***Business Plan for Education Options RFP***

***For Existing Chicago Operators Applying to Open Additional Schools/Campuses***

***Tier 1I Business Plan Due:***

***August 10, 2015***

***By 10:00 a.m. CST***

***Submitted by:***

***Youth Connection Charter School***

***10 W. 35th Street***

***Chicago IL 60637***

***Submitted:***

***Mon. Aug 10, 2015***

***Narrative***

***Table of Contents***

***Page***

1. ***Executive Summary …………………………………………………………3***
2. ***Network Overview…………………………………………………………..5***
3. ***Growth Plan……………………..................................................................11***
4. ***Section 1: Family and Community Engagement and Support………….16***
5. ***Section 2: Academic Capacity………………………………………….….27***
6. ***Section 3: Operational Capacity…………………………………….…....34***
7. ***Section 4: Economic Soundness……………………………………………47***
8. ***Section 5: Management Organization (MO) Capacity (Not Applicable)…..52***

**Executive Summary** ·

Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) was founded in 1997 as an alternative school charter that provides “Not just a Second Chance…. But a Better Chance” for off-track, at-risk, and drop-out students. YCCS has the distinction of being a top rated high school network in the city. Last December 4, 2014, Chicago Public Schools released the 2014 SQRP Academic Performance ratings for its schools and YCCS performances topped the chart, with 14 of our 20 campuses scoring “1+”, top of the scale, and an additional 4 campuses scoring “1”. YCCS students successfully graduate from high school, with a one year graduation rate of over 90%, and also 75% of YCCS graduates go on to post-secondary education, training, and/or employment in expanding sectors with career ladder opportunities. YCCS provides a national model of a community-based alternative education system that not only in the day to day saves students’ lives, but also, in the long term, prepares our most vulnerable youth to become tomorrow’s college graduates and community leaders.

YCCS partners with 20 community-based organizations to provide a world-class education to over 4,000 students per year. Over the almost 17 years of existence, YCCS has graduated over 15,000 former drop-outs, of which 76% continue on to post-secondary education and/or employment. YCCS proposes, in this Tier II revised application, to add one (1) alternative high school campus to its current roster of twenty (20) educational options school campuses: The Rincon Family Services Young Adult Learning Academy: A Youth Connection Charter School Campus, to be located at 3720 N. Kedzie Ave, Chicago IL 60618, to serve, as its intended student recruitment boundaries the contiguous community areas of Belmont Cragin, Hermosa and Avondale. Rincon Family Services, the community-based organization which will be a key partner, has the demonstrated support of the target communities to be served , from the grass-roots level of parents, local businesses and community organizations to the political level of City, County and State Elected Officials.

Over the 17 years of YCCS existence, YCCS has evolved into an Alternative Education ecosystem, a community of 20 dedicated urban schools, utilizing a common design framework offered in distinct and unique learning environments that meet the diversity of need and interests of off-track students and out-of-school youth and collectively improving the educational and social outcomes of our student population. What has evolved is the YCCS “3 + 1” Educational Framework, which organizes the network’s academic and support offerings into four instructional pillars: (1) Personalized Learning and Multiple Pathways to Graduation; (2) Applied/Active Learning; (3) Interventions for Struggling Students; and (4) the “+1”: Post-Secondary Preparation. In addition to the school-wide adoption and implementation of the “3 + 1” Educational Framework by Fall 2016, YCCS plans, over the next five years, to move to a school-wide competency-based learning credit system, with graduation criteria and all courses, whether blended learning, on-line learning, traditional classroom learning and/or real-world project-based learning, based on the student meeting core competencies.

While all YCCS campuses follow the same YCCS “3&1” education design, YCCS encourages its educational partners to deliver the YCCS program design through a specific learning focus or learning lens. The YCCS Rincon Family Services Young Adult Learning Academy will have a career-readiness and community leadership focus, as delivered through a social-emotional transformative learning approach, developing youth resiliency, persistence and positive leadership skills. The new campus will also implement the YCCS basic competency-based learning education model which includes multiple pathways to graduation and personalized learning, active learning environments, interventions for struggling students, and post-secondary readiness through college-high school dual enrollment, college preparatory activities and career-based learning.

The YCCS Mission is to advocate,develop, and provide world-class education to at-risk students and high school dropouts in partnership with the alternative high school community. The key characteristics that enable our school campus partners to fulfill our mission is network level governance and leadership providing ethical and highly competent stewardship and oversight, as well as network-wide professional development and collaborative supports that sustains a focus on instructional improvement and embedding in each campus a school culture that is college and career focused. The YCCS mission is transmitted and fulfilled through the adoption and implementation of the following YCCS 10 fundamental design principles at both the network and the campus levels:

* Adaptive school structures that build on the strengths of students and the collective school organization;
* Quality school instruction that motivates at-risk students to learn and grow academically and personally;
* Strong academic leadership that builds strong school teams;
* Assessment driven instruction culture shared by all members of the school;
* High expectations for all students;
* Professional environment that has continuous professional development and career opportunities;
* Continuous program improvement that leads to improved learning outcomes for all students;
* Community-based programming that connects learning to the community;
* Accountability for all aspects of the school program; and
* Organizational commitment to advancing alternative education under the umbrella of YCCS.

With the approval of this new campus, which will draw primarily from the high need community of Belmont Cragin, we will be able to expand the YCCS high quality educational opportunity to more at-risk youth, thereby providing another pathway for more of our youth to future career and educational success.

***Options Business Plan Narrative Questions***

*Q1.* Network Overview: (2-5 pp.)

**School Mission, vision and educational philosophy:**

**YCCS Mission:** Youth Connection Charter School advocates, develops and provides world-class education to students at-risk and high school dropouts in collaboration with the alternative high school community. YCCS meets the individual needs of students through programs committed to academic excellence, human development, cultural enrichment, and social equity. YCCS prepares students for quality life experiences, technological literacy, graduation, vocational and post-secondary education, and competitive employment.

**YCCS Vision:** Youth Connection Charter School is a nationally recognized model for alternative education with quality academic and support services, providing tools to empower at-risk students and high school dropouts to graduate and become productive members of society.

**Educational Philosophy:**

Over the 17 years of YCCS existence, YCCS has evolved into an Alternative Education ecosystem, a community of dedicated urban schools, utilizing a common design framework offered in distinct and unique learning environments that meet the diversity of need of off-track students and out-of-school youth and provides a collective impact to significantly improve the educational and social outcomes of our student population.

Working from a community development framework (student community, neighborhood community, school community), YCCS is transforming students’ lives through a systems approach to alternative education that provides for a variety of school models, and employs multiple pathways to graduation. Over the past two years, as part of shifting from an essential skills framework aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards to the Illinois Common Core Standards, all levels of YCCS has been engaged in rethinking and redesigning the educational enterprise to effectively and efficiently reengage students and empower a high level of student learning, particularly in light of the YCCS student body increasingly entering with student academic proficiency gaps in excess of 3 grade levels below their class cohort and multiple barriers to successful high school completion. What has evolved is the YCCS “3 + 1” Educational Framework, which organizes the network’s academic and support offerings into four instructional pillars: (1) Multiple Pathways to Graduation; (2) Applied/Active Learning; (3) Interventions for Struggling Students; and (4) the “+1”: Post-Secondary Preparation. In addition to the school-wide adoption and implementation of the “3 + 1” Educational Framework by Fall 2016, YCCS plans, over the next five years, to move to a school-wide competency-based learning credit system, with graduation criteria and all courses, whether blended learning, on-line learning, traditional classroom learning and/or real-world project-based learning, based on the student meeting core competencies.

The YCCS Student and School Services Support Department (SSSS), which is supplemented with foundation grants, community partnerships and corporate sponsorships, provides multiple-path career, leadership and college-readiness-scaffolded opportunities that support the transition of disconnected/ dropout youth to move from being out of school with low academic proficiencies, no high school diploma and dim prospects of success, to graduation from a YCCS high school campus, ready for college and post-secondary training and/or employment.

**Educational Program Design:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **YCCS *Program Design*** | | | | | |
| ***YCCS Mission and Vision*** | Youth Connection Charter School advocates, develops and provides world-class education to students at-risk and high school dropouts in collaboration with the alternative high school community. YCCS meets the individual needs of students through programs committed to academic excellence, human development, cultural enrichment, and social equity. YCCS prepares students for quality life experiences, technological literacy, graduation, vocational and post-secondary education, and competitive employment. | | | | |
| ***YCCS Goals & Values*** | YCCS Goal is to meet the individual needs of students through programs committed to academic excellence, human development, cultural enrichment, and social equity. YCCS prepares students for quality life experiences, technological literacy, graduation, vocational and post-secondary education, and competitive employment. YCCS campuses promote the following values: Integrity; Excellence; Respect; Leadership; Responsibility; Commitment; Courage. | | | | |
| ***Organizational Model*** | A systems approach to alternative education that provides for a variety of school models, employing a variety of completion strategies that meet the diversity of need of off-track students and out-of-school youth, utilizing a common design framework offered in distinct and unique learning environments. YCCS’s organization model includes the following processes:   * COLLABORATIVE COORDINATION**:** Work collaboratively with community-based schools and nonprofit agencies within a co-branding and shared leadership model * ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING**:** Collectively cultivate and assess the knowledge and “products” created by campuses to inform new strategies, goals, activities, roles, technologies, and “educational models” for the future. * COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: Engage members in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing activities, group projects, and networking events that meet individual, group, and organizational goals while creating an increasing cycle of participation and contribution | | | | |
| ***Educational Program***  ***Overview*** | The core components of YCCS’s education program are the provision of multiple pathways to graduation and competency-based learning, implemented within the YCCS’ 3 Plus 1 Framework For Learning. YCCS’ 3 plus 1 model requires campuses and educators to provide the interventions, support systems, and personalized-learning pathways that each student needs to meet the expected standards and graduate college and career ready.  YCCS campuses offer multiple learning options that allow students to demonstrate proficiency on expected learning standards, earn academic credit, and satisfy graduation requirements. YCCS encourages its students to explore a broad range of learning experiences, including outside-of-school options. Courses that meet the requirements of the diploma include traditional classroom based courses and classes, virtual/blended classes, career based and extended learning pathways, as well as, applied academics (theme-based) courses, classes, and units of study.  YCCS’s competency-based learning approach allows students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning. Students demonstrate mastery of a comprehensive list of competencies to fulfill graduation requirements. Competency-based strategies provide flexibility in the way that credit can be earned or awarded, and provide students with personalized learning opportunities.  Academic strategies that promote student success in learning objectives by meeting the developmental needs of learners include, but are not limited to: extended learning time, alternative modes of learning assignments, make up opportunities for missed assignments or failed assignments, retesting, literacy, numeracy, and behavior interventions, emphasis on mastery learning, and other instructional accommodations.  Engagement strategies include research based and strategically designed interventions to promote student self-efficacy and autonomy and tiered interventions based on factors related to persistence, resiliency, stress and distress. | | | | |
| ***Educational Delivery***  ***YCCS’s 3 Plus 1 Model (Non-negotiables) and Strategies for Student Success*** | * **Competency based Pathways to Graduation and Personalized-Learning** * Multiple pathways to graduation that allows for flexible approaches to credit recovery and how students earn credit; student voice and choice in demonstrations of learning; and a variety of learning opportunities in a variety of settings * Blended/Virtual Learning/Credit Recovery using the Aventa On-Line Learning Curriculum * Competency-based instructional model that focuses on the mastery of a set of specific competencies and assessments for student learning that encompass course content * M*ultiple assessments* and multiple measures of what students actually know and can do at the course and exit level * The Integration of student information and learning management systems designed around competency-based approaches, providing data to support students, teachers, and schools for improving performance * A variety of scheduling, instructional activities, co-curricular and extracurricular activities that extends the quantity and quality of learning time * **Active Learning Environments** * The promotion of active learning environments that includes discussion, problem solving, cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning, and writing exercises (graded and ungraded) * Instruction intently focused on higher order, critical and creative thinking skills, and deeper writing * The use of educational technology to provide real world applications and to differentiate instruction to maximize student learning * Students learn to communicate, problem solve, and think critically by tackling real-world tasks in an experiential environment * **Interventions for Struggling Students** * The use of scientifically based research instructional and school-wide strategies for diverse, high-risk, and at-risk learners, with a focus on:   + Improving literacy and numeracy   + Interventions and learning supports   + Social and emotional learning   + Data driven instruction and decision-making * The implementation of a comprehensive framework of learning supports for all students including SWD that includes tiered intervention in reading, math and behavior, engagement and reengagement strategies, and dropout prevention strategies. * **Post-Secondary Readiness:** College preparatory and career building skills, including career based learning, career pathway programming, dual enrollment college credit and vocational certifications. | | | | |
| ***Essential Skills*** | Enduring understandings and skills across all subjects and grades   * Cross Cutting Competencies: Critical Thinking, Effective Communication, Creative Exploration, and Active Contribution. * Cross-Curricular competencies: Derived from and aligned to CCSS, 21st Century Skills, College and Career Readiness and the Compass Exam include literacy, reading, numeracy, oral communication, technology * Habits of Mind: Pedagogical approaches in individual disciplines that foster deep learning, and get students to think like disciplinary experts | | | | |
| ***Assessments*** | Student Portfolios, Exhibitions of Learning, Aventa Assessments, COMPASS, ACT, STAR Reading and Math, Formative and Summative Assessments | | | | |
| ***AVENTA On-line Curriculum*** | YCCS uses AVENTA, an online curriculum and small-group teacher led instruction to personalize learning. The curriculum is student paced, allowing students to work on courses or projects to satisfy graduation requirements. All core subject courses are offered, and high quality instructional services where students learn in a collaborative environment is provided.  Based on an evaluation of students’ transcript, they will be assigned AVENTA on-line course(s) to recover credits toward graduation. Students have 24 hour access to their courses and can access them from home. Additionally, students will be provided interventions to increase reading and math achievements. Lastly, based on students’ needs they may be offered individual student programming (i.e. project based independent study). The following courses are offered via the AVENTA Learning curriculum. | | | | |
| ***English*** | ***Social Studies*** | ***Science*** | ***Math*** | ***Electives*** |
| English I  English 2  English 3  English 4 | American Government  American History  Economics  Geography  World History | Biology  Chemistry  Earth Science  Physical Science | Algebra I  Algebra II  Geometry | Health  P.E.  Spanish I |
| ***Graduation Requirements*** | * All students will demonstrate that they have achieved proficiency in the content-area graduation standards articulated in the Illinois State Code. Meeting the standards entails demonstrating proficiency in each of the following content areas prior to graduation: 4 credits – English **(Writing Intensive)**, 3 credits - Mathematics (1 yr Algebra, 1 course must include geometry content), 2 credits – Science, 2 credits – Social Studies, 1 credit – Fine arts, Foreign Language or career/vocational education, 1 credit – Health (18 weeks), 3-6 elective credits , Community Service (40 hrs ), Consumer Education (1 quarter or 9 weeks), Public Law 195 (US Constitution), Health Education, PARCC Assessment (Algebra II and English III or equivalent 11th grade course) * In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the YCCS Board:   + A minimum of four (4) Exhibitions of Learning and/or Capstone project (interdisciplinary) evaluated by applicable rubric   + Compass Assessment   + Career Development and/or Life Skills (40 hrs) | | | | |
| ***Schedule*** | Regular day with option for extended day and flex schedule | | | | |
| ***Target Population*** | Drop outs ages 16-21 | | | | |
| ***Number of Students*** | 200-350 students per campus | | | | |
| ***Teacher: Student Ratio*** | 1:15-20 | | | | |
| ***Mentor-Advisor: Student Ratio*** | 1:25-30 | | | | |
| ***Program Evaluation*** | YCCS campuses are evaluated based on the CPS options SQRP performance metrics, YCCS internal goal related metrics, and the YCCS Quality School Measures. | | | | |

The key characteristics that enable our school campus partners to fulfill our mission is network level governance and leadership providing ethical and highly competent stewardship and oversight, as well as network-wide professional development and collaborative supports that sustains a focus on instructional improvement and embedding in each campus a school culture that is college and career focused. The YCCS mission is transmitted and fulfilled through the adoption and implementation of the following **YCCS 10 fundamental design principles** at both the network and the campus levels:

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* Community-based programming that connects learning to the community;
* Accountability for all aspects of the school program; and
* Organizational commitment to advancing alternative education under the umbrella of YCCS.

The “Campus by Campus” 2015-2015 SQRP performance ratings for YCCS’ twenty campuses are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table IV Academic Performance Indicators[[1]](#footnote-1) 2014-2015[[2]](#footnote-2)** | | | |
| Campus | Rating | Campus | Rating |
| Youth Connection Leadership Academy | 1 | Community Services West – Academy of Scholastic Achievement | 1+ |
| Ada S. McKinley - Lakeside | 1+ | Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School | 1+ |
| Sullivan House Alternative High School | 1+ | Innovations High School of Arts Integration | 1+ |
| Latino Youth Alternative High School | 1+ | West Town Academy Alternative High School | 1+ |
| Jane Addams | 1+ | Austin Career Education Center | 1+ |
| Community Youth Development Institute | 2 | Westside Holistic Leadership Academy | 1 |
| Olive Harvey Middle College High School | 1+ | Charles Hamilton Houston Alternative High School | 1+ |
| Truman Middle College High School | 1+ | ASPIRA – Antonia Pantoja | 1+ |
| Association House – ECA | 1+ | YCCS Virtual High School | 1 |
| Community Services West – Community Christian Academy | 1+ | YCCS Chatham Academy | 2+ |
| **Youth Connection Charter School** | **1** |  |  |

YCCS, with its 20 community-based small school partners, is creating a “counter narrative” for thousands of students for whom, YCCS provides “Not just a Second Chance... But a Better Chance.” On December 4, 2014, Chicago Public Schools released the 2014 SQRP Academic Performance ratings for its schools. YCCS performances topped the chart, with 14 of our 20 campuses scoring “1+”, top of the scale, and an additional 4 campuses scoring “1”! YCCS students successfully graduate from high school, with a one year graduation rate of over 90%, and also 75% of YCCS graduates go on to post-secondary education, training, and/or employment in expanding sectors with career ladder opportunities. YCCS provides a national model of an alternative education system that not only, in the day to day, saves students’ lives, but also, in the long term, prepares our most vulnerable youth to become tomorrow’s college graduates and community leaders.

**Growth Plan**

**a. Growth Rate**

***Qa.1.*** State how many additional campuses the network is applying to open through this Business Plan, as well as over the next five years. Cite the proposed opening years, locations, type of schools or programs and projected five-year enrollment for each campus.

In accordance with its growth plan, YCCS plans to grow by a total of 2250 students over the next five years. This growth includes 1) increasing the enrollment allocation of its existing campuses by 800-1000 students over the next 5 years through the MMA process, which will support a number of campuses expanding its programming to include evening schools for students whose work schedules require the flexibility of an evening program, and 2) increasing the YCCS portfolio of campuses by 5 new campuses, totaling an additional 1250 students through the RFP process.

YCCS plans to open 5 new campuses over the next 5 years: one alternative high school campus in 2016, and three campuses (two high schools and one middle school) in 2017. The one (1) new campus for 2016 is the RFS Young Adult Learning Academy for students who have low skills, low or no credits, and/or are truant in their previous school. The two new high school campuses in 2017 are (1) the YouthBuild Career Academy, an alternative high school for primarily older drop out and at-risk students who are interested in hands-on and applied learning which builds skills for entering the construction trades and (2) the Sustainable Technology Academy, which will focus on the applied engineering and business skills needed for building sustainable local economies. The alternative middle school is designed to address the distinctive learning needs of students who are already indicating that they have learning gaps and are below grade level in reading and math. The fourth alternative high school, to open on the South Side in the Chatham area in 2017, will employ a blended learning model similar to the YCCS Virtual High School campus. Through an ecosystems approach to alternative education, utilizing a Common Design Framework offered in distinct and unique learning environments, YCCS provides a variety of Completion Strategies that meet the diversity of needs of Off-track Students and Out-of-School Youth. Moreover, by achieving an economy of scale at the network and the campus levels through the increase in students and campuses, YCCS will be able to deliver more robust programming that provides multiple pathways to graduation and post-secondary training and learning.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Opening Year** | **Location** | **Type of School/ program** | **Grades/ Ages** | **ENROLLMENT** | | | | | |
| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| 2016 | YCCS | 20 campuses | 9-12 | 4217 | 4417 | 4617 | 4817 | 5017 | 5217 |
| 2016-2018 | 20 campuses | MMA Seat Increase | 9-12 | +200 | +200 | +200 | +200 | +200 |  |
| Fall 2016 | Irving Park/ Belmont Cragin | Young Adult Learning Academy | 9-12  (17-21) | 175 | 200 | 225 | 250 | 250 | 250 |
| Fall 2017 | Pilsen/ North Lawndale | YouthBuild Career Academy | 9-12  (17-21) |  | 150 | 200 | 225 | 250 | 250 |
| Fall 2017 | Humboldt Park | Sustainable Technology Academy | 9-12  (17-21) |  | 200 | 225 | 250 | 250 | 250 |
| Fall 2017 | Chatham | Alternative Middle School | 6-9 |  | 150 | 175 | 200 | 225 | 250 |
| Fall 2018 | Auburn Gresham | Young Adult Learning Academy | 9-12 |  |  | 175 | 200 | 225 | 250 |
| TOTAL |  |  |  | 4592 | 5317 | 5817 | 5892 | 6417 | 6467 |

The schools that open in 2016-2018 will be designed to provide flexible learning environments that complement the current portfolio of YCCS campuses by providing at the entry point interventions that build the soft skills and academic skills needed to successfully obtain a high school diploma while simultaneously preparing and achieving readiness for post-secondary training, education and careers. The YouthBuild Career Academy will be designed around the Department of Labor YouthBuild education model, which engages youth disaffected from the education system back into school through the construction trades, preparing the youth for entry level and apprenticeship level work in the construction industry and/or other expanding career fields. In addition to these school openings, a number of YCCS campuses are interested in expanding their physical sites or adding satellite sites, to accommodate additional students, thereby permitting the launch of applied sciences/vocationally-enriched academic programs at the campus and network levels.

**b. Growth Rationale**

***Qb.1.*** What is the rationale for the proposed growth strategy? What academic, financial, and operational metrics does the Board of Directors use to determine readiness for replication?

YCCS, the only integrated network of small alternative school campuses in the State of Illinois that operates as one charter school. Founded in 1997 as a multi-site alternative high school charter of 26 campuses, YCCS is one of the 15 original replicating Charter Schools in the City of Chicago. Up to this point in its 17 years of existence, YCCS has not exercised its ability to replicate its unique charter school structure. Under this unique multi-site structure, YCCS, as the Charter School, is charged with operating the educational program and program of instruction in partnership with its now 20 campuses, which operate effectively as small school pods within a school, in accordance with agreement #4 of the current charter school agreement, “The Charter School shall operate an educational program and program of instruction serving the educational needs of the students enrolled therein.” [[3]](#footnote-3)

The rationale for the YCCS growth strategy is three-fold: 1) to raise the student allocations at current YCCS campuses to a level at which every campus is able to operate at an economy of scale; 2) to partner with community-based organizations to add additional campuses to the YCCS charter that will increase the learning options available for the students to increase the likelihood of the student’s successful completion of high school and transition to post-secondary education and career opportunities and 3) to identify areas of the City where there is a substantial demand for high-quality alternative school educational services.

Academic, Financial, and Operational Metrics Used By Board to Determine Readiness for Replication:

The YCCS Board determines readiness for replication based on the current ability of the YCCS network to deliver high quality educational services through the substantial majority of the campuses and based on the financial & compliance score card, indicating the health of the financial and operations capacity of the network. In order to consider replication or an addition of campuses to the current roster of campuses under the YCCS Charter, YCCS SQRP and score card must demonstrate that the campuses are meeting standards. Through the oversight of its Compliance Committee, the Board will require that a current community school partner be able to demonstrate capacity to grow a campus, or establish a new campus or satellite, based on the following academic, financial, and operational metrics:

1) Academic Metrics: Existing community partners providing educational services to YCCS campuses must have achieved an overall standing of 1 or 1+ on the previous year’s SQRP in order to increase enrollment or to establish a new campus or satellite site; Those partners with a campus that scored 2+ on the previous SQRP will also be considered for growth if in previous years the campus has not been on probation and the partner has a strong academic improvement plan, for which the growth in enrollment will contribute the resources needed to achieve greater academic improvement.

2) Financial Metrics: Existing community partners must demonstrate, through their previous year’s annual independent audit, that they have the financial capacity, fiscal controls and cash flow to manage the financial demands of creating a new campus.

3) Operational Metrics: Existing partners must pass the YCCS annual compliance audit to be permitted to open a new campus.

**YCCS Vetting Process for New Vendors**

YCCS has an established, YCCS Board approved, process for vetting and opening new campuses in partnership with new school partners (vendors). All prospective vendors put forth in this MMA have gone through or are currently going through this process. The process established in 2010 is internal to YCCS and is a means of establishing a vendor’s qualification and “organizational fit”, as well as, to build a strong foundation for opening quality alternative schools under YCCS.

**YCCS New Campus Vetting Process (Sample Timeline/Calendar)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
| Aug-Sept | YCCS Interest Meeting Advertisement in local papers |
|  | |
| Sept | YCCS New Campus Partner Interest Meeting  AGENDA   * Mission and History Of YCCS * Campus Educational Design Overviews * YCCS application process * YCCS Financial Expectations * YCCS Contractual elements |
|  | |
| Oct | Letter of intent submission (LOI) from perspective vendors   * Qualifications and interest in being a YCCS campus * Community Preference * Financial Capacity and Structure (3 year audited financials as attachment) * Board of Directors (with affiliations as an attachment) * Accepted LOI Applicants sent YCCS New Campus Partner Application |
|  | |
| Nov | * Facility and ADA compliance Plan * Facilitation of community engagement strategy |
|  |  |
| Nov | YCCS New Campus Partner Planning Workshops lead by various YCCS Departments   1. Instructional Design (School Improvement Department) 2. Campus Operations (Strategic Operations and Accountability Departments) 3. Financial Operations (Finance Department) 4. Contractual Obligations (Executive Leadership) 5. Special Education Programming (Special Education Department)   Applicant works on application in collaboration with YCCS Staff |
|  | |
| Dec - Jan | New Campus Partner Application due; YCCS Board and Staff interview Applicant; YCCS Board reviews application and staff recommendations. |
|  | |
| Feb - Sept | YCCS works with approved vendor to open new school (see Support for new campus Programs below): |
| Per CPS RFP or MMA Calendar | YCCS Submits RFP or Material Modification Application to Chicago Public Schools\* |
|  | |

\*Process and timeline subject to change dependent upon CPS contracting & review process

The criteria for becoming an YCCS vendor are as follows:

1. Has an educational philosophy that aligns with the YCCS education program
2. Has demonstrated community relations experience / partnership – 5 years in a community serving a YCCS like population, evidence of community support
3. Mission / Vision statement aligned to YCCS
4. Have access to and/or identified facilities meeting geographic criteria; Options:
   1. YCCS controlled Facilities
   2. Partner controlled facilities
5. Financial Management History
   1. Organization has financial capacity, adequate cash flow (lines of credit, fund raising capacity
   2. Financial history – 3 to 5 years of finances
6. Programmatic Management History – five years
   1. Contract experience – no loss of contract due to mismanagement
   2. HR experience
7. The proposed educational programs meets are model programming requirements
   1. Credit recovery
   2. Career Pathway
   3. Blended High School / College
   4. Theme Programming
8. Agrees to a co-branding relationship

The YCCS Director of Development is responsible for deploying the YCCS team to assist new school operators in building a strong foundation for opening quality alternative schools through coaching, technical assistance, and networking with other YCCS campuses. The Director of Development provides planning support from the time of the founding group’s first meeting, through the first year of the school’s operation with activities that include business and multi-year financial and operations planning, vetting new schools to the community, the recruitment and selection of school staff, targeted professional development, curriculum selection, principal and teacher training. The Director of Development also works with various departments within YCCS to familiarize and train potential new school operators on YCCS policies and procedures, various educational frameworks, and quality school standards.

Once selected as a vendor, YCCS works with the leadership of the organization in providing a range of supports that occur prior to opening and throughout the first two years of operation. These supports are provided through trained and seasoned staff of the various departments at YCCS. These supports include but are not limited to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Facility planning | Development Department and the YCCS Strategic Operations Department |
| New principal training | YCCS School Improvement Department, YCCS Strategic Operations Department |
| New teacher induction program | YCCS School Improvement Department |
| Compliance and operations training | YCCS Strategic Operations Department |
| Fiscal and financial management | YCCS Fiscal Department |
| Special education planning and implementation | The YCCS Special Education Department |
| Recruitment of students | YCCS Recruitment Coordinator |
| Teacher and principal recruitment | YCCS Human Resources Department |

Each new campus will be assigned a School Improvement Representative. The School Improvement Representative, under the direction of the Chief Education Officer, establishes and supports the educational goals of the assigned campus in a manner consistent with our legal, fiscal, organizational and educational frameworks. Along with the New School Director, the School Improvement Representative assists new school leadership teams in concept design and development, organizing and implementing an appropriate instructional program in alignment with YCC”s 3 plus 1 Model, evaluation of the program, communicating support system needs to the YCCS Executive Director; school improvement planning, interviewing and recommending instructional leaders, coaching, and in maintaining appropriate working relationships with YCCS, school staff, and the community. The orientation and training of new campus operators is consistent with YCCS development priorities.

YCCS’s management development priorities, as described in the YCCS’s Strategic Plan, include:

* Breaking the cycle of underdevelopment of out-of-school youth and off-track students
* Achieving high standards for student academic success
* Creating powerful alternative learning environments
* Driving school improvement and student achievement through accountability
* Optimizing operations and service delivery to improve student achievement
* Optimizing board governance to improve organizational effectiveness

The tasks associated with training and acclimating new campuses to YCCS protocols and educational program are carried out by various departments at YCCS. Organizationally and administratively, YCCS is structured to support campuses in every area of operations. The various departments are organized to provide new and existing campuses with a range of on-going services and technical assistance to ensure educational quality, fiscal accountability, student support, and compliance with applicable district, state and federal policies (see YCCS organizational chart).

**Section 1. Family and Community Engagement and Support**

**Rincon Family Services Young Adult Learning Academy – Location: Irving Park/Belmont Cragin/ Avondale)**

**1. a. Background of the Targeted Community(ies)**

***Q1.a.1.*** 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

Target area recruitment boundaries for the Rincon Family Services Young Adult Learning Academy will be within the communities that community partner Rincon Family Services (RFS) has already been serving for over forty years: Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, and Avondale. Each of these communities displays its own set of particular needs, yet all show a need for, and interest in, increased support for the proposed education center and its offerings, in particular for educational services that address the learning and social-emotional needs of high-risk youth. Our proposed alternative school will serve to improve the overall quality of life for all residents of these communities through increased educational opportunities and a focus on re-engagement and retention of students who are typically disengaged from traditional education.

The overall population of Belmont Cragin is 81,448, with 35.1 percent of people under 18 years old. About 26 percent, or 21,095 residents, are school-aged. Between 2000 and 2010, Belmont-Cragin experienced a steady increase in a population who identify as Latino/Hispanic (currently 72.4 percent), while the Non-Hispanic White population has steadily decreased. The average household income is $43,581, though the per capita income (based on is only $15,246. This incredible disparity is obviously problematic and is exemplified when looking at the housing costs in the area. In 2012, the median cost of rent is approximately $943 (73 percent of an income of $15,461), and the estimated value of houses is nearly $241,298. Of renters, it is estimated that 57.4 percent pay over 30 percent of their income, with 31.8 percent paying over 50 percent of their household income. This income however does not apply to the 11.5 percent of Belmont-Cragin residents who are unemployed and may assist in explaining that 18.6 percent of residents still live in poverty (according to 2013 city data-sets). Another disconcerting statistic for the area is that 37 percent of these residents have less a high school diploma, or the equivalent of one.

Out of a total population of 42,187, 30.6 percent of Avondale residents are under age 18. Families with children in the Avondale community area make up 39.6 percent of the population, while the average household size is 3.1. Avondale’s racial and ethnic population trends are more fluid and less predictable than other RFS service area communities, with around 60 percent of residents identifying as Hispanic. The income per capita is somewhat higher here, at $20,489, but nearly 14.6 percent of this population is still living below poverty level, 25.7 percent of Avondale residents lack a high school diploma and 9.3 percent are still unemployed. With a 2012 average monthly rent of $937, it is estimated that 47.2 percent of renters in the neighborhood pay over 30 percent of the household income in rent. The estimated cost of a house at approximately $299,438, and about 41.8 percent of neighborhood housing is owner occupied, leaving over half of the residents struggling with high rental costs and low incomes.

With a total population of 20,632, 37.6 percent of Hermosa residents are ages 18 and under. A total of 47.4 percent of households in Hermosa comprise families with children, with an average household size of 3.7. From 2000-2010, the Hermosa population has had a mild, but steady increase in the Latino/Hispanic population, currently making up 84.9 percent of the total population. The median household income was $41,775 in 2011 though the per capita income from a Chicago data set in 2013 was only $15,411. With a 2012 median rent of $933, this per capita income is still problematic, and it is estimated that 64.1 percent of renters in the neighborhood pay over 30 percent of their household income on rental costs. This coincides with the 19.1 percent of families living in poverty. Approximately 41.9 percent of Hermosa residents lack a high school diploma and 12.9 percent are unemployed.

While each of our communities is unique, it is also a sad trend that there are such high rates of unemployment, and lack of high school diplomas throughout. At YCCS, however, we recognize that it is not just about the demographic data or the aggregates created through studies. It is about changing the lives of one individual at a time, and we believe that through our proposed alternative high school, combined with our cultural competence and years of community involvement, and that of our community partners, we can do just that.

*History:*

**Q1.a2. Provide a brief historical context of the neighborhood(s) within the proposed recruitment boundary. Include information that your applicant believes is important to understand in order to serve the targeted student population and community residents.**

Avondale has a long-standing history as a home to Chicago’s Polish community. Polish immigration to the area began as early as the 1920’s and has continued since. The industrial infrastructure of the area has created a multitude of jobs for incoming residents, which has been the central attraction of Avondale for several decades. The community has retained much of its proud heritage as a working-class, Polish community. Because of its role in serving communities like Avondale, Rincon has expanded and diversified the array of services offered, incorporating Polish-speaking clinicians and other staff members to remain active in serving the Polish community of Chicago.

Named after the Spanish adjective “pretty,” Hermosa is among the largest predominantly Latino communities in Chicago. As of the 2012 Census, Latino migration to Hermosa has remained consistently high since the 1980’s, with Latinos now comprising over 90% of the community population. Additionally, roughly 30% of Hermosa residents are foreign born, a very large percentage relative to Chicago’s 21% of foreign-born residents. As a Latino-founded, Latino-focused social service agency, YCCS community partner Rincon Family Services is a responsive service provider to communities like Hermosa, providing comprehensive, bilingual, and culturally competent services where they are needed.

Belmont Cragin is also home to a large Latino community, with Latinos comprising nearly 65% of the area’s population. This community continues to attract working class families, with industry positions and affordable housing remaining an integral part of the community. Belmont Cragin is also comprised heavily of households with families, as family households account for roughly 64% of local households, with the average household size being 3.6. YCCS partner RFS has made sure that the services offered are an ideal fit for communities like Belmont Cragin, as they emphasize a family-oriented, culturally competent, and bilingual provision of services.

**b. Community Research**

*Initial Research:*

**Q1.b.1. Do any members of the applicant 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 applicant 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 applicant team attended to make additional connections and enhance members’ understanding of the targeted communit(ies)?**

Rincon Family Services (RFS), as an organization with over 40 years of history within the communities YCCS is targeting for this alternative school, already has extensive networks, partnerships and linkages to organizations, schools, politicians and people within Avondale, Belmont-Cragin and Logan Square. Many RFS staff also live within these communities and are involved with their communities outside of work as well. For example, several of RFS employees recently helped to incorporate the Reach’n Avondale Coalition, with the purpose of working with the community and the youth within, to reduce drug use. As so many of our existing relationships are heavily involved within these communities, RFS has already started discussing the proposed school by first tapping into these relationships, including our current1900 clients.

YCCS and RFS also reached out to our existing political, organizational and community networks. This occurred through in-person meetings, emails and phone calls as we got the word out about this prospective partnership. We began the initial process of gaining feedback from our connections, and to date, have only received positive feedback regarding this new opportunity. We are also using social media to engage our audiences about this new potential venture through posting on Facebook and Twitter, as well as sending information via our newsletter.

*Assets and Needs:*

**Q1.b.2. 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 were used to identify existing assets and educational and support needs in the community?**

While poverty, unemployment and other daunting factors burden the targeted communities, the communities themselves are also full of a rich diversity of strengths. These assets include strong familial connections and resilience. Throughout this application process, YCCS and partner RFS will continue to work with the communities to inquire what they see as the benefits and assets within their communities and themselves, focusing on what they see as educational strengths and support needs. We will utilize our existing connections as well as our expansive outreach efforts specific to this process to elicit these responses from various community members, elected officials and stakeholders.

**c. Community Fit**

**Q1.c.1. Based on the outreach and research that your applicant 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?**

Rincon Family Services’ strong ties to the community, including working with various youth programs, makes it deeply aware of the need for increased access to educational opportunities within its targeted community areas. All three of the community areas have over 25% of people over twenty-five still lacking a high school diploma, with Hermosa having over 40 % over twenty five still lacking that essential degree. In RFS current partnership with YCCS, the organization has already been engaged with the out-of-school youth already, and also has been working with YCCS campuses to increase student retention. Within this work, we have contacted over 700 youth to work with them to re-engage them in a high school setting. Just within the past two enrollment periods, we have conducted outreach to 122 individuals, enrolling just over 45% of those contacted into schools. While not all of these youth are within our targeted areas for this school, these numbers still shows the significant amount of youth who have become disengaged from traditional education, and that there are many who still desire to return.

Based on this work, the high poverty rates, unemployment rates and low rates of high school diplomas, we know that these communities are still in need of a viable solution to their education concerns. As we have begun notifying the community, we are also aware of the strong support we have seen for the school. RFS will continue to work with YCCS to garner additional evidence of the community support.

**1.2 Notification to the Community of Proposed New School or Program**

**a. Elected Officials**

***Q***1.2.**a.1**. 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.

YCCS and Rincon Family Services (RFS) have good relationships with many of the elected officials within the target areas. RFS is currently in the process of working with elected officials to gain their specific support to this proposal. In the next tier or stage of the application, we will submit formal letters of notification and begin to attend ward nights within our targeted areas, as well as the community surrounding our school. However, we are already working with several of our elected officials and their representatives:

* Alderman Ariel Reboyras of the 30th Ward:
* Email communication with Lois Planthaber, Alderman’s Assistant (March 24, 2015);
* Town Hall Meeting (March 25, 2015)
* State Representative Jaime Andrade, Jr. of the 40th District: In-Person Meeting between President/CEO Rolando Correa and Representative Andrade Jr. (March 25, 2015)
* Alderman Deborah Mell of the 33rd Ward: In-Person Meeting between Resource Development Direct Ivan Medina and Alderman Deborah Mell (March 26, 2015)

**b. Community Organizations and Stakeholders**

***Q1.2.b.1.*** List the key individuals or organizations in the neighborhood with whom you have met to discuss the educational vision for the proposed new school/campus.

*(Note: If preferred, this information may be provided in a table.)*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Method** | **Number Notified** | **Evidence** | **Appendix** | **Notes** |
| Emailed RFS Newsletter | Mailing list of 700 | Copy of Newsletter | Attached | Ongoing Engagement |
| RFS Social Media | 324 Facebook followers 30 Twitter | Dated Facebook and Twitter | Attached | Ongoing Engagement |
| Community Petitions | 64 community signatures | Petitions | Attached | Ongoing Engagement |
| Business Petitions | 45 Business Signatures | Petitions | Attached | Ongoing Engagement |
| Local Ads | TBD | Copies of the Ad |  | Looking into Austin Weekly, La Raza and others |
| Community Forums | TBD | Sign-in sheets |  | Planned with YCCS |
| Radio | TBD | Date and Time |  | Planning with Polish Radio and Vida Nueva |

*Community Forums* ***(Required****)*

***Q1.2.b.2.*** Describe the structure of the community forums that were held to discuss the school model with residents and to seek their feedback on the educational vision for the proposed school.

The community forum was held on July 29 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. RFS and YCCS reached out to the communities of Avondale, Hermosa and Belmont-Cragin, gaining signatures on petitions and gathering what are the community’s questions and concerns, to gain community input into the new alternative school to be located at 3720 N. Kedzie. The forum provided an opportunity for RFS and YCCS to explain their educational model, and allowed the community members to provide their comments, ask their questions, etc. There was interest in the new school, but no one present expressed any negative input or concerns.

*On the Ground Outreach*

***Q1.2.b.3.*** Discuss the various on-the-ground outreach activities that you conducted. In which geographic areas in the recruitment boundary did your team’s outreach activities take place? Which members of your team participated in outreach activities? Who else did your 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?

As an organization that regularly serves 1900 clients in many west side Chicago communities, including those of the target area, RFS carried out and will continue to make efforts to alert the community to this proposal. RFS began by notifying our internal networks of this new proposal, through conversations with staff and then moved forward by strategizing with both RFS and YCCS staff and consultants on how best to work within our current structure of outreach activities, i.e. utilizing our partnerships, like the Reach’N Avondale Coalition, local organizations and community schools, as well as outreaching within the YCCS networks. RFS Community Resource Liaison, Angel Roman, regularly attends community events as part of RFS community outreach, and now also brings news of this new proposal. Specifically, in the Spring, he attended the 25th Police District’s Faith Based Subcommittee meeting (March 25, 2015 at 1pm at the 25th District Office), Alderman Reboyras’ Town Hall Meeting (March 25, 2015 at 6pm at Riis Park), the Family Focus Nuestra Familia Northwest Chicago (March 26, 2015 at the Illinois Welcoming Center) and the Reach’N Avondale Coalition Meeting (March 26, 2015 at noon at Rincon Family Services Kedzie office). Other staff has been out canvassing the community businesses obtaining signatures and positive feedback.

As RFS works with YCCS to continue the efforts, its paid staff and volunteers will continue to canvas the neighborhood and local businesses around the proposed site and within the catchment areas of Hermosa, Belmont-Cragin and Avondale. RFS Staff has approached the community areas with flyers informing the communities of the new proposed school, with information in English and Spanish, developed collaboratively with both YCCS and RFS. RFS has continued to ask for signatures on parent/ business community petitions, and has approached selected individuals, representatives of organizations and prospective parents for letters of support. RFS outreach workers, as part of their program outreach, have included questions related to education, their concerns, interests, and needs, and primarily through this approach have engaged community residents in conversations about the possibility of the new school and their opinions regarding this opportunity.

**c. Community Feedback**

***Q1.2.c.1.*** In your 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?

Rincon Family Services (RFS), as an organization founded by Latinos for Latinos that serves the needs of underserved communities, strongly believes in community interaction and feedback. It is standard practice at RFS to promote options for clients and stakeholders to respond, react and make suggestions for improvement of programs already in place. Throughout our outreach efforts for this proposal, we will work with the community to provide them various opportunities and venues for feedback. Through social media, newsletters, one-on-ones, flyers and the community forums (scheduled and yet to be scheduled), elected officials, community organizations and stakeholders will all have the opportunity to provide their feedback on the proposed school. As of yet, we have encountered only positive feedback and support, but are continuing to solicit opinions and comments from the community. Most specifically, in our outreach to businesses, RFS and YCCS both desire to be able to respond to and potentially incorporate suggestions and/or alleviate or address concerns as soon as possible, thereby making the community know that that this is their school.

While not limited to the following, RFS has used the following methods of notifying families/guardians and community stakeholders of the Young Adult Learning Academy:

* On the ground outreach (e.g., Stop and Chats)
* Holding community forums, alone or in partnership with local community, or faith-based organizations or leaders
* Meeting with groups of local families
* Distributing flyers, brochures, or other marketing materials to residents, community organizations, and/or businesses
* Placing advertisements in neighborhood newsletters or other media outlets
* Collecting petitions and/or Intent to Enroll forms

In addition to the petitions and flyers distributed in the spring, attached (in Section 1 attachments) are the additional petitions collected as part of having notifying residents in the proposed recruitment boundary of the community forum. Approximately 290 residents were notified and signed the petitions supporting the campus.

RFS staff have initiated an outreach campaign and are presenting and will continue to present the topic at various community forums in Belmont Cragin, Hermosa and Avondale – approximately 10 to 20 persons attend each of these meetings – so approximately 240 individuals will be informed through this avenue. Many of these are representatives for different agencies and follow up meetings have been and will be held as appropriate to disseminate information as well as gather input.

In addition, at the two additional RFS centers in the City of Chicago (Belmont Cragin and Humboldt Park) fliers have been distributed in April -July at these locations. Fliers have also been distributed at several churches services in Humboldt Park, Hermosa, Avondale and Belmont Cragin. It is anticipated that at least 2 thousand information fliers on the school will be handed out.

RFS staff will appear on Chicago Area Network TV in May/ June (times are being arranged) to discuss the school on Perspectivas Latinas – the show will be videotaped in both English and Spanish. These will air at least twice in the month of May - CAN TV’s is widely watched and several thousand viewers will see this information.

Community meetings will be advertised and held at the RFS offices in Avondale/Irving Park– announcements will be put in Hoy and The Chicago Tribune. It is anticipated that there will be two meetings and that at least 60 community residents will be in attendance at each meeting. A sample of the proposed advertisement is attached. The Chicago Tribune has an average daily circulation of 448,000 readers.

*Community Forums* ***(Required****)*

***Q1.2.b.2..*** Describe the structure of the community forums that were held to discuss the school model with residents and to seek their feedback on the educational vision for the proposed school.

One community forum was held on July 29, 2015. Due to the timing and the fact that we had held so many one-one and small group information sessions and chats, only about ten people attended the community forum. The forums are announced by fliers and social media – Facebook and Twitter and will be held on the second floor of the proposed location of the school. RFS leadership will present the proposal with YCCS and then open the forum to questions and concerns. This will be transcribed and will be done by bilingual staff. In addition fliers will be sent within an 8 block radius of the proposed school. Community organizations and leaders will be invited to attend.

**1.3 Community Support**

The *Community Support* section asks applicants to include evidence of support from elected officials, community-based organizations and stakeholders, community members, and families. The applicant should identify key community-based partnerships for the school and acknowledge any opposition to the proposed school or program.

**1.3.a. Elected Officials**

***Q1.3.a.1.*** List any elected officials that support the proposed school or program.

YCCS and RFS have already garnered the support of various elected officials, both those in the targeted community areas and of those in the vicinity of the school (See Appendices).

* Alderman Reboyras of the 30th Ward
* Representative Andrade Jr. 40th District

***Appendices:*** If obtained, attach any letters of support from elected officials within the recruitment boundary.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**b. Community Organizations and Stakeholders**

***Q1.3.b.1.*** 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.

YCCS and RFS are well-established, connected and respected organizations in the targeted communities. As such, we have garnered the support of multiple of community organizations and stakeholders within the community for this new proposal. These organizations trust RFS and YCCS to continue their quality commitment to the community and expand our services with a focus on the educational model of YCCS, melded with our compassionate, holistic care. These organizations have provided us with letters of support that are attached in our appendices.

* Literacy Center
* A Wellness Organization
* Access Behavioral Services
* Lutheran Family Services
* Reach’n Avondale Coalition
* Chicago Commons
* Kingdom Voice Ministries
* Pan De Vida
* Fellowship Connection
* The Miracle Center
* ***Appendices:*** Please attach any letters of support from community-based organizations[[5]](#footnote-5) and/or key stakeholders within the recruitment boundary.

**c. Partnerships**

***Q1.3.c.1.*** Describe the coalition of partners and collaborators that your applicant 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 opening and once the school is in operation to oversee these partnerships.

YCCS will engage Rincon Family Services (RFS) as the primary partner for the school. However, in addition, RFS also has established partnerships that will provide additional wrap-around and educational services for the students and their families. For example, RFS has existing agreements with the Center for Changing Lives, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Roosevelt University, the SAFER Foundation and the Spanish Coalition for Housing. Between these organizations, RFS can offer students and family referrals for employment services, job readiness training, ACA enrollment assistance, financial literacy and housing assistance (see Appendices for attachments). These services would be in addition to the number of services that RFS itself could provide for families and students, including counseling, substance abuse services, anger management, HIV prevention, education and testing and DUI services.

All partner organizations have been chosen through careful selection, based on the needs of our clients, including but not limited to quality, cultural competence, ability to be accessible by public transportation, offering various financial arrangements based on ability to pay and of course historical experience with the leadership or on the ground staff of the organization.

Please find, submitted as an attachment with this response, a sample 5 year contract with YCCS Community-based Education partners and a statement of key contract terms and conditions.[[6]](#footnote-6)  Please note that the attached sample contract is in the process of being updated and revised, to reflect the 2014 legislative changes to Illinois Charter Law as well as any new language and terms of agreement in the CPS-YCCS 5 Year Renewal Agreement. However, the basic terms and conditions between the vendor delivering educational services and YCCS will remain the same.

**d. Family and Community Members**

*Support of community members*

***Q1.3.d.1.*** Please provide signatures of support from individuals residing within proximity to the school site.

RFS has begun the initial stages of obtaining community member signatures. With the assistance of dedicated volunteers and organizational staff, RFS already obtained over 50 individual signatures in support of the proposal. We will continue to garner support and obtain additional signatures from businesses, community members and key stakeholders as time and this application progresses. Please see the attached appendices for the copies of petitions obtained so far.

*Key Community Supporters*

***Q1.3.d.2.*** 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 that explain why they believe the proposed school or program will be an asset to the community.

In addition to elected officials and organizations, there are some local volunteers who stand out. Lucy, as an ‘across the alley’ neighbor of RFS has volunteered to work with us on getting the word out to her neighbors and getting them to sign the petitions. Jelisa, as an authorized representative of the Reach’n Avondale Coalition, who also works with local schools to provide substance abuse prevention trainings for students and families, has also worked significantly to provide support for this project. We anticipate that as this project continues to develop, we will also encounter more champions for this meaningful cause.

***Appendices:*** In an attachment, include any letters of support from key community members – In Process

**e. Risk Factors**

***Q. 1.3.e.1***Based on your applicant’s interactions with elected officials, community organizations, 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?

As of this date, no opposition has been expressed or presented regarding the proposed school. Still, YCCS and RFS will continue to provide opportunities for all elected officials, community organizations, stakeholders, families and community members to voice any potential concerns or questions. We will then work with those individuals to understand their concerns and the reasons for them. If there are simple misunderstandings, we will work to clarify and them. For other concerns, we will work to see if or how those concerns could be addressed, working within our limitations.

**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**

***Q1.4.a.1***What is your applicant’s ongoing community engagement plan from the time of submission of proposal materials leading up to the opening of the school?

YCCS and RFS recognize the essential nature of involving community in decisions that affect them and both YCCS and RFS are dedicated to ongoing community engagement efforts. While our regular interactions within our service areas allows for continuous outreach work for our various RFS programs, together with our partners, networks and dedicated staff, RFS will expand our engagement activities particular to this school. We will work with YCCS to continue to develop marketing materials to alert the community to this on-going proposal, as well as establish and market information about up-coming community forums. We are in the process of arranging promotions of proposed school on the radio in both Spanish and Polish. We plan to promote our proposed schools in local community papers and will explore options including La Raza, Polish News, Austin Weekly News and others.

**b. Community Support**

***Q. 1.4.b.1*** 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?

Rincon Family Services (RFS), having been founded by Latinos affected by Substance Abuse for other Latinos affected by substance abuse, has always seen itself as part of the communities it serves. As RFS have evolved as an organization, we have done so in direct response to the needs we have observed in our service areas that have further moved to advance our mission. Educational needs are obvious, as is the unfortunate fact that traditional forms of education are not meeting those needs. Combining the RFS compassionate and holistic care model and experience with youth in the area in addition to the “3 Plus 1” education model of YCCS, the RFS Young Adult Learning Academy will address the multi-faceted issues of truancy, drop-outs and low rates of obtaining high school diplomas. Working toward reducing the barriers and increasing education, we believe we will not only improve the community through increasing numbers of high school graduates, but also fostering opportunities for economic empowerment and advancement for the communities at large.

RFS sees this new school as an additional enhancement to its mission of providing access to the variety of health and mental health services RFS traditionally offers. These services include but are not limited to case management, counseling, HIV education, prevention and testing, substance abuse services, anger management and more. Through the YCCS unique collaborative approach, building on the strengths of the community-based organizations that provide a grassroots commitment to our campuses, the RFS Young Adult Learning Academy will provide a quality education that is undergirded by the quality family mental health services offered through RFS.

**c. Community Input**

***Q.1.4.c.1*** 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 provide regular feedback to the Board of Directors?

RFS has always believed in obtaining community feedback and involving the community as directly as possible in decisions and services that affect them. RFS plans to continue this practice with the new school. Once the school is in place, RFS intends to develop a family/guardian school association (FSA), with a member of the Board of RFS as a chair person. This association would provide direct opportunities for families to interact with school staff, raising academic and policy concerns, as well as provide general feedback to the board.

**Section 2. Academic Plan for Growth**

**2.1. Deviations from Existing Educational Model (if applicable) – not applicable**

***Q.* If the educational model being proposed in the new school(s)/campus(es) differs from the existing schools/campuses, please highlight key distinctions in response to all applicable questions included in the following sections of the 2014 Education Options RFP:**

***ANS: The educational model being proposed in the new school (s) campuses*** ***is the same*** as that already in place at the existing YCCS campuses. The new campuses will follow the basic YCCS program design as provided in the Program Design table in Question #1 Overview of the Network. The core components of YCCS’s education program are the provision of multiple pathways to graduation and competency-based learning, implemented within the YCCS’ “3 Plus 1” model. Each campus implements the campus’ academic theme or career focus within the structure of the “3 Plus 1” model and delivers its academic program within the parameters of the established YCCS program design.

**2.2. Academic Plan**

**a. Instructional Leadership**

**Q. If school leadership has been identified, please 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, please cite any school leadership programs or fellowships that they have completed, or will complete, prior to school opening. If school leadership has not been identified, describe the criteria and process that will be used to select the proposed leader(s), highlighting any existing leadership pipelines. Provide a timeline for identifying school leader(s) and specify whether past leadership experience is a requirement.**

**ANS:** The school leadership has not been selected. YCCS has a well thought-out effective school leadership recruitment strategy based on the Haberman Framework selection criteria. These criteria include:

* Personal excellence
* Collaborative leadership
* Evidence of using technology tools for school management, assessment, and research
* Demonstrated knowledge of curriculum and instruction for alternative schools
* Personalization of Instruction and educational delivery
* Prior educational leadership experience in an alternative school setting or equivalent will be required.

The YCCS timeline for identifying and selecting a school leader is 6 – 9 months before the opening of school. The process for selection of leadership will include an interview committee consisting of the YCCS Executive Director or her designee, the leadership of the sponsoring community-based organization, and a representative from the YCCS New Teaching for New Learning Institute (NTNLI). The selected candidate will go immediately into the YCCS principal leadership certification training cohort, which is conducted through the YCCS NTNLI. Candidates from YCCS campuses that have already gone through NTNLI Principal leadership certification will be prioritized in consideration.

**b. Academic Goals and Metrics**

The following are YCCS Academic Goals and Metrics, per the YCCS Renewal Application 2014:

**YCCS Academic Performance Goals FY2016-2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goal** | **Metric(s)** | **Strategies** | **Progress Measurement** |
| **Increase or maintain YCCS’s performance over baseline for all campuses on the CPS SQRP** | 85% - 95% of YCCS campuses will have performances at the tier 3 level or higher on the CPS SQRP | * Continue to implement the YCCS School Improvement Plan * Continue to improve data collection at the campus level * Continue to implement and develop specific strategies around engagement and interventions | * # of YCCS campuses performing at the tier 3 level or higher on the CPS SQRP annually |
| **Increase the number of students that graduate at the late high school benchmark** | Increase the number of graduates exiting at the late high school benchmark by 10% annually  Increase the number of seniors over baseline passing the Compass Exam by 10% annually  Increase the number of students over baseline enrolled in dual credit or Workforce training programs by 10% annually | * Continue to implement Multiple Pathways to graduation that allows for flexible approaches to credit recovery and how students earn credit * Continue development and implementation Competency-based instructional model * Prepare students to take and pass the COMPASS exam * Provide professional development related to active learning environments that include high level discussion, problem solving, collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, and exhibitions of learning * Continue to develop partnerships to provide dual enrollment/dual credit opportunities | % of graduates exiting at the late high school benchmark annually  Graduation Policy adopted by the YCCS Board  % of seniors passing the Compass Exam annually  % of students enrolled in dual credit or Workforce training programs annually |
| **Decrease the number of students that graduate below the high school benchmark** | Increase the number of graduates exiting below the high school benchmark in reading and math by 10% annually  Increase the number of students over baseline improving reading and math levels by at least two grade levels per year | * Tiered interventions that allow significant increases in intensity of instruction for students based on their literacy and math needs * Intensive, focused instruction for students with serious gaps in their reading skills, including students with learning disabilities * High-quality instruction in both word-level and comprehension skills in order to meet the diverse needs of students who continue to struggle with reading at the late-elementary, middle, and early high school levels * Instruction to help students apply reading comprehension strategies more effectively before, during, and after reading, instruction to increase the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge * Instruction and assignments that are motivating and engaging * Implement a comprehensive framework of learning supports for all students that includes tiered interventions in reading, and math at all YCCS campuses | % of graduates exiting at the late high school benchmark annually as measured by the STAR  % of students over baseline improving reading levels by at least two grade levels per year as measured by the STAR or other instrument |
| **Increase graduation rates** | 10% annual increase in the number of students who graduate over a two year period | * Remove physical, emotional, and mental barriers to learning in partnership with community-based social service partners * implementation of proactive strategies to increase engagement and attachment to school * Implement Comprehensive attendance management strategies including Transformational Organizing activities, attendance management teams, and other engagement strategies * Continue to support the YCCS Retention Collaborative: Community-based organization partnerships supporting student retention * Recover students who have dropped * Provide for a variety of completion strategies (career pathway, blended early college) * Offer flexible scheduling options * Support interschool transfers and follow-up to ensure students enroll and “stick” * Expand support services to reduce barriers | Increase in the number of students who graduate using a two year cohort metric |
| **Increase post-secondary placements** | 10% annual increase in the number of graduates entering postsecondary/ employment | * Provide resources and technical support for dual credit/enrollment/placement * Develop and implement a common curriculum framework for all students to meet college readiness standards that is discernibly competency based * Provide job training, internship, and dual enrollment opportunities for students throughout the school year * Provide resources and technical support to students enrolled in certificate programs at City Colleges of Chicago * Prepare all students for college-level work and ensure they understand college-readiness standards * Foster college aspirations and expectations * Assist students with steps for college entry | % of graduates who enter college or training program (includes dual enrollment) with 3 years of graduation  % of students enrolled in and complete a dual credit and/or workforce training program |
| **Develop, codify, expand, and replicate effective educational models (elements) for serving off-track and out-of school youth integrated with high school reform** | 100% of campuses have codified 3 plus 1 model | * Implement multiple pathways model construct * Revise the YCCS Quality School Measures to reflect competency based direction and 3 plus 1 framework * Evaluate campuses annually using the Revised Quality School Rubric beginning in 2015 * Provide additional resources to campuses to create collaborative learning environments (CLE) and practices to codify and support 3+1 educational model * Provide additional resources for campuses as they codify their 3+1 model | # campuses with codified 3 Plus 1 Models |

**c. Measuring and Monitoring Progress**

***Q.* How will the organization track its progress toward academic goals at the Board, network, and school level? What performance management systems and benchmarks will the organization use to formally assess academic progress?**

**ANS:** YCCS tracks its progress toward meeting academic goals at the Board, network and school campus level through monitoring the student data systems in place for tracking all the SQRP metrics plus the unique metrics to YCCS (See **Academic performance goals FY2016-2020**, above). The systems that YCCS derives data from include Power School and Power Teacher, CPS Impact System, Star Reading and Math and the YCCS adapted learning management system. YCCS also tracks post secondary data through the Educational Clearing House and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES).

Academic and other performance goals are monitored and compiled monthly by YCCS Data Management Coordinators. YCCS ‘ School Improvement Coordinators are tasked with monitoring and communications with campus leadership relative to performance data, as well as, the construction of school improvement targets in collaboration with campus leadership. In addition, campuses are able to download their data and look at point in time snapshots, which are also distributed and discussed at a high level, with individual meetings convened as needed. Campus and overall charter performance data is also discussed at monthly Principal Leadership meetings.

The YCCS Board also reviews campus attendance and retention data at its monthly board meeting. Midyear performance is reviewed by the YCCS Compliance Committee at mid-year and no later than February 28 of each year.

***The systems in place*** for tracking progress toward academic goals at the Board level ***include:***

1. **Monthly reports to the Board of Directors.** The Operations Director aggregates the YCCS network-level department reports, most notably the Strategic Operations, School Improvement, and Finance Departments, and conveys all governance and board oversight concerns to the Executive Director who informs the Board President of the need for Board review and recommended actions. YCCS network-level and campus-level performances, as measured against the CPS contractual performance metrics (i.e. SQRP) are reviewed quarterly by the Compliance committee, and when the network or a school did not meet its performance goals or compliance requirements, an appropriate level school improvement plan is created with the input of the school improvement department, as part of the campus being placed into a one or two year restructuring status.
2. **Board Committee structure.** Board committees, staffed by YCCS senior leadership, meet regularly to provide oversight and make recommendations for Network level and Campus Vendor level actions to the full Board of Directors. The Board Executive Committee meets monthly to review key oversight and governance issues related to all YCCS campuses and network, as identified by the Executive Director, prior to the monthly board meeting. The Compliance and Finance Committees provide the primary oversight of academic, operational and financial performance.
3. **The YCCS Network-level organizational structure.** The key departments that staff the Board committees and support the Board’s oversight of the network’s and campus-level academic, financial and operational performances are Finance, Administration, School Improvement, and Strategic Operations.

Relative to the Board’s governance role in the development and support, particularly in the development and support of new schools, but addressing the oversight of all YCCS campuses, the following processes and activities are accomplished by each respective committee of the Board with primary and collateral responsibility for ensuring that new vendors meet their contractual and performance obligations:

|  |
| --- |
| Board Monitoring Review CYcles & timeline |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity Date (dates subject to change per YCCS Board Compliance Committee oversight & staff recommendation for review)** | **Activity** | **Board Committee** | **Supporting YCCS Department** |
| August/October | Review of annual targets, initiatives and supporting budget for each campus | Finance Committee  Executive Committee | Administrative and Operations |
| August/October | Review of the YCCS Campus’ School Improvement Plan | Planning and Development Committee  Executive Committee | School Improvement |
| August | Review of campus enrollment level recommendation | Executive Committee | Operations |
| October, Quarterly | Review of all aspects of contractual compliance: facility, fiscal, personnel, etc | Compliance Committee | Strategic Operations |
| February | Review of teaching and Learning audit (Quality School Measures) conducted by external evaluator | Compliance Committee | Strategic Operations &  School Improvement |
| February | Review of midyear student and school performance results. Review of probationary campus performance | Compliance Committee | Strategic Operations &  School Improvement |
| June | End of the year campus performance on Standard Bar Matrix and Compliance indicators | Compliance Committee  Full Board | Strategic Operations &  School Improvement |
| June | Review of vendor compliance and contracting | Compliance Committee  Executive Committee  Full Board | Administrative |
| Monthly | Review of campus expenditure levels and reporting compliance | Finance Committee  Compliance Committee | Finance Compliance Unit |
| Monthly | Review of financial statements and fiscal compliance | Finance Committee  Full Board | Finance |
| Monthly | Review of student enrollment and attendance | Full Board | Operations & Accountability |
| Monthly | Action plan activities reported by Departments | Full Board | Administrative |

At any point in the review process, the Board may act through deliberate intervention to correct or modify a situation using the policies and provisions available to them, including revocation of a contract, placing vendors and staff in a probationary status, termination of employment, technical assistance, financial support, and review and modifications of policies. The YCCS Board acts to intervene if a campus is not meeting its academic goals or compliance requirements through a clearly defined process delineated in the YCCS Accountability Plan and the YCCS Policy and Procedures Manual. The consequences for campuses not meeting performance and compliance is also described in the YCCS Accountability Plan and the YCCS Policy and Procedures Manual.

**d. Interventions**

***Q.* Please explain how the Board of Directors monitors and diagnoses underperformance of individual schools/campuses. How are appropriate intervention(s) determined and implemented? What are the key areas in which existing schools/campuses need to improve, and what strategies have been identified to drive academic improvement?**

**ANS:** In accordance with the YCCS restructuring policy, drafted by the YCCS Compliance Committee and approved by the YCCS Board at the 7.12.12 meeting, the **first year** that a YCCS school campus does not meet its academic goals or compliance requirements, the campus goes into a probationary status and the campus submits its plan for improvement to the Board Compliance Committee.

Campuses that demonstrate low and/or marginal performance rankings in the **second year** must:

1. Submit school improvement plans at the beginning of each year detailing plans to improve performance.
2. Present their plans to the YCCS Compliance Committee or the Committee’s designee.
3. Meet with the full YCCS Board to outline corrective action steps.
4. Participate in school improvement planning activities of the Charter.
5. Submit performance data at mid-year (beginning of the second semester) for review by YCCS staff to determine if the school is demonstrating a trend toward satisfactory performance.
6. YCCS staff will submit a mid-year report on the status of the schools to the Compliance Committee.
7. Submit end of the year outcome data no later than July 10 (or date determined by board) that shows satisfactory improvement in areas with rankings in the Low and/or Marginal Performance categories

Campuses on probation receive extra support from their School Improvement representative and their assigned Strategic Operations Department representative. These two people meet regularly with campus leadership to ensure the campus turnaround. An outside consultant or leadership coach may also be assigned to a campus to facilitate permanent and systemic change.

If the school campus has not met its performance or compliance requirements at the midterm of the second year, the campus enters into the YCCS Restructuring Process. As the first step in that process, the YCCS Board Compliance Committee meets with YCCS Compliance and School Improvement staff and reviews the performance and compliance data and then brings its recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding entering into the two year restructuring/probation status. If the Compliance Committee recommendation is approved by the Board of Directors, the School Improvement staff then, with input from the campus and final review and acceptance by the Compliance Committee, develops the School Improvement Plan. Examples of when the YCCS Board intervened due to a school not meeting its performance goals since July 1, 2012 include the placement of Howard Leadership Academy on a two year restructuring status, which ultimately resulted in the vendor deciding that they were not able to make the changes needed to meet the requirements of the restructuring plan and deciding to close its doors (see above where the governing board made changes to the school/school leadership in response to the academic performance of the school.)

An example of an Campus Vendor placed into restructuring year two and subsequently moving off of probation/restructuring is Ada S. McKinley Academy, which was placed into year 2 of restructuring in 2012 -2013 (See Board minutes 7/12/2012) but at mid-year had raised its performance to a performing level (Board minutes 2.28.13), and moved off of probation/restructuring based on its improved performance in 2012-2013.

**Section 3. Operational Capacity**

**3.1. Governance**

**a. Governance**

*Skill Sets*

***Q.*** Describe the diverse skill sets that currently exist on the Board/Body, and note any additional type of expertise that the Board/Body may seek to help support the growth plan. Please include signed assurance statements for each Board/Body member.

**ANS:** The YCCS Board of Directors, currently at a total of 10 members, has a diverse set of skills sets and expertise, all of which have contributed to the success of YCCS as a provider of community-based alternative schooling for drop-outs and at-risk youth. One of the strengths of the Board is the longevity of its core members, where seven of the ten members have served on the YCCS Board for more than 8 years; another is its cultural diversity, largely reflecting the diversity of the student population we serve. The Board has also worked very hard over the last year to bring three new members onto the Board, all of whom deepen and broaden the skill sets of the Board. The diverse skill sets of the ten members include higher education, special education, educational research and evaluation, financial analysis and forecasting, banking and investments, media relations and television production, marketing, strategic planning and organizational development, human resource management, computer software/internet connectivity, and high risk youth interventions. In addition there is considerable depth in the areas of school to work career development, workforce development, and entrepreneurship. Skill sets for which the YCCS board still seeks, to better support the YCCS growth plan and the continued vitality of YCCS, include fundraising, real-estate expertise to negotiate deals, architecture/construction, an attorney to assist in the management of contracts &/or education law, and advocacy. In regards to legal expertise, the YCCS board does have, as part of its protocol, an attorney on retainer who attends board meetings and advises the board on all legal matters.

* Assurance Statements have been signed and were included in the Tier 1 submission.[[7]](#footnote-7)

*Structure:*

***Q.*** Describe how the organization’s governance structure will adapt to oversee and support the 5-year growth plan and the addition of new school(s), if applicable. Include any impact on:

 The composition of the Board of Directors/Governing Body.

*(Note any additional types of expertise that the Board may seek to help support the growth plan.)*

 Board’s/Body’s roles and responsibilities

 Board’s/Body’s professional development priorities at each stage of growth

 Board’s/Body’s relationship to schools or programs

The YCCS Board of Directors has been a very stable board that exercises its governance role in a manner that has been very deliberate, demonstrating a reasonable standard of care and oversight of the schools. Over the 17 years that YCCS has been chartered, it has operated as one school with multiple campuses, and the policies and procedures for the board oversight, for finance, and for the operations of the school campuses have been developed and are in place. As described in the above question, the Board, among its ten current members, has a very broad and deep set of diverse skill sets that it brings to its deliberations, and the addition of two new campuses to the current roster of 20 campuses is not viewed to require any changes in the composition of the Board of Directors/Governing Body or the Board’s roles and responsibilities. In addition, the Board is not expected to need any new professional development specific to the addition of the two campuses, and its relationship to schools and programs is not expected to change.

That said, as also stated in the response to the above question, the Board does plan to continue to grow its board, up to 13 members, and in the next few years some of the long-time members have indicated that they will want to retire from the Board. The Board development committee continues to meet and to engage and vet potential candidates with needed skill sets and a commitment to at-risk youth that are interested in serving on the YCCS Board. The Board is also considering the addition of a parent representative on the Board. Specific skill sets that will be sought, in addition to what might be lost with the retirement of any of the members of the board, include fundraising, additional finance skill sets, legal expertise in education and/or contracts, community and policy advocacy, and real estate/construction.

The YCCS Board of Directors consists of the President, Vice-president, Treasurer, Secretary, and directors. The Board maintains the following committees:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Standing Committees** | **Roles** |
| Executive Committee | Is Comprised of Board chair, other officers and/or committee chairs; Oversees operations of the Board; acts on behalf of the Board during on-demand activities that occur between meetings (and these acts are later presented for full Board review); performs evaluation of chief executive. |
| Finance Committee | Led by the Board treasurer Oversees development of the budget; ensures accurate tracking/monitoring/accountability for funds; ensures adequate financial controls; reviews major grants and associated terms. |
| Compliance/Evaluation | Guides development of compliance and evaluation related policies; ensures overall Charter and vendor school compliance as it relates to charter school law and the policies of YCCS. Reviews vendor school performance data, compliance, and outcomes on a yearly or as-needed basis; recommends Board actions related to vendor school non-compliance and/or non-performance, reviews and recognizes schools and student achievement. This committee may include campus representatives. |
| Human Resources Committee | Guides development, review and authorization of personnel policies and procedures and leads evaluation of the chief Executive; sometimes assists chief executive with leadership and management matters. |
| Program Development Committee | Guides development of the educational enterprise; promotes capacity building activities designed to strengthen the educational enterprise; serves as a link between the Board, administrative staff, and school on programmatic activities and issues. May identify and solicit funds from external sources of support. This committee may combine efforts with the Compliance and Evaluation Committee. This committee includes campus representatives. |
| Technology Committee | Oversees the development and implementation of the Technology Plan; Oversees the YCCS E-rate subsidy for the continued and expanded connectivity of those campuses covered under the YCCS E-rate grant. |

*Ad Hoc and Advisory Committees: The following descriptions are intended to portray various functions often conducted by ad hoc board committees and advisory committees to the Board.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ad-hoc Committees** | **Roles** |
| Curriculum Advisory Committee | Comprised of content area instructors from the various campus sites; plans, evaluates, and reviews curriculum; makes recommendations to the board on curriculum changes |
| Program Advisory Committee | Comprised of Campus Administrators from the various campus sites; plans, evaluates, and reviews the educational program and initiatives; makes recommendations to the board on program related issues |
| Accountability Advisory Committee | Comprised of Campus Administrators from the various campus sites; plans, evaluates, and reviews school performance relative to accountability agreement, recommends to the Board changes or additions to the accountability agreement. |
| Assessment Advisory Committee | Comprised of Campus Administrators from the various campus sites; plans, evaluates testing instruments, recommends changes or additions to the Board. |
| Events (or Programs) | Plans and coordinates major events such as fundraising, retreats, (non-profits), team building or planning. |
| Nominations | Identifies needed Board member skills, suggest potential members and orients new members. |
| By-Law Committee | Reviews and amends the Board’s Bylaws. |
| Annual Meeting | Plans and facilitates annual meetings. |

The Board of Directors meets regularly once a month, except July and December, with all meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act.

The Board’s development priorities, as described in the YCCS’s Strategic Plan, include:

* Breaking the cycle of underdevelopment of out-of-school youth and off-track students
* Achieving high standards for student academic success
* Creating powerful alternative learning environments
* Driving school improvement and student achievement through accountability
* Optimizing operations and service delivery to improve student achievement
* Optimizing board governance to improve organizational effectiveness

Through a Board process, YCCS will contract with the new vendors to operate in partnership with YCCS to provide educational services to be delivered at their campus. Each new vendor will have a performance contract that defines the terms and conditions of the relationship. The Youth Connection Charter School Board monitors the school’s academic performance and compliance through the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the YCCS’s Policy and Procedure Document, Agency Contract, the YCCS/CPS Charter School Agreement, The YCCS Accountability Plan and Charter School Law. YCCS has clearly defined metrics covering a variety of areas that codify and measure performance and compliance expectations and goals. YCCS’s policies and procedures also define consequences for non-compliance and non-performance. The YCCS Quality School Measures, the Standards Bar Matrix Student and School Performance Measures, and Fiscal Accountability indicators are examples of on-going evaluation policies and processes embedded in the day to day operations of YCCS that are reviewed by the Board.

**b. Organizational Charts and Decision-Making Authority**

**Q.** Provide an organizational chart that includes the campuses being proposed in this Business Plan, indicating any new positions.

* See YCCS organizational chart, submitted in First Tier Submission.[[8]](#footnote-8)
* No new positions required at the network level in the first year.

**c. Legal Compliance and Ethics Policies**

*Ethics Policy*

***Q.*** Please provide a copy of the network’s Ethics Policy for board members, directors, officers, and employees.

Currently YCCS does not have one network Ethics Policy that covers board members, directors, officers and employees. YCCS does have an Employee Code of Ethics Policy and the Board of Directors has a Conflict of Interest Policy. The Board Conflict of Interest Policy covers Nepotism, Financial Interest in contracts, and Gifts, Loans and Favors; The Employee Code of Ethics covers Conflict of Interest as well as sexual harassment. YCCS is in the process of revising these policies so that they will be ready by the Charter Renewal Agreement’s December 1, 2015 submission date.

***Appendices:***

 Attach an Ethics Policy –

* See YCCS Employee Code of Ethics[[9]](#footnote-9)

*Conflicts of Interest Policy*

***Q.*** Describe how the Board or Governing Body identifies and addresses conflicts of interest. Include a copy of the network’s Conflict of Interest policy.

See response above regarding network Ethic’s Policy. As stated above, YCCS is in the process of revising these policies so that they will be ready by the Charter Renewal Agreement’s December 1, 2015 submission deadline.

***Appendices:***

 Attach a formal Conflict of Interest policy

* See Board Conflict of Interest Policy, attached.[[10]](#footnote-10)

**3.2 Operational and Financial Goals and Metrics**

***Q.* Please outline the organizations’ and proposed new schools’ short-and long-term financial and operational goals, and metrics. (See Attachment 1of the Business Plan for sample tables.) How will the organization track its progress toward financial and operational goals at the Board/Body, network, and school level? What performance management systems and benchmarks will the organization use to formally assess financial and operational progress?**

YCCS Financial and Operational goals 2015-2020

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Goal** | **Metric(s)** | **Strategies** | **Progress** |
| 1. | **All levels of YCCS *are***  ***accountable for increased***  ***student achievement***  • Meet or exceed YCCS Accountability Measures | • Maintain consistent high quality as evidenced by meeting accountability standards at the school  improvement level or higher  • Maintain consistent high quality as evidenced by meeting CPS’ SQRP rating of 3.0 or higher | 1. Provide technical assistance and support for campuses in warning or restructure levels  2. Provide for peer review process  3. Implement model development  4. Provide resources to campuses for leadership coaches, instructional coaches, content coaches, literacy coaches, research-based material, and evidence-based strategies (products and services)  5. Work with CPS to adopt the accountability standards articulated by SQRP | YCCS overall rating is 3.95 overall, which makes us a Tier 2 school, .05 away from being a Tier 1 overall. Currently there are 12 campuses at tier 1, 6 campuses at Tier 2 and 1 at Tier 3.  There is only one campus who did not meet the SQRP rating of “3.” It is 0.2 away from meeting the “3” rating. YCCS is working with that campus to ensure it will perform adequately next year. |
| 2. | \* Develop, maintain and enhance financial and  operational efficiencies to  maximize student outcomes  • Grow to an economy of scale necessary to meet the instructional and operational needs of campuses | • YCCS will expand from 4004 to 4866 seats by 2019-2020 | 1. Invest in school improvement  activities with select operators to enhance quality and safe  learning environment  2. Invest in infrastructure with select operators to grow to scale  3. Grow to scale successful or promising models, practices and/or operators for meeting the educational needs of off-track and high-risk students  4. Work with strategic partners to implement facility finance  strategies  5. Increase enrollment to 4866 by utilizing CPS Material  Modification process and  opening new schools (campuses) | Submitted MMA in March 2014 and subsequently in Jan 2015, and are awaiting official response so there has been no growth. |
| 3. | Maintain and enhance financial and operational efficacies to maximize student outcomes  • Maintain a positive cash flow | • Maintain liquidity ratios above industry standards:  • Current ratio above 2.18  • Cash ratio above 1.58  • Generate 2% annual budget from private sources by 2017  • Maintain annual reserve of 5% of operating Budget | 1. Diversify sources of funding for support of on-going operations in particular for school improvement activities, special ed., technology acquisitions and new school development  2. Implement adequate budget  controls and provide for lines of credit as needed  3. Conduct a detail assessment of operational and financial  obligations and needs (i.e.  buildings, reporting systems,  school improvement,  technology, specialized  services)  4. Present monthly financial  reports to YCCS Board  including Statement of  Financial Position, Statement of Activities, Statement of Cash Flow, Footnotes, and all  Liquidity Ratios  5. Add additional staff as  processing needs expand and  reporting requirements of the  funding environment change  6. Oversee budgeting processes  for all development and  fundraising plans  7. Hire a fund development and  grant writing professional | 1. YCCS has met and exceeded the industry standards for liquidity ratios  2. YCCS continues to maintain an annual reserve of at least 5% of the operating budget.  3.YCCS has expanded its funding from other public and private sources to about 2% of its operating budget.  4. Erate funding has provided adequate funding to support school improvement activities, special education and new school development.  5.Private grants are supporting post secondary placement for YCCS students  6.YCCS has obtained a line of credit as a resource for cash flow  7. YCCS presents monthly financial updates to its board  8. YCCS has hired a development person to support fund raising |
| 4. | Build cross-sector collaborations with CPS, city and state agencies, alternative education providers, community-based organizations, and community colleges to create targeted interventions to assist off-track students and out-of-school youth | Expand available seats by 20% in dual enrollment and vocational training with City Colleges of Chicago and other postsecondary  institutions (St. Xavier, Columbia, National  Louis) over the term of the contract  • Collaborate with a minimum of 5 City-wide, community-based organizations, state and city social service agencies, and alternative  education providers to develop an integrated system of support for students. | 1. Work with Cook County Workforce Board to  continue to have Workforce  investment funded youth  programming at all campuses  2. Facilitate advocacy initiative to build cross-sector  Collaborations  3. Work with individual  community colleges and the  district office to expand dual  enrollment / credit opportunities with City Colleges for students  4. Seek foundation support for  postsecondary placements | 1.YCCS continues to partner with Work Force Board to provide placement assistance to all YCCS students.  2.YCCS has partnered with UIC, several corporations in Chicago to open up the job industry to our students providing training and permanent employment  3.YCCS has partnered with City Colleges of Chicago to facilitate post secondary placement and dual enrollment placement for YCCS students  4.YCCS has secured at least one private foundation to support post secondary and dual enrollment placement. |
| 5. | Develop, maintain and enhance financial and  Operational efficiencies to maximize student outcomes  • Advanced technologies accessible to teachers and administrators and utilized for instructional and administrative purposes | • 100% of campuses linked to YCCS through a secure IT Network for delivering assessment, curriculum, PD, and data management services by 2017  • 75% of campuses utilize an education data management platform for aggregating data  and providing real-time reports on student performance by 2015  • 30% of campuses by 2016 will implement the  use of 21st century learning tools (e.g.,smart)  phones, smart boards, tablets) for the delivery  of educational content to increase academic performance on YCCS assessments. | 1. Utilize E-rate funding for all  infrastructure development for the YCCS technology platform.  2. Develop manual for technology utilization to ensure YCCS technology platform standardization.  3. Develop and implement a plan to provide low cost technology support services to campuses. | YCCS, through E-rate, has managed to get most of its campuses to obtain 100 Mbps access to internet and has allowed campuses to set up labs and classrooms with computer and internet access to at least 5-1 student to device ratio to ensure support of YCCS educational strategies.  All campuses at YCCS are using PowerSchool as the student Management system and at least 15 campuses are utilizing smart phones, smart boards and tablets for the delivery of educational content to increase learning. |
| 6. | Develop, maintain and enhance governance and leadership to maximize student outcomes  • The Board of Directors retains current members and encourages new membership | • Increase in Board membership to a total of 9 members by 2015 | 1. Recruit board members to support YCCS’ strategic plan. | As of January 2015, YCCS Board had increased to 9 active members. |

**3.3 Human Capital**

**a. Recruitment and Staffing**

*Network Staffing Plan*

***Q.* Please complete the table in Attachment 3 below, indicating your projected staffing needs for the entire network over the next five years.**

* See Attachment 3[[11]](#footnote-11)

*School Staffing Rollout Plan*

**Q. Please complete the table(s) in Attachment 4 below, outlining your school-specific staffing rollout plan for both a “typical” elementary school, and a “typical” high school (as applicable).**

* See Attachment 4[[12]](#footnote-12)
* **3.2 Please provide an updated 5-year staffing table for each school. Ensure that the table specifies each required role (for example, differentiate between core subject teacher, specialized subject teachers, special education teachers, etc.).**

**Rincon Young Adult Learning Academy**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 |  |
| # Total Student – Enrollment | | 175 | 200 | 225 | 250 | 250 |  |
| Staff Position | |  |  |  |  |  | Campus Budget Line Item? |
| Core Subject Teachers | | 9 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 13 | Yes |
| Specialized Subject Teachers | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Special Education Teachers[[13]](#footnote-13) | |  |  |  |  |  | On YCCS Network level budget |
| Director | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes |
| Registrar | |  |  |  |  |  | Yes |
| Attendance Specialist | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes |
| Academic Advisor | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | Yes |
| Assistant Director | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes |
| Teacher’s Aides | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 3 | 3 | Yes |
| Administrative Staff | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes |
| TOTAL TEACHER/ Staff | 16.1 | 18.1 | 20.1 | 23 | 23 |  |
| Student: Teacher Ratio\*[[14]](#footnote-14) | 20:1 | 20:1 | 20:1 | 20:1 | 20:1 |  |
| Student/Staff Ratio | 11:1 | 11:1 | 11:1 | 11.1 | 11.1 |  |

\* RFS believes that in an alternative high school with a focus on students’ personalized learning (individual and group learning) will be fostered by the planned teacher to student ratios, not to exceed a 1:20 Teacher-Student ratio. The student to staff support ratio reflects the needs have the support staff aid in the running of the school and facilitating the teacher’s learning objectives.

*Recruitment*

**Q. Identify whether recruitment will be managed at the school or network level for each type of position. Identify key partnerships, and/or sources the operator will rely upon to recruit teachers and leaders. Identify the process the operator will rely upon to identify and develop high-quality teachers, and leaders.**

YCCS has developed a profile for effective alternative school teachers and principal leadership adapted from the Haberman Framework. These are key indicators when identifying and developing alternative school teachers and leaders. Recruitment for all positions at the campus/site level will be managed by the campus/site, with support from the YCCS human resources department. As a screening and vetting strategy, YCCS’s Human Resources Department utilizes the following recruitment venues: School Springs, NPO.Net, Career Builder, Monster, Illinois Network of Charter Schools, and Chicago Public Schools. YCCS has several high stakes key partnerships with universities that include; Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago State University, Loyola University, DePaul University, and Roosevelt University. YCCS will assist the campus in leveraging resources with high stakes partner for the purposes of staff recruitment, selection and retention.

YCCS has developed a two-year teacher induction and new principal leadership institute. The two-year teacher induction has five elements that guide professional development and coaching. The YCCS Induction and leadership elements are:

* Generating Engagement
* Meeting Student Needs
* Establishing High Expectations
* Establishing Relationships
* Connecting Learning to Community

Professional development and training for new teachers are conducted bi-monthly and led by experienced, alternative school instructional teacher leaders. The New Principal Institute includes mentoring, coaching and professional development. YCCS’ on-boarding strategy for new principal leaders encompasses weekly collegial mentoring, monthly coaching meetings and quarterly professional development.

**b. Professional Development**

***Q.* Identify the organization’s plan to meet professional induction and development needs at the proposed new schools. Include whether induction and professional development will be managed at the school/program or network level. Identify the method the organization will use to determine the effectiveness of the induction and professional development.**

**ANS:** **Improvement of Teaching and Learning:** The YCCS Leadership at the network level improves teaching & learning by building capacity and providing resources to YCCS campuses, teachers, and principal leadership. This effort is consistently aligned to YCCS’s vision, mission, and strategic goals. Through the Education Support Department, division of the YCCS **New Teaching for New Learning Institute[[15]](#footnote-15)**, YCCS leadership develops, monitors, and coordinates system-wide new teacher and new principal professional development; builds instructional leadership capacity through our Principal Leadership Institute; customizes professional development to meet the teaching and learning needs of campuses (teachers, principal, support staff); and facilitates strategic planning, problem solving, and open communication through Communities of Practice that engage members in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing activities. Professional development and induction effectiveness will be evaluated by participants, teacher & principal leadership performance, and SQRP metric.

The New Teaching for New Learning Institute (NTFNL) at Youth Connection Charter School designs and implements high-quality professional development that focuses on research-based strategies as it relates to elements included in a competency based educational framework. It provides leadership, technical assistance and resources to YCCS campuses to improve students’ learning by building teacher and principal capacity through organizational and professional development. Drawing on the experiences of alternative school educators and research-based strategies the Institute engages the YCCS school community in developing creative, effective and innovative andragogies that enhance student learning and support academic success for higher-risk youth. In addition, the Institute promotes high impact pedagogies and andragogies as tools for innovation in teaching and learning through the development and design of curriculum, assessment, and effective practices that prepare students for meaningful careers, community involvement, and college success and engaged citizenship.

The following are YCCS professional development activities and topics that will support our strategy to reengage drop-outs and disengaged youth.

**Professional Development Topics**

* New teacher induction and workshops (2-year cohort on-going)
* Teacher evaluation - Danielson and Marzano Models (Per Educational Vendor selection & on-going)
* Instructional and whole school design (on-going)
* Social/emotional learning (disciplinarians, mentors, advisors)
* Competency-Based Learning (pilot/Competency-Based framework development and YCCS model design)
* Competency-Base Learning 101 (Inquiry, UBD, Socratic learning, project based-instruction)
* Co-Teaching and Blended Learning
* Numeracy
* Collaborative Classroom Learning Environments
* Unit of Study Using Digital Media
* Whole School Literacy Plan

**Campus Level Supports to Strengthen Academic Program and Instruction**

* Funding for and coordination of Master Teachers, Instructional Coaches and Reading Specialists assigned to campuses
* Special Education Case Management Support
* Grow Your Own teacher training in partnership with Chicago State University
* Masters Degree Reading Coach program in partnership with St. Xavier University
* Computer Technology - computers for Instruction, online learning courseware, digital media technology and teacher training
* STAR Assessment support including progress monitoring and instructional planning
* Title 1 and SGSA Planning
* Data monitoring and review includes data talks with campus leaders and teachers
* Coordination of data management systems including but not limited to PowerSchool/ PowerGrade

**Communities of Practice:**

* Professional Learning Community Clusters (Content teacher teams across multiple campuses working collaboratively)
* Numeracy Coaches (Math teachers working collaboratively on refining instructional practices)
* Competency-based (Content teachers working collaboratively on development of standards, assessment rubrics and units of study)
* Collaborative Learning Environments (Teachers working collaboratively on units of study and courses that incorporate digital media and project-based learning and subject integration)
* Academic Advisor (Academic advisors working collaboratively to ensure student access to post-secondary opportunities, college and careers)
* Principal Advisory Committee (Thought partnering around YCCS initiatives, designing policy, and professional growth opportunities)
* Principal and Teacher Coaches (Identifying alternative school best practices, evidence-based and YCCS strategies for re-engagement

At YCCS professional training and development is about CHANGE in teaching and learning and instructional changes start with principal leadership. This change process takes time. Therefore, it is expected that individual professional development activities will result in long-term instructional behavior, improved student achievement, and changed practices during the course of a school year. So, as we evaluate training, the outcomes are not only to provide information on the effectiveness of professional development, but also to provide data for refining and adapting professional development activities to ensure that professional development can be improved on an ongoing basis. Therefore, YCCS takes the responsibility for leadership training. The purpose of YCCS’ professional development is to improve student outcomes as it relates to our four cross cutting competencies. As a result, our goal is the assist our principals in refining teaching practices at the campus level. Our Principal Leadership Academy was formed to provide monthly professional development for principals. We provide a professional development calendar by semester where workshops and training are aligned to our school improvement plan. Monthly PD is provided for principals, YCCS provides training for teachers, academic advisors, and mentors during the summer of each school year. Principals are expected to provide professional development at the campus level, and all PD should be aligned to the YCCS strategies and targets during the school year.

**c. Performance Evaluations and Retention**

**Q. Identify the organization’s approach to staff performance evaluations. Specify how frequently the organization plans to evaluate teachers and leaders, who will evaluate whom, and the strategy and plan for how the organization plans to retain high-performing teachers and leaders.**

ANS: Contractually, and in accordance with YCCS policy, campuses/educational vendors are required, minimally on an annual basis, to evaluate their teachers and principals. Campuses/Vendor Organizations are required, per YCCS policy, to utilize either the Charlotte Danielson or the Robert Marzano teacher evaluation instruments and framework to evaluate their teachers. These instruments utilize a growth model approach that refines teaching and learning practices, builds teacher capacity, and enables teachers to customize professional growth plans.

Principal evaluations also are to be conducted, at minimum on an annual basis, by the educational vendor/vendor organization. YCCS suggests that the vendor organization utilize the Marzano School Leader Evaluation Instrument, which complements both growth model teacher evaluation models. The campus performance/score card is also advised to be included in the Principal’s evaluation, as well as the YCCS quality school rubric for the Principal evaluation, which includes the following as key indicators for evaluating principal effectiveness,:

* *Living a mission, vision and beliefs for results*
* *Leading and managing systems change*
* *Improving teaching and learning*
* *Building and maintaining collaborative relationships*
* *Leading with integrity and professionalism*
* *Creating and sustaining a culture of high expectations*
* *Accomplishing student engagement, growth and attainment*

The YCCS strategy, in partnership with its campuses, for supporting new teachers and leaders AND retaining high performing teachers and leaders includes the following:

* 2-year mentoring program for both new teachers and new leaders
* Professional Development and Training for teachers and principals
* Peer-coaching (professional engagement with peers)
* Peer-shadowing for both new teachers and new leaders
* Professional Learning Communities
* Infrastructure for Continuing Education

All the above programs and structures are designed to both provide support to new teachers and new school leaders AND provide opportunities for high performing teachers and leaders to gain recognition for their expertise, at both the education delivery and program development sides, by being selected to be becoming coaches and mentors to their peers. Teachers and educational leaders who are selected to be coaches then have the opportunity to develop leadership skills in their area of expertise, achieve professional advancement as a teaching or leadership coach, as well as receive a supplementary stipend. It is becoming increasingly understood and supported by human resource and educational research that the way to retain high performing teachers and school leaders is to foster a professional culture of learning among peers, to provide teachers and leaders with opportunities for continuing professional growth, and to recognize high performing teachers and leaders by asking them, whenever possible with a stipend, to share their expertise with their peers.

**Section 4. Economic Soundness**

**4.1 Financing and Development**

**a. Multi-year Financial Plan**

***Q.*** Submit a five-year, accrual-based financial plan and budget narrative:

**ANS:** See 5 year consolidated budget, which includes aggregated school/program-level budget of existing schools and programs and projected new schools plus detailed assumptions, submitted to drop box.

**b. Financial Controls**

***Q.*** What financial controls does the organization have in place at the central-and school/program-level to ensure long-term financial viability?

YCCS Finance Department, under the direction of the Comptroller and Assistant Comptroller, in

conjunction with the Executive Director, Chief of Staff and Operations Director, oversee the YCCS budget and financial operations of the network. The department prepares Financial Statements monthly which include a Statement of Financial Condition, Statement of Activities with Ratio of Budgeted to Actual Performance, Statement of Cash Flows, Footnotes, and an analysis of Liquidity, Financial Leverage, and Profitability Ratios.

The Finance Department also has a school-wide Fiscal Compliance function, namely to develop and administer Campus Fiscal Compliance Policies and Procedures that ensure (through an audit review) that all campus reimbursement vouchers meet Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and OMB 133 audit standards in particular. Also, the certified audits of the individual campuses are analyzed at the end of the contract year for conformity with vouchers presented, and to review the fiscal capacity of the individual campus. The department provides technical assistance to campuses on a one-on-one basis where needed and provides annual trainings and updates to campus principals, their agencies, CFO’s and executive directors. There is also a third party auditing firm that conducts annual audits of YCCS and its campuses to ensure compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices and to ensure there are no deficiencies or provide recommendations if any are found.

At YCCS, we work with the campuses at the beginning of each academic year in the development of their budgets, approval of their budgets and the monitoring of the budgets.

1. Campuses are allocated a rate for funds received from CPS which includes Tuition, Facility Supplement, and Title I. All of SGSA funds are allocated to the campuses as well.
2. Campuses submit budgets for review and approval based upon the financial policies and procedure distributed at the beginning of each year.
3. Campuses budget for Title I and SGSA are formulated around the goals set up in YCCS’ Program Design for Title I and SGSA.
4. YCCS monitors these budgets through a vouchering process. Campuses are given a quarter’s advance of their funds to begin operation. On a monthly basis they submit vouchers detailing what has been expended with all supporting documents including invoices, proof of payments of payroll taxes and cancelled checks or bank statements.
5. These vouchers are audited and payments made for the approved voucher amount.

The YCCS Network-level budget is broken down into two types of costs: (1) central programming costs and (2) administrative costs. YCCS keeps 14% of Tuition and Facility Supplement funds received from CPS for Central Programming and Administrative expenses. Approximately 5% of these are spent on central programming and the remaining 9% are purely administrative. Also, about 40% of Title I funds are directly expended on school improvement activities to raise the academic performance of the campuses.

Central programming costs consist of all activities undertaking to improve the campuses in an effort to achieve an ultimate goal of YCCS, which is to offer quality education to at-risk students. These activities include, but are not limited to, principal coaching and mentoring, curriculum development, curriculum materials, resources for special education, direct support services for schools and students, post-secondary education (career education and college credit dual enrollment) opportunities and services, literacy and numeracy coaches and teaching and learning support. On the CPS budget template, these activities are part of the following line items: classroom supplies, educational materials, school support services, school activities, contractual and consulting services, teacher and after school stipends, part of salaries, and licenses. As a further note, the YCCS audited financial statement submitted to CPS for 2013/14 had administrative and board expenses of $4.2 million out of the total expenditure of $47.4 million, which is 9%.

YCCS has achieved the following contractual financial ratings in the most recently released YCCS Financial and Compliance Score Card:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key Compliance and Reporting Indicators** | **2012-13** |
| Legal Compliance | 4 |
| Budget | 4 |
| Quarterly Statements | 3 |
| CPS/Federal/State Compliance | 3 |
| Audit | 4 |

**c. Fundraising Plan**

***Q.*** What are the organization’s fundraising goals over the next 5 years? Please provide a development plan, including staffing needs. The plan should demonstrate historical fundraising success and future likelihood of success.

**ANS:** YCCS does not currently have a fund development plan, and does not set fundraising goals for the schools and educational programs, per se. However, YCCS does raise funds through grants, sponsorships and donations on a project by project basis, and the only on-going fundraising goal is to support the YCCS Network level Career Pathways Program (CPP), currently supported through a $150,000 Mott Foundation grant, which covers the costs of dual enrollment courses and industry trainings through City Colleges and leverages a Department of Rehabilitative Services grant that covers the costs of training and on-the-job experience for students that qualify for special education services as identified in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP); Additional programs for or from which YCCS has sought support include Cook County Partnership WIA in-school program, a job-readiness program and After School Matters apprenticeship program.

**4.2 Facilities**

**a. Facility Space Requirements**

***Q.*** Identify the organization’s core requirements for facilit(ies) to accommodate the organization’s stated growth plan, e.g., square footage, number and type of classrooms, and amenities, etc.

**ANS:** Specific Facility-Space Requirements for the two sites are still being determined.

**b. Facility Plan**

*School/Program Sites*

***Q.*** Describe the plan to secure an appropriate facility for any school or campus being requested for approval via this Business Plan. 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.

The Rincon Family Services (RFS) Young Adult Learning Academy: A Youth Connection Charter School Campus, to be located at 3720 N. Kedzie Ave, Chicago IL 60618. Space was recently acquired by Rincon Family Services and is presently vacant. Former use was as a Wallpaper design and manufacturing site.

The RFS Academy’s back up site is 3710 N. Kedzie, the current RFS Administrative Offices and Training Site, where the training rooms and surrounding offices can be reconfigured for the 2016-2017 first year of school.

*Contingency Plans*

***Q.*** Identify contingency plans if desired facility strategy is not achieved.

Due to the Start Up grant’s discontinuance, and other budgetary constraints resulting from State cuts and general state budget uncertainties, RFS has adjusted the timeline for the build-out of the facility at 3720 N. Kedzie, and is making plans for the renovation of the site at 3710 N. Kedzie.

*Project Management*

***Q.*** Describe the organization’s capacity and experience in managing these strategies, including required renovation.

YCCS has an extensive track record of identifying and opening new locations, starting new educational programs, and campuses. YCCS is also up to speed with the new Building and Fire Department requirements that the campus be zoned for and meet the building requirements of a high school. Our experience in identifying and opening new locations includes relocating campuses and new start-ups. In accordance with our business model, YCCS works in partnership with our vendors to secure the facilities and cover the start-up costs for each campus and for all major renovations and expansion to existing facilities. Please note, that as was the practice with other charter schools, YCCS did not receive any start-up funding through CPS for these new schools (with the exception of the “Options” campus).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1998 | YCCS was successful in converting nine (9) GED programs housed in various locations across the city into credit granting alternative schools. These programs were developed as Youth Connection campuses in partnership with their sponsoring organizations and most have operated successfully as part of YCCS’ portfolio of schools for over 15 years. These campuses are: Greater West Town Academy, El Cuarto Año Alternative School, Bronzeville Academic Center (now Innovations High School), Howard Area Alternative School (closed), Westside Holistic Alternative School (now YCCS Westside Leadership Academy), Lakeside Academy, Community Youth Development Institute, Jane Addams Alternative High School, and Rudy Lozano Leadership Academy (now an alternative charter school under CPS). |
| 2005 | YCCS created the Youth Connection Leadership Academy, currently located at 3424 N. State. YCCS secured the lease from the Illinois Institute of Technology, funded the start-up, and made major renovations to the faculty to accommodate 250 students. |
| 2010 | YCCS opened Westside Leadership Academy as a direct run campus located at 4909 W. Division. In partnership with Westside Holistic Family Services, YCCS secured the lease and financed all of the renovations and start-up costs to accommodate 250 students. Renovations included creating 10 classrooms, 3 computer labs, a cafeteria, offices, and technology infrastructures. |
| 2009 | YCCS opened the Youth Connection Virtual Academy in partnership with K-12 Learning. We housed the campus at Malcolm X college, secured the lease on the space and supported its start-up with technical assistance and training of personnel. |
| 2010 | YCCS formed a partnership with the Circle Foundation to open Innovations Arts Integration High School. We relocated the facility from 220 W 45th Place to 10 North State Street. YCCS worked with alderman’s office, and secured a five the lease on the building and financed the renovation of the space |
| 2011 | Opened the Options Academy in partnership with Little Black Pearl. Little Black pearl is now a contractor of CPS under its ALOP program. |
| 2012 | YCCS opened Chatham Academy at 9035 S. Langley. YCCS secured the lease on the building through the Archdiocese, financed the renovations, selected the principal, and functions as fiscal agent for the campus. |

In all cases YCCS worked with the sponsoring organizations, organizations that have deep roots in their respective communities and histories of service our student population, to secure the political and community support to open or relocate an YCCS campus. Hence, the cornerstone of our community engagement strategy is to work with or through existing community organizations with a history of serving their respective communities. Our campuses are generally located in economically disadvantaged communities that have large number of at-risk African-American and Latino students and an YCCS campus is viewed as adding value to the neighborhood, or as is the case with our city college locations, value to the mission of the institution. For this MMA our community strategy engagement strategy is:

* Identify and vet a community organization that has deep roots in the community, history of serving our student population, and own or lease an existing facility.
* Meet with and inform the alderman and local officials of expansion or proposed new YCCS location and obtain their support.
* Meet with and inform local organizations of the intended action and seek their support.
* Notify parents of the intended action (if an expansion) and petition parents and community members (if new location) seeking their support
* Work with the alderman to hold a public hearing (if new location)

**5. Management Organizations (MOs) – *Not Applicable. YCCS is not a Management Organization and does not contract with Management Organizations.***

**5.1 MO Capacity - *Not Applicable.***

**a. Historical Financial and Operational Performance**

*Model Non-Negotiables*

**Q. If providing academic services for the operator, what are the key non-negotiables (i.e., the key school design components, policies, practices, etc.), which underlie school culture, and academic outcomes of your school/program model? Discuss any school/program-level autonomy in implementing the educational plan. Explain how these non-negotiables align with the network’s mission.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

*Historical Financial and Operational Performance*

**Q. Please specify whether any of the schools/programs under the MO’s management are on fiscal probation. Please list any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, that has involved the MO. Discuss the outcomes, and/or any demands, identified as part of the arbitration, or litigation. Please note any instances in which the MO has had their contract terminated, has voluntary closed a school/program, or has not been renewed by their authorizer for non-academic reasons. Please cite any non-openings that the MO has experienced. Describe the circumstances surrounding these incidents.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

*Interventions*

**Q. Please explain any past performance that has not met the organization’s expectations. How the underperformance was diagnosed; how were appropriate intervention(s) determined; and how were/are the interventions (being) implemented? What are the key areas in which existing schools/campuses need to improve, and what are the priorities to drive further success?**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

**b. Strategic Plan**

**Q. What academic, financial, and operational metrics do the organization, and its Board of Directors/Governing Body, use to determine readiness for replication? How would the organization’s growth strategy be modified if these benchmarks were not met?**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

*Growth Rate and Rationale*

**Q. Please describe the organization’s proposed scope of growth over the next 5 years in Chicago and in any other locations. Provide the number of schools/programs, locations, opening years, proposed five-year enrollment projections, and type of schools/programs. Please list any other proposals that are pending with other authorizers or have been recently approved to open new schools/programs; cite the number of schools/campuses requested in each proposal.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

**5.2 Overview of Management Organization (MO) Relationship**

**a. Selection**

**Q. Discuss the criteria that the operator used to select the MO and the due diligence that was conducted on the MO prior to submission of the proposal. Describe how the services and responsibilities that will be provided by the organization will further the mission, vision and goals of the network.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

**b. Scope of Services**

**Q. Specify the decisions and services for which the MO will be responsible. Clearly state the compensation structure and/or fees that the operator will pay to the MO. Explain**

**Whether the MO has a role in selecting the school leader, who employs the school leader, and whether the school leader reports to the MO.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

**c. Monitoring**

**Q. Describe how the Board/Governing Body will monitor ad evaluate the performance of the MO to ensure quality service. What academic, operational, and/or financial performance metrics will the Board/Governing Body examine to evaluate MO performance? With what frequency will the Board/governing body monitor these metrics? What benchmarks will define successful MO performance? What are the consequences if these benchmarks are not met? Please describe conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.**

***ANS: Not Applicable.***

1. Rating of 1-3, with 1+ the highest and 3 the lowest; Campuses at 2+ or higher considered to have a satisfactory performance. Performance rating based on a weighted average of campus performances in Academics (Math & Reading Gains, Credit Attainment and 1 year Graduation Rate) and Student Engagement (Attendance & Stabilization Rates). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In 2013-2014 70% of YCCS campuses were at Level 1+, 20% of campuses at Level 1, 5% at Level 2+ and 5% at Level 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Renewal of Charter and Charter School Agreement (Youth Connection Charter School), Agreement #4, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Appendix: 1.3.a. RFS Elected Officials [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Appendix: 1.3.b. RFS C.S. Letters & 1.3.b RFS Petitions [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Attached, Sample 5 Year Vendor Contract. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See Appendix: 3.1.a. YCCS Assurance Statements [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See Attachments – 3.1.b Org Chart [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See Appendix: 3.1.c. Emp Code Ethics [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See Appendix: 3.1.c Board Conflict of Interest [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See Attachments: 3.3.a. Network Staffing Rollout Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See Attachments: 3.3.a. School Staffing Roll Out Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Special Education Services and provided by YCCS Special Education Teachers who are assigned to campuses and managed at the YCCS Network Level. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The YCCS Teacher: Student ratio is set by policy, in alignment with the YCCS Design Principles and Curriculum Design, to not exceed 1:20. The 1:20 Teacher: Student ratio reflects best practice in alternative school education, and is in alignment with YCCS student-focused learning, the personalization of instruction, and the YCCS goal that each student is well known by at least one adult in the school. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The New Teaching for New Learning Institute (NTFNL) is The New Teaching for New Learning Institute at Youth Connection Charter School designs and implements high-quality professional development that focuses on research-based strategies. It provides leadership, technical assistance and resources to YCCS campuses to improve students’ learning by building teacher and principal capacity through organizational and professional development. Drawing on the experiences of alternative school educators and research-based strategies the Institute engages the YCCS school community in developing creative, effective and innovative andragogies that enhance student learning and support academic success for high-risk youth. In addition, the Institute promotes high impact pedagogies and andragogies as tools for innovation in teaching and learning through the development and design of curriculum, assessment, and effective practices that prepare students for meaningful careers, community involvement, and college success and engaged citizenship. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)