enrolling in CFA can apply directly to a CFA campus in person, via CFA's website or at the CFA administrative office. Applicants will be fully informed of the educational programs and services offered. Included in CFA's policy is full disclosure of all available educational services and program offerings. Applicants must be fully informed of the process of application for CFA enrollment.

CFA will use an application form to document the application process. In addition to an application form, the following information is collected on each applicant and maintained on file:

- Proof of age
- Proof of residence
- Drop or release forms from prior school
- Transcript (when available).

Enrollment, Application, and Lottery Process

As stated previously, applicants may apply to enroll in CFA at one of CFA's campuses or at the administrative office. Students wishing to enroll in CFA must indicate their campus preference or preferences in rank order on the application for enrollment. In the event that an applicant meets CFA's enrollment criteria as well as program pre-enrollment criteria for their selected campus and there is no available space, the applicant will be placed on the CFA lottery list. CFA shall not request information in the application process about a student's academic aptitude, special education needs, or English language proficiency.

Application process - applicants are informed of the following:

- The availability of space
- A description of the campus program that includes, at a minimum, the classes offered and the graduation requirements
- A determination of whether the applicant meets CFA's admission criteria

In the event that there are more applicants than available space at a campus, and the applicant meets the campus admissions criteria, the applicant's name will be placed on a Waiting/Lottery List (see below).

Lottery Process

All waiting/lottery lists and applicant referrals are forwarded to the CFA office. During the course of the school year, CFA maintains a "Waiting/Lottery List" of eligible applicants. If at any time there are more eligible applicants for enrollment than available space, eligible applicants are selected by lottery. CFA conducts one lottery per year, prior to the beginning of the new school year. The CFA central office draws from that lottery to enroll students for the new school year, and then conducts lotteries as needed to fill available seats when students withdraw or graduate. The applicant remains in the lottery pool until he/she is removed due to enrollment or the student has moved with no forwarding address and/or has no working phone number, is no longer interested in attending CFA, or is no longer eligible for enrollment.

If by June 1 of each year there are more eligible applicants than space available for the upcoming year, eligible applicants shall be selected by lottery. The Waiting/Lottery List is a list of eligible students who have made application to CFA but were not accepted due to lack of available space. The Board of Directors, or its appointees at the CFA administrative office between June 1 and August 1 of each year, conduct the CFA annual lottery.

All lotteries are witnessed by a third party or videotaped.

Placement Criteria

CFA permits campuses to set campus program placement criteria in addition to CFA admission requirements. The use of placement criteria helps to determine each student's academic program. Placement criteria do not limit an applicant's admission into CFA. Placement criteria are defined as student information that is used to determine the most appropriate campus placement for the applicant. When determining the most appropriate campus placement, CFA reviews the proximity of the campus to the applicant's home, the student's academic needs, and the student's area of focus. Campus program placement criteria must be directly related to the program mission. The campus must not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, marital status or need for special education services. All campus program placement criteria must be part of the campus admission policies and procedures, and approved by CFA prior to the start of the school year.

e. Transition Planning

> **Q. The goal is to support each student through completion/graduation of the program. In the event a student chooses to transition out of the program, identify who will be responsible for oversight, implementation of the transition plan, and reporting of transitional data.**
>
> *With this information, provide your plan on how you will support students who are transitioning from the program. Provide a process map to illustrate all steps, including (but not limited to) the following:*
> *--When will the transition process begin for a student?*
> *--Identify what points in a year a student will be eligible to transition out of your program, and how eligibility will be determined.*
> *--Identify the owner or team members, including stakeholders who may support the process, responsible for facilitating the transition plan.*
> *--Once students are deemed ready to transition from the program, what services will be provided to parents to assist them in identifying the next best setting/good academic fit?*

With the cooperation of teachers, mentors/assistants, coaches, social worker and others, the transition specialist will establish close trusting with students and practice intrusive advising. The transition specialist works solely with students who have fully transitioned to a post-secondary setting. They provide a high level of support to help students apply, enroll and persist in college. As previously explained, transition specialists will work with CFA students in a manner similar to resource specialists. The primary difference is that the transition specialist works solely with students who have fully transitioned to a post-secondary setting. They provide a high level of support to help students apply, enroll and persist in college. The transition specialist will establish close relationship with City College advising staff to monitor performance in college course work. Additionally, the transition specialist will utilize social media such as Facebook® to create a community to access students post-graduation.

f. Attendance & Truancy Strategies and Family/Guardian Information

> **Q. Describe your attendance and truancy strategies, including the school-wide steps that will be taken to promote attendance. Categorize strategies as prevention, intervention, and recovery of chronic truants. Provide evidence that the proposed strategies have proven effective with your identified target population. Indicate who will be responsible for conducting outreach to students when they do not attend. Describe the method and staff responsible for ensuring that families/guardians are in regular contact with the school for reports on student attendance and performance. Detail the system for communicating student progress to families, including attendance, academic and social.**

CFA believes that encouraging students to focus on their future will enhance the value of their high school experience. By focusing our students on their future goals and the journey they must take to reach future work goals, the value of the CFA educational experience will come alive for them. It is our belief that by partnering with GtCNN and utilizing the GtC Holistic Student Support System (refer to section 2.1.e) we will have significant impact on student attendance behaviors.

3.3 Governance Model

a. Governance

Structure

> **Q. Describe the structure of the Governing Board/Body at the proposed school or program. (If an existing Chicago replicator, describe if/how the structure of the Board/Body will adapt to support the additional grade configurations, and/or the new school/campus/program.) Identify any proposed Board/Body officer positions, committees, or advisory councils – including those with family members – and explain their role, planned membership, and reporting structure as they relate to the Governing Board/Body and school leadership.**

The CFA Board of Directors (Board) understands that its role is to provide guidance and direction to the organization that allows it to fulfill its vision and mission, reflect its core values, maintain accountability and fulfill its responsibilities to the students, parents and families, community and its many independent constituencies including the authorizing entity and state laws that allow the organization to exist and function. Each member of the Board and the Board itself acknowledges and accepts the legal responsibilities of a duty of care (the ordinarily prudent person standard), a duty of loyalty (standard of faithfulness) and duty of obedience (faithfulness to organization mission) and acknowledge that beyond those legal responsibilities it has responsibilities for the health and sustainability of the organization. This means that the Board recognizes that to be effective it must excel in its governance function but also provide outstanding management support.

A major role of the CFA Board is to serve as a thought partner to executive management and staff as they strive to operationalize CFA's vision and mission. CFA's Board is ultimately responsible for all aspects of campus and organization operations. The Board at all times will meet and exceed minimum requirements for sustaining it's not-for-profit corporate status in the State of Illinois. The Board will maintain a minimum of 3 and not exceed a maximum of 15 voting directors. CFA's Managing Director will serve as a member of the board. Board members will be selected that have expressed interest in and desire to serve the population of students that CFA intends to serve. Additionally every board member will have the skills and capacity to assist CFA in accomplishing its mission. As in any start-up, the Board of Directors will be called upon to recruit additional members to achieve the board's desired skill levels and expertise.

The Board will have the following standing committees: executive, finance, program compliance and performance, fund development, and facilities. Each committee will be chaired by a member of the Board and may have members that are not on the Board but have particular expertise that will support the committee's and the Board's decision-making process. The Board has the power to appoint additional committees and to delegate appropriate authority as needed. A committee with corporate authority must have a majority of its membership comprised of directors.

The Executive Committee meets monthly and is responsible for recommending policy decisions and discussing strategic issues that require immediate dialogue or decision. The group is empowered to act on behalf of the board, for later board ratification, if prompt and urgent action is required in the areas of

human resources, finance and health and safety. The Executive Committee is chaired by the Board Chairman and comprises corporate officers and committee chairs. The committee (acting as a governance committee) will be responsible for recruiting new board members to CFA during its first 24 months and for developing and running the re-nomination process of existing board members. With input from the Managing Director, the Board chair and the full board, the Executive Committee will identify skill sets and competencies that the board requires to enhance its work and leverage the relationships of the school, its partners and its constituents to identify members who fit the board's needs.

- The Finance Committee conducts monthly reviews of budget proposals and year to date financials, selects an auditor, reviews the annual audit, and reports to the full board. The Finance Committee is chaired by the Board Treasurer.
- The Program Compliance and Performance Committee reviews organizational compliance with all applicable laws including the Charter Law, Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, contract compliance (CPS, state and federal grants/contracts), and monitors academic performance. The PCP Committee is chaired by the Board Vice-Chairman.
- The Fund Development Committee works to ensure that CFA meets it's fund raising goals by developing and implementing the board approved fund development strategy. The Fund Development Committee will be chaired by a member of the board with expertise suited to support the fund development efforts of the organization.
- The Facilities Committee works to ensure that CFA facilities meet all applicable Health and Safety and ADA requirements, oversees preventive maintenance schedules, identifies new facilities, and oversees lease and construction negotiations and contracts. The Facilities Committee will be chaired by a member of the board with expertise in real estate development and management.

Board members will have staggered terms such that the number of board members potentially entering or leaving at any one time is manageable. As a board member's term comes to conclusion, the process for existing board members to be re-nominated will include a board member self-evaluation and a board member scorecard, both of which will be aligned to a board member job description. This process will be run by the Board's executive committee.

Progress Monitoring

> **Q. Clearly describe the procedures that the Board/Body will use to continually monitor academic, financial, operational, and legal compliance aspects of the school or program. Describe any policies or procedures that will ensure that Board/Body meetings are conducted in an efficient, timely manner.**

In its fiduciary role, the Board has the responsibility to be objective, unselfish, responsible, honest, trustworthy and efficient. As stewards of the public trust, Board members act for the good of the organization, exercise reasonable care in decision making and avoid unnecessary risks. To avoid "unnecessary risk" means that systems for monitoring the academic, fiscal, operational and legal health

are in place. To support CFA's long and healthy life, the board will institute the following monitoring systems, which will evolve with the growth of the organization:

1. All board members will understand, and some board members will be expert in, financial affairs. As noted above, budgets will be developed and financials will be monitored monthly, with variance reviews and discussions as appropriate. From these discussions, judgments of financial soundness, leading and lagging indicators, need for budget revisions and distress indicators will be in place. We will: have monthly cash flow reports and projections of adequacy; in due time, develop reserve targets and measure them against time sensitive benchmarks; monitor expense and revenue growth and pace and make adjustments accordingly; and establish normal accounting checks and balances, including function segregation appropriate to our size and normal fraud prevention checks including independent review of bank statements, two signature requirements, etc.

2. With respect to legal compliance, the Board will understand the limitations and restrictions as well as the powers granted by the Charter Law, the Open Meetings Act and any other applicable state requirements. The Board will assure appropriate filings with the IRS including withholding tax payments and Form 990 filings; and any similar state attorneys general requirements. The board will assure reasonableness of executive compensation and have periodic reports on external requests that may require freedom of information or other action response.

3. With respect to academic performance, the board will understand and track performance standards presented in its operating plan and measure progress against organizational expectations. Given the individual learning plans, technology based instruction, competency based assessments and other individual attributes of the CFA school model, the board will be trained to understand progress against the performance metrics required to meet and exceed contracted performance requirements. The Board will establish systems to track; enrollment, progression to degree, dual college enrollment numbers and credits, and percentage of students enrolling in community college without remediation. Variances from expected progress will be measured in the total student population with assessments of ongoing recruitment strategies, time to performance targets, anticipated student loss, and student attendance and persistence statistics. Appropriate services for our student population and assessments of social and emotional engagement and quality of supports provided by our Gateway partners as described in Section 2.1.d, will be a part of the Board's evaluation.

4. The managing director will be evaluated on management and operational standards including facility preparedness. In developing expectations for periodic review of quality of staff, required support structures, adequacy of administrative staff and related issues, see the school leader evaluation in Section e. below.

See Attachment 3.3.c for our proposed Board Calendar.

> **Q. What formalized mechanism(s) will the proposed school or program have for families and the community to be involved in the governance of the school or program, and/or provide regular feedback to the Board/Body of Directors? What policy or procedure will provide guidance for families who have an objection, or concern, regarding a Governing Board/Body policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school?**

In addition to the Board oversight (one member of the board will be from one of the target communities), each campus will have a community advisory board which will support the unique focus of the campus and be responsible for local community input, relations and development. A campus will have several family days during an academic year for students still residing with a parent or guardian. During these sessions, we will address family concerns and issues and conduct surveys. Further, the faith based community is a major partner that will provide social support, and we will work with church leaderships and with individual members of the congregations who have children or other relatives in school or in some relation to the organization. A Board member will be designated, in an appropriate appeal process, to review decisions of the managing director involving matters of board policy or regulation, administrative procedure or school practice. The decision of the board representative will be the final step in the internal appeal process.

b. Board Experience

> **Q. CPS expects that by the time of Tier 1 proposal submission, design teams will have identified, at a minimum, the proposed Board/Body Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. At least one founding Board/Body member has close ties to the proposed community.   CPS highly encourages design teams to have identified at least a sufficient number of Board/Body members to comprise a quorum of the Founding Board/Body by the time of submission. Identify who will fill these roles, as well as any other Founding Board/Body members already identified, and discuss their qualifications to serve on a public school Governing Board/Body.**

INFORMATION INTENTIONALLY DELETED

c. Legal Compliance and Ethics Policies

> **Transparency**
>
> **Q. Specify where and how frequently the Board/Body plans to meet. Describe the procedures that will be in place to ensure compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and the Freedom of Information Act.**

The Board of Directors will meet monthly, during the first year of operation, to discuss the operations of CFA and progress toward annual goals and objectives. The meeting calendar is attached, reflecting the meeting date set in the organization's by-laws. To evidence the transparency of the Board's operations the following is noted:

- The Board will maintain an annual schedule of meetings and will post such schedule annually, a year in advance;
- The Board will post an agenda in advance of each meeting, conforming to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, with clear information materials, and any permitted private sessions clearly identified; At each meeting, the group will:
  - Complete and record accurate minutes of each meeting will be maintained; and
  - Follow the agenda honoring time constraints, yet encouraging full participation from members;
- Each Board member will be asked to serve on at least one committee, best matching his or her skills and ability to contribute to the organization; and
- The organization will acknowledge Board member contribution in appropriate venues.

Proof of CFA's 501(c)(3) filing is attached.

Q. Provide a draft Ethics Policy for the proposed school or program's Board/Body members, directors, officers, and employees.

See Appendix

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Q. Describe how the Board/Body will identify and address conflicts of interest. Identify any existing actual or perceived conflicts of interest among the proposed Founding Board/Body members, and explain how the design team/Founding Board/Body plans to address them. Include a draft Conflict of Interest policy that establishes safeguards to prohibit any of the proposed school or program's Board/Body members, directors, officers, employees, agents, or family members from having a private interest, direct or indirect, or acquiring any such interest directly or indirectly, which would conflict in any manner with the school's performance and obligations under the Charter School Agreement, Contract Agreement, or ALOP Agreement. The policy may be separate from, or included in, the Ethics Policy above.

Section 14 of CFA's bylaws addresses CFA's policy on conflicts of interest. Specifically, in an instance where the board if voting on a transaction involving a board member, the presence of the board member who is directly or indirectly a party to the transaction, or a board member who is otherwise not disinterested, may be counted in determining whether a quorum is present but may not be counted when the Board or committee of the Board takes action on the transaction.

For more specificity on CFA's conflict of interest policy, please see the attached Bylaws and draft Conflict of Interest policy.

Board members will self-identify any possible conflicts of interest either in relationship to any project or proposal to come before the Board or in the annual conflict of interest form which each will sign at the organization's annual meeting. The nature of the conflict and any mitigation required is defined in the policy attached hereto.

A current economic interest form for each founding board member is attached.

d. Board Development

Composition

Q. Identify the desired composition of the Governing Board/Body, including key skills and constituencies that will be represented. If an existing operator is proposing a new school/campus or additional grade levels, describe any additional skillsets that the Board/Body may try to acquire to support the growth, and/or any professional development that existing Board/Body members may receive. Charter schools are required to describe the nature and extent of parent, professional educator, and community involvement on the Board (105 ILCS 5/27A-7(10)).

CFA's board will include a combination of civic and corporate leaders who have diverse skill sets, backgrounds and experiences. The board's by-laws state that there will be no less than three (3) nor

more than fifteen (15) members of the board of directors. Our board will be comprised of members who have the following areas of expertise:

- Finance
- Development / fundraising
- Education
- Marketing
- Past governance experience
- Talent / human resources

Furthermore, in order to ensure fidelity to the mission of CFA, we will select Board members who have a passion for serving at-risk youth. The Founding board is illustrative of the talent level and quality that will be pursued throughout the life of the organization.

Recruitment

> **Q. Provide a plan and timeline for recruiting a Governing Board/Body prior to school opening and thereafter that represents the diverse skillsets, experience, and backgrounds required for rigorous school or program oversight. In particular, detail how Board/Body members with skillsets that are not yet represented on the founding Board/Body will be recruited. Identify any existing relationships with individuals or organizations that the design team can leverage as it develops its Founding board/body.**

CFA's current Board of five members and the Managing Director possess a diverse set of qualifications, including expertise in education, public finance, board governance, at-risk youth, law, marketing, executive leadership, and strategy. As CFA expands its board, it will recruit members with experience in development and fundraising and talent / human resources. In this process, CFA expects to draw on its current board's relationship to Leadership Greater Chicago and Leap's Next Generation programming resources for recruitment of corporate and civic leadership. After the initial 24 months, it is expected that Board recruitment will be transitioned to a stand-alone Governance committee.

Selection

> **Q. Specify the process by which Board/Body members have been selected and will be selected in the future.**

The initial members of CFA's board were recruited by the Managing Director/CEO. Once CFA is approved for its charter, the board will transition from founding to governing, at which point committees will be formed, as noted above, including the executive/governance committee, which will take on the duty of recruiting additional board members. As it relates to new board members, the executive/governance committee will identify candidates for the board, leveraging member contacts and school constituents, based on qualification criteria and noted gaps in the board. The board chair and/or CFA's managing director will individually interview candidates prior to their nomination, and based on the outcome of those interviews, the executive/governance committee will nominate new members to the full board, which is ultimately responsible for electing new board members.

Q. Discuss the design team's role in interacting with, or participating, in the Founding Board/Body during the start-up of the school, and after school opening. Describe a transition plan and associated timeline, as the Founding Board/Body becomes the working Board/Body.

During the design of CFA, the Managing Director--the primary design lead of CFA, shall serve as a voting member of the board. Founding Board members are also responsible for start-up of CFA. Once CFA is approved for its charter and the Managing Director is employed by CFA, the Managing Director will transition to being a non-voting member of the board. At this point, the board will cease performing any day-to-day execution responsibilities and will transition to a more traditional governance role, as described above. The role will include setting policies and expected outcomes of CFA and overseeing CFA's performance in accordance with those policies and expected outcomes. In order to effectively provide oversight, the board will work in the committee structure described in detail above.

Training

Q. Describe any orientation and ongoing training that Board/Body members will receive, including a timeline for training and topics to be addressed.

The Managing Director will be responsible for on-boarding and orienting new board members, and will provide new board members with tours of CFA campuses and relevant organizational and business plan documents at the beginning of the board member's term. For ongoing training, CFA board members will adopt many of the recommended tools of The High Bar, starting with their guidebook for boards. A subscription to The High Bar will allow board members access to training on a variety of topics, including Executive Director oversight, committee effectiveness, fiscal soundness, development strategies, recruitment strategies, and academic best practices. The CFA board will pursue its training options (The High Bar or other services) once CFA obtains its charter approval. New board members will be paired with an existing board member for the first 3 months of board meetings.

e. Accountability

Organizational Chart

Q. Provide a narrative description of an attached comprehensive organizational chart, which should clearly describe the lines of authority and reporting structure of the school or program leadership, management organization (if applicable), and any school or program advisory bodies or family/teacher councils (if applicable), to the Governing Board/Body. Explain the rationale for this proposed structure.

CFA's managing director is responsible for day to day operations. The executive team of CFA is comprised of the managing Director/CEO, director of education/CAO, and the director of finance and operations. All organization level directors will report to the managing director with dotted line reporting to the chairs of the corresponding board committee. As multiple sites are opened, site directors will be hired and report to the director of education/CAO. The site director will manage all campus academic staff personnel. All site non-academic personnel will report to the director of

operations with dotted line reporting to the site director. The CFA campus advisory boards will support the site director in securing additional resources to enhance the teaching and learning objectives at the campus level. The advisory boards will have no governance or programmatic oversight responsibility and will provide feedback and other input as described in the Family & Community Involvement section above.

School/Program Leader Evaluation

Q. How will the Board/Body evaluate the performance of the network (if applicable), and school or program leader(s)?

The managing director holds the key leadership position in CFA. Under the authority of the board, the managing director assumes full responsibility for carrying out the assigned roles, policies and regulations. The managing director has the authority to direct the implementation of the organization's programs and services, and is responsible for the management of all staff members and for recruiting, supporting and directing volunteers.

The managing director:

- Directs the day-to-day operations
- Implements policy
- Hires, trains, delegates, supervises, evaluates, and releases staff
- Attends all board meetings, and is invited to all committee meetings
- Acts as a consultant to the board and its committees

CFA's managing director has ten key responsibility areas:

1. Policy Management
2. Strategic Planning
3. Visioning
4. Leadership
5. Program Management
6. Personnel Management
7. Financial Management
8. Risk Analysis
9. Advocacy Management
10. Director's Performance Appraisal Process

CFA's managing director in conjunction with the board's executive committee will develop annual performance metrics based upon the key responsibility areas. These key areas will set the foundation for the board's annual evaluation of the managing director. Our comprehensive organization chart appears in Attachment 3.3.e.

Q. Explain how the Board/Body will evaluate its own effectiveness on an ongoing basis. What expectations will there be for Board/Body membership and what clear, measurable goals and metrics will the Board use to evaluate itself? What actions would trigger removal from the Board/Body, and what process would guide removal?

The Board will adopt a board job description which will include its own expectations of itself. Key among the board's expectation of itself are the following:

1. Determine mission and purpose
2. Select the chief executive
3. Support and evaluate the chief executive
4. Ensure effective planning
5. Monitor and strengthen programs and services
6. Ensure adequate financial resources
7. Protect assets and provide financial oversight
8. Build a competent board
9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity
10. Enhance the organization's public standing

Each year, the executive/governance committee will develop a self-evaluation that is aligned to the board job description, and it will provide a base for measuring the board's overall effectiveness based on this self-evaluation. The Board will also adopt a board member job description which describes the expectations of each individual board member. Individual board member effectiveness will be measured in two ways: 1) based on a self-evaluation that each board member completes, and 2) based on an evaluation that the board chair completes on each board member, in alignment with individual board member job descriptions. These individual evaluations will be used by the executive/governance committee to determine a board member's status for potential re-nomination.

Section 4: Economic Soundness

4.1. School Budget

a. Financial Forms

> **Q. Complete the budget workbook. Instructions are provided on the first tab of the budget workbook. Assumptions should be clearly detailed in the budget workbook. If the space on the Excel worksheet is insufficient for any given budget line, include an explanation in the budget narrative. Financial forms that do not include assumptions will be considered incomplete.** *If you are an existing national operator, see additional budget requests in Section 5: Existing National Management Organizations.*
>
> *If a blended learning applicant:*
>
> *Include costs associated with the implementation of the blended learning model, including device set-up support, device repair and replacement, infrastructure, Information Technology (IT) support, and home Internet access.*
>
> *If a blended learning applicant:*
>
> *All unique costs associated with the implementation of their model are accounted for.*

b. Budget Narrative

> **Q. Include a budget narrative that provides a high-level summary of the budget, and describes how the budget reflects the mission, vision, education plan, and overall strategic development of the proposed school or program. Discuss how resources will be used to support identified school or program priorities and specific student needs, including any changes in funding over the first five years of the school's existence.**

Connected Futures Academies has developed financial projections that align with and represent its mission and vision. CFA, at full development, will include five campuses across the City of Chicago, under the larger umbrella of a central operator. As defined by the template instructions tab, individual spreadsheet templates have been created for each proposed campus and included as a part of this application. Central Operation (CO) level costs have been allocated to the campuses and incorporated into their expenses - this allocation detail can be found on the CO Costs tab.

Summary and Primary Assumptions

Each proposed campus generates a surplus in every year of operation, with year 5 surplus margin ranging from 1% to 13% across all campuses. Primary assumptions made in each template include:

- Each campus will start with 125 students in the first year of operation and grow to maximum enrollment of 165 students by Year 3.
- Staffing in Year 5 aligns appears in Table 4.1.b.1 below.

Table 4.1.b1 CFA Campus Year 5 Staffing	
Position	**FTE**
Site Director	1
Social Worker	1
Registrar	1
Resource Specialist	1
Transition Specialist	1
General Ed Teachers	5
SPED Teachers	2
SPED Clinicians – Psychologist, Social Worker, Speech Therapist, Nurse	0.1 each

- First year average general education teacher salary is $50,000
- Salaries assumed to increase at 2% per annum
- CFA will contribute 10.6% to CTPF and 4.40% to 403b for eligible employees
- Additional assumptions can be seen in the Budget with Assumptions, Calculations, and CO Costs tabs of the template

Each of CFA's campuses will adopt a blended learning model and will partner with a City College of Chicago to provide dual enrollment opportunities for students. Teachers and mentors will work with students to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in a given career-focused industry, including: Allied Health; Manufacturing; Green Construction; Hospitality; and Technology.

These unique aspects to CFA's educational plan are reflected in the Budget Template, and noted below:

Campus Additions

CFA plans to open two campuses in Fall 2016, and then it will add one campus each year for the next three years (Fall of 2017, 2018 and 2019). While this timeline is reflected in the Calculations and CO Costs tabs of the financial forms, the nature of the Budget Template required that Campuses 4 and 5

appear as though they are opening in 2016. Adjustments to calculations for rates and enrollment have been made accordingly and can be seen on the Calculations tab of the Budget Template.

Additional information about each campus can be found in Table 4.1.b.2 below:

Table 4.1.b2. Five-Year Plan for Campus Additions				
Campus	**Year Open (Actual)**	**Location (where available)**	**Focus**	**Partner**
Campus 1	FY16	Greater Grand Crossing	Hospitality	Kennedy King College
Campus 2	FY16	Grand Boulevard	Construction	Dawson
Campus 3	FY17	Chicago Lawn	Manufacturing	Daley College
Campus 4	FY18	N/A	TBD	TBD
Campus 5	FY19	N/A	TBD	TBD

Note: for campuses 1, 4, and 5, we have assumed CPS District (Default) in the neighborhood selection on the budget template's 'Revenues-Fed, State, & Expan.' tab. The predetermined percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch in the template is low compared to estimates based on past experience with the same target demographic – this results in underestimated SGSA and Title I funds for CFA schools in this template.

Dual Enrollment – Impact on Staffing & Revenue Forecasts

Students at CFA will also be enrolled in one of the partner City Colleges of Chicago, dependent upon their campus and field of study. Students in their first year at CFA will spend 30% of their time enrolled at a local college, while students in their second and third years will spend approximately 60% and 100% of their instructional time, respectively, at the local college. Because students at CFA will not spend all of their instructional time at the school, student-teacher ratios are notably higher than other Chicago charter schools, though they are similar to those at alternative schools with comparable dual enrollment models.

CFA will pay tuition for students to attend local colleges, at varying rates. This is reflected in the Budget Template in the Expense line item for "Dual Enrollment." The Calculations tab provides additional explanation as to how this expense was calculated, based on the estimated number of students in their first, second and third years for Years 1 through 5 of the school's existence. A weighted number of dual enrollment students was calculated for each year, multiplied by the $2,000 full-time tuition rate for the local college.

Additionally, City Colleges of Chicago has agreed to provide a tuition reimbursement of 50% to CFA for the first two years of the school's existence. This is reflected in the Revenues line item for "Revenue from City Colleges of Chicago."

Blended Learning School Design

Connected Futures Academies will operate a blended learning model, wherein students spend a portion of their learning time using technology independently, rather than through direct instruction from a teacher. For their model, CFA assumes a one-to-one ratio of student to device, so that all students may access their online coursework simultaneously, if need be. CFA will purchase Chromebooks for all of its students, and assumes 40 additional device purchases per year per campus for replacement purposes. IT costs also include per-student rates for digital curricula, instructional systems, and a student information system, as well as spending on computer network equipment (includes cost of wiring, infrastructure, switches, firewalls and regular maintenance).

As a result of its blended learning model, CFA will have a higher student-teacher ratio than is typical of a traditional Chicago charter school. The technology-based model allows classroom teachers to rotate between groups of students for more direct attention, as well as for more independent online work for the student him/herself. Mentors are used to assist students with independent work, at a lower average salary than a certified teacher. Lower student-teacher ratios can also be attributed to the dual enrollment model with City Colleges of Chicago explained above.

c. Development Plan

> *Q.* **Include a description of additional revenue needed to maintain financial viability, including detailed assumptions behind the calculation of projected need (including the amount). Identify existing relationships with potential funders; indicate current levels of interest, and present contingency plans in the event that development goals are not realized.**

There is an increasing awareness nationally of the need for personalized learning and career readiness models serving alternative students. Therefore, CFA's fundraising plan includes pursuing multiple sources of additional revenue to enhance the CO and campus-level programming. The Board of Directors will have a Development Committee devoted entirely to working alongside the Executive Director and DFO to build these relationships and funding opportunities. Additional revenue in CFA's plans and financial forms included below in Table 4.1.c.

Table 4.1.c. Proposed Additional Sources of Revenue		
Organization	**Funds Pursued**	**Assumption**
Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Grants	$75,000 Annually, per campus	Per campus beginning in Year 2 of each campus' operation
The Walton Family Foundation	$250,000 One time, per campus	Per campus, one time, in Year 1
Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)	$150,000 One time	One time grant in Year 0 for Campus 2 only
CFA Board of Directors	$50,000 Annually	Minimum of $50,000 raised annually by Board

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Grants

WIA grants are provided through the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. CFA Leadership has experience in acquiring these grants and understands the organization's willingness to support alternative models like CFA. These grants are provided on an annual basis at an assumed average rate of $75,000 per campus and will fund general program support. Funding is assumed to begin in year 2 at each campus, after a demonstrated successful first year of campus operation.

The Walton Family Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation funds alternative charter schools that meet the organization's academic standards. CFA will pursue the $250,000 base grant award from the Startup Grant Program after receiving the charter authorization. The funds are assumed to be received in year 1 at each campus. To remain conservative, CFA budget templates reflect keeping the entire award from Walton in contingency. This will add flexibility to spending at the campus level in the event that the award is received.

Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)

CFA is applying to NGLC's Wave IV Grant for breakthrough school models for college readiness. A summary of the grant can be found here. NGLC funds "bold" breakthrough school models in the blended learning space, and CFA's blended learning model is particularly bold in serving the target alternative student population. CFA was discouraged from applying to the NGLC Chicago regional pilot because the cohort program stated that they do not have the expertise to support design for the most at-risk kids. Therefore, CFA will apply directly to NGLC for the national $150,000 launch grant for a single school model, due on December 2, 2013. Grantees will receive the proceeds in the 2014 incubation year. These

funds will be used primarily to support Campus 2's year 0 blended learning purchases and to build a cash balance for year 1.

CFA Board of Directors

The Development Committee on the Board of Directors will be responsible for overseeing the fundraising of $50,000 annually. The minimum requirement of $50,000 will be incremental to the funds raised from the organizations above, and will be raised primarily through connections with individuals, corporations and foundations, as well as through fundraising events. The funds raised by the Board of Directors will benefit all campuses.

4.2. Financial Controls

a. Financial Monitoring

> **Q. Describe plans to ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance for the proposed school or program. Specifically, address the financial monitoring process that the Board will use to receive updates on the school or program's financial position. Who is responsible for directly managing and overseeing the school or program's budget? If applying for a charter, Illinois Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-5(f)) requires charter schools to submit an annual audit of school finances conducted by an outside, independent contractor.**

Connected Futures Academies will comply fully with all applicable financial reporting and legal requirements regarding fiscal management and oversight. CFA's policies and procedures relating to these matters can be subdivided as follows:

Financial Oversight and Responsibilities

The responsibility of financial oversight lies with the Board of Directors, which will establish a Finance Committee that oversees financial reporting on a monthly basis. The Board will ultimately ensure that the financial operation of each school and the CO overall remain aligned to the CO's mission and vision.

CFA's Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), with the approval of the Board of Directors, will establish internal controls and financial and operational policies and procedures. The DFO is responsible for all matters pertaining to preparation and delivery of budget reports to the Board, in addition to day-to-day operations and compliance of all schools, according to financial policies and procedures of the CO. The DFO will also establish CFA's chart of accounts, as well as establish and implement an accounting software system.

Policies and procedures approved by the Board will establish authorized personnel for contract decision making and check signing. All checks written by the accounting staff will use pre-numbered check stock. The bank accounts will be monitored on a weekly basis to ensure that no fraudulent checks have been

presented to the bank and paid. Upon receipt of the monthly bank statements, a reconciliation of bank to books will be completed using the software in the general ledger system.

Per Section 3.1.a, the DFO will oversee the services shown below in Table 4.2.1.

Table 4.2.1 Services Overseen by the CFA Director of Finance and Operations

In-House Services	Contracted Services
Budget and Financial Planning	Audit
Bookkeeping and Bank Reconciliations	Legal
Procurement and Payables	Payroll Processing
Human Resources	Insurance
Information Technology	Food Service
Security	Custodial & Maintenance
Printing and Office Operations	Waste Removal & Grounds

In Year 3, the CO will hire a Budget Manager, whose primary responsibilities will be to help the DFO and Executive Director develop the annual budget and to prepare monthly budget reports for presentation to the Board. Both the DFO and the Budget Manager are employed at the CO level and will be shared across all five locations.

Other relevant personnel that will report to the DFO include an Accounting Manager (beginning in Year 2) and a Payroll & A/P Clerk. The Finance & Accounting CO personnel will follow CFA's policies and procedures, and compliance with these procedures is a part of the annual review process for all personnel.

Financial Reporting

The Finance Committee will meet each month in advance of regularly scheduled full board meetings. Full board meetings will include time for the DFO to present the monthly financial report. This financial report will include budget vs. actual income statement (statement of activities), as well as a balance sheet (statement of financial position), and a cash flow forecast. Financial reporting is summarized in Table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2. CFA Board Finance Committee Report Content		
Report Type	**Personnel Responsible**	**Frequency**
Income Statement - Budget v. Actuals Report	DFO & Budget Manager (when applicable)	Monthly
Balance Sheet	DFO & Budget Manager (when applicable)	Monthly
Cash Flow Projection	DFO & Budget Manager (when applicable)	Monthly
Annual Budget	DFO & Budget Manager (when applicable)	Annually
Audit	External party	Annually
IRS 990	DFO & Budget Manager (when applicable)	Annually

CFA's records will be maintained in compliance with 105 ILCS 5/27A-5(f) and the Not-For-Profit General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). CFA will submit reports at each of the state required reporting periods according to the procedures required by the Illinois State Board of Education, and/or by Chicago Public Schools.

Budgeting

The DFO will prepare a campus-level budget for each school in collaboration with the campus leadership. In addition, the DFO will work with the central CO staff to prepare a central budget and will roll-up all campus and central budget information into a consolidated CO budget. A first budget draft will be developed by February prior to the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1. This draft will be used as a guide for the spring staffing and procurement process. A final fiscal year budget will be approved by the Board in June of each year.

Audits & Compliance

CFA will provide for a complete annual financial audit for each fiscal year by November 1 of the following fiscal year, according to Illinois Charter Law. The annual audit will be performed by an independent firm of Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), licensed to practice by the Illinois Board of

Examiners. The audit will be provided to the State Board of Education with the IRS form 990 from the prior year.

The audit will include the state of all revenues, expenditures, and ending balances and will contain accompanying financial statements and other supplementary documentation typically provided by an independent auditor. Additionally, the annual audit report will include the auditor's independent review of the fiscal policy and procedures of the school.

Legal Compliance

CFA will maintain sufficient records and policies to ensure compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal legal requirements, including the specific requirements of the Charter Agreement with Chicago Public Schools.

CFA will also use internal auditing procedures to maintain compliance with the Chicago Public Schools compliance chart and any applicable teacher certification requirements.

At this time, Connected Futures Academies is still in the process of developing a comprehensive fiscal management handbook. As such, none is provided here. We plan to provide the handbook during our Tier 2 submission. (See Attachment 4.2.a.)

4.3. Facilities

a. Facility Plan

> **Q. Describe the plan to secure an appropriate facility for the school or program.**

CFA is working with a commercial real estate broker and our community partners from the faith based community to identify sites that maybe appropriate for CFA. To date we have identified two locations, one in Greater Grand Crossing Community, New Coventant Baptist Church, and the other in the Grand Boulevard Community, St. Paul Church of God in Christ Community Center. CFA continues to identify potential sites in communities that will support our mission and vision.

b. Space Requirements

> *If proposing a blended learning model:*
> **Include technological requirements to implement the model (e.g., broadband, power, networking, hardware, distribution, speed and availability of the Internet connection at the facility).**

CFA has sought facilities in proximity to communities where:
1. ease of access to a Community College to facilitate dual credit classes.
2. CPS has identified as an underserved community.

CFA seeks facilities that are approximately 25,000 square feet in size, with easily adaptable spaces (ease of construction) to address school code requirements, ability to address basic zoning requirements for a school, and ability to gain community support. Any building that we have identified needs to have ease of access to by public transportation. Each campus needs a large multi-purpose space to serve as a large student gathering place (i.e., lunchroom, assembly hall), approximately 8 classrooms that can support approximately 165 students.

The building we select will need to have the ability to have high speed internet access to support our blended learning environment. CFA plans to make initial facility upgrades to ensure basic internet across the campus (i.e. network access points, charging stations to support chromebook or similar device charging).

c. School/Program Site

Q. Provide an overview of each proposed site and include the following supporting materials:
--The address and a general description of the property, including its current owner and previous use.
--An Inspecting Architect's Report completed by a CPS-approved architect.
--An ADA Compliance Report completed by a CPS-approved architect.
--If the property is not currently ADA compliant, a plan for bringing the building into compliance.
--Evidence that the site is or will be secured (Letter of Intent or MOU) and a description of your design team's plan to meet lease or purchase requirements.
--A plan detailing how rehabilitation work will address issues raised by the architect, meet applicable building codes, and support the proposed school's or program's educational program, including:
++The scope of work to be completed;
++A description of persons/managing parties responsible for project management and related qualifications;
++A project timeline for any necessary renovations; and
++A completed Sources and Uses of Funds Report for Facility Development, and the planned funding mechanism to cover projected costs.
--The address and a general description of a secondary or back-up facility, including its current owner and previous use

Appendices

Section 1. Family and Community Engagement and Support

Appendix 1.3 Letters of Support

Section 2. Academic Capacity

Appendix 2.1	**Common Core ELA Standards (Optional)**
Appendix 2.1.f	**CFA Grading and Promotion Policies**
Appendix 2.2.a	**Resumes of Design Team**
Appendix 2.2.c	**Job Descriptions for Instructional Leadership Team**
Appendix 2.4.a	**CFA Course Scope & Sequence and Curriculum Maps**
Appendix 2.4.c	**CFA ISBE SpEd Form**
Appendix 2.4.d	**School Calendar (excel file), Instructor and Student Daily Schedules**
Appendix 2.5.a	**5-year School Year Staffing Model**
Appendix 2.5.a	**School Level Organizational Chart**
Appendix 2.5.a	**Comprehensive Job Descriptions All**
Appendix 2.5.a	**Resumes**
Appendix 2.5.a	**Calendar**
Appendix 2.5.b	**Professional Development Calendar**
Appendix 2.5.b.1	**Cultural Relevant Guidelines**
Appendix 2.5.e	**Teacher Evaluation Documents**

Section 3: Operational Capacity

Appendix 3.1.b	**Start-up Plan**
Appendix 3.1.d	**Transportation Plan**
Appendix 3.2.b	**Application and Registration Forms**
Appendix 3.3.a	**Board Bylaws**
Appendix 3.3.b	**Resumes of Board Members**
Appendix 3.3.c	**Board Calendar**
Appendix 3.3.c	**Board Assurances**
Appendix 3.3.c	**Proof of Filing 501c3**
Appendix 3.3.c	**Code of Ethics Policy**
Appendix 3.3.c	**Board Member Economic Interest Form**
Appendix 3.3.e	**Comprehensive Organizational Chart**

Section 4. Economic Soundness

Appendix 4.1.a   Budget Workbooks (excel files)
Appendix 4.2.a.1   Listing of Financial Reports
Appendix 4.2.a.2 Fiscal Policies Outline

Section 5: Existing Management Organizations (MOs)

Not Applicable

Endnotes

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