**Be the Change Charter School**

**Proposal Narrative**

**September 2013**

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**Section 1: Parent and Community Need, Engagement,**

**and Support in Targeted Community**

**1.1 Parent and Community Engagement/Need in Targeted Community**

**a. Parent and Community Engagement (Preparation of Proposal):**

*(i) Describe and provide evidence of how your Design Team notified community stakeholders and parents/guardians of the development of the proposal to open a new school. List the types, dates, locations, and number of outreach activities in the proposal narrative or in a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment. (Please see pp. 1-2 of the Answer Manual for examples of possible forms of evidence of notification). (ii) Explain the role of parents/guardians and community members in providing input into the proposed school, the form and nature of the feedback, and the process for incorporating the feedback into the proposal. In the proposal narrative or in a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, list the specific suggestions or input received, and explain whether or not the feedback was incorporated into the design of the proposal. If incorporated, please cite how. In a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, include:*

*(i) Evidence of notifying parents/guardians and community stakeholders of the proposal (ii) Examples of written or other communications that specify how parents/guardians and community stakeholders can provide comments on the proposal/proposed school*

*(ii) A detailed record (e.g. in a table or spreadsheet) of the specific feedback that the Design Team received, which cites whether and how the feedback was incorporated into the proposal*

BCCS plans to serve and be located within the communities of McKinley Park and Bridgeport based on our mission, neighborhood needs assessment, and CPS-identified priority areas. An essential part of BCCS’s mission is to bring together students and families and staff of different backgrounds in order to learn and work together in peaceful ways, discover our own and others’ voices, and become active citizens. Thus, it was important for BCCS to identify a community area that would enable the school to recruit a diverse population of students and families. Both McKinley Park and Bridgeport are evolving and growing neighborhoods with a long and diverse history and would allow the school to draw from the surrounding areas of Pilsen, Armour Square, and Bronzeville. While in the early stages the Design Team focused its energy for community engagement in the Bridgeport neighborhood, BCCS has recently begun expanding its reach into McKinley Park.

**Outreach**

BCCS is committed to fostering a symbiotic relationship with the community and has engaged with families and community organizations throughout the development of its proposal. Since 2011, the Design Team has researched to learn more about the community’s strengths and needs to inform the proposal, established contact and built relationships with community partners, developed support and interest in the mission and vision of BCCS, and incorporated the voices of community members throughout the design phase.

During the summers of 2011 and 2012, the BCCS Design Team developed a Needs Assessment Survey for Bridgeport community members to learn more about the community’s strengths and needs, as well as to gain information on what parents would be looking for in a public school. By walking the streets, hosting information tables at events and organizing information sessions the Design Team surveyed 85 parents and community members. (Please see Appendix D Community Outreach, Appendix E Community Survey Results 2011, and Appendix F Community Survey Results 2012.)

The Design Team has also contacted and had face-to-face meetings with eleven important organizations and their leaders, listed in the table below. During these meetings, the Design Team sought to learn more about each organization’s mission, programs, and relationship within the community, as well as their views of the community’s strengths and needs in general and in relation to educational services. These meetings were also an opportunity for BCCS to notify community organizations about our mission and potential areas of partnership. In addition to meetings with community members and organizations, throughout 2012, the Design Team hosted information sessions for families and community members to learn more about BCCS’s mission and vision, meet the Design Team, ask questions about the charter process, and provide feedback in the design of the school. BCCS has partnered with several organizations to coordinate and/or participate in community events, such as Bridgeport Day and a Summer Kick-Off in McGuane Park.

Lastly, BCCS publicizes its mission and vision and gains supporters in a number of ways. BCCS has created a website, a Facebook page which currently has over 250 likes, and a Twitter account which currently has 268 followers. The Design Team sends a monthly newsletter to everyone on its email list, which contains updates, events, and informational articles about charter schools and education initiatives. The Design Team has also been featured in articles in local media sources, including Bridgeport News and DNAinfo.com. We have engaged in honest conversations with organizations via social media regarding why we are interested in opening a school in the community.

The following is a list of BCCS outreach activities since 2011. In spite of not having a location identified, the BCCS Design Team has made contact with hundreds of individuals and families and gained more than 200 supporters. Further evidence of notifications to stakeholders regarding BCCS’s proposal as well as activities can also be found in the attached appendices, which include BCCS fliers, newsletters, and articles.

**BCCS Community Outreach**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outreach Activity** | **Date** | **Location** |
| Community Needs Assessment Survey | June-July 2011 | Bridgeport |
| Community Needs Assessment Survey Part 2 | June-July 2012 | Bridgeport |
| Meeting with Tina Ayala, Director of Fellowship HouseMeeting with Karen Chiu, Director of Project:VISION | June 5, 2011 | Bridgeport - Fellowship House, 844 W. 32nd St.Armour Square - Project:Vision, 2301 S. Archer |
| Meeting with Esther Wong, Director of Chinese American Service League | July 6, 2011 | Chinatown - CASL, 2141 S. Tan Ct. |
| Information Table at Valentine Boys & Girls Club | July 2011 | Bridgeport - B & G’s Club, 3400 S. Emerald |
| Meeting with Kal Moy, Director at McGuane Park | July 19, 2011 | Bridgeport - McGuane Park, 2901 S. Poplar Ave. |
| Meeting with Pastor Tom Gaulke, First Trinity Church | July 20, 2011 | Bridgeport - First Trinity Lutheran Church, 643 W. 31st |
| Bridgeport Citizens Group Smoke Out | July 22, 2011 | Bridgeport - Co-Prosperity Sphere, 3219 S. Morgan |
| Meeting with Alderman James Balcer, 11th Ward | August 11, 2011 | Bridgeport - 11th Ward Office, 3659 S. Halsted |
| Table at One Bridgeport  | August 13, 2011 | Bridgeport - Benton House, 3052 Ma Benton Lane |
| Meeting with Karen Chiu, Director of Project:VISION | September 19, 2011 | Armour Square - Project:Vision, 2301 S. Archer |
| Meeting with One Hope United: Bridgeport Child Development Center | September 19, 2011 | Bridgeport - 3053 S. Normal Ave. |
| Information Session  | September 20, 2011 | Bridgeport - Valentine B & G’s Club, 3400 S. Emerald |
| Information Session Community of the Future Meeting  | January 22, 2012 | Bridgeport - Maria’s Community Bar, 960 W. 31st St. |
| Information Session | February 16, 2012 | Bridgeport - McGuane Park, 2901 S. Poplar Ave. |
| Information Session | April 12, 2012 | Bridgeport - Fellowship House, 844 W. 32nd Street |
| Table at Bridgeport Day | May 12, 2012 | Bridgeport - Benton House, 3052 Ma Benton Lane |
| Joint Fundraiser with Project:VISION | June 9, 2012 | Bridgeport - Maria’s Community Bar. 960 W. 31st St. |
| Summer Kick-off event in partnership with McGuane Park, Fellowship House, Project:VISION | June 16, 2012 | Bridgeport - McGuane Park, 2901 S. Poplar Ave. |
| Information Session | September 20, 2012 | Bridgeport - Valentine B & G’s Club, 3400 S. Emerald |
| Silent Auction Fundraiser | November 2, 2012 | Bridgeport - Co-Prosperity Sphere, 3219 S. Morgan |
| Interview with Reporter from DNA Info | March 13, 2013 | Bridgeport Coffee House |
| Meeting with Black Star Project | August 5, 2013 | Douglas - Black Star Project, 3509 S. King Dr. |
| Joint Fundraiser with Project:VISION | August 24, 2013 | Bridgeport - Maria’s Community Bar. 960 W. 31st St. |
| One-to-one outreach to community organizations via telephone and e-mail - McKinley Park Advisory Council, Donovan Park Advisory Council,, Aquinas Literacy Center, McKinley Park District, National Latino Education Institute, Rauner Family YMCA, LDE Soccer | Mid-August | McKinley Park |
| Hoyne Park Advisory Council Meeting - Design Team presentation | September 12, 2013 | McKinley Park - 3417 S. Hamilton |
| Monthly Newsletters | March 2012 - present | n/a |
| Neighborhood Parents Network Elementary School Fair | September 21, 2013 | Hyde Park - Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, 5480 S. Kenwood Ave. |
| Meeting with Diego Monroy, LDE Soccer | September 24, 2013 | McKinley Park(organization is city-wide) |

**Incorporating Parent and Community Voices**

BCCS is committed to enacting one of its core values of voice by incorporating responses and feedback from parents and community members throughout the design of the school. First, the Needs Assessment Survey results and meetings with community organizations provided valuable information about the strengths and areas of improvement for the community, as well as satisfaction rates with respect to particular issues. A short summary of the results includes the following:

* Strengths of the community include: support of neighbors, city services, local parks, community agencies, ethnic diversity, small businesses, security, transportation, family-oriented environment, growth over the years
* Some of the issues the community faces include: gang violence, need for more acceptance of diversity, need for more interactions with community and leaders, lack of better schools/education, need for more places for students to go, and safety.
* 54% of those surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of teaching at neighborhood schools, while 46% said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.
* 40% of those surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunities for decision-making provided within schools, while 60% said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.
* 42% of those surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of language or ESL programs/services, while 58% said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.
* 39% of those surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied with how schools are addressing the issues of racism and discrimination, while 61% said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.
* Community members also voiced their need for schooling options, as evidenced in the following survey responses:

*It is very important to have quality schooling options in this neighborhood. Otherwise people begin to feel hopeless and despairing, and just settle. I do not feel Bridgeport has enough quality schooling options.*

*Important in the sense that people (my neighbors) won't want to stay and invest in the neighborhood if they don't think it's the best place to raise/school their kids.*

*Very [important]. Daughter is 3 months old. We want options for Bridgeport schools if we are to stay in the area vs. moving to another neighborhood or the suburbs. - Survey Respondents (prospective parents)*

BCCS also held several information sessions where community members heard the mission and aspects of the proposal described and could ask questions or provide feedback. Some of the feedback included:

* Request for rigorous academic curricula that prepares students for selective high schools
* Assurance of how the administration and teachers will meet the needs of the students
* More clarity regarding the shared leadership structure
* Better communication via newsletter to parents and community members on the status of the school
* More opportunities for community engagement, such as workshops for parents
* Explanations and examples of how diversity will be addressed - what does it mean for BCCS to value diversity?
* How BCCS will contribute to the safety in the neighborhood
* Opportunities for after-school programming

The BCCS Design Team used the feedback received throughout the design phase to strengthen and improve aspects of the school’s academic plan, leadership, and community engagement plan. For example, BCCS has more fully developed what it means to have an interdisciplinary curriculum by visiting Mission Hill School in Boston and organizing the learning around three strands per year within which themes for units emerge. (Please see Section 2.4.) The Design Team has also clarified the School Leadership’s roles and responsibilities in addition to going through a rigorous interview process in order to hire a School Director. (Please see Sections 2.2 and 2.5.) A final example of how BCCS has incorporated feedback is how we have made more concrete our commitment to diversity and inclusion from aspects of our school culture to trainings/workshops to the development of our Community Center. (Please see Appendix G Incorporating Community Feedback.)

BCCS is grateful for the voices and actions of parents and community leaders on our Design Team and Governing Board, who have provided valuable input into the design of the school over the past two years. Two parents in the Bridgeport community have been closely involved in the development of the BCCS proposal. At our April 2012 information session, we met Kelly Fallon-Wilson, a parent in Bridgeport who expressed interest in helping the Design Team. Kelly formally joined the team in May and has been instrumental in strengthening many aspects of BCCS’s proposal, including participating in conversations about school culture, the interview process for a School Director, fundraising, and revising sections of the proposal with her perspective as a parent. Another parent supporter of BCCS is Robert Vagnieres, a father of two twin daughters and a local architect, who has guided the Design Team through its facility search as a member of the Real Estate Development Team.

Finally, BCCS has intentionally developed a Governing Board with community representation who have been invaluable in providing feedback as well as financial and moral support. BCCS’s Governing Board includes two community leaders: Juan Chavez, a community artist and activist in McKinley Park; and Ed Marszewski, Founder of Lumpen Magazine and Co-Owner of Maria’s Community Bar in Bridgeport. Both are parents, who jumped at an opportunity to serve on the Board of a school that would provide an additional quality option in the neighborhoods.

As described above, multiple contacts and avenues for feedback from community members and parents, including those who also became members of the Design Team and Governing Board, have helped shape the design of the school.

**b. Description of Need in Targeted Community**:

*Describe the community (e.g. demographics, assets, challenges, relevant history, etc.) and the specific population of students that your proposed school intends to serve. Explain and cite evidence of the unique educational needs of the community, parents, and specific population of students (please see p. 2 of the Answer Manual for examples of possible forms of evidence). How does the proposed school align with community needs and expectations, including those voiced by parents and stakeholders during the community engagement process?*

*If applicable, (e.g. in the case of stakeholder survey data), include evidence in a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment*

**Description of Need**

BCCS is committed to providing a school option that serves ***all*** children with its instructional model and culture. Thus, BCCS plans to draw on the drastically diverse make-up of the targeted neighborhoods and commit to providing an authentic and holistic academic and social and emotional program for its students; we will also incorporate that diversity and history into the school’s culture and curriculum.

BCCS will be recruiting its students from the following Chicago neighborhoods: McKinley Park, Bridgeport, Pilsen, Armour Square, and Bronzeville. The target area is diverse in race, ethnicity, and socio-economic levels, and has had significant changes in population over time. In this way, these neighborhoods are a microcosm of the greater Chicago area.

**Target Neighborhood Demographics**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Armour****Square** | **Bridgeport** | **Bronzeville** | **McKinley Park** | **Pilsen/Lower West Side** |
| Total population | 13,391 | 31,977 | 18,238 | 15, 612 | 35,769 |
| White | 12% | 35% | 10% | 17% | 12.4% |
| African-American | 11% | 2% | 73% | 1.5% | 3.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3% | 27% | 3% | 64.8% | 82.4% |
| Asian | 73% | 35% | 13% | 15.7% | 1% |
| Other | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 1% |
| Student Population Age 0-5 | 752 | 2324 | 947 | 1454 | 3262 |
| Student Population Age 6-12 | 823 | 2573 | 1048 | 1671 | 3741 |
| % of Households below Poverty | 35.8% | 17.3% | 26.1% | 16.1% | 27.2% |

2010 Census Data

BCCS recognizes McKinley Park as a priority area identified by CPS. McKinley Park and Bridgeport border each other and are connected by numerous CTA and train routes, including the 35th street bus and orange line. According to the CPS Draft Educational Facilities Master Plan published in 2013, McKinley Park is expected to have 820 additional children aged 0-14 by 2016. The Bridgeport/Chinatown neighborhood is expected to have an additional 59 children within that age range by 2016. The following table lists several of the public schools in the area, student enrollment information, and their academic achievement according to the Illinois Interactive School Report Card. Of the schools listed, Burroughs, Chavez, Namaste Charter, and Seward are listed as overcrowded according to CPS.

**McKinley Park and Bridgeport Schools Information**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Name** | **Type** | **Neighborhood** | **Students Receiving Free/ Reduced Lunch** | **Student Enrollment** | **3rd grade Reading Meet/Exceed on ISAT 2012** | **3rd grade Math Meet/Exceed on ISAT 2012** |
| Burroughs | NeighborhoodK-8 | McKinley Park | 95% | 497 | 82% | 92% |
| Chavez | NeighborhoodpreK-8 | McKinley Park | 100% | 901 | 61% | 92% |
| Greene | NeighborhoodK-5 | McKinley Park | 96% | 633 | 64% | 81% |
| Everett | NeighborhoodpreK-5 | McKinley Park | 94% | 319 | 56% | 65% |
| Evergreen | NeighborhoodMiddle | McKinley Park | 98% | 392 | 81% (6th) | 76% (6th) |
| Namaste | CharterK-8 | McKinley Park | 85% | 452 | 91% | 93% |
| Armour | NeighborhoodpreK-8 | Bridgeport | 97% | 365 | 70% | 90% |
| Holden | NeighborhoodpreK-8 | Bridgeport | 97% | 595 | 63% | 94% |
| Healy | NeighborhoodPreK-8 | Bridgeport | 94% | 1379 | 78% | 90% |
| McClellan | NeighborhoodPreK-8 | Bridgeport | 94% | 270 | 85% | 97% |
| Seward | NeighborhoodPreK-8 | McKinley Park | 99% | 894 | 61% | 69% |
| Sheridan | Neighborhood, Magnet K-8 | Bridgeport | 68% | 536 | 94% | 98% |

**Alignment to Community Needs**

Results from community surveys and meetings with community members indicate a need for:

* more quality school options for families
* a school community and staff who will meet the changing and diverse needs of students
* opportunities for families and community members to be part of decision-making within a school
* quality language and ESL services
* an effective and thoughtful approach to issues of racism and discrimination.

The mission of BCCS aligns with the strengths and needs of the community areas. BCCS plans to draw from the strengths by forming important partnerships with existing community organizations that will support instruction and after-school programming for students and families. In addition, BCCS will work to contribute to the growth of the community as part of its mission to foster active citizenship for students, teachers, and families. For example, BCCS will host a service days for students, staff, and families and reach out to other neighborhood schools to form professional development connections or joint workshops.

The design of BCCS has been informed by community needs over the past three years. The mission and vision of BCCS specifically addresses the needs of the community in the following ways:

* BCCS will provide a unique and rigorous educational option for families with a focus on interdisciplinary teaching and learning that will foster students’ love of learning and prepare and empower students to make successful choices in high school, college, and life
* We will address what it means to be a diverse school (and city and world) through our school culture and values of peace, voice, and action; our curriculum based on the humanities; and diversity training provided to staff and community. Thus, we will be oriented to celebrate our diversity as well as address the conflicts that have been a historical part of the community or that may arise along the way.
* BCCS will also become a community center by year 3 with programming outside of school hours, which will provide language enrichment and support for both students and adults, extra-curricular activities and clubs, and tutoring in partnership with community organizations.
* BCCS is committed to a democratic decision-making process and invites the voices of all stakeholders - students, teachers, leaders, families, and community members. Beyond a shared leadership structure, BCCS will work to develop a strong Family- Teacher-Community Organization (FTCO) which will provide feedback and advice to the leadership team and have multiple avenues for students and teachers to contribute to decisions made in the school.

**1.2. Evidence of Parent and Community Support in Targeted Community**

1. **Evidence of Parent Support in Targeted Community(ies):**

*In the proposal narrative or in the Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, provide evidence of support for the proposed school among prospective parents with school-aged children in the proposed community(ies) (please see pp. 2-3 of Answer Manual for a list of recommended types of evidence to gauge parent support). In a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, include evidence of support for the proposed school among prospective parents.*

The BCCS Design Team has met and spoken with many parents in the Bridgeport neighborhood through canvassing the neighborhood, hosting information tables and information sessions, and meeting with organizations during 2011 and 2012. BCCS has gathered more than 60 parents from these sessions who support our mission and have signed up for our email list and who receive our monthly newsletters and updates. In addition, 58 prospective parents signed a petition of support.

In recent months, BCCS has worked to gather parent support in the McKinley Park neighborhood. We have already gathered several signatures and added new parents to our email list. We will continue to work hard to gain more support and to collect signatures in the next few months between Tier 1 and Tier 2. The Design team has plans to canvass the neighborhood, host a table at LDE Soccer registration day in November, and hold informational sessions with the McKinley Park and Donovan Park Advisory Councils. The School Director, Mary Rawlins, is also working to contact daycares and pre-Kindergarten services in the area to set up meetings with parents. (Please see Appendix H Letter of Support\_Parents and Appendix K Petition.)

**b. Evidence of Community Stakeholder Support in Targeted Community(ies):**

*Identify community- and faith-based organizations, leaders, cultural institutions, and/or businesses with which the Design Team has corresponded and/or that have pledged support for the school. Provide evidence of support from community organizations and stakeholders (please see page 3 of the Answer Manual for examples of appropriate forms of evidence). In a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, please include evidence of community support for the proposed school.*

From efforts over the past two years, BCCS has a total of over 200 supporters on its email list, 38 signatures on its Change.org petition, over 250 Likes on Facebook, and 268 followers on Twitter. BCCS has received in-kind donations from more than 50 businesses and 100 individuals through its fundraising events. BCCS also attended an INCS job fair and had 51 interested teachers or staff members sign up on our email list. The following is a list of significant community leaders, organizations, and individuals who have pledged support for BCCS. (Please see Appendix I Letter of Support\_Community Organizations and Appendix J Community Email List.)

**BCCS Supporters List**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Community Supporters** | **Educational Supporters** | **In-Kind Donations****(from 2012 and 2013 Silent Auction)** | **Individual Donors** |
| Karen Chiu, Project:VisionKal Moy, McGuane ParkErin Rochford, Valentine Boys & Girls ClubOne Hope United - Bridgeport Child Development CenterCYC-Fellowship HouseChinese American Service LeagueNew Life Community ChurchBlack Star ProjectHoyne Park Advisory CouncilMcKinley Park Advisory Council | UChicago UTEPMission Hill - Boston Pilot SchoolGloria Harper, *Director of Golden Apple Foundation*Bob Welch, *AUSL Coach*Claire Barner, *Administrative Project Manager, Youth Outreach Services* Jayme McKeel, *Director of Operations, Chicago International Charter School* Juhyung Harold Lee*Teachers College, Columbia University*Lindsey Mann, *Graduate Student Researcher in Math Education**University of Michigan* Maureen Murray, *7th grade Language Arts Instructor, LEARN 8 Campus*Nabiha Calcuttawala, *LCSW, Student Development Specialist at CICS-ChicagoQuest*Deborah Kim, *High School English Teacher, Alliance Health Services Academy High School*Briana Nichols, *PhD candidate in Educational Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania*Ly Kim, *4th grade teacher, CICS -Wrightwood*Kandice Washington Cole,*Program and Curriculum Manager for Narrative 4,**Consultant with UChicago UTEP*Tonya Howell, *Instructional Coach, University of Chicago Charter Schools--North Kenwood/Oakland Campus (NKO)*Kyla McCartney, *3rd Grade English teacher in a Dual Language Program, Boston Public Schools* | Adler PlanetariumAnnoyance Theatre & BarArts n’SpiritsBespoke CuisineBits & PiecesBittersweetBrunswick ZoneBuild-A-Bear WorkshopBulls/Sox AcademyCabot CreameryChestnut Mountain ResortChicago Botanic GardensChicago Children’s MuseumChicago Kids CompanyChicago RushChicago Shakespeare TheatreChicago White SoxCooper’s Hawk WineryCourt TheatreCVSDick’s Sporting GoodsGene Siskel Film CenterGrand Lux CafeHighlightsHowl at the MooniO TheaterKingston MinesLakeview SmilesLaugh FactoryLou Malnati’s PizzeriaMuseum of Science and IndustryOld Town School of Folk MusicPanera BreadPickle’s PlayroomRobust Coffee LoungeShedd AquariumZANIES Comedy Nite ClubThe Second CityKohl Children’s MuseumChicago CubsAmerican IdolCanvas on DemandPleasant HouseZaytune’s Rocky’s Maria’s | Emma B. CoateGrace H. KimKyoo Hong LeeJames & Jeannie WangJohn L. Bryant & Virginia BlanfordGrace ParkWerner Paul Harder Healthier TomorrowsRosemary CroninDonna LindemannKenny & Jenna JulianDiane & John FallonSusan ArtKatie AylwinMargarent GonzalezLiz SchuttSuejing ZhouJasmine ShimDeborah LeslieAmanda NewmanChelsea SouterLaura GluckmanHan Na KimBrynley LazarJieun HeoKaleah MerriweatherJim BangBarbara BaldiniJean CapperArthur HowardCecily HenslerKatherine CichonJulia GoldburgLoretta EdwardsAnnie LeeMegan SchlepenbachCarolyn SaperSara Ray StoelingaMarvin HoffmanNancy WilsonDean A. Olson Foundation |

**1.3. Future Plans for Parent and Community Engagement and Partnerships *(Once in Operation)***

1. **Key Community Partnerships:**

*Describe the role of community partnerships that will provide key academic or non-academic services, supports, or opportunities for students throughout the first five years of the school. Explain: (i) the nature, terms, and scope of service of any partnerships (please see page 3 of the Answer Manual for specific information that should be included about each partnership), ii) how such partnerships will further the mission and vision of the school, and iii) who will be responsible for managing and cultivating these partnerships. In a Parent and Community Engagement and Support attachment, please provide evidence of any partner organization’s commitment.*

**BCCS Community Center**

Within the first three years, BCCS will work to be a Community Center where families, organizations, and members can gather and collaborate in order to serve our students and better the community as a whole. We recognize that learning and social development for children continue beyond the school day, and that there is a need for positive activities and opportunities before and after-school. BCCS will develop its Community Center around the definition of a community school put forth by the Coalition of Community Schools:

*The school is oriented toward the community, encouraging student learning through community service and service learning. A before- and after school learning component allows students to build on their classroom experiences, expand their horizons, contribute to their communities and have fun. A family support center helps families with child-rearing, employment, housing and other services.*

BCCS will develop close and symbiotic relationships with community organizations to provide programs, workshops, classes, and trainings for students and teachers as well as family and community members. For example, mentoring, tutoring, and youth leadership programs for students will be provided through our community partnership with Project:VISION, and our professional growth for teachers will be supported through our partnership with UChicago UTEP. Language enrichment and ESL classes will be provided through potential partnerships with organizations such as the Chinese American Service League and the National Latino Education Institute. BCCS will also depend on a strong team of committed volunteers within the school.

In addition, the BCCS Community Center will be essential in engaging parents in their students’ learning at the school by providing a space to meet, learn, and take action. Parents will be involved in all of the six areas of school-community partnership as outlined by the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University, which include family outreach, communication, volunteering, home learning, decision-making, and community collaboration with the school. Each of the areas incorporates numerous opportunities for parents and BCCS staff to work together to support students’ social and emotional growth as well as academic learning.

**Role of Key Community Partnerships**

Community partnerships will be essential to BCCS’s commitment to being a Community Center that will provide workshops for parents, in-school learning opportunities and after-school programs for students, professional learning opportunities for teachers, health and social services, and additional resources for families.

BCCS has established solid partnerships with two organizations during its design phase that will gradually evolve by year 3:

**University of Chicago’s Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP)** is a two-year master's degree program that recruits and prepares candidates with strong undergraduate backgrounds and a commitment to educational equity to teach in underserved urban public schools. BCCS and UChicago UTEP will have a partnership in which BCCS serves as an important site for teacher learning and development and UChicago UTEP is able to provide tutors, student teachers, mentor teacher opportunities and professional development. Both sides will benefit from increased diversity and exposure to new ideas and communities. This partnership will help professionalize the field of education, cultivate well-rounded, deep thinkers in both our staff and students, and advocate for quality teacher preparation programs. Both stakeholders are committed to deepening and formalizing this relationship in the following ways:

* UChicago UTEP first year teacher candidates tutor students in literacy and math.
* BCCS teachers serve as clinical instructors (mentor teachers) for UChicago UTEP residents. As such they will receive professional development and be paid a substantial stipend for their service, as outlined by UChicago UTEP clinical instructor agreement.
* BCCS serves as a site for UChicago UTEP resident seminars, creating an explicit place for teacher learning inside the school.
* UChicago UTEP provides on-going support and professional development to all teachers at BCCS, through the clinical instructor mentoring program.
* BCCS teachers have opportunities to collaborate with UChicago UTEP staff and graduates in alumni inquiry groups and other professional development opportunities.

**Project:VISION** is a nonprofit organization with a mission to provide youth of Chicago’s Chinatown and Bridgeport communities. Project:VISION works to foster educational, personal, and civic development in middle and high school students. Project:VISION has a dedicated staff of after-school tutors who help students from various schools with homework, preparing for the ACT, or college applications. In addition, Project:VISION offers a program for English Language Learners after-school and organizes community service projects and internships throughout the year for youth. BCCS and Project:VISION plan to develop their partnership fully by year 5 when we have students entering middle school. Both stakeholders are committed to formalizing this relationship in the following ways:

* BCCS will serve as an after-school tutoring site for middle school students by Project:VISION tutors
* BCCS and Project:VISION will organize joint community service projects
* Project:VISION will require five community service hours for all students in the after-school program
* BCCS will invite Project:VISION high school students in the leadership program to serve in the BCCS community
* BCCS and Project:VISION will communicate and collaborate to monitor the progress of students and provide differentiated support

BCCS collected memoranda of understanding from both organizations that outline the nature of the partnership. BCCS has also had initial partnership conversations and/or letters of support from the following community organizations who will be potential partners once the school is opened.

1. Valentine Boys and Girls Club
2. Black Star Project
3. Chinese American Service League
4. McGuane Park

(Please see Appendix L Memoranda.)

**Managing and Cultivating Partnerships**

The Dean of Community Center (DCC) will be responsible for managing and cultivating partnerships for BCCS and coordinate and align the work and learning that occurs during and outside of regular school hours. The Dean of Community Center will be hired part-time in the first two years of operation, working to develop the partnerships and necessary capacity to run a quality community center in the after-school hours. During these early years, the DCC will also be working to identify and solidify local, state, and federal grants that will be needed to sustain the Community Center’s efforts. By year 3, as a full-time member of the School Leadership, the Dean of Community Center will have the following responsibilities, among others:

* Establish contacts and communication between community organizations and school for educational, extracurricular, and other support purposes
* Maintain community partnerships, organizing after-school opportunities and coordinating student participation
* Manage the volunteers, tutors, after-school club or activity leaders, educators, and/or trainers in providing services for BCCS students and families
* Organize community information sessions
* Connect BCCS to other community schools and develop opportunities to collaborate with other neighborhood schools
* Coordinate community events intended to increase awareness of issues, such as gang violence, immigrant rights, and obesity
* Organize family nights and family orientation
* Attend and help coordinate Family-Teacher-Community Organization (FTCO) meetings and be the voice of leadership team/staff
* Organize community service opportunities/days for BCCS
* Develop Community Resource Room and coordinate programming for classes/meetings
* Gather data and monitor progress towards engagement goals

1. **School Involvement in Community:**

*Describe your Design Team’s vision for establishing the school as a pillar in the community once in operation and explain how the school leadership team will execute this vision. Specifically: (i) Describe any services, resources, programs, or volunteers that the school will provide for parents/guardians community members once in operation. (iii) If applicable, the parent and community plan should clearly address any community tension that exists surrounding the opening of a new school.*

**Vision**

BCCS believes that in order to develop and serve the whole child, a school must partner closely with the community in which it is located. We believe that a school should become a community center where families, organizations, and members can gather and collaborate in order to serve our students and better the community as a whole. We envision our school to be one that is invested in the community, as well as a school in which the community is fully invested. Thus, BCCS is committed to working alongside families, organizations, and other schools towards building a peaceful community, creating opportunities for empowerment and voice, and becoming active learners and citizens.

The BCCS Design Team acknowledges the tension in the targeted community areas created by the potential opening of a new charter school and has sought to address the tension through open and honest dialogue with community members as well as a reflective and collaborative stance on issues. BCCS has positioned itself as an independent charter public school led by a group of educators, which aligns to the original intent of charter schools as envisioned by Al Shankar. Thus, BCCS seeks to provide an innovative educational model as an option to families but share successful practices and learn from and work with existing neighborhood schools to provide the best services to all students in the target communities.

**Incubation Period**

As BCCS moves from the design phase to the incubation period, BCCS’s goals will focus on solidifying partnerships and publicizing the mission to families in order to recruit students. The BCCS Design Team plans to:

* Continue holding information sessions in various locations, including churches and community organizations, and sending monthly newsletters to keep supporters up-to-date with progress as well as spread the word to families with young children
* Identify partnerships with key community organizations as well as neighborhood and parochial schools, and develop goals and action steps that will outline the partnership and track its success
* Host family workshops in partnership with educational organizations and/or other schools around a topic or theme, such as Common Core State Standards, literacy in the primary grades, or adolescent development.

**School Opening through First Five Years**

Once BCCS opens its doors, it will implement its Community Engagement Plan, which is outlined by the six areas of focus below. The six areas include communication, family outreach, volunteering, home learning, decision-making, and community collaboration with the school. These areas are based on the work of the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University and research by Joyce L. Epstein, which shows that family and community involvement with the schools has a significant positive impact on student achievement and other indicators of success. Within each area, annual goals will be set and monitored throughout the year.

**Communication**: Communication with student families will be an integral part of how BCCS functions. Families with children entering BCCS will be provided with clear information about the mission of the school as well as its programs, policies, activities, options, and assessments through orientation meetings. Parents or guardians will be asked to participate in an interview about their students’ academic and social strengths and needs as well as their feedback on how BCCS could best support them. BCCS will keep a regular schedule of monthly newsletters and useful notices as well as an updated and informative website. Bilingual staff members or volunteers will help with translation needs with written or verbal communication between staff and families. Teachers and parents will engage in two-way communication consistently on students’ academic and social progress through one-on-one or group exchanges, student-led conferences, review of student work, and goal-setting meetings.

**Family Outreach:** We will focus on increasing opportunities for parent involvement in the school and services provided for adults as a direct result of input from community leaders. BCCS plans to hold workshops and parent education classes ranging from child development, family literacy, college readiness, English as a Second Language, and health. Through partnerships with organizations and support programs, BCCS will be able to assist families with needs in the areas of nutrition, counseling, and food banks. BCCS plans to set aside an area of the school that will serve as the Community Resource Room that will hold information about volunteer work, meetings, services, and resources for families.

**Volunteering:** BCCS will create and promote volunteer opportunities for family and community members in addition to paid staff positions for parents. Parents will be able to volunteer in several areas, including patrols to increase school safety, learning aides or tutors during the school day, chaperones on field trips, organizers of student performances and assemblies, and club leaders or coaches.

**Home Learning:** BCCS believes that effective teaching and learning occur not only within the classroom but beyond its walls - in the home and in the community. Teachers and staff will provide information on the curriculum, strategies and skills taught at each grade level, and homework expectations of all students to families and partnering community organizations. BCCS will expect teachers to work together with families to set academic and socio-emotional goals and provide advice on how to assist students at home. Similarly, BCCS teachers will communicate with tutors and/or academic support through partner community organizations so that student’s academic expectations are clear and can be supported.

**Decision-Making:** BCCS will maintain an active Family-Teacher-Community Organization (FTCO) to ensure family and community members’ leadership and participation in decision-making for the school. Through participation in the FTCO, family and community members will have the opportunity to raise issues of concern or identify positive experiences, suggest new initiatives, and provide feedback on school programs and decisions. Family members will also be invited to serve on committees of the Board as well as nominate Board members. All FTCO meetings will be open to the public. The Dean of Community Center will be present at all FTCO meetings to report on the status of the school and receive comments and feedback. The Dean will work to develop a network to link all families with parent or community representatives who will have a voice in developing school programs and improving them through the FTCO and the Governing Board. The FTCO will collaborate with the School Director and the Dean of Community Center through a monthly meeting with the elected leaders of the FTCO.

**Collaborating with the Community:** BCCS plans to collaborate closely with community organizations in order to support the growth of our students. Partnerships with community organizations will not only provide after-school programs and enrichment activities but extend to opportunities for internships at community businesses as well as workshops run by organizations such as health care centers, the police department, and cultural centers based on need and interest. BCCS staff and students will participate in community service opportunities organized by the school. We also plan to work alongside other neighborhood schools by sharing resources, inviting families and staff to events, workshops, or professional development at BCCS, and encouraging participation in the community service projects.

**Section 2: Academic Capacity**

**2.1 Mission, Vision, and Culture**

**a. Mission and vision:**

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

The mission of Be the Change Charter School (BCCS) is to be a K-8 school community of students, teachers, and families from diverse backgrounds and experiences who will learn how to work with each other in **peaceful** and equitable ways, discover their **voice** and the voices of others, and embrace their roles as **active** citizens of the world. Students at BCCS will study the humanities through an interdisciplinary learning approach and will graduate as empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates, who are empowered to make choices in their future academic and life endeavors.

At BCCS, we believe that “being the change” is about expanding how schools and districts define what it means to educate all children, and how a school can be organized democratically – fostering peace, voice, and action among students, families, community members, teachers, and school leadership. While we want our students to achieve academic success according to traditional measures, like test scores, our students will also be successful if they are able to collaborate productively with one another, engage in inquiry based learning, and take active measures to apply what they learn to the choices they make in their community and a diverse society.

Underlying our mission are the **three core values of Peace, Voice and Action**. Enacting these core values, students, families, teachers and leaders at BCCS build peaceful communities, incorporate multiple voices and views in making critical decisions and actively learn and develop as students, teachers and community members. We will teach and model these core values through the following five structures, which will be outlined in further detail throughout this proposal:

1. **BCCS’s instructional philosophy is centered on an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning**. This approach allows us to teach literacy, social science, mathematics, science and the arts in an integrated manner and to reveal the deep connections between content areas. Teachers and students actively learn by exploring themes and real-world problems through the lens of different disciplines. At every grade level, students have a Humanities Project Block. This Block allows students to apply their knowledge in a comprehensive, meaningful way. In addition, students receive focused instruction in literacy and mathematics. (For more information, see Section 2.4 Curriculum and Instruction.)

BCCS students will take responsibility for their learning by showcasing their understanding and mastery of skills each trimester through their unit project and by maintaining a portfolio throughout their time at BCCS. This portfolio contains evidence of their academic and social and emotional goals; growth towards and achievement of goals, including their development of collaboration, discussion, and critical analysis skills; feedback from teachers; and other major accomplishments. These authentic assessments and the active role required of students reflect real-life achievement and preparation to become reflective adults and active citizens. In addition, BCCS students will be expected to present a Thesis Project to a panel of reviewers prior to graduating the eighth grade. The Thesis Project demonstrates their understanding of the humanities. Students will prove a thesis by integrating their knowledge and skills of literacy, mathematics, social studies, sciences, and the arts. (For more information, see Section 2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan.)

2. **BCCS will intentionally recruit a diverse student and staff population.** This is to build a school culture that is focused on understanding difference, conflict resolution, and social justice activism, in order to develop students well-equipped to learn, live and work productively within diverse communities throughout their lives.

BCCS will be a unique schooling option on the south side with our focus on becoming a model for racial and socioeconomic diversity. BCCS intends to be located in an area where it can serve the communities of McKinley Park, Bridgeport, Pilsen, Armour Square, and Bronzeville. We acknowledge that our students come from diverse backgrounds, which can include environmental impacts of trauma or urban life experiences. Thus, BCCS is not simply interested in having a diverse student population, but drawing upon that diversity to help students, teachers and parents to build relationships across difference, learn skills for engaging within a diverse group, and participate in collaborative decision-making and conflict resolution.

**3. The BCCS School Leadership will implement a shared leadership model and engage each other, teachers, and families in democratic methods of decision-making**. This model affords the School Leadership the opportunity to model and promote the values of peace, voice and action within the broader school community. At the core of the shared leadership model is the commitment to having open lines of communication with all members of the school. All stakeholders will have opportunities to voice their concerns and comments and to provide feedback on school-level decisions through platforms, such as the Family Teacher Community Organization (FTCO), Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC), and Student Advisory Committee (SAC). Feedback and comments will be taken, integrated, and considered at School Leadership meetings in order to collectively make well-informed decisions for the success of BCCS. (Please see Section 2.5 Talent Management.) We believe that this method of decision-making also provides a real time model for our students of what collaboration and active participation can look like in a community.

**4. BCCS will be a professional learning site by partnering with the University of Chicago’s Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP).** This partnership will provide paths of learning, growth, and leadership for teachers at all junctions in their careers, thereby cultivating and ensuring a pipeline of high-quality teachers for all BCCS students. By Year 3, BCCS and UChicago UTEP will have a partnership in which BCCS serves as an important site for teacher learning and development and UChicago UTEP is able to provide tutors, student teachers, mentor teacher opportunities and professional development. (For more information, see Section 1.1 Parent and Community Engagement.)

In order to foster professional learning from the start, BCCS is committed to following a year-round professional development cycle. Led by the School Director, the content of professional development will shift based on the needs and requests of the staff. The content will also be shaped by ongoing analysis of all available data. BCCS is a school committed to being lifelong learners. As such all BCCS staff will be asked to set annual professional learning goals during the Summer Institute sessions, which they will continually revisit throughout the year. They will have opportunities to attend as well as lead professional learning opportunities that draw from the diverse expertise our staff bring to the professional culture. (For more information, see Section 2.5 Talent Management.)

**5. Finally, BCCS will develop a symbiotic relationship with its community by becoming a** **Community Center.** The Community Center will be open during, before, and after-school hours by Year 3. In this capacity, BCCS will offer a variety of programs, workshops, activities, and classes for students, families, and community members. We recognize that learning and social development for children continues after the school day, and that there is a need for positive activities and opportunities before and after-school. As a Community Center, BCCS aims to be a space for community organizations to host programming for our students as well as to utilize as needed for events and needs. In order to build strong relationships, the Dean of Community Center will focus on developing partnerships and organizing the Community Center in the start up years so that we can be an effective partner in the community by Year 3. (For more information, see Section 1 Parent and Community Engagement.)

The success of the mission of BCCS will be evidenced by the vision of the BCCS graduate who peacefully works with others and stands up for themselves, their ideas, and other people in order to affect change and contribute to their community.

BCCS will open August 2014 with 195 kindergarteners, first graders, and second graders. We chose to start with three grade levels and build BCCS from there in order to establish a strong school culture. We recognize that what we are asking of our students and families is unique to BCCS - committing to the development of not only our students’ academic skills through a humanities focus but also their social and emotional identities and their roles as leaders and advocates in their community. We believe that our school culture will equip our students to develop their curiosity to acquire more knowledge than what is offered. They will also have the tools to obtain knowledge and to be productive citizens. Our primary entry point after year one will be Kindergarten, however we are open to accepting transfer students at any grade level as available. We want to remain an educational option to any student and their family. At year seven, we will be at full capacity (approximately 600 students).

Four years from when BCCS opens its doors, in the fall of 2018, will see the start of our middle school with the first class of sixth graders. Having built the foundation of working peacefully with others, celebrating one another’s voice, and actively creating their unit projects, middle school will be an opportunity to extend their journeys. In middle school, students will engage with complex texts, conduct independent research projects, and lead peer mediations. Six years from now, in the 2020 school year, our inaugural second graders will have completed an 8th grade Thesis Project, successfully defended it to a panel of evaluators, and prepared to seamlessly transition to a high school that is a best fit for their talents and aspirations that they have explored while at BCCS. We believe that our well-rounded academic curricula and social and emotional supports will afford opportunities for our students to select and attend strong, best-fit high schools and become active learners and citizens for all students.

In fall of 2024, our inaugural second grade class will enter their senior year in high school. Having developed the skills to self-assess and reflect on their strengths and areas of growth, they will make informed choices about their next steps. These choices will be made with the understanding that the world offers many paths and the importance of thoroughly exploring all options in order to be empowered to make the best decision for themselves. BCCS graduates will attend college, to pursue further learning opportunities in a formal setting, if their passions and skills require it. If their talents and skills are better fit with a path that allows them to transition into a career immediately out of high school, in areas such as the arts or manufacturing trades, our students will make that decision knowing that their success is determined by stepping into a role in their society that allows them to be empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates.

In 2025, this first class of BCCS graduates will be entering college, pursuing careers, and taking an active role as a citizen in their democracy. They will confidently apply their skills of collaboration, critical thinking and advocacy in challenging new settings. A BCCS counselor will maintain contact with BCCS alum as they journey through high school and make decisions about college and careers, supporting them in their choices and connecting them to appropriate resources and contacts as needed.

When we realize our vision, our school will be unique among schools in Chicago—cultivating a culture of success that is anchored in a balance of academic content and habits of a productive citizen. Our school is designed to ensure that students will graduate with a strong sense of being a member of a community and their social responsibility to analyze and evaluate issues in their world with a critical lens. While there are ample challenges that lie in our way, particularly with students who are at-risk, our model is designed with the goal of teaching the whole child through every aspect of the school, and the five structures outlined above anchor BCCS in this goal. Beyond educating our students and preparing them to be active citizens in their larger democracy, we strive to become a model for humanities focused interdisciplinary learning and a community centered school that is intentionally diverse.

**b. Education Philosophy:**

*Briefly describe the educational philosophy of the proposed school. Identify the Design Team’s core beliefs and values about education; explain how these priorities inform the school’s key program and design components that are critical to its success with the targeted student population. Provide a clear rationale for using these strategies, citing research and evidence of success with similar student populations.*

BCCS is committed to bringing back the whole curriculum. We will do this by providing authentic experiences for learning everyday that allow students to learn about and internalize our core values of peace, voice, and action. Our education program is anchored in a research-based interdisciplinary curriculum through which students study the humanities through a real world question and the lens of multiple disciplines. This approach is well-known for its successful implementation at Mission Hill School, a Boston Public Pilot School. (For more information, please see Section 2.4 Curriculum and Instruction.)

Our academic calendar is organized into three trimester long strands, anchored in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), that explore literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and the arts through a school wide theme. Interdisciplinary learning supports our belief that children build strong, in-depth, and lasting understandings when disciplines are taught in conjunction with and in relation to one another rather than in isolation. This hands-on learning approach also provides ongoing opportunities for students and teachers to collaborate with one another. BCCS teachers will collaboratively develop curricula based on the interests and needs of students as well as CCSS. The curriculum will be delivered through frameworks, such as the workshop approach.

The BCCS staff will implement a multi-layered assessment plan that will help us track and achieve our performance goals and maintain a balance of standardized assessments and comprehensive performance tasks. The School Director and staff will engage in the process of data analysis, delineating instructional implications, planning, and implementation of strategies. Teachers will follow a specified assessment cycle with the support of the School Director. Our success in achieving our performance goals will be determined by the outcomes of the data analysis process, which will inform our instructional program, including individualized instruction and interventions for each student. Ongoing assessment will be a critical component of the school program in order to ensure that the whole child is developed at BCCS. BCCS students are equipped with the necessary skills and content to perform well on standardized assessments (i.e. NWEA MAP, PARCC) and have built a solid foundation of critical thinking and developed the confidence to be a strong group member so that they eventually become agents of positive change in the world. (For more information, please see Section 2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan for more detail.)

**c. Description of Culture:**

*Describe the culture envisioned for the proposed school. Explain how the school will promote a positive environment with high behavioral and academic expectations to foster students’ intellectual and social and emotional development. What are the systems, traditions, and policies that will help the school achieve this culture? Please describe any non-academic goals that the school may set for students, how they will be measured and by whom, to help monitor and support school climate.*

We will purposefully develop the culture at BCCS to be anchored in our three core values of peace, voice, and action. As a school committed to intentionally recruiting a diverse student and staff population, we believe it is imperative for our school community to be one where all community members learn how to interact with one another in a peaceful and productive manner and be empowered to use our voices in ways to actively engage with the local and global communities. Thus, BCCS plans to create a safe and trusting environment where students, teachers, and community members work together and take on the role of active learners and citizens. Our systems, traditions, and policies are anchored by our core values.

**Peace**

BCCS is committed to building spaces in the school, both in our physical environment and through our practices, where learning how to interact and engage with one another in a peaceful manner is expected to be a journey and a work in progress, both as individuals and as a community. Peace will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* Use of Responsive Classroom Approach in classroom spaces, research- and evidence- based practices focused on developing teachers in the domains of academic engagement, positive community, effective management so that students thrive. (For more information, see sub-section g.)
* School established peace room for peer mediation and cool down purposes
* Dean of Student Development to facilitate a Restorative Justice approach at a school level that complements the Responsive Classroom approach. (For more information, see sub-section g.)
* Family/community meeting space (Community Resource Room) in school for family workshops and Family Teacher Community Organization (FTCO) meetings
* Diversity training for BCCS staff and workshops for interested community about the process of understanding one’s identity, interacting with others who are different, working through conflict, and constant self-reflecting through Diversity and Inclusion resources from the National Association of Independent Schools.

**Voice**

BCCS is committed to integrating multiple platforms for the voices in the school community - students, teachers, school leaders, and families - to be expressed and heard. This way, we increase the opportunities and likelihood for all in our school community to share their experiences, ideas and concerns, which will help us build authentic relationships, understand and meet the needs of students, families and staff, and support the informed, democratic decision-making process we value. Voice will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* Student led all-school meetings once a week, monitored and supported by the Dean of Student Development
* School level committees, including: Family Teacher Community Organization (FTCO), Teacher Advisory Committees (TAC), Student Advisory Committee (SAC)
* “Voice boxes” (comment boxes) for all members of the school
* Small group inquiry/discussion (academic norm)
* Student celebration/showcase (every trimester)
* Designated daily Community Meeting time (Morning Meeting/Advisory) for students to have opportunities to share out and hear from one another as well as discuss issues and their perspectives and experiences

**Action**

BCCS is committed to providing opportunities for school to be an active experience, both academically and civically. Learning within the school is not an isolated experience nor an end, but it is a means to create change and build relationships with others beyond classroom walls. Action will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* School wide community service learning projects (every trimester)
* Project based learning in classrooms
* Experiential field trips that complement the thematic focus of the interdisciplinary unit
* Partnerships with other schools and community organizations
* Teacher led professional development workshops
* 8th grade Thesis Project

A key example of how our school culture is grounded in our core values of peace, voice, and action is the Student Advisory Committee (SAC). SAC will be comprised of BCCS students on a voluntary basis. There will be a SAC for each grade band - primary, intermediate, and middle levels. At SAC meetings, students will have the opportunity to hear about decisions that are being made in the school and to **voice** their thoughts by providing feedback regarding these decisions and other programs/events. These meetings will present an opportunity for students to learn to engage with one another and the issues in a **peace**ful manner, asking for clarification as needed, sharing their opinions openly, and pushing back on ideas respectfully. The Dean of Student Development will be present at all SAC meetings and serve as a liaison between the students and the School Leadership. As a result, students observe how their **active** participation on SAC can impact their school community. BCCS believes in providing opportunities for all stakeholders, including students, to participate in the democratic systems of the school.

The shared leadership model and its process for decision-making, consensus decision making (CDM), similarly are prime examples of the core values of peace, voice and action for adults at BCCS. CDM is a [group decision makin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_decision_making)g process that seeks the consent of, but not necessarily the agreement of, participants and the resolution of objections. It is used to describe both the decision and the process of reaching a decision. When a decision needs to be made, a member will verbally make a proposal that includes the details for the decision they suggest. Every member involved then has the right to agree with the proposal (thumb up), pass the proposal even though they are not fully in support of it which will then lead to a follow up discussion (thumb in the middle), or block the proposal which will then lead to a follow up discussion (fist). The group will continue to engage in a conversation about the topic until all members have given a thumbs up or thumbs in the middle to a proposal. At the core of our school’s organizational structure is our commitment to the Consensus Decision Making Process to make all decisions. (Please see Appendix M Consensus Decision Making Chart.)

This process is used within the School Leadership and the Governing Board and reflects our school’s commitment to collaboration and democratic systems. Before a proposal to make a decision is made, members of the School Leadership and the Governing Board are committed to gathering input and asking clarifying questions to the appropriate people, as evident in the CDM chart. School Leadership might bring information gathered from FTCO meetings or the Teacher Advisory Committee. The organizational chart shows the lines of communication staff, students, and the community utilize to share opinions, suggestions, and concerns. (Please see Appendix QQ Organizational Chart.)This process ensures that every person has the opportunity to voice thoughts and concerns and engage in peaceful discussion and debate in order to take action by making a decision that will further the mission and vision of BCCS.

While we are committed to this decision making process, we acknowledge that there will be situations where School Leadership needs to make a decision in a timely manner in order to best serve the needs of our students and school. Decisions that cannot be made through CDM but considered pressing will be presented to the School Leadership depending on the jurisdiction of the matter and the following procedure will take place:

1. The team will review the concerns from those who blocked the issue.

2. The team will solicit specific input from School Leadership/Governing Board members most knowledgeable on that particular issue. For example, within the School Leadership:

* Financial issues will require input from the Director of Finance and Operation
* Student discipline issues will require input from the Dean of Students Development
* Community issues will require input from the Dean of Community Center.

Issues that span two or more areas will require input from multiple members of the School Leadership. If a decision cannot be made through CDM by the School Leadership, the School Director will review the entire case and make the final decision. In a situation where time is a pressing factor, the School Director will forgo input and make the final decision. Our commitment to CDM and shared leadership provides an active model to BCCS students of what it looks like to hear from one another, collaborate, and make informed decisions.

It is important that there are opportunities to reflect on and evaluate the school culture to make sure our systems and practices are aligned with our mission, vision, and values. For this reason, students, staff, and families will have an opportunity to evaluate and reflect on how the BCCS culture is being formed by the core values and vice versa through the annual 5Essentials survey. Additionally BCCS teachers and staff will engage in conversation and action planning around the school culture during summer professional development.

**d. College Readiness:**

*Describe the specific programs and supports, beyond academic curriculum, that your school will provide to expose students to college and support them to be successful in college academically and emotionally. If applying to open a high school, describe how the school will help students meet requirements to apply to college, submit applications, and persist in college after high school graduation. Specify the methods that the school will employ to track student/alumni college acceptance and persistence rates. Identify who is responsible for monitoring and overseeing these efforts.*

As students who are empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates, BCCS graduates will be empowered to make successful choices in their future academic and life endeavors. The comprehensive interdisciplinary curriculum and the academic and non-academic skills we will foster at BCCS comprise a foundation that will prepare students academically, socially and emotionally for success in college and careers. At the same time, we believe that in order for our students to hold a big picture understanding of the knowledge and skills needed to experience success in college and careers, they first need to be admitted into “best fit” high schools. BCCS will provide curricular and extra-curricular supports to prepare students to be successful in their high school experiences in Chicago, which will prepare them for college and other future endeavors in the larger real world context. These supports include:

* Starting in kindergarten, students will engage in project-based, interdisciplinary learning, develops critical life skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration. Developing these skills early on will support BCCS students to discern their future goals and passions.
* BCCS plans to hire a counselor for the middle grades, who will be an integral part of guiding students and families through the high school application process. The counselor will maintain a system of tracking the high school, college, and career pathways of all BCCS alum.
* In the middle grades, students will take an enrichment class devoted to high school and college readiness developed by the middle school counselor. This class will focus on developing good work habits, such as organizational and time management skills, and addressing essential study skills. The class will also expand student knowledge of their high school and college options through lessons and activities that give students the motivation, skills, and support to be successful in high school and college.
* BCCS will provide workshops for families on the various options for high schools in Chicago and the high school application process.
* BCCS will provide workshops for families on college expectations and career choices. The Counselor will work closely with the Dean of Community Center to set up college visits and opportunities to participate in summer programs at colleges for BCCS students.
* BCCS intends to pursue partnerships and/or opportunities with college readiness organizations, such as The Posse Foundation, Link/Ladder Up, and the Illinois College Access Network. The Dean of Community Center will set up workshops to connect parents to these organizations and provide financial literacy workshops in preparation for paying for college.

**e. Social, Emotional, and Physical Health:**

*Describe the social, emotional, and physical health needs that you anticipate among the targeted student population. Describe the programs, resources, and services (internal and external), that your school will provide in order to promote students’ social, emotional, and physical health. Explain how individual student needs will be identified and monitored on an ongoing basis at the school. Describe how the effectiveness of these programs will be measured. Cite who will be responsible for overseeing these efforts.*

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is defined as “the process through which children enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaving to achieve important life tasks. Those competent in SEL are able to recognize and manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, meet personal and social needs, and make responsible and ethical decisions.” (Elias et al, 1997; Payton et al, 2000.)

**Anticipated Needs**

The BCCS mission calls for us to cultivate skills in our students to interact with others and engage with their own identities in peaceful and reflective ways. We believe that social and emotional support is a critical aspect of academic success. We acknowledge that our students come from diverse backgrounds, made up of varying stages of child development and can include environmental impacts of trauma or urban life experiences. For this reason, we anticipate the need to explicitly teach and practice the skills of showing compassion for others, problem solving, conflict resolution, reflection, collaboration, standing up for oneself and others, and making good choices.

The history of racism and discrimination has left significant scars in the heart of Chicago (McKinley Park, Bridgeport, Pilsen, Armour Square, and Douglas), which is formed by a diverse cross-section of ethnicities, races, cultures, classes, and languages. Since we hope to recruit intentionally from these neighborhoods to form our student population, we anticipate that the need to explicitly teach social and emotional skills will be of greater concern for our school.

Furthermore, we believe that with diversity comes tension. As we strive to celebrate the diversity of our school community, we recognize that our student population will need increased opportunities to understand the challenges that come with diversity and the need to stretch oneself beyond his or her own experience and worldview. During informational meetings hosted by BCCS, community members expressed a concern for issues of racism and discrimination among different populations, gang violence, and lack of health education among youth.

**Programs, Resources and Services**

We have identified several ways to address the anticipated social and emotional needs of our students:

**Community Meeting Time** - Time will be set aside each day for Morning Meetings and Sunset Meetings in the primary and intermediate grade levels for classroom teachers to check in with their students and respond to students’ needs appropriately. Our Advisory program for the middle grades will be a designated time in the morning during which students meet in small clusters with an advisor, who is a BCCS staff member (teacher, administrator, aide, etc.). At all grade levels, teachers will implement the Responsive Classroom Approach, a research-based process that creates a culture that maximizes learning and human development. The Responsive Classroom Approach is a nationally used, research- and evidence-based way of teaching that improves students’ social and academic skills and raises teachers’ instructional quality. This approach uses classroom practices, such as rule creation, logical consequences, and collaborative problem solving so that safe and positive classroom communities are established and can focus on academic engagement. Through Responsive Classroom practices, teachers will have the space address issues such as bullying and conflict management as well as to develop collaborative skills, community agreements, and meaningful participation that is unique to the child’s social and emotional development process.

Finally, once a week the entire school will gather in lieu of the Morning Meeting and Advisory time for an all-school meeting. These meetings will be facilitated by a student leader, with the support of the Dean of Student Development. This is a time when students are celebrated for their academic and behavioral achievements. They can also share appreciations for their peers and school community as well as have a platform to share their learnings and creations. We believe students develop a healthy social and emotional identity when they are provided multiple opportunities to express themselves and are guided to an understanding of knowing the different contexts within which they can facilitate their social and emotional queries.

**Family Involvement** - As outlined in *Section G* below.

**External Partnerships-** BCCS will intentionally partner with community organizations that provide opportunities for social and emotional development in our students. The school will connect students and families to organizations, such as Benton House, Project:VISION, The Black Star Project, and Chicago Youth Center-Fellowship House, which provide mentorship and opportunities for positive community involvement. The Design Team has been establishing partnerships with community organizations over the past two years, participating in events and collaborating on fundraisers and workshops. The Dean of Community Center will maintain these partnerships and work to establish new ones.

**Identification and Monitoring of Student Needs**

There are a variety of methods that BCCS will use to identify and monitor the needs of students. BCCS will identify and monitor individual student social and emotional needs through family interviews, careful observation by teachers and staff, and behavior incidences recorded in a student information logging system. The Dean of Student Development will track the data and activity logged into the system. Students who have been identified as needing intervention will be regularly monitored through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. (For more details, see Section 2.4 Curriculum and Instruction.) The social worker/counselor will work closely with teachers in designing and implementing RtI strategies. Lastly, BCCS will use the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Goals and Learning Standards as guidelines to identify students who may need social and emotional learning supports. More specifically, the benchmarks will be a guidepost for differentiating students’ social and emotional learning needs at different grade levels.

BCCS staff will be required to record student anecdotal information using a student information logging system in order to identify and track student social and emotional needs as well as behavior patterns and interventions. These anecdotal logs will support staff to be reflective and provide intentional supports as needed. The social worker/counselor and Dean of Student Development will work alongside teachers to support students in the classroom or pull small groups or individual students to address specific needs. There will also be regular opportunities for the general education teachers and support staff to work together to support the needs of targeted students.

**Measuring Effectiveness of Programs**

The Dean of Student Development, with support from the social worker/counselor, will measure the effectiveness of the implemented programs by identifying increases in attendance, positive interactions and incidences, and updates from the social worker/counselor, as well as decreases in behavior incidences and self-destructive behaviors. The RtI team will also measure the effectiveness of interventions used through the RtI process by touching base on the progress students are making in this area of need. Finally, we hope to eventually be a school that will conduct annual SEL surveys to gauge staff, community, and student perceptions of SEL programs and the positive impact it has on our school culture and environment.

**f. Behavior and Safety:**

*(i) Describe the school’s approach to student discipline, behavioral intervention, and classroom management. Explain the roles of teachers and administrators in consistently and equitably implementing consequences for disciplinary infractions and positive behavioral interventions and supports. How will these strategies create a safe and productive learning environment for all students? Cite who will be responsible for overseeing student discipline and behavioral interventions.*

*(ii) How will expectations for behavior and corresponding consequences and rewards be clearly communicated to students and families?*

*(iii) Explain how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings and afford due process for all students.*

*Attach copies of the school’s policies for promotion, graduation, and student discipline.*

BCCS believes in a proactive approach to disciplinary actions so that students are explicitly taught skills to be positive members of a school community that deals with conflict and differences in a respectful, responsible, and peaceful manner. Our intentional and active approach to SEL strongly ties into our disciplinary approach. For this reason, we will have a Dean of Student Development (DSD), who will focus on developing programs and opportunities for individual students as well as the school community, such as peer mediation, conflict resolution workshops, and the Student Advisory Committee. These programs and opportunities will proactively address student discipline and develop school culture. Additionally, the DSD will focus on providing opportunities for students at all grade levels to develop as leaders in multifaceted ways and exercise their leadership roles in the school community. As a school, we will promote the immediate use of these skills as well as support the leadership development of our students.

While we believe in being a proactive school, we acknowledge and anticipate that there will be behavioral issues and situations that will make disciplinary actions necessary. General classroom expectations will be determined collaboratively by the class and teacher, and teachers will use the Responsive Classroom Approach to productively establish a classroom that is actively engaged in the learning.

At the school level, a school disciplinary code of conduct that delineates consequences for different tiers of offenses as outlined in the Chicago Public Schools Student Code of Conduct (CPS SCC) will be implemented. The BCCS Student Discipline Policy supplements the CPS SCC with the addition of a few procedures that will be utilized. Since we expect our students to be mindful, empathetic advocates at all times, within and beyond the school walls, this policy applies to actions of students during school hours, before and after school, while on school property, field trips, community activities, and at all school-sponsored events.

The BCCS Student Discipline Policy outlines the process of disciplinary action at BCCS and the integration of restorative justice practices. The CPS SCC lists tiers of offenses and consequences, including suspensions and expulsions. The DSD will review the infraction and determine the appropriate consequence using the SCC as the guideline. As stated in our school policies, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as outlined in the BCCS Student Discipline Policy and Student Code of Conduct. (Please see Appendix N Student Policies.) In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services.

As mentioned above, BCCS will practice Restorative Justice, which emphasizes repairing the harm caused by an offense by incorporating all members affected by the offense, in order to move forward in a productive manner. We strongly believe that restorative justice is an intervention process that is anchored in our core values, and that while we maintain high expectations of all our students, we also value the voice of each student in any circumstance in an effort to actively repair and reconcile the distrust that may have risen as a result of the choices that were made and actions that took place. For example, as our school builds, students who commit infractions that lead to them being excluded from school for some period of time will be referred to a peer council upon return to the school in order to restore peace. We believe it is not enough to issue a consequence for a disciplinary offense; the conversation and action plan that follows is the most important part of the discipline process. While we acknowledge that there are egregious acts that can result in cases of suspensions and possibly expulsions as outlined in the SCC, BCCS will work to preserve our students’ attendance at and participation in our school’s community through the restorative justice approach. In review of the CPS SCC and Restorative Justice practices, we have concluded that they can be used effectively in conjunction with one another.

Our School Director is an expert in the restorative justice approach, having received training in restorative justice practices by Alternatives, Inc. Her expertise will support the implementation of these practices. In addition, during the summer institute before the inaugural year of BCCS, other members of the School Leadership, social worker/counselor, and founding teachers will be trained in Restorative Justice. While there are many different training opportunities, we believe it is important to partner with a community organization that has supported schools serving similar student populations in urban areas. BCCS will seek training in the restorative approach through Chicago Area Project (CAP), a non-profit organization aimed at promoting positive youth development and preventing juvenile delinquency through community-building. CAP in partnership with Cook County Restorative Justice Collective has conducted restorative peer jury trainings and provided restorative justice training and support to more than 25 Chicago Public Schools.

Founding teacher leaders and the DSD will provide in-house professional development in restorative justice as needed. The DSD will manage and oversee the use of restorative approach at BCCS. She will make arrangements for the necessary people (i.e. student(s), teacher/staff, social worker, parent) to be present at a restorative justice meeting and facilitate that meeting to ensure that there is equity of voice, appropriate reflection, and an established plan of action to move forward. The combination of our proactive and restorative justice approach will establish a school community that is fair and equitable, ensuring the safety and peace of the school community.

The behavioral expectations and consequences at BCCS will be clearly communicated to students and families during orientation at the start of each school year. Families will also receive a copy of the discipline policy. Additionally, teachers will spend time during Community Meeting time at the start of each school year to discuss how the school’s expectations connect to our core values of peace, voice, and action and allow space for students to ask questions. Families and students will also receive copies of the BCCS promotion and graduation policies and will be made aware of these policies during orientation. (Please see Appendix N Student Policies.) Policies will be made available in the main office at all times and available during student led conferences every trimester. With regards to the promotion policies, there will not be summer sessions in the initial start-up years of BCCS. Instead, BCCS will work closely with families throughout each school year to ensure that all students will promote and/or have special structures in place in the following year to provide additional supports to students who might have otherwise been retained. As the school expands, summer session will either be held at BCCS or through collaboration with other community partnerships to ensure that students are fully prepared, academically, socially, and emotionally, to move onto the next grade level.

**g. Parent Involvement:**

*Discuss strategies to engage parents and guardians in their child’s education and in the broader school community. Describe any programs or resources that the school will provide for parents and guardians.*

BCCS believes that a school must develop and serve the whole child, thus a partnership with families and the community is essential to fulfilling its mission. Parents will be involved in all of the six areas of school-community partnership (For more information, please see Section 1.3 Future Plans for Parent and Community Engagement). The six areas include communication, family outreach, volunteering, home learning, decision-making, and community collaboration with the school.

Each of the areas incorporates numerous opportunities for parents and BCCS staff to work together. Such an extensive outreach effort by the school aligns with the mission of BCCS to become a school that is also a community center. BCCS will be a place where both students and adults are learners, critical thinkers, and advocates for themselves and others. For this reason, the Dean of Community Center (DCC) will play a significant role to ensure that the six areas of school-community partnership are being carried out consistently and effectively. The DCC is a member of the BCCS School Leadership. BCCS will employ the following strategies:

**Communication**

BCCS will keep families informed and engaged in their child’s education and school events or programs through useful, consistent communication from school to home and vice versa. BCCS will send out monthly newsletters that will keep families up-to-date on what students are learning and any important events at school. Teachers will also conduct family conferences every marking period in order to discuss the child’s academic and social and emotional strengths and areas of improvement. Conferences will yield goals for each student for the following trimester and an action plan to track progress on those goals. Teachers will maintain a portfolio of student work, so that conversations are evidence-based.

**Family Outreach**

BCCSwill focus on increasing opportunities for parent involvement in the school and services provided for adults as a direct result of input from community leaders. BCCS plans to hold workshops and parent education classes ranging from child development, family literacy, college readiness, English as a Second Language, and health. Through partnerships with organizations and support programs, BCCS will be able to assist families with needs in the areas of nutrition, counseling, and food banks. BCCS plans to set aside an area of the school that will serve as the Community Resource Room that will hold information about volunteer work, meetings, services, and resources for families.

**Volunteering**

BCCS plans to develop our own parent and community mentors, tutors, and volunteers as we grow as a school. Parents will be able to volunteer in several areas, including as patrols to increase school safety, learning aides or tutors during/after the school day, chaperones on field trips, organizers of student performances and assemblies, and/or club leaders or coaches. BCCS will create and promote volunteer opportunities for family and community members in addition to paid staff positions for parents.

**Home Learning**

BCCS believes that learning must occur both in the classroom and at home. Thus, BCCS will hold recruitment events, informational sessions, and an orientation for families to welcome them into the school community and acquaint them with the mission and vision of the school. Throughout the school year, teachers and staff will hold workshops for families about the curriculum and how to assist their children at home. BCCS will expect teachers to work together with families to set academic and socio-emotional goals and provide advice on how to assist students at home. Similarly, BCCS teachers will communicate with tutors and/or academic support through partner community organizations so that student’s academic expectations are clear and can be supported.

**Decision-Making**

Families will have the opportunity to engage in the decision-making process at BCCS by participating in the FTCO. This organization will be a platform for family members to put their voice into action, expressing their thoughts about school decisions and operations. Members can be nominated by the FTCO for consideration as Board members, bringing the larger student family voice to the Board, which will inform policies and critical decisions made for BCCS. (For more information, please see Section 3.2 Governance Model.)

**Collaborating with the Community**

BCCS plans to collaborate closely with community organizations in order to support the growth of our students. Partnerships with community organizations will not only provide after-school programs and enrichment activities but extend to opportunities for internships at community businesses as well as workshops run by organizations such as health care centers, the police department, and cultural centers based on need and interest. BCCS staff and students will participate in community service opportunities organized by the school. We also plan to work alongside other neighborhood schools by sharing resources, inviting families and staff to events, workshops, or professional development at BCCS, and encouraging participation in the community service projects.

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

**a. Roles and Demonstrated Experience:**

*Briefly describe the qualifications and experience of members of the Design Team and/or founding Board in all areas that are key to successfully opening, managing, and sustaining a new school, including education, school leadership/administration, operations, finance, development, law, and ties to the proposed community. Describe how the Design Team was formed, how frequently the Design Team meets, how members collaborate with one another, each Design Team member’s contributions to the proposal, and each member’s proposed role in the school. Please cite any advisors or consultants external to the founding group and define their contributions to the development of the proposal, including their relevant experience and qualifications.*

*Attach resumes of Design Team members and any other individuals who have made substantial contributions to this proposal. Label each resume with the individual’s affiliation with the proposed school. Note: It is not necessary to provide personal addresses or phone numbers.*

In the summer of 2008, six classroom teachers from across Chicago who were all graduates of the University of Chicago’s Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP) met for the first time to discuss the possibility of opening their own school. After working in a number of district and charter schools in Chicago, we recognized what was missing for our students within the current education system – a focused attempt to address the needs of the whole child – as well as our limitations to create change in our roles as classroom teachers. Our initial idea was to create a school with a strong instructional focus, community involvement, and a diverse student population that attended to academic and social-emotional development. Over the next three years, the team developed a detailed K-8 curriculum and researched key elements of opening an effective, sustainable charter school, including community engagement, facilities and finance. In 2011, BCCS presented its first proposal to Chicago Public Schools. Though that proposal was not authorized, BCCS received valuable feedback and gained insight from the process,, which have informed the current school design.

The BCCS Design Team is now composed of four core team members and two associate members. The design team meets weekly to discuss the planning of the school, and schedules additional time to meet with advisors, make community visits and meet with possible vendors. The core Design Team consists of the School Director, Mary Rawlins; the Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), Phillip Hall; the Dean of Student Development, Sonia Wang; and Governing Board member-elect, Eliza Bryant. The associate members are Kelly Fallon-Wilson and Amy Millikan.

In addition to the design team, we have built a founding Governing Board of ten individuals who who currently meet quarterly. After authorization, the Governing Board will begin meeting on a monthly basis. (For more information, please see Section 3.2 Governance Model.)

BCCS believes in a shared leadership model and has utilized a consensus decision-making model throughout the design process. This process reflects our school’s commitment to collaboration and democratic processes, and the School Leadership and the Governing Board will continue to use this model when making decisions. Because we realize that there will be times when either consensus cannot be reached or the urgency of certain decisions will not afford us the time for discussion, our process also clearly defines final decision-making authority. At the management level, the School Director has ultimate authority and responsibility for all decisions. At the board level, the Board Chair will make the final decision. (For more information, see Section 3.2 Governance Model and Appendix M Consensus Decision Making Chart.)

As described below, the BCCS design team and governing board members possess deep experience in education and school operations. In addition, the BCCS team has enlisted the support of advisors to add expertise and capacity in key areas.

**BCCS Design Team**

|  |
| --- |
| **Eliza Bryant**Core Design Team Member, Governing Board Vice Chair-elect |
| Teaching, Instructional Coaching, Mathematics Education, Development/Fundraising* Coaches and supports teachers, teacher leaders and administrators in 5 parochial elementary schools on successful implementation of *Everyday Mathematics*
* Designs professional development trainings and webinars intended to differentiate support to teachers with varied levels of experience
* Five years as Chicago Public Schools (CPS) teacher, grades 1-2
* Chaired the BCCS Silent Auction Committee and managed the planning, preparation and execution of BCCS’s annual benefit gala, *Planting Seeds of Change Silent Auction*, which raised over $11,000 in its first year
* Instrumental in creation of BCCS 501(c)(3) organization and development of Founding Governing Board
* M.A.T., Urban Teacher Education Program, University of Chicago (2006); B.A., University of Chicago (2005); Illinois Type 03 Elementary Teaching Certification.
 |
| **Phillip Hall** Core Design Team Member, Proposed Director of Finance and Operations |
| Extensive senior executive-level experience in finance and operations, including Chief Operating Officer at Institute for Latino Progress, Financial Administrator and Interim Executive Director at Esperanza Community Services, and Director of Revenue and Treasurer at Chicago Park District * Provided accurate budgets for 11 programs over the past nine years, including two CPS charter schools and two CPS contract schools
* Managed finance and operations at Rudy Lozano Alternative High School and aided in its transition from a sub-contract school to a multi-site charter
* Provided the financial support and infrastructure needed to launch Instituto Health Services Career Academy High School in 2010 and Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy in 2012
* 15+ years of nonprofit board governance service
* MBA, Harvard Graduate School of Business (1989); B.A., University of Chicago (1985).
 |
| **Mary Rawlins, Ph.D.** (University of Illinois-Chicago, anticipated 2013)Core Design Team Member, Proposed School Director |
| Founding Charter School Principal, Counseling, Teaching* Holds Illinois School Administration (type 75) from UIC Urban School Leadership program School Guidance (type 73) and Elementary Teaching (type 03) certifications, both from DePaul
* Currently working towards doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction from University of Illinois-Chicago; holds Masters of Education and Bachelors of Science from DePaul
* Launched innovative early college high school model as founding principal at ASPIRA Early College Charter High School
* Managed school start-up from incubation through opening, including hiring all founding staff, recruitment of 300 ninth graders, project-based curriculum design and development of master schedule to enable block scheduling, daily “seminar” period and staff development time, including common preparatory time, weekly content/grade level team meetings and school-wide staff meetings
* Collaborated with founding teachers and faculty from Northeastern Illinois University (NIU) to develop unique, early college curriculum backward-planned to prepare students for success in designated NIU courses by 11th grade and “mirror” HS courses to support students in the college-level courses
* 15+ years in school counseling and teaching, including leadership roles as CPS Office of Specialized Services City-wide/Lead Counselor, Area Master Counselor and Independent Consultant for Boys Town Educational Model; extensive knowledge of special education
* Initiated and led Safe Schools Ambassadors program, Think First, Peer Council, Peer Mediation and Peer Jury programs in 2 CPS schools; authored advisory curriculum published by *American School Counselor Association*
* Extensive experience training and coaching teachers and students on topics including classroom management strategies, restorative justice, reading and implementing IEPs, and addressing the social and emotional needs of the students
 |
| **Sonia Wang**Core Design Team Member, Proposed Dean of Student Development |
| Middle-school Administration, Instructional Coaching, Teaching* Serves on Administrative and Instructional Leadership teams at UChicago Charter School – Woodlawn Campus (UCW)
* Sought and receives ongoing mentorship on school leadership and administration from Shayne Evans, the Chief Executive Officer and Director of the University of Chicago Charter Schools (UCCS)
* Hired and coaches UCW instructional staff in English Language Arts, social studies, science, and special education
* Seven years as CPS and charter school teacher, including English Language Arts, social justice and leadership, grades 6-8
* M.A.T., Urban Teacher Education Program, University of Chicago (2007); B.A., University of Chicago (2006); Illinois Type 03 Elementary Teaching Certification, with middle school language arts, math and social studies endorsements
 |
| **Kelly Fallon-Wilson**Associate Design Team Member; Incubation Period: Will collaborate with School Leadership to develop Human Resources policies and procedures and vendor relationships |
| Parent in the Bridgeport community invested in creating quality neighborhood education option; Human Resources Professional* Human resource manager with extensive experience in hiring, payroll, and employee benefits
* Extensive grant writing experience
 |
| **Amy Millikan**Associate Design Team Member, Incubation Period: Will collaborate with School Leadership to plan and implement high-quality professional development |
| Professional Development, Teaching (elementary and university levels), Educational Consulting* Designed professional development for multiple groups including CPS schools, teacher organizations and other education groups, such as developing inquiry based profession learning circles, the value of the use of play in the classroom, and the development of meaningful performance tasks in the Backwards Design model
* Designed and implemented clinical instructor PD for 10 years - series of workshops designed for UTEP mentors to help them develop strong coaching skills as well as make improvements in their own practice.
* Designed and implemented curriculum for 20-25 students in grades K-8 in all academic areas
* Deep understanding of and experience developing conceptual frameworks, standards and assessments for graduate-level teacher training (UChicago UTEP).
* Designs, plans, and co-teaches year-long *Professional Teaching Seminar*, with an emphasis on the four domains of effective teaching practice
* Developed strategies for coping with organization and school adjustment issues
 |

As educators in Chicago Public Schools, Eliza, Mary, and Sonia established highly effective learning communities using the balanced literacy framework, workshop approach, inquiry-based learning, and responsive classroom strategies – all of which will be implemented at BCCS. As a team, they bring a wealth of experiences addressing the whole child through academic and social-emotional development. Their expertise encompasses a range of grade levels and content areas within schools that serve predominantly low-income and minority student populations. The full Design Team, including Phillip, Kelly and Amy, rounds out the experiences needed to design and open a successful school.

**BCCS Governing Board**

BCCS Governing Board members possess deep experience in the areas of education, real estate, law, community partnerships and fundraising. In addition, several members bring prior nonprofit governance experience. (For more information, please see Section 3.2 Governance Model.)

**Advisors and Consultants**

In addition to the above-mentioned members, BCCS collaborates with the following advisors and consultants:

* **The Illinois Network of Charter Schools (INCS), Charter Starter Consulting: Fast Forward**. Fast Forward delivers ongoing support to propel strong design teams forward in the charter school design and application process. They provide expert knowledge, coaching, resources and connections to help teams plan, gain authorization, and open excellent charter schools. Anne Levy Brown, INCS Charter Growth Manager, supports BCCS in charter design and connects us with experts in education, operations and charter development. Through Fast Forward, successful charter leaders including Michelle Navarre (Principal, Polaris Charter Academy) and Kristin Olson (Director of Special Education, Rowe Elementary Charter School) have provided feedback on the BCCS instructional model. Through Fast Forward, the BCCS design team has also worked closely with experts including Edison Urena (Northwestern University Settlement House), Rich Wallach (IFF) and Afton Partners (see below) to make design decisions and deepen the team’s collective knowledge regarding school operations.
* **Afton Partners.** Afton Partners LLC provides financial consulting and related operational advisory services to BCCS as part of INCS Fast Forward program. BCCS received support from Co-founder and Managing Director Carrie Stewart and Analyst Mitch Mraz. Stewart is the co-founder and founding Board Chair of EPIC Academy, and sits on the Board of North Lawndale Prep Charter High School. Prior to Chicago, Stewart served as the COO of the Algiers Charter Schools Association, in New Orleans, as the city sought to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. Stewart also has extensive in finance as she began her career as a consultant with Arthur Anderson. Mraz has been a financial analyst since graduating with a B.S. with High Honors in Finance. Additionally, he brings non-profit and fundraising experience to the team.
* **Bailey Edward Architects.** Bailey Edward has worked with K-12 schools to design spaces to fit educational missions within CPS. Two architects, Damon Luke Wilson and Robin Whitehurst, within the firm have consulted with the Design Team to identify facilities, provide contacts, and advise the team on next steps. They are providing the ADA Compliance Reports and Architect Reports submitted along with this proposal, and they will lend their expertise to the Design Team in developing a renovations plan after approval of the charter.
* **Krystal Goh, advisor for finance and operations.** Krystle Goh served as Senior Project Manager within the LEARN Charter School Network, running and working on projects that touch all departments at LEARN including Strategic Finance, Development, Enrollment, and Operational Process improvement. As an advisor to BCCS, Goh provides support in the development of plans around operations, including facilities, financial management and food services. She works with the team to ensure alignment of all operational components to the mission, vision and core values of BCCS. As the school opens its doors, Goh will be a member of the Finance Committee, lending her expertise to the Governing Board to ensure sound financial policies and progress at BCCS.
* **Counterpart CFO.** Counterpart CFO is a consulting firm that provides shared CFO services for small companies and organizations that do not need a full-time position. Dan Weiss, Founder and President of Counterpart CFO worked with the BCCS design team through its search for a Director of Finance and Operations. With over twenty-five years of experience helping businesses and nonprofits with financial services, Weiss helped BCCS vet candidates for this position.
* **Marv Hoffman, advisor for school design and start-up.** Marv Hoffman is the retired associate director of the [University of Chicago Urban Teacher Education Program](http://utep.uchicago.edu/) (UChicago UTEP), and current course instructor. Hoffman was the founding director of the University of Chicago Charter School [North Kenwood/Oakland campus](http://www.uei-schools.org/nko/site/default.asp) (UCCS-NKO). Hoffman’s extensive teaching career spans over 40 years and includes pre-school through graduate school instruction, and he has authored multiple books on education. Hoffman has served as an advisor to the BCCS team since 2008, providing guidance on the educational program and complexities of starting a school from the ground up.He intends to provide guidance to the team after authorization and through the start-up phase.
1. **Academic Track Record Serving Similar Student Populations:**

*The proposal should demonstrate that the Design Team, whether an existing Chicago operator, existing national operator, or new operator, has a proven track record of success driving academic achievement and growth for students similar to those the school expects to serve. In addition to discussing the Design Team’s proven track record of success in the proposal narrative, include an attachment that includes corresponding data. Please see the below descriptions, as well as Tables 1-3 on pp. 10-12 of the Answer Manual, for more information on CPS’ expectations for demonstrating a proven track record of success for each different type of Design Team.*

BCCS is committed to the neighborhoods of McKinley Park and Bridgeport. As a school that hopes to work with a diverse population of students, BCCS will draw from McKinley Park and Bridgeport as well as the surrounding neighborhoods of Pilsen, Armour Square, and Bronzeville. (For more information, please see Section 1.1 Parent and Community Engagement/Need in Targeted Community.) Based on the demographics of these areas, BCCS anticipates serving a diverse student population, including Latino, Hispanic, Black, Asian, and White children, with a significant low-income population.

The BCCS Core Design Team members have a proven track record of driving academic achievement and growth among similar student sub-populations in their roles of classroom teachers, school counselors, instructional coaches, mentor teachers and school administrators.

**Academic Track Record**

|  |
| --- |
| **Mary Rawlins** |
| Teacher, 4th GradeAltgeld Elementary School (1996-2000)99% African-American; 99% FRL; 12.4% IEPCase ManagerHerbert Elementary School(2002-2004)95% African American; 96% FRL; 24% IEP CounselorMulticultural Academy of Scholarship High School(2009-2013)84% Latino, 15% African American; 95% FRL; 14% ELL; 14% IEP  | * Students averaged 1.3 years of growth on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in 1996; 1997-2000, students averaged 1.6 years growth with some students achieving over two years of growth in a single school year
* Managed the IEPs for all of the high incidence special education students.
* Developed and facilitated programs to generate a positive school culture and community. As a result, attendance rose from 81.7% to 91.9%. Dropout rate fell from 6.4% her first year to its current 0.6%. High school graduation rate increased from 57.9% to 75.8%. While this is the result of various school initiatives, surveys and reports completed by the Safe Schools Ambassadors evidence there part in those increases.
 |
| **Sonia Wang** |
| Teacher, 8th gradeClara Barton Elementary School(2007-2010)99% African American; 95% FRL; 11% IEPTeacher, 8th gradeUCCS-Woodlawn Campus(2010-2012)98% African American; 83% FRLInstructional CoachUCCS-Woodlawn Campus(2012-present) | * During the 2008-2009 school year, her 8th grade students moved from 43% to 64% meeting or exceeding standards on ISAT Writing.
* During the 2010-2011 school year, 87% of 8th grade students met/exceeded standards on the ISAT Reading, a growth from 72% as 7th graders
* During the 2011-2012 school year, 88% of 8th grade students met/exceeded standards on the ISAT Reading, a growth from 80% as 7th graders
* During the 2010-2011 school year, her 8th grade students grew 15% on NWEA MAP Reading scores.
* Provides an average of 210 minutes of coaching support each week for each teacher on her coaching load (Total teachers: 9)
* Coaching support includes: classroom observations, reflective debrief sessions, co-planning sessions, co-teaching, lesson planning review
* As a result of her coaching support, teachers showed growth on the UCCS Instructional Rubric from Fall 2012 to Spring 2013 when evaluated by the Director
 |
| **Eliza Bryant** |
| Teacher, Grades 1-2Clara Barton Elementary School(2006-2011)99% African American; 94.7% FRLElementary Math Educator (Instructional Coach)Center for Elementary Math and Science Education (CEMSE) (2011-present)“Big Shoulders Fund Mathematics Initiative” (BSFMI)~1500 students -  | * On average, 75% of Eliza’s students met or exceeded their target growth rate on STEP assessments, and 75% achieved mastery or better on *Everyday Mathematics* end of the year assessments.
* Students made significant gains on the mathematics portion of the Terra Nova test in both 3rd and 5th grades, with two schools substantially increasing their national percentile rankings from 39th to 50th, and 53th to 73th.
* 92% and 84% of teachers reported that the professional development was effective in increasing their pedagogical knowledge and math content knowledge, respectively
* 98% of teachers reported that the professional development was effective in increasing their knowledge of *Everyday Math* and its implementation
 |
| **Kavita Kapadia Matsko** |
| Director of Teacher PreparationUChicago UTEP | * Approximately 100% hiring rate and 90% 5-year retention rate of teachers graduated from UChicago UTEP
* 74% of UChicago UTEP graduates are routinely rated using the Charlotte Danielson Framework as having “proficient” or “distinguished” practice, compared to 57% of their counterparts
 |
| **Marv Hoffman** |
| Founding Principal North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School (NKO) | * Created a high performing academic culture which produced some of the highest test scores for elementary charter schools in the city.
* Oversaw the creation of a stable school culture with low student and teacher turnover.
* Built trust with parents and key community members who have provided ongoing support for the school throughout its sixteen years.
 |

For more information on the demographics of the schools in which Design Team Members have worked, please see Appendix P School Report Cards.

**c. School Leadership:**

*(i) Briefly describe the proposed instructional leadership structure. (Note: the structure should align with the school-level organizational chart provided in Section 2.5.a). (ii) If school leader(s) have been identified, provide the criteria used to select the proposed leader(s), including skills, qualifications and characteristics. If school leadership has not been identified, describe the criteria that will be used to select the proposed leader(s), provide a timeline for identifying school leader(s), and specify whether past leadership experience is a requirement. (iii) 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 experience running a school, please cite any school leadership programs or fellowships that they have completed or will complete prior to school opening.*

*Attach clearly labeled job descriptions for all staff that will provide instructional leadership at the proposed school. (Note: Job descriptions are also requested in Section 2.5.a. These job descriptions satisfy both requests.)*

The BCCS School Leadership will be comprised of the School Director, Director of Finance and Operations, Dean of Student Development and the Dean of Community Center. Each of these leaders will bring their expertise in specific areas to provide well-rounded and comprehensive management of the school. The School Leadership team has a firm commitment to promoting diversity and acceptance, has experience as effective educators and leaders in urban education, and is actively engaged in reforms and strategies that develop opportunities for student success. The shared leadership structure of BCCS means that each member of the School Leadership team will be responsible for a distinct aspect of the school and the team at large will engage in collaborative decision-making. There are many benefits of a shared and collaborative decision-making structure. First, it ensures that multiple voices are heard before a decision is made. Second, it allows for responsibilities to be appropriately delegated so that members of the School Leadership can be more present for teachers, students, and families. The School Director will be ultimately accountable for all decisions and retains authority with respect to all management decisions. (For more information, please see Section 3.2 Governance Model and Appendix Q School Leadership Job Descriptions.)

Responsibilities within the school leadership will be shared as follows:

* The **School Director** will serve as the school’s instructional leader, manage the School Leadership, establish a climate of academic and personal growth, and promote the core values of BCCS. The School Director will oversee curriculum development, instructional coaching and evaluations, student recruitment, and ultimately be responsible to the Governing Board for achieving BCCS’s mission and vision.
* The **Director of Finance and Operations (DFO)** will oversee all financial and operational management at BCCS. The Director of Finance and Operations will be responsible for all internal operations, such as accounting for all money coming in and going out of BCCS, compliance, implementing procedures, and facilities related issues. Additionally, the Director of Finance and Operations will ultimately ensure that all financial and operational decisions reflect the mission and vision of BCCS.
* The **Dean of Student Development (DSD)** will implement the BCCS Discipline Policy and Student Code of Conduct (SCC). Students who commit infractions as described in the SCC will be referred to the Dean of Student Development in order to respond to the infraction and restore peace in the school community. In addition, the DSD will work closely with the Social Worker and Counselor to design and monitor programs that help develop students’ social and emotional well-being.
* The **Dean of Community Center (DCC)** will be committed to developing a close partnership with the community and raising awareness about BCCS in an effort to both enroll new students and ensure the symbiotic relationship BCCS hopes to have. The Dean of Community Center will eventually also be responsible for managing the BCCS Community Center open to all students, their families and other community members. The Community Center will be a space where students, families, and community members and organizations can collaborate in order to serve our students and better the community as a whole.

In order to identify the School Director and Director of Finance and Operations, the BCCS design team conducted a rigorous candidate recruitment and selection process. For both positions, candidates participated in two phases of interviews, which included formal interviews, hypothetical tasks, and case study reviews. The Core Design Team evaluated each candidate using a rubric (0-4 rating) aligned to the mission and core values of BCCS that was generated specifically for this process. School Director candidates were rated on the following categories: collaboration, communication, cultural competence, instructional/pedagogical knowledge and school leadership, whereas DFO candidates were rated on collaboration, communication, cultural competences, and operational and financial fluency. The process ultimately saw eight School Director candidates and four DFO candidates.

Upon final evaluation of all interviewed candidates, the Design Team found a natural alignment of Mary Rawlins’s philosophy on instruction with the mission and core values of BCCS. In expressing her approach to education, Mary exhibited a passion for addressing the needs of the whole child and for placing support of social-emotional development on par with academic growth – supported by her track record of student achievement growth and success in building positive school cultures and non-academic outcomes, like increased attendance and decreased drop-out rates. Additionally, BCCS noted that Mary specifically brings charter start-up experience as opposed to many other candidates who held leadership positions in well-established schools. The Design Team deemed her experience vastly more valuable because it includes her ability to anticipate the complexities of starting a school from the ground up.

Similarly, the Design Team saw Phillip Hall’s ample financial and operational experience with charter schools coupled with his calm and collaborative spirit a natural fit. Phillip has worked with both start-up and existing charters and non-profits, allowing him to build great relationships with CPS Central Office and other city offices. During the selection process, Phillip displayed the aptitude for clearly communicating to the full team how specific design decisions impact the school budget, and how the school’s high-level financial goals can be achieved through a viable budget and consistent policies. Additionally, the design team noted Phillip’s excitement when learning that his role would not be isolated; rather the DFO would be part of a shared leadership model.

The BCCS School Leadership team will be led by the **School Director,** Mary Rawlins. As the Director, Mary possesses strong leadership and management skills; passion and commitment to educational excellence, respect, and inclusiveness; exceptional problem-solving skills; and a tenacity to overcome obstacles. She is dedicated to creating, facilitating, and participating in a democratic professional environment in which students and teachers excel.,

As a former principal and now in her current role as a consultant for Boystown Educators, Mary has accomplished the following:

● Inspired, led, and managed an instructional team focused on improving student achievement.

* Held weekly meetings in the high school to look at student data in order to make instructional decisions
* Designed and implemented professional development to reinforce the instructional strategy of project based learning, while maintaining focus on the mission of the school: to prepare students for college
* Facilitated critical friends sessions for teachers to present projects they were designing, discuss student work, and offer suggestions and support in order to develop more robust projects
* Facilitated monthly curriculum design team meetings, with both high school and NEIU faculty present
* Designed a small group behavior management program, later published by the American School Counselor Association, and a course for freshmen integrating language arts and social/emotional learning; for which she won a citywide counseling award

The **Director of Finance and Operations**, Phillip Hall, will be working closely with the School Director. His primary focus is that of developing a robust budget that reflects the BCCS mission and ensuring that BCCS maintains fiscal and operational health and compliance at all times. Phillip’s responsibilities will include financial and human resource management, hiring, managing and developing operations personnel, establishing and managing relationships with vendors, and all non-academic reporting.

In his position at Institute for Latino Progress, Phillip has accomplished the following:

* Improved Finance, HR, IT and Facility Operations during staff growth from 100 to 250
* Facilitated a 125% growth in revenues with only a 10% increase in operations staff
* Coordinated the move into a rehabbed 100,000 sq. ft. facility and coordinated its financing
* Re-wrote and implemented financial policies and reduced audit findings from 10 to one.

The **Dean of Student Development,** Sonia Wang, will be working closely with the School Director. Her primary focus is that of developing BCCS students in their leadership and social skills as well as addressing major disciplinary concerns. Her responsibilities will also include implementing a school-wide discipline plan grounded in restorative justice, developing programs and supporting teachers in developing skills in conflict resolution and peaceful interactions, as well as tracking social and emotional growth of students. Sonia’s experience as a school administrator and educator, detailed above, will inform her work as BCCS’s Dean of Student Development.

In her current position, Sonia has accomplished the following:

* Developed academic and social and emotional programs in response to needs expressed by students, families, and the school, including Student Council, Literacy Intervention Program, Peer Mentorship Programs, and the LGBTQ Alliance Club
* Supported an 8th grade female advisory once a week during the extended advisory time
* Offered more structured SEL supports and mentorship for three of her former students, meeting with them once a week for academic check-in and counseling.
* Developed and taught a Social Justice and Leadership class to the 8th grade class, focused on developing leadership skills as a member of the local and global community they belong to through project based learning and Socratic seminars.

BCCS is currently vetting candidates for the Dean of Community Center and lead teaching positions.

**Section 2.3: Educational Goals and Assessment Plan**

**a. Educational Goals and Metrics**

*Identify educational goals and metrics for the proposed school. Create and include a table that details the school’s quantifiable achievement goals, including targeted assessment scores, attendance levels, retention rates, and additional metrics for each of its first five years of operation. Sample goals and metrics tables are provided on pp. 13-14 of the Answer Manual. Please describe how your Design Team determined these goals and why these goals are appropriate for the school’s intended population.*

BCCS believes teacher-designed assessments are the most useful to instruction and will use student portfolios to monitor understanding and progress both academically and socio-emotionally. Student learning and achievement on authentic assessments aligned to our interdisciplinary curriculum will transfer and be reflected on standardized tests. BCCS will use metrics according to CPS’s School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) and will set goals to become and maintain Tier 1 status as a charter school. BCCS’s academic program’s success in preparing our students for high school and college will be reflected in the attendance rate, students’ annual growth and attainment on the NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, and the 5Essentials Survey completed by students, teachers, and parents. BCCS has also included goals for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which is slated to be used in school year 2015-16.

**NWEA MAP**

BCCS will use NWEA MAP as a metric in a variety of ways, and we understand the ways in which the data will be analyzed and weighted according to the SQRP. MAP is a computerized adaptive test aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that measures an individual student’s growth over the year as shown in his or her RIT score. A student’s RIT scores provide information to teachers on skills assessed and show growth over time, as well as the ability to compare students’ performances with the norm group average. When students take the MAP in the fall, they will receive their RIT score, and there will be a target growth score for the year based on nationally normed average growth for a student who started at the same RIT level. BCCS will track the percentage of 3rd to 8th grade students achieving target growth relative to national norms over the course of the year. BCCS will also track the attainment of our students according to MAP Spring assessment RIT scores. As outlined in the table below, BCCS has set goals to be in the 90th percentile in terms of national NWEA MAP growth in Reading and Math, 70th percentile for priority groups growth in MAP Reading and Math, and 90th percentile for attainment in MAP Reading and Math.

**PARCC**

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, BCCS is anticipating that students in the 3rd-8th grade will begin taking the PARCC English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics assessments annually. PARCC will be a collection of rigorous performance tasks that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Understanding that this assessment will be new for all our students, we are beginning with a goal of 70% of our students meeting or exceeding standards. It is extremely difficult to predict how ISAT scores and PARCC scores will correlate at this juncture, though we have based this estimate on an average of the percentage of students meeting/exceeding on the ISAT within the surrounding neighborhood schools and then adjusting for the new demands of PARCC. The average of McKinley Park and Bridgeport area schools’ percentage of students meeting/exceeding on the ISAT in the 2011-12 school year was about 80%. BCCS’s interdisciplinary curriculum and our regular use of performance tasks and project-based learning will prepare our students to do well on the PARCC assessments, leading to high achievement rates by year five.

**Attendance and Satisfaction Rates**

Other metrics BCCS will track include attendance, transfer rates, community satisfaction rates, and results from the 5Essentials Survey of teachers and students provided through the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR). Attendance rate goals are based on an average of data from surrounding neighborhood schools and set at 98% for BCCS beginning from year four.

**BCCS Academic Metrics and Goals**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Metric** | **Goal** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| National Growth Percentile on NWEA Reading and Math (3rd-8th) | 90th percentile | --- | 90th %ile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile |
| Priority Group National Growth Percentile Reading and Math (3rd-8th) | 70th percentile | --- | 70th %ile | 70th %ile | 70th %ile | 70th %ile |
| % of students making national average growth on NWEA MAP Reading and Math | 80% of students achieving target growth relative to national norms | --- | 70% | 70% | 75% | 75% |
| National Attainment Percentile on NWEA MAP Reading and Math (2nd-8th) | 90th percentile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile | 90th %ile |
| % of students meeting/exceeding Common Core standards | PARCC assessments 3rd - 8th grades | -- | 70% | 75% | 80% | 85% |
| Attendance | Daily Average K - 8th grades | 95% | 96% | 97% | 98% | 98% |
| Student Transfer Rate | Annual percentageK - 8th grades | 4% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 2% |
| 5Essentials Survey | Survey Completion Rates by Parents | 90% | 92% | 94% | 95% | 95% |
| 5Essentials Survey | Survey Completion Rates by Teachers | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 5Essentials Survey | Survey Completion Rates by Students | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5Essentials Survey Results | Overall 5E Score | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized |

Data from the above educational metrics as well as other assessments described below will be analyzed to provide a valid portrait of students’ academic progress, inform instructional strategy, set appropriate goals moving forward, and evaluate the overall success of the academic and non-academic programs at BCCS. If students are not making sufficient academic progress as defined by our proposed metrics, BCCS will provide increasing supports as necessary. In addition, School Leadership will take action to identify and address concerns if such indicators as student transfer rates exceed 5% and/or attendance rates dip below 95%. BCCS will work to understand and revise areas of improvement indicated by the Community Satisfaction and 5Essentials surveys in an annual action plan, including areas such as staff turnover, effective leadership, collaboration, and quality of programs and services.

**b. Student Assessment Plan:**

*(i) Explain how the school will assess the progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole on the metrics identified in Section 2.3.a. Educational Goals and Metrics over the course of the five-year contract. Create and include a table that details specific diagnostic, benchmark/interim, and summative assessments that will be used for each grade level, as well as the timing of their administration (please see pp. 15-16 of the Answer Manual for sample Assessment Tables).*

*(ii) The proposal narrative should: explain the rationale for selecting or developing the identified assessments; describe each assessment's purpose, design and format; demonstrate the validity and reliability of any non-standardized assessments; note alignment of assessments with state standards and/or Common Core State Standards, where applicable; and identify who will be responsible for administering the assessments.*

BCCS believes formative and summative assessments designed by teachers which are aligned with unit standards are the most insightful for instruction. Different types of assessments that will be used at BCCS will determine whether students are successfully achieving academic and social-emotional goals. The following is a list of valid and reliable assessments that will be used, the rationale for their use, and who will be responsible for administering the assessments.

**Unit Performance Tasks**

As teachers are developing and planning interdisciplinary units of study, they will create performance tasks and rubrics aligned to the Common Core standards identified for the unit. These performance tasks will be used to assess students’ understanding of the essential questions, content, skill proficiency, and use of strategies being taught within the unit. For example, performance tasks could include a written essay, a collection of original poetry, a math investigation, a science experiment report, or a historical inquiry project. Such performance tasks are a critical component of interdisciplinary units developed through backwards design and incorporate the idea that quality instruction follows from desired outcomes of student understanding. In their book, *Understanding by Design*, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, write, “Understanding is revealed in performance. Understanding is revealed as transferability of core ideas, knowledge, and skill, on challenging tasks in a variety of contexts. Thus, assessment for understanding must be grounded in authentic performance-based tasks” (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). These tasks allow students to learn how adults in the larger world apply the knowledge and skills used within school, and make their learning meaningful in the context of mastery and performance. Teachers will create and administer these assessments, and there will be an expectation of one performance task for every unit. Each performance task will have a set of clear criteria laid out within an analytic rubric, which rates a variety of distinct dimensions along a continuum. Such teacher-created and calibrated rubrics lend validity to their use, which will increase over time.

**Portfolio Reviews and 8th grade Thesis Project**

Throughout their time at BCCS, students will maintain a portfolio containing evidence of their academic and social and emotional goals, growth towards and achievement of goals, feedback from teachers, and major accomplishments. The use of student portfolios as a form of authentic assessment is used at Mission Hill School and, according to Deborah Meier, reflects students’ real-life achievement and preparation to become reflective adults and citizens, in contrast to standardized tests. Students will choose evidence of their understanding and application of skills from interdisciplinary units within the three strands of Turning Points and Changemakers, Natural and Physical World, and Art & Expression. (For more information, please see Section 2.4 Curriculum and Instruction.) Teachers will also require students to include particular performance tasks or work from the units at each grade level. Each piece of evidence will include a rubric or a reflection by the student and/or feedback by the teacher of how the evidence reflects what the student knows and is able to do. The portfolio will also contain evidence of social and emotional learning and growth in relation to BCCS’s values of peace, voice, and action, including observable behavior, reflection pieces, and hours of community service. Formal reviews of portfolios will take place twice a year, at the middle and the end of the year. At the beginning of the year, students, teachers and families will set goals based on previous evidence and data. In December during student-parent-teacher conferences, the portfolio will be reviewed to check the progress of the student towards the goals and inform next steps. At the end of the year, the portfolio will again be formally reviewed to note the achievement of goals and the students’ performance at the grade level, as well as to inform promotion to the next grade level.

Eighth grade students at BCCS, like at Mission Hill, will be required to present a Thesis Project to a panel of reviewers that will include students, family/community members, and teachers. The Thesis Project is an extended piece of work that encompasses the students’ growth and learning throughout their years at BCCS and grows from the body of work within their portfolios. Students must demonstrate their understanding within the humanities by developing and proving a thesis that integrates literacy, mathematics, social sciences, sciences, and the arts. Through the project, students will be asked to interpret in their own way the school’s mission of graduating young adults who are empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates, who will be empowered to make choices in their future academic and life endeavors. (Please see Appendix R 8th Grade Thesis Project Rubric.)

**Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS)**

Another assessment used at BCCS will be solely focused on reading fluency and comprehension; the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) is a diagnostic reading assessment that provides teachers with student data on reading levels, strengths, and skills for improvement that will inform individual conferences as well as small group and whole group instruction. The BAS is based on the last twenty years of research regarding the gradient of text difficulty, is used with high reliability to establish grade level expectations for students and teachers, and is linked to the Continuum of Literacy Learning, a continuum of observable behaviors for assessing and teaching (Resnick and Hampton, 2009). Teachers will be trained over the summer to administer the BAS assessments three times a year and interpret the results to inform literacy instruction at an individual, small group, and whole group level.

**ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) Test for ELLs**

ACCESS is an English proficiency test given to English Language Learners in K-8th grades and assesses students’ performance in relation to WIDA Consortium’s English Language Proficiency Standards. Scores from ACCESS will include listening, speaking, oral language, reading, and writing composites as well as an overall score. ACCESS will allow BCCS to monitor ELLs progress in English proficiency annually, as it is administered every January. In addition, students’ scores will inform classroom instruction, differentiation, and ESL support services needed. While the percentage of students meeting individual growth targets is a metric that will be tracked according to the SQRP, BCCS has not set school-wide goals around ACCESS and will mostly use ACCESS scores as a diagnostic and benchmark assessment to inform instructional strategies and services for individual students. The lead ESL teacher, in collaboration with classroom teachers, will coordinate the administration of ACCESS tests and monitoring of scores for ELLs.

**Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)**

As described in the section above, the NWEA MAP test for Reading and Math will be administered once in the Fall and once in the Spring the first year of operation for 2nd grade students. As BCCS adds 3rd through 8th grade, NWEA MAP tests will be administered in the Winter and the Spring. Similar to CPS, BCCS will move towards Spring to Spring data. NWEA MAP tests are now aligned to Common Core standards and are focused on providing data on student growth over the year. Students’ beginning of year (BOY) RIT scores will help determine growth targets by the end of the year and allows teachers to provide interventions and enrichments as necessary. MAP data will also be a key data point for Response to Intervention (RtI) supports at BCCS. Administration and data analysis of NWEA MAP results will be coordinated by the School Director.

**Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Assessments**

PARCC assessments in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics are scheduled to be implemented beginning in the school year 2014-15 and will assess student mastery of Common Core State Standards. At BCCS, students in the third grade will begin taking the PARCC in 2015-16. The PARCC tests consist of a variety of performance-based tasks that will allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in preparation for college and career. PARCC has two required assessment components that make up a student’s overall score: the performance-based assessment (PBA) component which is made up of five sessions (three for ELA and two for math) and the end-of-year (EOY) assessment component which consists of four sessions (two for each subject). The PBA component is given about 75% of the way through the school year, which would fall in March-April, and requires students to apply their knowledge and produce a product. The EOY portion is given about 90% of the way through the school year - in May - and requires students to respond to computer-scored questions.

**BCCS Assessment Plan**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade Level(s)** | **Assessments** | **Type of Assessment** |
| K-5 | F&P BAS | DiagnosticInterim/Benchmark |
| K-8 | Unit Performance TasksPortfolio Reviews | Formative &Summative |
| K-8 | ACCESS for ELLs | Interim/Benchmark |
| 2-8 | NWEA MAP (Spring to Spring) | Interim/Benchmark |
| 3-8 | PARCC | Summative |
| 8 | Thesis Project | Summative |

**BCCS Assessment Calendar\***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Aug** | **Sept** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **April** | **May** | **June** |
| F&PK-8 |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |
| Portfolio ReviewK-8 |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  | X |
| Thesis Project8th grade |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X | X |
| ACCESS for ELLs |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| NWEA MAP Reading & Math3 - 8\*\* |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| PARCC3 - 8 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  | X |  |

\* Performance Tasks are not reflected in this assessment calendar, as it will depend on the length and number of interdisciplinary units created by teachers. BCCS will expect at least one culminating performance task per trimester to demonstrate understanding and skill learned within the strand, whether social science, science, or arts-based.

**c. Data Driven Programs & Instruction:**

*Describe how school administrators and teachers will review results of formative and summative assessments to inform programmatic and instructional decisions and make adjustments to curricula, professional development, and other school components. This response should clearly explain the roles and responsibilities of the instructional leadership team in overseeing teachers’ progress toward helping students meet their identified goals, as well as specify the formalized processes and supports that will enable teachers to reflect on student progress and adjust their instruction accordingly.20 (ii) Please explain how the school will continually communicate with parents and students about academic achievement and progress.*

Data analysis and review will be a collaborative endeavor and learning process for students, teachers, parents, and administrators. Data from formative and summative assessments detailed above will be analyzed not only to inform instructional strategies, but to gauge the overall success of the school culture and instruction at BCCS and to set appropriate goals. Data and the body of work within portfolios will drive decisions about students’ individual goals and action plans, as well as curricular and instructional designs.

**Data Analysis Protocol for Instruction**

BCCS is committed to building a professional learning culture, which includes collaborative meetings focused on data analysis that will drive instruction (Please see Section 2.5 Talent Management). BCCS will use a data analysis protocol created and coordinated by the School Director. Though we expect our teachers to be analyzing data at all times to inform their instruction, BCCS teachers will formally analyze assessment data every trimester. In this formal analysis, teachers will meet in grade level teams and/or content area teams to share their findings and collaboratively analyze F&P BAS data, performance task rubric data, and/or portfolio data (which includes social, emotional, and behavioral information about students). Teachers will identify trends with possible explanations, set goals for individual and groups of students, and determine instructional and social and emotional strategies and next steps. Teams will develop an action plan based on the data that will guide their planning for future teaching, provide intervention and enrichment for individual and groups of students, and communicate goals to students and families. (Please see Appendix S Data Analysis Protocol.)

**Data Analysis for School-Wide Goal-Setting**

The MAP assessment in reading and math will measure a student’s skill growth over the course of a year and a student’s attainment at the end of each grade level. In addition, the PARCC assessment will measure student’s achievement of Common Core State Standards in preparation for college and career. Teachers in the 3rd through 8th grades will review Spring results from the previous year in August/September of the school year to determine strengths and areas of growth for individual and groups of students within their class. Teachers will also communicate with the students and parents to identify the target growth for the year ahead based on the student’s performance and national norms. At the end of every year when MAP and PARCC data are available, the BCCS teaching staff will engage in a shared data-analysis process to compare class, grade, and school performance to goals defined by BCCS at the start of the school year. As a school, the findings will be analyzed for school or cross-grade implications, and the School Director, in collaboration with teacher teams, will create an action plan for the following year(s).

**Data Analysis for Programmatic Decisions**

Daily attendance will be recorded by teachers in a student information logging system, and tracked weekly by administration. The BCCS School Leadership will collect and analyze attendance data by classroom every week, which will inform the Response to Intervention process and be used to identify supports that need to be in place for particular students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally at school.

Finally, BCCS will issue a set of surveys at the end of every year that will measure community, teacher, and student satisfaction with the school. The surveys will be an opportunity for BCCS to receive and analyze feedback from stakeholders on its range of academic and social and emotional programs, the success of its community engagement plan and Community Center programs, and overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and vision. Data from the Community Satisfaction survey and 5 Essential surveys will be analyzed by the Leadership Team, shared with the public, community, and staff, and used to develop the action plan for the upcoming school year that will include changes, if necessary, to the structure of Family-Teacher-Community Organization (FTCO) meetings, student advisory groups, community workshop topics, after-school program opportunities, and outreach/communication efforts, among others.

**Section 2.4 Curriculum & Instruction**

**a. Curriculum:**

*(i) Provide a brief description of the proposed curricula and supporting materials for each subject and outline the rationale for curriculum development or selection decisions. How will the proposed curricula further the mission of the school?*

*(ii) Provide evidence that the proposed curricula are research-based and have been effective with students similar to those the school expects to serve. Also include a brief description of how these curricula will keep students on track for college and career readiness, highlighting any backwards-planning efforts, if relevant.*

*(iii) Explain how teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it; include the curriculum resources that will support instructional planning (e.g., curriculum maps, scope and sequences, pacing guides, etc.);*

*(iv) Describe the curriculum development and revision processes by which school leaders and teachers will evaluate and revise the curricula to ensure its continued effectiveness in driving academic achievement and growth for all students, alignment to state standards, and alignment from grade to grade.*

*Attach a course scope and sequence by subject for each grade level being proposed. (Please see p. 17 of the Answer Manual for a sample Scope and Sequence for illustrative purposes.)*

* *Attach a curriculum map and/or pacing plan that identifies course outcomes, demonstrates a clear alignment with appropriate state and Common Core State Standards, and illustrates alignment from grade to grade. (Please see p. 17 of the Answer for a sample planning map for illustrative purposes. )*
* *Attach a timeline (from authorization through the July prior to opening) that outlines plans to develop curricula for the proposed school prior to school opening. The timeline should specify which individuals will be responsible for completing key tasks at each stage of the process. Indicate how this timeline aligns with teacher hiring and professional development calendars.*

**Description of Curricula**

BCCS implements a humanities focused curriculum as defined by Lyn Maxwell White in Handbook for Undergraduate Curriculum: A Comprehensive Guide to Purposes, Structures, Practices and Change; the humanities *“help us face the tensions between the concerns of individuals and those of groups and promote civic and informed discussions of conflicts, placing current issues in historical perspective. They also give voice to feeling and artistic shape to experience, balancing passion and rationality and exploring issues of morality and value. The study of the humanities provides a venue in which the expression of [varying] experiences can be recognized and areas of common interest explored.”* All children at BCCS will study the humanities through the exploration of school-wide themes. BCCS is committed to a collaboratively developed and integrated curriculum that values student participation, inquiry and instructional approaches that support our goal of educating the whole child.

We recognize that the curriculum in many schools is increasingly being narrowed to “testable skills” and, therefore, BCCS seeks to widen the curriculum with the understanding that we can only develop whole people - critically literate people, people who approach world problems as citizens, people who imagine and respond to the predicaments of others - when the curriculum speaks to those issues as well as cultivating important and foundational numeracy and literacy skills. BCCS is committed to brining back the whole curriculum and integrating curricular experiences allows us to achieve this. Students only become literate, resilient, curious and empathic advocates when they are exposed to all content areas and modes of expression.

In order to successfully enact the BCCS goal of teaching to the whole child and widening the curricular experience, the BCCS community plans to use an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning.

**Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning**

The interdisciplinary approach at BCCS describes how students will study a real-world problem or question through the lens of multiple disciplines, the integration of which leads to new insights and deeper knowledge. We believe an interdisciplinary approach reflects the actual nature of issues in the world we live in and answers the growing call for curriculum that is **relevant** to students, thus promoting motivation, collaboration, inquiry, creativity, and critical thinking which are skills needed as adults in the larger world. It is the thinking processes or what Deborah Meier calls “habits of mind” that are developed through a humanities-focused, interdisciplinary curriculum that attends to the academic, intellectual, artistic, social, emotional, and civic growth of each student.

An interdisciplinary curriculum requires thoughtful design of thematic units that are standards-based, have coherent scope and sequence, engage learners in higher-order and critical thinking skills, and are aligned to authentic assessment measures. BCCS will have three school-wide strands called *Turning Points and Changemakers, The Natural and Physical World*, and *Art and Expression,* which represent learning in the social sciences, the sciences, and the arts respectively. At each grade level, students will be immersed in thematic units that fall under each school-wide strand and will study a real-world question or topic through multiple disciplines and explore its connections to their lives. In keeping with the school's mission, interdisciplinary learning allows students and teachers to collaborate (peace), exercise choice and present their learning (voice), and apply what they learn in the community and society (action). This exploration of content and development of skills within the interdisciplinary units will occur most intensely during the **Humanities Project Block**, but will draw from and extend to the other learning blocks of the day.

It is important to note that students will be involved in both discipline-specific and interdisciplinary experiences at BCCS. This is based on research that shows students must acquire a solid foundation in the various disciplines in order to fully benefit from the ways in which interdisciplinary studies bridges them together. At BCCS, literacy and mathematics will be taught as discrete content areas during the **Literacy Block** and **Math Block**. The content and processes learned in these blocks may also connect to the theme under study in the Humanities Project Block. However, the purpose of an interdisciplinary approach is to create opportunities for students to *apply* literacy, math, history, science, and arts (discipline-specific) knowledge and skills in the study and exploration of a question or real-world problem.

**BCCS Strands and Themes**

The broad strands of *Turning Points and Changemakers* (social science), *Natural and Physical World* (science), and *Art and Expression* (art) are constant from year to year, whereas there is a more focused *themes* for every trimester. Themes zoom in on a particular sub-genre within the larger strand [ie. *Turning Points and Changemakers* (strand) → “Community” (theme)]. The school’s themes for each strand will follow a three-year cycle. Each student experiences the full range of nine themes from Kindergarten through second grade, and then a second time, from third through fifth grades, and a final time from sixth through eighth grades.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strands***(School-wide, constant)* | **Turning Points and Changemakers** | **The Natural and Physical World** | **Art and Expression** |
| **Year 1 Themes** | Community | Life Science | Folk Art |
| **Year 2 Themes** | Expansion | Physical Science | Historical Art Periods |
| **Year 3 Themes** | Justice  | Engineering & Technology | Art for Function |
| **Year 4 Themes** | Community | Life Science | Folk Art |
| **Year 5 Themes** | Expansion | Physical Science | Historical Art Periods |
| **Year 6 Themes** | Justice  | Engineering & Technology | Art for Function |

The following are descriptions of the over-arching, yearly strands and their possible respective themes:

* *Turning Points and Change Makers*

One full trimester of the BCCS school year will be focused on the social studies-anchored strand *Turning Points and Change Makers*. Each year, this trimester will cycle through three subset themes: “Community”, “Expansion”, and “Justice”. Grade-level teams will work together to develop interdisciplinary units to conduct throughout the term that address specific social studies content, and research and presentation processes. For instance, in the first trimester focusing on the theme of “Community,” the primary team might generate essential questions around different types of social groupings within the local community, like their families, their friends, the school, and/or the neighborhood. Middle-school teams might generate essential questions that focus more on oral histories of ancient communities in the Americas and elsewhere.

* *The Natural and Physical World*

One full trimester of the BCCS school year will be focused on the science-anchored strand *The Natural and Physical World.* Each year, this term will cycle through three subset themes: “Life Science”, “Earth & Physical Sciences”, and “Engineering & Technology.” For instance, in the second trimester focusing on the theme of “Life Science”, the primary team might work with students to generate essential questions around the life cycle of plants and animals. Middle-school teams might generate questions around inherited characteristics and gene mutations.

* *Art and Expression*

One full trimester of the BCCS school year will be focused on the art-anchored strand *Art and Expression*. Each year, this trimester will cycle through three subset themes: “Folk Art,” “Historical Art Periods,” and “Art for ‘Function’.” Grade-level teams work together to develop interdisciplinary units to conduct throughout the term that address specific content and experiences around various modes of artistic expression. For instance, in third trimester focusing on the theme of “Folk Art,” the primary team might generate essential questions around how artistic artifacts can communicate and celebrate community traditions. Middle-school teams might generate essential questions that highlight the relationship between artistic artifacts and commerce.

**Humanities Project Block**

Every day, BCCS reserves 120 instructional minutes - the humanities project block - for students to engage in interdisciplinary learning. Within every trimester’s theme, teachers will collaborate to create a series of *interdisciplinary units* (ie. *Turning Points and Changemakers* → “Community” → “Me and My Family”) that are both horizontally and vertically aligned allowing for students to experience a spiral approach to learning. The table below shows sample units that a student could experience within three years at BCCS.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Turning Points and Changemakers** | **The Natural and Physical World** | **Art and Expression** |
|  | **Trimester 1** | **Trimester 2** | **Trimester 3** |
| Year 1 | Theme: CommunityUnit(s):  - Me and My Family - My Neighborhood | Theme: Life & Earth SciencesUnit(s): - Animals and Habitats - Life in Outer Space?  | Theme: Folk ArtUnit(s):  - Tribal Arts & Dance - Hopi Pottery |
| Year 2 | Theme: ExpansionUnit(s): - Ancient Rome - Movement of  People | Theme: Physical SciencesUnit(s): - Forms of Matter  - Motion and Movement | Theme: Historical Art PeriodsUnit(s): - Invention of Photography - Neighborhood Murals |
| Year 3 | Theme: JusticeUnit(s): - Fair doesn’t always mean equal - Meaning of Human Rights  | Theme: Engineering and TechnologyUnit(s): - Robotics - Engineering in the Environment | Theme: Art for FunctionUnit(s): - The Purpose of “Nice”  - Power of Spirituals |

Each grade-level team will generate developmentally appropriate interdisciplinary units. BCCS teachers will use the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in combination with students’ interests, questions and needs, to guide their planning of effective, high-quality interdisciplinary projects. This combination of rigorous standards and authentic student interest ensure that both teachers and students will be motivated to engage with the unit content at high levels. A 2001 study by Ivey and Broaddus demonstrated that students remember the curriculum better when their teachers begin with aspects that are most interesting to the students. Students who sit passively will not take control of their own learning beyond school. A 2000 analysis by John Thomas showed strong achievement gains for students at schools that use a model of inquiry-based learning. There were improvements in student motivation, problem solving abilities, conceptual understanding, school climate, and teachers’ confidence in students (Harvey & Daniels, Comprehension and Collaboration).

As teachers generate and thoughtfully plan interdisciplinary projects, they will identify activities that weave together a wide variety of content areas. For example, if a fifth grade class is embarking on a unit on Civil and Human Rights, they might be asked to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts about the civil rights movement, apply data collection skills they learned in math, or write a how-to book about the process of changing laws. Ultimately, through this approach students will gain exposure to critical skills and processes in the fields of science, social science, and the arts, as well as develop the abilities to compare, analyze, and apply what they have learned during the day in authentic contexts.

**Literacy Block**

BCCS believes that students still need some focused instruction around literacy skills and strategies that they can then apply, practice and extend during the humanities project block, as well as throughout other areas of learning during the day. More generally, BCCS will employ the balanced literacy approach during the 100 minute block to teach critical skills and strategies around reading and writing. Balanced literacy promotes literacy achievement, which then promotes a higher level of comprehension.

The literacy block will draw from, but not adhere strictly to, the most recently updated CCSS *Units of Study* by Lucy Calkins and integrate developmentally appropriate instruction around phonemic awareness, phonics and word study pulled from *Phonics and Word Study* by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. The *Units of Study,* out of Teacher’s College at Columbia University,immerses students in the acts of reading and writing by following a series of units that help them think about themselves as legitimate readers and authors. The reading component exposes students to a wide variety of literary genres and pushes students to be critical and analytical thinkers while they read. The writing component emphasizes both the process of writing--mechanics and craft--as well as the completion of polished products, including lessons on revision and editing. Fountas and Pinnell’s *Phonics and Word Study* is a program that reflects the most current research on child and language development. The curriculum plots a course along a developmental continuum for students to traverse, as they become expert word solvers and effective readers and writers. A major accomplishment of the balanced literacy approach is that it promotes accountability, making students control their learning outcomes and recognize their accomplishments throughout the learning process. Each of these literacy-based programs offer invaluable lessons, resources and instructional suggestions that effective teachers can call on to support their students. A balanced literacy approach that is properly implemented will fully immerse students in the literary experience with relevant skills that link directly to the literature. Both researchers and theorists promote the balanced literacy approached where participants are involved in meaningful activities over direct literacy instruction (Ivey, Baumann and Jarrard, 2000). BCCS believes that teachers, who know their students best, will be able to navigate between the needs of the class and its path for growth to determine the skills and strategies necessary to teach.

**Math Block**

Much like literacy, BCCS believes that students need some focused instruction on skills, strategies and mathematical content, but there will be myriad opportunities throughout the rest of their academic days and lives to apply, practice and extend this knowledge. BCCS reserves 60 minutes a day for math-focused instruction.

BCCS will use *Everyday Mathematics* (2012 CCSS Edition) for grades K-5 and the *Connected Mathematics Project 3* for grades 6-8, and teachers will use the scope and sequence of each program to support the mathematical practice being done within their project blocks. *Everyday Math* is a CCSS aligned, research-based curriculum that offers rigorous and balanced instruction and emphasizes conceptual understanding and problem solving, as well as mastery of basic skills. Its spiral approach allows for mathematical learning to build over time. The research conducted in the “ARC Center Tri-State Student Achievement Study” found that students using *Everyday Mathematics*, as part of a set of comprehensive elementary mathematics curricula, consistently outperformed students not using comprehensive curricula and also outperformed traditional methods. Regardless of race, ethnicity and socio-economic status, higher performance was noted on all measured tests, and across all grade-levels and all strands. *Connected Math* is a problem-centered curriculum also aligned to CCSS. A selected set of concepts and processes are studied and developed in depth at each grade level. The program makes connections within mathematics, between mathematics and other subject areas, as well as to the real world. The teacher leads students through an exploration of an investigation with major problems. Extensive problem sets are included for each investigation to help students practice, apply, connect, and extend understandings. According to a research study conducted by Dr. Rebecca Eddy of Claremont University’s Institute of Organizational and Program Evaluation Research, students in the *Connected Mathematics* *Project* demonstrated greater gains than peers using a different program in the following mathematical areas: problem-solving, math communication, and math reasoning strategies.

**Inquiry and the Workshop Approach**

The instructional practices that connect the three blocks as well as contribute to the interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning include **inquiry** and the **workshop approach**.

**Inquiry**

At BCCS, teachers will emphasize the art of great questioning and inquiry. As Martha Nusbaum argues, “cultivated capacities for critical thinking, inquiry, and reflection are crucial in keeping democracies alive and wide awake.” Teachers will model how to generate and ask high-quality questions, as well as advocate for their questions both within the classroom and outside of it. As it would naturally follow, students would become empowered to similarly employ good questioning strategies in their lives. Teachers guide the questioning and provide resources and materials from which students can gather and analyze information. These essential questions both help drive the planning of a unit and the ongoing learning activities and assessments throughout the unit. Once essential questions are established, teachers guide students through the humanities project block to investigate answers to those questions, complete research projects, and present their learning to their peers and others in public presentations, discussions, or debates. A BCCS student will be able to confidently communicate about the essential questions explored within each interdisciplinary unit over the year. Learning in an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based way is ultimately the kind of work going on in college. Students need to be able to think across the, often, artificial boundaries among the disciplines, to be able to work together, and to have the research skills to answer their own questions if students are going to be adequately prepared for college and a meaningful career.

As the field of education is more firmly emphasizing critical and flexible thinking, BCCS anticipates a great shift in classroom structures and instructional delivery such that the onus of understanding rests primarily on the students. A number of extensive studies have shown that inquiry-based learning allows for students to push their thinking to higher and deeper levels all the while being more flexible with the application of what they’ve learned. In 1998, H.G. Shepherd worked with a group of fourth and fifth graders who were engaged in inquiry-based learning. In contrast to the control group, these students scored significantly higher on a critical-thinking test and also expressed greater confidence about what they had learned. Additionally, Jo Boaler found in her comparative study in 1997 and 1998, found that students engaged in inquiry-based and project-base learning developed more flexible thinking with regards to mathematics. A number of more recent studies also offer evidence that this approach can have equally or better results on standardized test. Perhaps even more importantly to BCCS, inquiry-based learning improves motivation, attitudes towards learning and work habits.

**The Workshop Approach**

Throughout the entire day, BCCS teachers and students will engage in learning within the format of the Workshop Approach, opening up more opportunities for differentiation. The Workshop Approach is not a curriculum; rather it is a constructivist and student-centered framework in which learners of any age work "alone together" to develop and hone their interests and skills, much the way that professionals in science, math, writing, and art do. The Workshop Approach includes mini-lessons focused on specific content, skills or strategies; small group work time, independent work time and one-on-one conferencing time. These differentiated structures allow students to acquire new knowledge and skills, revisit skills for practice, and self monitor their own progress. These components also allow for varied levels of teacher support and increased differentiation by ability, approach, and/or content. This approach allows students to have more choice in the classroom, which results in a higher level of student engagement and motivation for their learning. Further, according to the Report Card for the Nation (1998), the volume of reading and writing that students accomplish through the Workshop Approach has led to an increase in student achievement overall. Due to its efficacy and inherent opportunities for differentiation, BCCS will apply the Workshop Approach to all of the learning blocks. Using this approach, BCCS hopes to create a learning environment that functions as much like the real world - the science laboratory, the artist's studio, the writer's favorite coffee shop - as possible, and BCCS students will become highly self-sufficient, independent and resourceful learners.

**Evidence in Support of Humanities-focused and Interdisciplinary Learning**

The focus on humanities and interdisciplinary learning is valued and implemented in many higher education contexts but have important applications within elementary schools. Most notably, the University of Chicago requires all undergraduate students to undergo study in the Core curriculum, which includes series of classes within the fields of Civilization, Humanities, and the Arts; Natural and Mathematical Sciences; Social Sciences; and Languages. The Core curriculum allows students to gain the background and necessary skills of inquiry that are used in *every* discipline and provides a common experience and vocabulary within the university’s community. Similarly, at BCCS, students will undergo study of common themes within the three strands throughout their years, developing the knowledge and skills to approach any real-world issue. According to the University of Chicago, such an interdisciplinary approach is essential to fostering increased skills in close reading, analysis, and critical thinking: “By learning how others have posed big questions, they take up the challenge to ask their own. The result is transformative: students better understand themselves, their lives, and society, while gaining skills applicable to their academic and professional futures” (University of Chicago Faculty of the College, 2013).

In elementary schools, interdisciplinary curriculum also has a proven track record on student achievement across multiple measures, including test scores, retention rates, and measures of student engagement such as self-esteem, motivation, and decision-making. The success of interdisciplinary teaching and learning can be seen in the data from schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools network in Boston. The CES Common Principles and classroom practices of K-12 schools within the coalition include the following benchmarks and align to the mission and vision of BCCS:

* Culturally responsive pedagogy
* Differentiated instruction
* Essential questions
* Habits of mind and heart
* Interdisciplinary curriculum
* Performance-based assessment
* Student-centered teaching and learning

CES includes Mission Hill school, part of the several Boston Pilot Schools that opened in 1997 with more autonomy, longer instructional time, and smaller class sizes. BCCS drew much of its curricular and school design from Mission Hill, which also serves a diverse student population both in terms of race/ethnicity and socio-economic levels. In the 2006 Report called *Progress and Promise: Results from the Boston Pilot Schools* published by the Center for Collaborative Education, researchers noted the tremendous gains in academic learning and drops in disciplinary infractions of students who attended schools that implemented interdisciplinary curriculum and student-centered teaching and learning as compared to other public Boston schools:

* Attendance rates increased within pilot schools, which was one of the measures of student engagement. According to the report, the difference in attendance rates amounted to, on average, almost two more days a year at the elementary level and just over a week more at the middle school level.
* Low suspension rates also indicate higher engagement of students and fewer disruptions to the learning community. Pilot schools had suspension rates that were one third of other public schools.
* Grade level retention was used as an indicator of students’ educational performance, as well as future performance. In fact, grade level retention is directly linked to an increased risk of dropping out of school. Pilot schools had a 33% lower grade-level retention rate at the elementary level and 40% lower grade level retention rate at the middle school level than at other schools.
* Lastly, standardized test results on the state-wide Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) showed higher academic achievement in Reading, Math, and English/Language Arts as shown by the percentage of students at the Pilot schools who scored at an advanced/proficient status and at a passing status. In third grade reading, twice as many pilot school students placed in the advanced/proficient category than in Boston public schools, and the passing category had 20% more students in pilot schools. At the fourth grade level, the achievement levels were even higher in both ELA and math, with the proportion of students in the advanced/proficient category 59% higher in ELA and 76% in math at the pilot schools.

**Curriculum Development**

BCCS believes that to see inquiry-based learning come to fruition, it must stem from the interests and questions of students themselves. Every year, BCCS teachers will work with students to revise their interdisciplinary units to better meet the questions of each class. Because of this BCCS teachers must be patient and flexible guides of learning, as well as highly adept at revising curricular moves throughout a unit or theme. BCCS recognizes, however, that teachers must lay the foundation and begin developing units before students arrive in August 2014.

**Start-up Curriculum Development**

BCCS intends to develop a founding teacher cohort as early as possible during the incubation phase. As founding teachers are hired in the spring of 2014, they will be strongly encouraged to work with school leadership, remaining design team members, and PD providers to start generating interdisciplinary units to implement throughout the school year. Please see Appendix W Curriculum Development Timeline.) At this time, BCCS is exploring various external professional development providers, including UChicago UTEP, Facing History, and the Center for Collaborative Education. Teachers will start by identifying essential questions, and grade-level standards and goals to help guide their planning. With the guidance of school leadership, the founding teachers will backwards plan units, establishing meaningful unit-based activities and assessments. Teachers will additionally generate rubrics and other formative and summative systems and tools to help ensure that all students are making adequate amounts of growth from the beginning of units to the end, as well as from the beginning of the year to the end. Finally, teachers and school leadership will also work together to generate lists of necessary curricular materials for all the learning blocks.

**Summer Institute**

Founding teachers will also have dedicated time to develop curriculum during the Summer Institute (For more information, please see Section 2.5.), but this time is meant for finalizing plans, gathering materials and resources, tying up loose ends, and ensuring that all units meet appropriate grade-level standards. While teaching units, BCCS teachers should regularly take note of aspects of each unit that could be revised. During End-of-Year Retreats and Summer Institutes, teachers will take into account their notes on units as well as student outcomes to guide unit revisions. Though major unit revisions are expected year to year, teachers are ultimately responsible for making changes at the classroom and/or grade level that are directly based on the needs and interests of their students. BCCS School Leadership expects that all interdisciplinary units address all the necessary grade-level standards.

**Curriculum Development after Start-up**

During the first year, founding teachers should be regularly monitoring the success and pitfalls of all interdisciplinary units. Teachers should also be gathering the questions generated by students within each unit so as to better prepare the unit for its next round of implementation. It is intended that interdisciplinary units will be returned to through the three-year cycling of themes. The ultimate goal will be that the core of the unit will stay the same year to year, but the subtleties will change based on the questions and interests of that year’s students. Though some details will change each year, BCCS teachers will always continue to work with grade-level teams, vertical alignment teams, and school leadership to ensure that all revisions continue to adhere to the most current set of standards.

**b.** **Instructional Strategies:**

*(i) Describe the instructional strategies that will be implemented at your school to support the education plan, including approaches to classroom management, checks for understanding, etc. Explain how the proposed instructional strategies support the proposed mission, vision, and educational philosophy of the school.*

*(ii) Highlight evidence that the proposed instructional strategies are research-based and have been effective with students similar to those the school expects to serve.*

*(iii) Describe any specific supports or requirements for implementing specific instructional strategies (e.g., co-teaching or aides, technology, physical space requirements, etc). Discuss how teachers will use different methods of instruction to meet the needs of all students, highlighting the three areas below.*

* *Assessing Student Needs: Describe the anticipated performance levels and academic needs of the students you intend to serve. Discuss how the school will assess all students upon enrollment and how these assessments will inform instructional planning for the school year.*
* *Remediation: Describe how your education program will identify and meet the needs of all students who require remediation, including those who are below grade level, through specific instructional strategies, programs, services, and supports. Describe the level of growth expected in student achievement from these programs. Note: ‘Remediation strategies’ does not refer to services to support students with Special Education needs and students who are English Language Learners (ELL); the intent of this question is to describe supports for the underperforming general education population.*
* *Accelerated Learning: Describe how your education program will identify and meet the needs of accelerated students through specific programs, services, and supports. Describe the level of growth expected in student achievement from these programs.*

**Instructional Strategies**

BCCS teachers will be knowledgeable in the use of several key instructional strategies that promote maximum student comprehension and success. These strategies include but are not limited to:

**Scaffolding** This is a process in which teachers support students with concentrated instructional assistance when needed and at varied levels, allowing each individual to experience success in learning. This includes, but is not limited to mini-lessons, individual coaching, prompts, and open-ended questioning. Teachers gradually release responsibility of the learning as students progress and grow. Scaffolding offers many opportunities for differentiation as teachers determine the range of complexity within a given concept being taught and layer it with different types of “scaffolds” for different types of learners.

**Modeling** This is a process in which the teacher demonstrates a new concept or skill and the students learn first by observing. This is an effective strategy that allows students to not only observe the teacher in practice but also the teacher’s thought process. Students engage in the imitation of the particular behaviors and the thinking behind a certain concept or skill, and this engagement ultimately encourages learning. At BCCS, teachers will be encouraged to involve students in modeling as well. Students who have mastered specific concepts or skills will be able to model for their peers at developmentally appropriate times. Modeling offers many opportunities for differentiation as teachers carefully select what thought process, what approach or what content to model. Additionally, peers model for one another increasing the opportunity for students to learn from one another within their zones of proximal development.

**Guided Practice or Active Engagement** Teachers begin the process of handing over learning of a concept or skill that has been modeled to the students. Involving the students in a meaningful way, teachers apply the steps of a strategy or the dimensions of a concept such that students are highly unlikely to fail. Students and teachers work together to complete the steps of a skill. As students become more adept at applying the learned skill or concept, they take on more and more of the responsibility still with guidance from the teacher. One might describe this as a strategy to effectively transition students from whole group direct instruction to independent practice, teacher-centered to student-centered. Guided Practice is a great way for teachers to support students at different levels. Teachers can target the types of skills that different groups of students will need and provide the practice in this format.

**Group Work** Group work will be a fundamental part of classroom life at BCCS. Students will work together in groups that are organized by ability and interest as well as other categories. Groups will vary in size. Students will form groups throughout their daily experience for small tasks like generating questions or creating a math problem for others to solve, for more on-going task like literature circles or the development of signature projects for integrated units. While teachers will always serve as facilitators, the purpose of group work is to allow students to teach and learn from one another, to collaborate and develop the skills necessary for setting deadlines and accomplishing tasks together. Group work is organically differentiated, as groups are never static but rather dynamic in response to the needs and abilities of individuals.

**Discussions** Discussions will be another staple of the BCCS classroom. Discussions are led by the teacher or students to push thinking and try out ideas. Students have the chance to respond and listen to each other’s ideas and build upon them, use oral language skills, and learn how to stretch their own perspectives and worldviews. Discussions offer opportunities for differentiation in the classroom by tapping into different modes of learning, and allowing students at all levels to participate in discussion of content to deepen understanding.

All the instructional models, approaches and strategies have been extensively researched and proven to be successful. (Please see Appendix V Curriculum Research.)

**Assessing Student Needs**

Based on the ISAT data from neighborhood schools in the target community, BCCS anticipates 60% of students to be meeting/exceeding in Reading and 70% of students to be meeting/exceeding in Math. (For more information, please see Section 2.3 Education Goals and Assessment Plan.) Since BCCS will open with Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades, BCCS has conducted preliminary research by speaking with organizations serving pre-K and Head Start students. BCCS has identified the need for academic supports in the areas of reading, English as a Second Language, and social and emotional development at the primary level. BCCS will actively communicate with other schools, organizations, and/or state programs in order to facilitate a smooth academic transition for all students.

As BCCS enrolls students and new families, teachers will also conduct family interviews and individual student conferences in order to get to know each student. These interviews will set a precedent from the beginning that family partnerships are critical and that BCCS values diverse sources of information about our students. Teachers will administer Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), periodic assessment embedded in *Everyday Mathematics* or *Connected Mathematics*, and a teacher-generated performance task related to the most recent interdisciplinary unit with every new enrolled student to determine baseline data.

Additionally, Response to Intervention (RtI) will be integrated into the general education program at BCCS as a way to address student needs before making a formal referral to special education services and will be spearheaded by the RtI team at BCCS. RtI is a school-based method of differentiation to meet students at their level and push them toward maximizing their achievement. The RtI process involves a three-tiered system of academic and behavioral supports. The RtI team will make step-by-step, data driven decisions about core instruction (Tier 1), supplemental instruction (Tier 2), and/or intensive instruction (Tier 3). In addition, the team will identify behaviors of concern and assess the effectiveness of the interventions.

BCCS anticipates Tier 1 will include approximately 80% of the student population. The RtI team and the BCCS teachers will work together to supplement and/or modify the curricular programs, as well as identify differentiation options inherently embedded in the programs to address the needs of Tier 1 students. In *Everyday Math,* for instance, there are already differentiation options included as a component of every single lesson. These options are intended to support both struggling and accelerating students.

BCCS anticipates Tier 2 will include approximately 15% of its student population. This group of students will need slightly more intense and specific interventions outside of what the core curricular programs can provide. The RtI team and teachers might identify different instructional strategies, such as pulling small subsets of this group of students who have similar needs to frequent guided instruction times. For example, a teacher might structure the math block such that he or she can pull small groups or conference with an individual student and teach to a specific skill or strategy.

BCCS anticipates Tier 3 will include approximately 5% of its student population. This group of students will receive specific, high-intensity, likely one-on-one supports and interventions on a daily basis. The RtI team and teachers might identify specific programs, like *Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)*, to support single students or the handful of students who need supports in addition to the core curricular programs.

**Remediation**

Our instructional strategies at their core are differentiated as outlined above. BCCS always has all learners in mind; all students deserve and require a rigorous academic environment where students, staff, and community members are empowered, engaged and valued. Based on an average of local public neighborhood and charter schools (For the list of schools, please see Section 1.1), BCCS anticipates approximately 13% of its incoming student population will perform below or significantly below grade level. Because of this, BCCS recognizes the need for a more focused method of intervention for students who need additional supports. BCCS plans to employ RtI to provide those supports.

BCCS recognizes the shifts in thinking that Response to Intervention (RtI) has brought about what requires a school to understand the failure to achieve as struggles of teaching and not always as struggles of learning. Therefore, BCCS teachers will be trained in RtI basic principles and come to the classroom work with an understanding of the types of adjustments and interventions that are responsive and help all children succeed. Well-trained BCCS staff members will lead the implementation of RtI as a school-based method of intervention for students with learning problems and behavioral issues. The process will be integrated into the general education program at BCCS as a way to address student needs before making a formal referral to special education services. The RtI model involves a three-tiered system of academic and behavioral supports. The RtI team, comprised of at least the BCCS staff member, social worker/counselor, and DSD, will make step-by-step, data driven decisions about core instruction (Tier 1), supplemental instruction (Tier 2), and/or intensive instruction (Tier 3). In addition, the team will identify behaviors of concern and assess the effectiveness of the interventions. The RtI team will meet consistently on a monthly basis.

During the RtI process, team members will use authentic, curriculum based, and norm-referenced measures to determine each student’s strengths and weaknesses. Communication about data and anecdotal evidence for students will be documented carefully through a student informational logging system. The team will establish and deliver no fewer than three alternative methods of instruction that can be embedded into the typical school day to support each student’s learning or behavior improvement. If successful, these methods will be adopted fully for classroom use. If none of the methods implemented for an appropriate amount of time are effective in changing student performance, the team, including the parent/guardian, will determine whether a referral for further evaluation should occur.

In addition to classroom supports, BCCS will provide after school tutoring and homework help through the unique partnership with the University of Chicago’s Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP). Furthermore, BCCS will call on strong relationships with local community organizations, such as Valentine Boys & Girls Club, Project:VISION, and Chicago Youth Center-Fellowship House, that will provide instructional supports both after school and during school. BCCS faculty and staff will communicate and collaborate with Chicago UTEP tutors as well as with local community service providers.

**Accelerated Learning**

Many of the ways that BCCS approaches learning--interdisciplinary units and the Workshop Approach--inherently support differentiation all the time. Through these approaches, BCCS will meet the needs of students who are high-performing, but will also identify students who are excelling at an exceptional rate. For those students, BCCS will work to create a balance of pushing both deeper and broader. Accelerated learners often feel like instruction moves slowly or is too repetitive. By including independent projects encouraging high-performing students to dig deeper and answer more higher-order questions, BCCS pushes students to learn content at a deeper level and make stronger connections of material across multiple content areas. BCCS’s accelerated learners will also be highly encouraged to participate in local, city-wide and national academic competitions, which will allow them to present their learning to a wider audience, provide an extended purpose for learning, and build confidence. BCCS pushes students to learn more broadly by introducing higher level content earlier--students who are accelerated learners might be more academically prepared to integrate higher grade-level content into their understandings rather than what is expected at their age-level. As previously mentioned, BCCS teachers will employ regular instructional strategies and approaches that inherently promote differentiation, but they also incorporate the theory of multiple intelligences and address the needs of multiple modalities of learning throughout all instruction periods.

BCCS teachers will collect formative and summative data on each student in a portfolio. (For more information, please see Section 2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan.) This student data portfolio acts as a gatekeeper of accelerated learning opportunities. Goals for all students can be, in part, derived from the artifacts collected because they will be representative of student needs and interests.

**c.** **Specialized Instruction:**

*Articulate how the curriculum/educational program of the proposed school will meet the needs of all enrolled students, including students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners (ELL), and students who are homeless. Discuss how course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, instructional strategies, and available student supports will be flexible and adjusted to support these student populations. Answers to the following questions should specifically discuss unique and supplemental ways for serving these populations and should not simply restate the CPS policies regarding specialized populations.*

*I. Explain how the proposed school will identify and meet the needs of students with disabilities, including curricula and instructional programs/practices to accommodate this group.*

*II. Explain how the proposed school will meet the needs of students in at-risk situations, including but not limited to homelessness, low achievement, poverty, behavioral issues, truancy, drugs, pregnancy, and emotional issues.*

*III. Explain how the proposed school will identify and meet the needs of ELL students, including curricula and instructional programs/practices to accommodate this group.*

* *Attach a completed ISBE Special Education Certification form*

The key to successfully creating an inclusive community starts with valuing the strengths that all members bring to that community and leveraging those strengths. BCCS takes an assets based, and not a deficit based approach to to the education of all its students, especially those who come to school with special learning needs and situations, including cases involving truancy, drugs, pregnancy, gangs, low academic achievement, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, emotional issues, and second language acquisition.

BCCS acknowledges and understands that it is subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the School Code of Illinois, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). BCCS will be accountable to the Illinois State Board of Education for purposes of assuring compliance with federal and state special education and disability laws.

**A Philosophy Grounded in Differentiation**

Because our entire curriculum and philosophy is organized around making a school that is ready for children and not children that are ready for school, we believe that we are uniquely positioned to meet the needs of all of our students. We further believe that a lot of the practices that were developed for specialized populations are in fact practices that are good for everybody. Differentiation itself is such a practice that first grew out of the need to be responsive to students who were outliers. We now know that all students require differentiation. Our curriculum follows the Workshop Approach, which allows teachers to differentiate instruction to support students in their learning on an individual basis. A workshop approach sets up a framework and structure in which all learners develop and hone their interests and skills with teacher guidance. Our focus on student inquiry is another pedagogical approach that will naturally support many different kinds of learners. This approach provides students with the opportunity to ask questions to motivate their learning and incorporate their personal experiences as they build their own understanding through a cycle in which they explore, reflect, and apply. This cycle allows students to access the content and create products to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways (For more information, please see sub-section a.) Our curriculum values student participation, inquiry, and pedagogical stances that support our students in their unique situations. These differentiation strategies and supports inherently embedded in our curriculum represent Tier 1 interventions within the RtI process.

**Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities**

To administer and supervise the special education programs and services, the social worker/counselor will also serve as the special education case manager in the start-up years. In later years and as the need arises, the school will hire a full-time case manager. BCCS will contract with the Chicago Public Schools for special education teachers to support our inclusion program and support Individualized Education Program (IEP) compliance. In later years, BCCS will hire an additional teacher with the school budget. As there is an increase in students with IEPs CPS will allocate additional teachers.

The case manager and the special education teacher(s) will manage decisions and paperwork pertaining to special education jointly. Because BCCS is committed to maximizing the success of all students, it is critical that every general education teacher is trained to read and implement student IEPs. Throughout the school year, teachers will participate in trainings during which they will learn how to make instructional accommodations and appropriately address behavior management, as they apply to their students with special needs. (Please see Appendix FF Professional Development Calendar.) Classroom teachers, the case manager and the special education teachers will meet to discuss specific IEP needs within each individual classroom.

**Child Find -** BCCS will open with kindergarten, first, and second grade students. In the Child Find process, a student can be identified as needing specialized instruction by the school or by the parents. The evaluation is free to parents if it is deemed appropriate by the IEP team, which includes the parent/guardian of the child. Child Find includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

* Students who enroll at BCCS will be given an initial reading and math assessment during orientation to inform teachers of individual students' needs
* Assessments administered by classroom teachers, including F&P BAS and unit performance tasks, as well as a collection of student work and reflections in portfolios, will provide quantitative and qualitative data on students' progress and learning needs and whether they need academic and behavioral support.
* Staff members will meet in grade level teams weekly to discuss student concerns from classrooms. Teachers will record concerns, document any interventions taken, and perform ongoing observations. These steps could lead to a request for evaluation.
* BCCS will implement RtI to provide leveled remediation strategies for all students as well as a way to identify students with learning disabilities or behavioral disorders. Teachers will use observations, student work, and assessment data to refer a student in need of academic and behavioral interventions. RtI meetings will occur monthly to assess the progress of students and determine whether students continue to require Tier 2 or 3 interventions or should be referred for special education services.
* Hearing and vision screenings will happen annually at BCCS.
* A classroom teacher may identify that a speech or occupational therapist (OT) is needed by a student. In this case, the teacher will consult the clinical team, and the speech pathologist or OT will screen the child.

BCCS school leaders and teachers will be intentional in informing families and parents about specialized services that are available to their students. Parents will also be informed of the special education protocol at orientation and in a booklet that will outline parents’ rights and responsibilities and go out in the beginning of the school year.

**Referral or Request for Evaluation -** BCCS’s approach is proactive and no situation with a student’s learning will wait until a moment of crisis. All stakeholders will be involved from the start. Any BCCS school professional may ask that a student be evaluated**.** Evaluation needs to be completed within sixty school days after the parents give consent.Referrals may result from Child Find efforts or any concerned person, including but not limited to school district personnel or an employee at the Illinois State Board of Education. Any person making a referral will do so in writing.

BCCS understands time is of the essence in ensuring that students’ needs are met in order to maximize their academic and social potential. For this reason, staff members involved in the initial evaluation of students will complete the evaluation process well in advance of the sixty school day time frame given, allowing the necessary supports can be provided to the respective student. Further, for students who begin evaluation with less than 60 days of school remaining in the school year, the evaluation team will be intentional to complete the evaluation by the start of the following school year with an IEP meeting scheduled for the very beginning of the next school year so that, again, students will receive the necessary supports for their learning.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) -** BCCS takes the idea of the LRE very seriously and plans to include all students in mainstream classroom instruction whenever possible and appropriate to a particular child’s learning and the learning of the whole class. All general education classroom teachers will be trained in differentiated instruction and equipped with the tools to make appropriate modifications. Teachers will work closely with special education teachers to ensure that the needs of students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) are met. BCCS also recognizes that there may be times when smaller group instruction outside of the classroom is preferable. All students with disabilities will be served in accordance with their IEPs and the provisions of national and state legislation, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Article 14 of the Illinois State Code. As appropriate, the vast majority of BCCS students with disabilities will be served in the general education classroom, though BCCS will establish resource and self-contained classrooms when appropriate and required by a child’s IEP.

**Continuum of Services -** BCCS staff will work collaboratively and creatively to provide all the services and resources required in a student’s IEP. Supports will be incorporated into several layers - from classroom supports, to school-wide supports, to community supports.

At the classroom level, BCCS will provide services within a full inclusion model except for cases in which the nature or severity of the disability is such that education within general education classes cannot be achieved despite intensive supports. The range of possible structures and supports within LRE include full inclusion in general education classroom with special education support for individual or small group instruction; or inclusion in the general education classroom with pull out as needed during particular times. In these cases, the special education teacher will work in small groups or work one-on-one with students to meet their individual goals and benchmarks in the support room. Another possible service will be having a full- or part-time aide who would stay with the student and collaborate with the special education teacher and classroom teacher.

Classroom teachers will differentiate instruction as necessary with the use of curricular accommodations and modifications as well as use individualized instructional strategies, such as peer tutoring, learning aids or materials, or assistive technology. Interdisciplinary teaching and learning allow various access points for students at all levels and abilities to engage in content and demonstrate what they know. In particular, teachers will be intentional about the use of the classroom environment, utilize differentiation tools and strategies, and allow students to make choices for specific activities throughout the day. If in the case a student with disabilities requires services such as speech or occupational therapy, physical therapy, or social work, the IEP team will determine the best method, times, and location for the student to receive those services, whether in or outside of the general education classroom.

To support teachers, BCCS will provide internal and/or external professional development on differentiation techniques. Also, teachers will use common planning times to collaborate with special education teachers and/or clinicians to discuss student progress and modify the curriculum or instruction as needed. In order to ensure a robust educational experience for all BCCS students, this time reserved for the classroom teacher and special education teacher to check-in with each other about the student(s) and plan for instruction will be invaluable. This allows for collaboration and alignment of classroom goals and objectives with student IEPs. The school will also provide access to computers or assistive technology to support student learning and services for sensory or personal care needs.

Additionally, if it is deemed appropriate by the IEP team that there is justification for transportation services they are added to the IEP at an evaluation meeting, IEP annual review, or IEP revision meeting. It must be determined that the child can not transport themselves in the same manner as peers without disabilities. They also must need transportation because of a sensory need, physical need, limited physical endurance, or significantly reduced intellectual development or problem solving skills.

Part of BCCS’s mission is to work with the community to provide the best education for our students and make sure we are addressing the needs of the whole child. Community connections will support the special education program and RtI implementation at BCCS. Organizations such as Boys and Girls Club and Project:Vision can provide after-school academic, social, and behavioral supports.

BCCS will never refuse a student enrollment at the school or discriminate based on need for special education services, and will work faithfully to implement a full inclusion model with intensive supports for students who need special education services. If a full inclusion model is not appropriate for a student, the IEP team will adjust services, such as adding resources or an aide, before determining if an alternative placement is necessary. If in the rare case that the parents and the IEP team determine that the school's instructional approach and services are not able to meet the student's needs, then staff members will work to help identify a more appropriate alternative and ensure a smooth transition for the student and family.

**Addressing the Needs of Students in At-Risk Situations**

**Morning Meetings and Advisories -** Morning/Sunset Meeting at the primary and intermediate grades and Advisory at the middle grades will serve as a critical support for the social and emotional needs of BCCS students. Morning Meeting and Advisory are designated times that occur on every single school day during which students either meet as a whole class or meet in small clusters with an advisor. These meetings (depending on the age level) are designed to build community and foster environments of trust and respect. For younger students, Morning/Sunset Meeting time will be spent engaging in activities that foster collaboration and cooperation and discussing issues that affect their lives like friendship, bullying, divorce, lying and stealing, etc. For older students, advisory time will address issues of concern, such as obesity, self-esteem, gangs, and pregnancy. These issues will be discussed in an open, honest and safe manner. The curriculum is emergent and expressly designed to respond to the social and emotional issues that students bring. The advisor will serve as a “go-to” person, with whom a relationship has been developed, and will allow students to have multiple support systems.

**Mentoring and Leadership -** BCCS teachers and staff will encourage students in at-risk situations to participate in mentoring and youth leadership programs through community partnerships, such as the Chinese American Service League, Valentine Boys & Girls Club, and the Chicago Youth Center-Fellowship House. These external programs will provide students with the opportunities to receive social and emotional supports in a different context, through positive relationships with other adults from the community and interactions with students from their own school as well as other schools.

**Support Staff -** BCCS will employ a social worker/counselor who will be responsible for monitoring the needs of any student in an at-risk situation. The social worker/counselor will provide professional development and meet regularly with classroom teachers to support their understanding of risk factors and behaviors that may indicate crisis situations as well as tools to support students in an at-risk situation. Teachers and the social worker/counselor will work together to identify students who are at-risk and provide supports and interventions so that they can be a full participant in the BCCS community. Additionally, the Dean of Community Center may also coordinate events and workshops intended to increase awareness of various factors that may lead a student to be at-risk or provide tools and methods with which to respond in a supportive manners to both students and families who find themselves in at-risk situations. Students and families are also encouraged to meet with the school social worker/counselor as needed.

**Extracurricular Activities/Opportunities** - BCCS will have partnerships with community organizations that will provide students with a variety of after-school opportunities, including academic support, mentoring, and arts programs. BCCS will encourage participation in after-school programming for students in at-risk situations; this will provide a safe and engaging place for a longer period of the day and allow students to interact with adults and students in an additional, supportive context.

**Strong Networks and Communication -** BCCS will have a full support service staff, including a Social Worker/Counselor and Dean of Student Development, who will be available for all BCCS students. Students in need or those who seek out assistance from a staff member will be able to receive the necessary social emotional supports, through consistent one-on-one or small group meetings. Learning is an emotional process dependent on strong relationships as much as it is an academic one and therefore, students need to be supported both academically and socially and emotionally to be most successful. A student information logging system will allow teachers and staff to keep anecdotal records of interactions with and observations of students. Anecdotal observations will be used as a tool to assess social and emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students in at-risk situations. In addition, this logging system will also record truancy/attendance routines. This system will assist teachers and staff in logging, assessing, analyzing and communicating patterns of at-risk behaviors allowing to them to efficiently take action towards supporting our students.

**Support for Homeless Students -** BCCS is an all-inclusive charter school and will thereby facilitate the seamless inclusion of all homeless children and their family members into school life. No student or their family members will ever be penalized due to homelessness. When a family is homeless, all school fees will be waived for the student. When a child is identified as homeless, BCCS staff will have three priorities: (1) to determine if the child and family have a safe place to stay while searching for permanent housing; (2) to determine if the child’s physical needs are being met (i.e. adequate food, place to bathe, clean clothing); and (3) to determine how to support the child in continuing his or her education at BCCS while the family searches for housing. These priorities are in line with the rights that Chicago Public Schools ensure students and families who are experiencing homelessness according to the Students in Temporary Living Situations protocol.

The school staff will work with parents/guardians and children to satisfy priorities one and two. To satisfy priority three, BCCS staff will refer parents to appropriate social service agencies as one way to identify temporary housing or shelters and to find resources for nutritional meals for families. Transportation vouchers will be issued if the family cannot use the same manner of transportation to and from school used previously. If requested by parents or if contacted by the agency directly, school staff will work cooperatively with the Department of Children & Family Services, Department of Public Aid, or Department of Children and Youth Services. A BCCS staff member will have the opportunity to serve as the homeless education liaison, keeping current on resources and policy, and communicating any modifications or updates to BCCS staff and families. Together, the social worker/counselor and liaison will conduct training on homelessness policies and supports for the staff on an annual basis.

**Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners (ELL)**

BCCS understands the value of developing learners who are bilingual, biliterate and bicultural. The research is clear that students whose first language is seen as an asset and not a deficit can be effectively leveraged to help them build proficiency in their second language. Thus, BCCS’s approach in emphasizing and supporting students’ first language as well as their second language acquisition is grounded in the school’s commitment to diversity.

The student population at BCCS is predicted to include students whose first language is Spanish, Mandarin, or Cantonese. Upon enrollment, BCCS families will be required to complete a Home Language Survey in compliance with Illinois School Code 23, Illinois Administrative Code 228. Students, whose home language is not English, will be initially assessed on their English proficiency by World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Access Placement Test (W-APT) in order to determine whether a student is in need of English language services and at what level.

Transitioning ELLs to succeed academically in a second language is strongly connected to ensuring they are able to access grade level content through their first language as well as developing their proficiency in English. At BCCS, there will be three levels of support for ELLs:

**Classroom Supports** - Students will be at mixed proficiency levels at each grade level classroom, and access to the content will be differentiated for ELLs. In addition to intentionally planning lessons aligned to WIDA standards and Common Core State Standards, teachers will use Sheltered Instruction strategies, a research-based range of teaching methods that include scaffolding and building background knowledge, developing the second language regularly as parts of lessons and units, and placing special attention on student developmental needs and goals within the parts of an effective lesson. Such strategies mesh well with the workshop model and inquiry-based learning, as students have opportunities to collaborate with other students who speak the same first language or students at higher English proficiency levels, as well as access the content and present their learning in a variety of ways.

**Bilingual Support** - Depending on a student’s English proficiency level, push-in support by trained bilingual staff may be necessary. Bilingual staff may support the classroom teacher by giving instruction in the student’s first language and/or using specialized curricular material to aid in second language acquisition. The model of push-in and Sheltered Instruction allows teachers to collaborate and reinforce grade level content and skills in the first and second language.

**Language Enrichment Programs** - BCCS also plans to emphasize the importance of maintaining students’ first language in order to be bilingual and biliterate. By partnering with community organizations, BCCS families will be able to enroll their children in after-school and/or Saturday school language programs to continue developing proficiency in students’ first language or for monolingual students to learn a new language.

ELLs will be assessed using the ACCESS test at least once a year to determine their progress in English proficiency. Reading running records that are a part of STEP assessments can be used as formative assessments of reading proficiency for ELLs, and unit performance tasks may be differentiated according to WIDA standards. These assessments will be used by classroom teachers to not only determine the students’ proficiency level and understanding of content, but also to inform their instructional approach and materials, grouping, and levels of support needed for first and second language development.

**d. School calendar/Schedule**:

*(i) Describe how innovations in the proposed school calendar and daily schedule will be utilized and how they will enhance student achievement. Note: If proposing a longer school day/year, please describe how your team has budgeted for overtime pay for faculty and staff, as appropriate.*

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

*(iii) Describe how a typical student’s day will be structured.*

*• Attach the proposed school calendar and daily schedule using the school calendar template*

*• Attach sample teacher and student schedules for a typical week*

**School Calendar**

“The base CPS school day typically delivers less than 240 minutes of total instruction. Of the 180 school days provided, fewer than 125 are fully devoted to grade-level, academic work. The cumulative impact of annual and daily start-up routines, special programs and events, holiday slow downs, test preparation periods, and a steep drop in academic work during the last six weeks of the school year, results in an enormous loss of much needed learning time. Indeed, this report suggests that many Chicago students experience not the intended 900 hours of annual instruction, but something much closer to 500 hours.” (Smith, 1998)

BCCS believes that all children can learn and that learning takes time. Academic and social-emotional growth does not happen on a specific timeline. By implementing an extended school year and school day, we will afford our students the opportunity to learn at a pace developmentally appropriate for them, all the while providing an acceptable amount of time to achieve instructional goals. Our extended day will allow for BCCS students to regularly engage in authentic reading and writing, mathematics exploration, scientific and historical studies, fine arts, life skills application, and social-emotional development. In doing so, BCCS students will make stronger connections across content areas, as well as reinforce and apply skills throughout the day. The expansive curriculum also offers BCCS students with opportunities to explore areas of intrigue and passion. BCCS is committed to professionalizing the field of education and working towards our mission of cultivating well-rounded, deep thinkers in our staff as well as our students. The BCCS calendar and school day offers teachers and staff dedicated time for collaboration.

In order to achieve this goal, BCCS intends on providing 180 days solely for instruction across three trimesters with every day including 370 minutes devoted to instruction. Teachers are expected to attend a total of 28 professional development and teacher institute days, including Summer Institute and End-of-Year Retreats (For more information, please see Section 2.5 Talent Management.) The entire BCCS community will be released for 27 days of holiday or intercession time. BCCS is providing 4 weeks of intercession throughout the year (Trimester 1 = 1 week, Trimester 2 = 2 weeks, and Trimester 3 = 1 week), three of which align with the CPS winter and spring breaks. The intercession in Trimester 1 falls mid-way through the term.

(Please see Appendix Y School Calendar.)

**Weekly Schedule**

As previously mentioned, each school day at BCCS includes 370 instructional minutes. Those minutes are broken down based on our content blocks and social emotional learning and community building times, such as Morning/Sunset Meeting or Advisory. For instance, the humanities project block is 120 minutes, the literacy block is 100 minutes and the math block is 60 minutes. BCCS recognizes that the literacy and math blocks are either the same or less than the amount recommended by CPS, but it assumes that teachers will regularly be integrating literacy and math into their humanities project block, as well.

Though science, social studies and art will be at the core of the interdisciplinary units during the humanities project block, BCCS expects teachers will be deliberate and thoughtful about balancing amounts of time addressing all the integrated content areas as well. School leadership, grade-level teams, and vertical alignment teams will collaborate regularly to ensure that every project block ensures that all content areas are hit on in depth throughout a trimester.

Included in the 370 minutes are 50 minutes focused on social emotional learning and community building within a classroom. That time is split into two chunks that bookend the day; students start their instructional day with 30 minutes in Morning Meeting or Advisory, and end their day with a Sunset Meeting. Every Friday morning, the whole BCCS school community will come together for the first 30 minutes of the instructional day for an all-school meeting to build school-wide community, celebrate accomplishments, and make recognitions.

Outside of the 370 instructional minutes, students will also have 80 minutes of parent monitored recess, rest, and lunch. For first grade and up, each class will have two recess periods in a day, one lasting 20 minutes and another lasting 30 minutes. In Kindergarten, each class will have two recess periods of 20 minutes a piece with an additional 10 minutes of parent monitored rest in the classroom. Additionally, breakfast will be available for any student 30 minutes prior to the start of school, and BCCS staff including parent monitors will be present for at least 20 minutes after the day ends to ensure an efficient and safe dismissal.

(Please see Appendix Z Y1 Weekly Schedule.)

**Sample Student Day**

BCCS strongly believes in addressing the whole child, and this is reflected in the daily schedule as well. Students will have a nice balance between time focused on academics and content, and time focused on socialization and social-emotional development. A student will engage in a tremendous amount of content-focused instruction, as well as social-emotional learning and class- and school-wide community building.

BCCS believes that it is important to recognize the personal and social needs of a developing child, especially one that we hope develops into an peaceful, empathetic advocate. BCCS includes ample time for play, as play is a crucial aspect of early childhood development because it stimulates the brain through the formation of connections between nerve cells, and helps to develop fine and gross motor skills. Not only that but it supports in language development, emotional communication, and authentic problem-solving in real-world situations. To help facilitate this, BCCS is allowing for 80 minutes of time in the school day to provide students with the opportunities to build strong, meaningful connections to their peers, build a strong personal identity, and learn how to be productive members of their communities.

Ultimately, a BCCS student’s day could start as early as 7:30am for breakfast with instruction starting at 8:00am and the day ending at 3:30pm. After year 1, the BCCS Community Center hopes to be available to all students, families and community members that wish to utilize it. This has the potential to extend a student’s day into the evening.

(Please see Appendix AA Sample Student-Teacher Schedule.)

**Sample Teacher Day**

Just as BCCS believes in addressing the needs of its students, it also believes in addressing the needs of its teachers. BCCS has made every effort to provide an effective balance between dedicated instructional time and breaks and preparation periods. A BCCS teacher is expected to not only teach for 330 minutes out of the day--40 minutes of each day will be taught by an enrichment staff member in art, music or gym--he or she is also expected to utilize planning and preparation time wisely both during the school day and out of it. All BCCS students will experience the 120-minute humanities project block, and the 60-minute math and 100-minute literacy blocks. Once students enter middle school, blocks will be taught by teachers endorsed in their content area.

BCCS fully recognizes the natural physical and emotional demands of simply being a teacher, and also acknowledges that a longer school day and longer school year can be all the more draining on a teacher. BCCS plans to hire highly motivated and hard-working teachers, and we anticipate that teachers will spend far more time planning and preparing during their personal time than what is scheduled into their work-day. Because of this, BCCS has provided almost an hour and half for breaks and preparation periods. So long as BCCS teachers are always fully prepared to teacher during instructional times, those breaks and preparation periods are available to be used as teachers see fit. During this time, students will be supervised by enrichment staff including art, music, or gym teachers or parent monitors during recess and lunch.

The schedules for every grade-level are such that each class will have common recesses, lunches and preparation periods. In most years and for most grades, many of these periods will also coincide with an adjacent grade-level. For instance, in year 1, both first and second grade have lunch and recesses at the same time. Though these times are slightly shorter, they do allow for cross-grade dialogues around vertical alignment of curricula. These breaks and preps are also intended to break apart the day at strategic points such that neither teacher nor students feel burnt out.

Outside of the instructional day, teachers are expected to arrive by 7:30am for a preparation period while breakfast is served to students, and they are expected to stay for until at least 3:50pm to aide in an efficient and safe dismissal process. Every Monday, teachers are also expected to stay for a one-hour all school staff meeting. (Please see Section 2.5 Talent Management for more details.)

(Please see Appendix AA Sample Student-Teacher Schedule.)

**Sample Enrichment Staff Day**

Enrichment Staff represent a combination of enrichment teachers for classes like art, music, and gym, and parent monitors who enrich the school community and environment by being present. Enrichment teachers will be part-time until our enrollment sustains their full-time position. In year one, each enrichment teacher will only be required to teach a total of 120 minutes a day, but as BCCS adds a grade-level each year, the enrichment instructional minutes will increase substantially and eventually require a shift to full-time positions.

Parent monitors will be part-time staff provided an hourly stipend for their service. Parent monitors will be responsible for supervising breakfast, recesses, and lunch and provide additional support during dismissal. In year one, BCCS will have six part-time parent monitors that will divide their time evenly across 10 periods. In other words, three parents will work 5 periods in the morning, and three parents will work 5 periods in the afternoon averaging 90 minutes of work a day. Both morning and afternoon monitors will have ample down-time in between their supervisory responsibilities.

(Please see Appendix BB Enrichment Staff Schedule.)

**Section 2.5: Talent Management**

**a. Recruitment and Staffing:**

*(i) Discuss the rationale for the proposed staffing numbers and structure outlined in the attached five-year school staffing model and organizational chart and cite teacher-student ratios for each type of teaching position. Describe the roles and responsibilities of each of the instructional and non-instructional positions listed in the attached school-level organizational chart. These descriptions should align with the attached job descriptions.*

*(ii) Describe your Design Team’s strategy, process, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the proposed school’s teaching staff. Include the selection criteria, planned mix of experienced and new teachers, and any unique considerations needed to support your school design. Ensure that the teacher hiring timeline aligns with the curriculum development and professional development timelines.*

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

* *Attach a school staffing model that lists all instructional and non-instructional staff positions over the school’s first five years of operation that clearly reflects the school’s proposed growth strategy. (Note: Please see p. 21 of the Answer Manual for a sample School Staffing Chart.)*
* *Attach a school-level organizational chart that presents the lines of authority and reporting within the school and clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of staff members over the school’s first five years of operation.*
* *Attach comprehensive job descriptions for all instructional and non-instructional positions listed in the staffing plan.*
* *Attach resumes for any identified candidates not serving on the Design Team; all resumes should be clearly labeled with the positions in which these candidates are proposed to serve.*

**BCCS Staffing**

BCCS will begin recruiting the teaching staff immediately after approval, January 2014, with the intent to secure a founding teacher team by June 2014. During the start-up year the BCCS instructional staff will consist of:

* School Director (1)
* Director of Finance and Operations (.1)
* Dean of Student Development (1)
* Dean of Community Center (.5)
* Classroom teachers (7)
* ESL teachers (2)
* Special Education (2)
* Enrichment Staff (3)
* Social Worker/Counselor/Case Manager (1)

BCCS plans to start-up with 7 classrooms (3 Kindergarten, 2 First, and 2 Second) and grow one grade-level each year until it reaches eighth grade. At full capacity, BCCS will have 19 classrooms with one full-time teacher in each. In addition to our full-time classroom teachers, ESL and Special Education teachers, BCCS will hire enrichment teachers to provide a sound physical, art, and music education curriculum. (Please see Appendix CC Staffing Model.) To assist with supervising students outside of the classrooms and as an additional resource to teachers, BCCS will hire part-time parent monitors. (Please see Appendix EE Instructional and Non-Instructional Job Descriptions.) Classroom and enrichment teachers will be responsible for designing and implementing an instructional program that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), builds upon the interests of the students, and is able to be modified to meet the varying academic needs. To achieve this mission, all BCCS instructional staff will be required to write professional learning goals, as well as attend grade level team meetings, school-wide professional development, and seek out additional, external trainings that may be needed to meet their individual professional goals.

BCCS also plans to hire operational staff, such as engineers, custodians, an office manager, and support staff and grow that staff to accommodate the increasing student population. (Please see Appendix II Operations Staff Job Descriptions.) Beginning in January, BCCS will hire the DFO as a part-time employee, and registrar and office assistant on a full time basis. The bookkeeper will be on board on a part time basis from July through the first year.

Eventually, with its partnership with UChicago UTEP (UTEP), BCCS will be home to Resident Teachers, or pre-service teachers, in many of its classrooms. As a program site, many BCCS teachers would commit to acting as Clinical Instructors, or mentors to residents, for UTEP. Because of this, a number of BCCS classrooms would have two adults allowing the student to teacher ratio to drop significantly. Our student to teacher ratio in kindergarten will be 25:1 with the additional support of UTEP residents and parent volunteers. First and second grade classrooms will have a ratio of 30:1, in addition to the support of UTEP residents and parent volunteers. BCCS understands the need to lower these ratios and will consistently re-evaluate our resources and staffing to move toward smaller teacher to student ratios as the school grows.

All teachers and staff are expected to be highly motivated and collaborative individuals who constantly seek to improve the lives of their students and their students’ families. All teachers and staff will work alongside School Leadership and families to establish, cultivate and maintain a climate of academic achievement and personal growth, and a school culture that aligns with the BCCS mission, vision and core values: Peace, Voice, and Action. The goal is that the school environment will act as a second home connecting all its members through experiences and learning. Non-instructional staff will also be expected to play a role in ongoing curriculum development and make significant contributions to the growth of the school at large. All teachers and staff will attend professional development and trainings to support their efforts--BCCS believes that *everyone* should continue to expand their understandings of the world.

**Staff Recruitment**

Vacancies for instructional and non-instructional positions will be posted on the BCCS website, INCS job board, as well as on other educational job websites. BCCS will seek out opportunities to recruit teacher candidates at local job fairs including area colleges and the INCS job fair. The Design Team has engaged in informal conversations with potential founding teachers. All other support staff will be hired prior to the Summer Institute (For more information, please see sub-section b.) in order to collaboratively create a professional environment.

In order to select and hire teachers that are not only high quality educators, but also well-rounded individuals, BCCS will implement a focused selection process. The first component will be a formal interview before which candidates will receive an article to read and questions to consider, such as “*Why Stories Matter: the social craft of art and chang*e” by Marshall Ganz. The first interview will be conducted by a team consisting of the School Director, Dean of Student Development, Dean of Community Center and at least one classroom teacher. Using behavioral interviewing, School Leadership hopes to gain a better sense of a candidate’s demonstrated track record. If it is decided to invite the candidate in for a second interview, they will be asked to prepare for and present a demonstration lesson. Before the lesson, the candidate will meet with the interview team to discuss their plans for the lesson. Following the lesson, the candidate will be asked to discuss their reflections about the success of the lesson and what they may have done differently. This will help to inform our understanding of the candidate’s ability to reflect. Before the school opens in the fall of 2014 these “lessons” will be presented to the interview team, but after the opening candidates will be asked to prepare and present a lesson for current BCCS students at the particular grade level.

**Salary and Benefits**

BCCS will always seek to hire high quality teachers to establish a strong curricular foundation and professional culture. All new teachers will be paired with an experienced teacher mentor to facilitate professional growth. BCCS believes that as part of professionalizing the field of education, we have to constantly provide opportunities for new teachers to have effective professional relationships as well as an environment in which they feel free to take risks and push innovative instruction with the guidance of mentor teachers. The pay scale for teachers will range from $45,000-$70.000, including salary and benefits. BCCS understands the importance in offering good salaries and benefits so that our teachers can focus their attention on their work with the students. We will seek additional funds so that we can offer more teachers the higher end of the range. Because we are seeking to hire high quality teachers, and encouraging them to work as mentors to our newer teachers, we understand that our pay scale must be appropriate to that type of work. In the coming years, BCCS plans to implement a pay for performance system designed through collaboration among the entire staff. This idea often raises concerns, but because of our belief in ongoing collaboration and shared leadership, we believe that a system that honors, respects and holds each teacher professionally responsible can be designed and agreed upon. The pay for performance system at BCCS would take into account the teacher’s work in raising student achievement, movement toward each teacher’s professional goals and his/her work in further the BCCS mission, vision and core principles. The final framework for this system must be agreed upon by the entire staff.

**b. Professional Development:**

*(i) Describe the school’s goals and strategy for ongoing professional development (PD), including whole staff development, grade-level/department/course teams, and instructional coaching. Identify which staff members will be responsible for driving and facilitating PD opportunities. Identify opportunities for teacher collaboration and mentorship.*

*(ii) Describe how the PD topics will be identified and how the PD plan (including both internal and external PD opportunities) will be driven by data to improve teaching and learning as well as school performance*

*(iii) Describe the process for evaluating the efficacy of the PD.*

* *Attach a professional development calendar.*

**Professional Development Goals**

All BCCS teachers, operational staff and administrators, will be lifelong learners. Every member of the BCCS school community will be expected to participate in, as well as initiate professional learning opportunities. BCCS aims to provide all staff members with continuous opportunities for development and leadership, helping them to become members of the larger professional community in education. In particular, BCCS will sponsor a trip for teachers to visit Mission Hill School to study a school focused on interdisciplinary teaching. Staff members will have ample opportunities to request options of ongoing learning, and School Leadership will strategically combine staff requests with school needs based on all available data (e.g. assessment data and school climate data).

BCCS will follow a year-round professional development cycle for which its content will shift based on the needs determined by ongoing analysis of all available data. (Please see Appendix FF Professional Development Calendar.) This development cycle will include a Summer Institute for all BCCS staff, weekly hour-long collaborative staff meetings, days devoted to curriculum or culture development on a trimesterly basis, ongoing coaching and mentoring throughout the year, and a culminating End-of-Year Retreat. (For more information, see sub-section c.) All BCCS staff will be asked to set annual professional learning goals during the Summer Institute sessions, which they will continually revisit throughout the year. In addition to on-site professional development opportunities, BCCS staff will be expected to seek out external trainings and conferences and/or gather any necessary resources in order to meet their professional learning goals.

**Professional Development Strategies**

**Summer Institute**

Each summer BCCS teachers, staff and administrators will participate in a four-week training that follows a specific progression:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Content** | **Involved staff** |
| Week 1 | * Developing School Culture - Mission, Vision, Core Values
	+ Overview of our mission, vision and core values, school-wide team building
	+ Building a climate and culture of peace, Restorative Justice practices
	+ Understanding the power of voice
	+ Taking meaningful action
	+ Celebrating diversity
* The BCCS teacher evaluation policy and procedure: Danielson Framework for Teacher Evaluation
* Curriculum Development
* Grade level teams meet to begin designing interdisciplinary units
* Teachers develop year-long professional goals
* Match mentors with new teachers
 | All teachers, staff and administrators will attend all Week 1 professional development together.  |
| Week 2 | * All-School content specific training--teachers and all instructional staff will attend PD including, but not limited to interdisciplinary learning, balanced literacy, and mathematics
* Professional Development training on developing interdisciplinary units
* Grade level teams meet to begin designing interdisciplinary units
* Teachers develop year-long professional goals
 | In year one, all teachers and teaching staff will attend trainings for major content areas, including interdisciplinary learning, math and literacy. After year one, all new staff will attend trainings and returning teachers will attend differentiated training based on experience levels in the various content-areas. |
| Week 3 | * Grade-level curriculum development ensuring alignment with Common Core Standards
* Revisit last week’s interdisciplinary units to ensure alignment with core values
 | All instructional staff and school leadership |
| Week 4 | * Teachers attend training on Responsive Classroom program
* Grade-level curriculum development
* Revisit interdisciplinary units to ensure alignment with core values
* Set individual professional learning goals and begin to generate plan for meeting
* Identify and begin working with mentors based, partly on, professional learning goals.
* Classroom preparation, continued collaborative planning, housekeeping and business
* Friday celebration for first day of school, inviting families/community!
 | All instructional staff and school leadership |

During week one, founding teachers and administrators will work together to provide an introduction to the BCCS mission, vision and core values: Peace, Voice and Action. During this week all BCCS staff members come together, learning about one another and participating in team and school culture building opportunities. It is through these types of interactions when trusting relationships are built- relationships vital to the successful realization of our school’s mission.

In the second week, all teachers will be expected to attend new user trainings around curricular programming. It is during this week when the instructional staff will begin to connect the skills and content of each of the core subjects with that of our school’s mission, vision and core principles.

Throughout the third week, both existing BCCS teachers and new hires will attend continued curriculum trainings as needed, as well as work together ensure horizontal alignment of their curricular units for the year.

During the 4th week of the summer institute teachers will continue to work on the curriculum alignment and then take time to design their learning spaces. The successful implementation of the curriculum depends upon more than just the design of the content. The design of the classrooms must be conducive to learning, allow for student collaboration and provide space for individual instruction as needed. New teachers will work with their mentors to discuss and consider all aspects of the curriculum as they co-design the classroom.

**Collaborative Meetings**

Professional development will be approached with as much intention during the school year as it was during the summer institute. Grade-level teams will have common prep times throughout the week during which they can collaborate on unit plans or have common professional development. These 40 minutes common planning times have been built into the master schedule. In addition to the presence of the School Director at these meetings, enrichment, ESL and Special Education teachers will be assigned to one grade level team and required to attend all meetings. Agendas for these meetings will include any data used in determining the content, times for each of the subtopics, and a means by which to evaluate the success of the meeting. The agendas for all meetings, as well as minutes taken during each meeting will be submitted to the School Director. While much of the content discussed during these meetings will address current data, a general outline for the direction of each grade level team’s year-long professional development plan will be written during the summer institute. Teachers will take turns designing and facilitating these meetings. Following each, the facilitating teacher and the School Director will meet to assess the success of the meeting and discuss the participating teachers’ evaluations.

In addition to the in-school common planning time, BCCS teachers and the school leadership will meet for one hour each week to address school wide data through four common themes. These themes are: student achievement, child-centered school culture, professional learning and collaboration, and family/community engagement. All instructional staff and school leadership will take turns designing and leading these sessions. Agendas for these meetings will be turned in to the School Director ahead of time, as well as minutes taken during the meetings afterwards.

**Trimester Professional Development Days**

Every trimester, BCCS teachers will participate in two full day professional development experiences. These days will be focused on a variety of topics such as reviewing and analyzing assessment data, curricular professional development, culture development, team-building and any externally mandated professional development. Decisions concerning the content of these sessions will be made through an evaluation of the content presented during grade level team meetings, weekly school-wide meetings, teachers’ professional learning plans, and school-wide data concerning the academic and social needs of the students. As with the weekly collaborative meetings, opportunities to lead these sessions will be offered to all staff.

**End of Year Retreat**

Shortly after BCCS students complete the academic year, BCCS staff will go on a three-day retreat that will focus on team-building, reflection and creating action steps for the summer institute and the upcoming school year. Teachers, staff and leadership will analyze end-of-year data and student project portfolios to inform school-wide goal setting. All BCCS staff will attend grade-level and cross-grade level meetings to identify 2-3 school-wide goals and revisit professional learning goals established during the previous summer’s training and development.

**Coaching**

**School Leadership Coaching**

BCCS will use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to consistently assess and improve teaching practice. The BCCS School Director will coach instructional staff members throughout the year through formal and informal observations. Coaching begins with a pre-conference to discuss the plan for the lesson and the areas the teacher wishes to focus upon. The informal observations will focus on areas of the framework identified collaboratively by the teacher and the School Director as areas in need of improvement. Following each informal observation, the teacher and School Director will meet for a debriefing session. These collaborative debrief sessions will focus upon the Danielson domain and end with a plan for improvement. Subsequent informal observations will focus upon those areas identified in the plan for improvement.

**Peer Coaching**

Throughout the entire year, BCCS teachers will be engaged in mentoring or coaching relationships as either the mentor or the mentee. With its partnership with UChicago UTEP (UTEP), teachers who are clinical instructors (mentoring pre-service teachers) will participate in the regularly scheduled professional development through UTEP, and they will have their own advisors through that structure. Those not directly participating with UTEP will work with each other within the grade-levels. It will be expected that more experienced BCCS teachers will work with those new to the school or those less experienced in teaching to both support them in their instructional practice and help them understand and assimilate into the BCCS school culture.

**Collaborative Coaching**

Grade-level and school teams will regularly participate in collaborative coaching. This is an approach to coaching very similar to Japanese lesson study. A small group of teachers will come together to collaboratively plan a lesson with the host teacher. As the host teacher teaches, each of the others identify and observe 2-3 students to get a sense of student understanding, and finally, all the teachers come back together to debrief what was observed.

**Using Data to Make Decisions about PD Topics and Content**

BCCS believes in following a cycle of analyzing ongoing formative and summative assessments. (For more information, please see Section 2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan.) These assessments will include standardized testing data, teacher-generated performance tasks based on their interdisciplinary units, teacher, student and family surveys, and school culture assessments. There is a strong connection between a positive and productive school culture and the academic success of a school’s student body; BCCS knows that it needs to constantly re-evaluate the general school environment just as much as it does its academic data. All members of the BCCS staff will receive ongoing training on strategies around data analysis and be expected to play a large role in devising action steps towards improvement, including professional development needs. As student achievement data is collected throughout the year, School Leadership and teachers will have ample opportunities to analyze student work and data outcomes during weekly collaborative meetings.

The BCCS School Leadership will conduct walkthroughs on a regular basis to identify common trends around particular facets of the school, like culture or content. In addition, at least twice per year, small groups of teachers will be invited to participate in scheduled walkthroughs. Similarly to when teachers determine needs for professional development during collaborative meetings, teachers and School Leadership will consider the identified trends to determine the content of upcoming professional development.

Creating a strong school culture requires the BCCS staff to be knowledgeable about effective strategies and potential roadblocks to building school culture, as well as have a deep understanding of their own identity as a person and a teacher. Additionally, as a school committed to creating a diverse student and staff population, BCCS recognizes the need to provide ongoing learning opportunities around this topic. With diversity also brings conflict and adversity, and BCCS believes it needs to be adequately prepared to deal with any issues that arise. BCCS will look to organizations that have had much success in this area, such as the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the Posse Foundation, both of which have dedicated job training, professional development opportunities, and curricula to the topic of diversity.

Teachers, staff and School Leadership will provide qualitative feedback at the conclusion of all professional development sessions. This feedback will be reviewed by BCCS Leadership and any appropriate teaching staff to determine the efficacy of the session. Once a trimester, teachers will be asked to complete a formal evaluation of the professional development cycle, assessing their work toward meeting their individual professional learning goals, and providing suggestions for improvement and/or possible topics for upcoming sessions.

**c. Teacher Induction:**

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

As described above, each year, BCCS will hold a four-week summer training: the first two weeks of which are specifically designed as an induction for new and returning teachers. Week one will be dedicated to welcoming new hires, and week two will be dedicated to an entire staff training. In week one, founding teachers and administrators will work together to provide an introduction to the BCCS mission, vision and core values: Peace, Voice and Action. During this week, all BCCS staff members come together; learning about one another and participating in team and school culture building opportunities. During the second week new teachers will be expected to attend new user trainings around curricular programming. Throughout the week, both existing BCCS teachers and new hires will attend continued curriculum trainings as needed, as well as work together to build both horizontal alignment of their curricular units for the year. Throughout both weeks, all BCCS teachers and staff will have unfettered access to the school building and their classrooms in order to have ample time to prepare for students’ arrival. (Please see Appendix FF Professional Development Calendar.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Induction Schedule**  | **Content/Focus of PD** |
| Week 1 Day 1 | Mission, Vision and Core Values (Team building day) |
| Week 1 Day 2 | Building a Climate and Culture of Peace (Restorative Justice)Understanding the Power of VoiceTaking Meaningful ActionCelebrating Diversity |
| Week 1 Day 3 | Responsive Classroom Training |
| Week 1 Day 4 | Training on designing and assessing interdisciplinary units |
| Week 1 Day 5 | Grade level teams meet to design units |
| Week 2 (Days 1-5) | - Content-specific trainingEverday Math, Balanced Literacy, Sheltered Instruction- Mandated health and safety training |
| Week 3 (Days 1, 2 and half-day 3) | - Grade-level curriculum development around themes: unit and project planning |
| Week 3 (Days 3-5) | - Critical Friends assess each interdisciplinary project |
| Week 4 (Days 1-5) | - Continued collaborative planning (both at grade-levels and vertically)- Revisit interdisciplinary units to ensure alignment with core values-Collaborate with mentor teacher to set professional learning goals for the year-Meet with mentor teacher and school leadership to review professional learning goals and begin to generate ideas for meeting these goals- Collaborate with mentor teacher to design learning space to ensure appropriate alignment with curriculum and school mission- Friday celebration for first day of school, inviting families/community! |

**d. Professional Culture:**

*Describe the professional culture of the new school, how you will achieve this culture, how it will contribute to staff retention, and how you will assess your success. Discuss how faculty and staff will be involved in school-level decisions and in developing new initiatives.*

Creating a strong professional school culture requires the BCCS staff to be knowledgeable about effective strategies, potential roadblocks, as well as have a deep understanding of their own identity as a person and a teacher. Every member of the BCCS staff, from the custodian to the School Director, plays an integral role in the fabric of the school. Regular celebrations of academic and personal achievements will occur in weekly staff meetings so that each member feels recognized as part of the larger whole. In addition to recognizing the good works going on in the school building, these celebrations afford us the opportunity to revisit our core values on a regular basis, ingraining them in our school culture. Additionally, by facilitating a culture of Peace, Voice and Action among the staff, BCCS seeks to model and develop a similarly vocal, active and peaceful school culture among students and other stakeholders.

**Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC)**

There will be a Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC) that will be comprised of BCCS teachers who represent each grade level at BCCS. The TAC serves as one platform for teachers to voice their opinions and ideas in developing BCCS and making our school stronger. The TAC will meet on a monthly basis with School Leadership to raise concerns and provide feedback on high level decisions that may need to be made. These meetings are open to the whole staff and will be a space to voice concerns, which may come from personal experience, conversations, or notes dropped into the Voice Box (i.e. Comment Box). These concerns and feedback will be integrated into School Leadership meetings and factored into the decision making process as appropriate.

**Peace, Voice, and Action**

The professional culture, as with the general culture of BCCS, will generate from the three core values: Peace, Voice and Action. All BCCS staff is expected to embody these core values through all that they do. The school community will work together to develop these values within its staff through activities and experiences.

**Peace** BCCS believes that as people develop strong relationships regardless of difference, people will act more peacefully with one another. Peace will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* As detailed in the Teacher Induction section and the Summer Training and Development portion of the Professional Development section, BCCS staff will participate in initial team-building exercises and experiences in order to strengthen grade-level and school-wide relationships.
* Conflict resolution will be modeled by all staff members, and BCCS will strongly encourage families to employ the strategies outside of school. To do so, BCCS will conduct parent/family interactive meetings aimed at bridging the school and home.
* BCCS recognizes that conflicts can arise in even the most positive of environments, and the school hopes to identify and train a staff Conflict Moderator to aid resolution between staff members.
* Constant collaboration among BCCS staff will be highlighted and modeled for students and families.
* All BCCS staff will engage in diversity training once a trimester to better understand their own identity within a diverse culture, as well as how to support BCCS students and families.
* Finally, BCCS will have all-school meetings that will include celebrations of peaceful acts by students, families, teachers and School Leadership.

**Voice** BCCS believes that as people find their voice, they’re more motivated to act. Each staff member’s voice counts and will always be heard, and BCCS plans to provide ample opportunities for staff members to share their thoughts and feelings about the status of the school through democratic forms of decision-making, conversations, and surveys with students, families and School Leadership. BCCS strongly believes that one of the most valuable tools that a teacher has is his or her voice, and when that teacher feels he or she is heard, positive action will follow. Voice will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* Teachers will have many opportunities to share their voice when they take on mentorship roles to others in the building, as well as lead internal professional development.
* Families, teachers and community members will all have a forum to voice their opinions in monthly FTCO meetings.
* Clear structures for communicating among all members of BCCS will be collaboratively developed and revised as needed, including several forums and opportunities for all members of BCCS to provide feedback to one another.
* BCCS also believes that teachers are able to contribute their voice more academically by having the agency to create curriculum year to year.
* All staff will participate in democratic decision-making structures and use a consensus-building protocol.

**Action**BCCS hopes to encourage everyone to be active citizens in the larger society, and participation in a democratic society needs to be modeled regularly. The staff will be comprised of individuals who are always social justice and equity oriented. Action will be fostered at BCCS through systems and practices that include:

* Strongly encouraging BCCS staff to be leaders outside of the school, as well as within, in such ways as providing professional development.
* Modeling of volunteerism and service within and outside the school.
* Regularly modeling their social justice and equity-oriented nature through their curricular development and practice, as appropriate.
* Initiating extra-curricular activities that also address Peace, Voice and Action.

**Assessing Professional Culture**

In order to assess the professional culture, BCCS teachers will complete surveys that include places for feedback for the leadership team once a trimester. Teachers will also complete the 5Essentials survey annually, which will provide data and feedback for the School Leadership. Each teacher will also have regularly scheduled individual informal check-ins with School Leadership in order to share feedback, voice concerns, or provide updates. The annual BCCS retreat offers ample time for teachers and BCCS leaders to reflect on the year and their practices, as well as have structured time to have needs-assessment discussions and collaborate on actions steps for the following year with regards to professional culture.

1. **Evaluation:**

*Discuss how school leadership will monitor and evaluate faculty and staff performance. Describe the processes, protocols, framework/criteria, and/or tools that will be used for conducting evaluations, delivering feedback, and coaching teachers. Cite any evidence or existing research supporting the effectiveness of utilizing the specified approach. Specify who is responsible for overseeing these procedures.*

*Attach any documents related to teacher evaluation, including evaluation frameworks/criteria, evaluation policies, and sample evaluation forms.*

At BCCS, teachers will be held accountable to the students, their colleagues, the school’s mission, and the community through formal evaluations using a set of professional standards based on the Charlotte Danielson framework, which includes domains of professional practice such as planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instructional delivery, and professional responsibilities. As role models to children and mentors to new teachers, they will be expected to enact the values of Peace, Voice and Action in their everyday interactions and work ethic, including leadership, collaboration, resiliency, advocacy, curiosity, empathy and communication. (Please see Appendix GG Teacher Evaluation Procedures.) In addition to the two mandatory formal observations, the School Director will conduct ongoing informal observations.

**Teacher Evaluation of Practice**

The School Director will conduct at least two formal observations each year. Each formal observation has three components: pre-conference, scheduled observation and post conference debrief. The first observation will align with the work being done during the coaching while the second will be an evaluation of the teacher’s practice, growth and participation in the process. While that observation will be the main component of the teacher’s evaluation, data collected throughout the year will inform that decision as well. BCCS believes in transparency. Feedback sessions throughout the year will clearly describe what the School Director is seeing and believes about the teacher’s practice. Those discussions are meant to be collaborative and not punitive. BCCS believes in working with teachers to grow and improve their practice. The Danielson Framework provides a common lens by which the teachers and School Leadership can collaborate and discuss practice in objective terms. We also recognize that new teachers will struggle at first- growth and motivation to participate in the process will be strong indicators considered during each teacher’s evaluation. Final evaluation will be comprised the following components:

* Teacher Practice - Measured through formal observations conducted at least twice per year by the School Director and ongoing informal observations- all of which are supported with debriefing sessions. (75%)
* Student Growth - BOY and EOY NWEA and teacher generated performance tasks (15%)
* Teacher Portfolio - staff generated rubric, based on professional learning goals, evidence of professional growth and commitment to our mission, vision and core values: peace, voice, and action (10%)

**Feedback**

Within two days following a formal classroom observation, the School Director and involved teacher will meet to discuss the lesson. This feedback will be informed by the observations of the School Director, but follow the Danielson Framework and cite specific data obtained during the observation. The Danielson Framework involves four domains:

* Planning and Preparation
	+ Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
	+ Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
	+ Setting Instructional Outcomes
	+ Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
	+ Designing Coherent Instruction
	+ Designing Student Assessments
* Classroom Environment
	+ Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
	+ Establishing a Culture for Learning
	+ Managing Classroom Procedures
	+ Managing Student Behavior
	+ Organizing Physical Space
* Professional Responsibilities
	+ Reflecting on Teaching
	+ Maintaining Accurate Records
	+ Communicating with Families
	+ Participating in a Professional Community
	+ Growing and Developing Professionally
	+ Showing Professionalism
* Instruction
	+ Communicating With Students
	+ Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
	+ Engaging Students in Learning
	+ Using Assessment in Instruction
	+ Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

*(Danielson, 2013)*

Teacher evaluations will be made based on the data derived during the formal observation, an analysis of student growth and the individual teacher’s movement toward meeting their professional learning goals. Teachers will receive one of the following ratings: distinguished, proficient, basic or unsatisfactory. All teachers, regardless of rating, will be required to complete a reflective plan following each debriefing session. Items in that plan should include areas of strengths and those in need of improvement, assessment and expansion of personal learning goals, and ideas for support from school leadership and mentor teachers in furthering the teacher’s professional practice. Following a formal observation cycle, the School Director will engage in informal observations and coaching sessions based on the goals set in the reflective plan.

If a teacher wishes to dispute their evaluation, protocols for disputing must be completed and submitted to the remaining School Leadership. These disputes will be included with their evaluation in their professional file.

In situations when a teacher receives less than a proficient rating the following steps will be taken:

1. Teachers who receive less than a ***proficient*** rating in any of the domains must meet with the School Director to collaboratively develop a 90-day plan for improvement. Included in that plan will be those areas most in need of improvement and a schedule for coaching from the School Director and mentor teachers.
	1. A weekly re-evaluation will occur during that 90-day period.
	2. Each re-evaluation will be followed with intensive, scheduled coaching sessions between the teacher and School Director.
2. If it is determined by the School Director that the teacher has not shown adequate growth a 45-day "Intensive Improvement Plan" will be developed by the school director; coupled with continued weekly observations and intensive coaching, including pre-conferences, observations and debriefs.
	1. Another re-evaluation will follow the 45-day period.
	2. The School Director will again rate the teacher based on his/her growth toward meeting the goals set in the “Intensive Improvement Plan.”
	3. Plan for intensive coaching by the School Director and mentor teacher(s)
3. If it is determined by the School Director that the teacher has again failed to improved his/her practice as described in the “Intensive Improvement Plan”, the School Director will present a written report documenting the findings of both improvement plans to the Governing Board. The teacher will be invited to present his or her case to the Board.
4. With a majority vote and within 10 days, the school board must vote to either remove the teacher or refuse to extend a contract for the following school year.
5. If the teacher does not appeal the decision within 20 days, the discharge takes effect.

(Please see Appendix GG Teacher Evaluation Procedures.)**Section 3 : Operational Capacity**

**3.1 General Operations**

**a. Operational Plan, Goals, and Metrics:**

*Explain how non-academic services will be managed once your school is in operation. In a table, identify quantitative operational metrics and goals for the proposed school for each of its first five years of operation (sample goals and metrics tables can be found on pp. 24-25 of the Answer Manual). Discuss how these metrics will be used to monitor progress and impact corrective actions. Identify who is responsible for overseeing progress.*

BCCS is committed to ensuring all students learn how to work with each other in peaceful and equitable ways, discover their voice and the voices of others, and embrace their roles as activecitizens of the world. In order to do this, BCCS understands that school operations need to support and enhance a strong academic learning environment and the BCCS school culture. Therefore, the operational goals and metrics outlined in the table below will be used to monitor the progress towards the school’s mission and the fiscal soundness of its operations.

**Operational Goals and Metrics**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GOAL** |  **STAFF RESPONSIBLE** | **METRIC** | **Y1** | **Y2** | **Y3** | **Y4** | **Y5** |
| Average daily attendance rates will show strong student attendance, reaching 95% by Y5. | Dean of Student Development | Student information logging system data | 90% | 92% | 93% | 94% | 95% |
| The school will demonstrate strong annual rates of student retention, with a goal of averaging 90%.  | Dean of Community Center  | Confirmed IMPACT Enrollment | 86% | 88% | 89% | 90% | 95% |
| 5Essentials Survey Completion Rates by Families | Dean of Community Center | 5Essentials Survey | 90% | 92% | 94% | 95% | 95% |
| 5Essentials Survey Completion Rates by Teachers | School Director | 5Essentials Survey | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 5Essentials Survey Completion Rates by Students | Dean of Student Development | 5 Essentials Survey | -- | -- | -- | -- | 95% |
|  5Essentials Survey  Results | Dean of Community Center | 5Essentials Survey Results | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized | Organized - Well-Organized |
| The school will demonstrate strong annual rates of teacher retention, averaging 85% over five (5) years.  | School Director | Commitment to Return Letters | 85% | 85% | 85% | 85% | 85% |
| All financial compliance requirements of the school are met annually. | Director of Finance and Operations | External Audits | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Monthly financial reporting: produce monthly financial statements and reconciling bank accounts by the third week of every month for the preceding month | Director of Finance and Operations | Financial Reports | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Procurement & vendor payment timeliness: paying vendors on a standard 30 days from invoice receipt. | Director of Finance and Operations | Financial Reports | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| CPS Fin. Condition & Budget Score | Director of Finance and Operations | CPS Acct. Report | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| CPS Reporting Score | Director of Finance and Operations | CPS Acct. Report | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| CPS Compliance Score | Director of Finance and Operations | CPS Acct. Report | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Payroll Issues | Director of Finance and Operations | # of Payroll Reruns | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

These annual metrics will be used as a valuable data source to help guide the decision-making and actions of the BCCS School Leadership. The 5Essentials survey will be conducted annually. The attendance, retention, and compliance requirements will be monitored monthly. Similarly, the status of budget projections, status of surplus and audit readiness will be reported on a quarterly basis. All measures will be collectively presented through quarterly reports to the Governing Board, with a real time update of the current status of the measure for the year noted. The appropriate committee for each metric will then discuss the measure (i.e. the Finance Committee would discuss the percentage within budget projections, surplus status and audit readiness, while the Education Committee would discuss average daily attendance).

In the event that the school is not on track to meet a targeted goal, the appropriate committee or full Governing Board will discuss possible actions to bring the school back on track. The Board will provide support with regards to management, but the School Director will ultimately make management decisions so that the school is on track to meeting its goals. The Board and School Director will maintain open lines of communication in order to ensure that the school is successfully operating. This proactive approach ensures both governance and management are attentive to critical measures and working to ensure a plan is in place to deliver the above metrics and goals.

**b. Operations Start-Up Plan:**

*Provide a timeline and schedule for the activities your team will undertake in the planning year(s) to ensure a successful school opening. The plan should address the wide range of activities required to successfully open a new school, clearly cite which staff member is responsible for overseeing completion of the task, and identify deadlines for the completion of each task.*

The following Operations Start-Up timeline has been developed to ensure a smooth transition from the application phase to post-authorization planning to operational phase in the first year of opening doors. The timeline below is an abridged version of the complete Operations Start-Up Plan. (Please see Appendix HH Operations Start-Up Timeline.)

**BCCS Operations Management Start-Up Timeline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Activity** |
| January2014 | * Charter Approval
* Announce Mary Rawlins as School Director
* Introduce BCCS Leadership Team: Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), Dean of Student Development (DSD), Dean of Community Center (DCC)
* Finalize building lease
* Set up bank accounts
* Continue informational sessions in community
* Post job descriptions
 |
| February | * Conclude discussions on construction plan and timeline
* RFP for renovations team (contractor, architect, etc.)
* Set up chart of accounts in Quickbooks
* Finalize operating & capital budget and get Board approval
* Continue informational sessions in community
* Direct mail campaign to households with school-aged children
* Engage in conversations with community organizations with pre-school and Headstart programs (One Hope United, CFC, Boys & Girls Club, etc.)
* Begin teacher recruitment
* Hire staff as needed
 |
| March | * Begin hiring teachers and staff
* Assess specific technology infrastructure needs
* Continue informational sessions in community
* Canvass neighborhoods to recruit students
* Direct mail campaign to households with school-aged children
* Student Application deadline
 |
| April | * Obtain property insurance
* Hire contractor
* Select/order furniture and technology equipment
* Secure food service from CPS
* Continue hiring teachers and staff
* Continue student recruitment efforts until full enrollment
* Finalize renovations planning/ADA compliance/permits, etc. on building and grounds
* Enrollment Lottery
 |
| May | * Begin renovations/ADA compliance on building and grounds
* Plan for installation upgrade of any necessary technology infrastructure
* Begin ordering necessary curricular materials
* Finalize financial and fundraising commitments
* Offer contracts to teaching candidates
* Continue student recruitment efforts until full enrollment, if necessary
 |
| June | * Continue renovations/ADA compliance on building and grounds
* Finalize financial and fundraising commitments
* Amend and finalize FY15 budget
* Continue student recruitment efforts until full enrollment, if necessary
* Secure all contracts
* Begin requesting and compiling student records
 |
| July | * Conduct staff summer institute and professional development
* Host Parent Orientation/New Student Enrollment
* Conduct Pre-Assessments for all incoming students
* Collect student registration forms
* Finalize financial and fundraising commitments
* Walk through facility and create punchlist
* Place final orders for curricular materials
* Continue student recruitment efforts until full enrollment, if necessary
* Receive curricular materials
 |
| August  | * Prepare building infrastructure (furniture, phones, copiers, etc.)
* Install/upgrade any necessary technology infrastructure
* **SCHOOL BEGINS**
 |

The School Director will have ultimate responsibility over all areas of school operations. However, most non-academic services will be managed by the DFO and office staff members, as needed.

**Management of Non-Academic Services post-school opening**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service** | **Planned Provider or Provider Type** | **School Staff Member Responsible** | **Timeline for Securing Service** | **Estimated Costs** |
| Bookkeeping | Internal  | DFO | January 2014 | $12,000 |
| Auditing | External | DFOGoverning Board | March 2015 | $10, 000 |
| Custodial/Maintenance | Internal | DFO | July 2014 | $57,000 |
| Food Service | External (CPS) | DFO | April 2014 | N/A |
| Healthcare | External | DFO | June 2014 | 9% of Salary |
| Insurance | External | DFO | June 2014 | $24, 000 |
| Payroll | External | DFO | January 2014 | $5,351 |
| Security | Internal | DSD | July 2014 | $25, 000 |
| Legal | External | School Director | February 2014 | $10,000 |

(Please see Appendix II Operations Staff Job Descriptions.)

**c. Student Recruitment, Application, and Enrollment:**

*(i) Discuss strategies to recruit your targeted student population. How will the school attract and retain students with disabilities, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), English Language Learners (ELL), and students in temporary living situations? (ii) Please describe the proposed school’s application, enrollment, and registration policies and procedures for all students. Outline the requirements for parents and students to apply to the proposed school, how the proposed school will conduct its lottery if over-subscribed, and how students will register once enrolled. Explain how you will ensure that these policies are in compliance with the Charter School Law and Illinois School Code, where applicable. (Note: Please see page 25 of the Answer Manual for recruitment, application, and enrollment guidelines.)*

* *Attach copies of application and registration forms.*

**Recruitment Strategy**

The BCCS recruitment strategy will reflect our school’s commitment to having a diverse, all-inclusive student population. This means we will be intentional about informing and recruiting our students by targeting specific communities, having publicity materials in different languages, and working closely with community organizations. We will also host additional information and awareness sessions for parents of students with disabilities and homeless parents, and will work with each family to ensure that the school will meet each student’s educational needs. We will inform the community about our school through a recruitment strategy that includes:

* Meeting with neighborhood business owners, political figures, local advocates and parents to explain our core principles and educational philosophy
* Widely distributing fliers in local places, such as the stores, libraries, parks and early childhood centers
* Collaborating with Pre-K and Headstart programs to identify interested students and families
* Fostering partnerships with area early childhood centers to promote our school as a possible feeder elementary school
* Attending community forums to publicize our school and its mission to families and residents
* Offering information sessions about charter public schools, the lottery process, and BCCS in particular, throughout the year
* Advertising in neighborhood publications
* Communicating information through our website and other social media outlets (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
* Registering parent/student information along the way and keeping them informed about the student application process

A full-time registrar will carry out the administrative responsibilities to ensure that our recruitment strategy is implemented and effective. In this role, the registrar will complete the following:

* Send open house information to parents and collect student information
* Get information on: who attended recruitment events, parent contacts, grade levels of students, interest in attending an open house, and application completion
* Maintain complete records on all recruits and students

The registrar will work closely with the School Director and Dean of Community Center so information is clearly communicated throughout the recruitment, application, lottery, and registration processes.

**Application, Enrollment, and Registration Policies and Procedures**

BCCS adheres to the state law in that families who submit applications on behalf of their children must reside within the Chicago city limits. (Please see Appendix JJ Student Application.) The school is open to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, disability status, religion, or sexual orientation. BCCS has no academic selection criteria and no entrance exams are required. Students will be admitted through a lottery process that will occur once a year in late March after families have submitted the school application. Any duplicates will be eliminated prior to submission to the lottery base. An unbiased, third party auditor certifies the lottery results, prints the acceptance lists, and time and date stamps the lists. Some priority admissions will be taken into consideration for applicants who are immediate family members of already enrolled students or students returning to BCCS from another school. Each school year, spots will be open for 75 incoming kindergarteners. The school will also fill vacancies in other grade levels that opens up due to attrition. Any remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list for one year. If a vacancy opens up at any time, students on the waiting list for that particular grade level will be offered a space in the order of which they are on the waiting list. Students will remain on the waiting list for one year after which families will need to apply for the upcoming year’s lottery.

Families may withdraw applications to the lottery at any time, but BCCS asks they inform the registrar of their wish to withdraw as early on in the process so as to expedite our lottery. Letters of admissions will be mailed out the Friday following the lottery, and families are expected to complete a registration form. (Please see Appendix KK Registration Form.) Parents/guardians may transfer their students from the school at any time, but must notify the Registrar and complete all appropriate documentation to do so. In addition, if a student transfers out of BCCS, his or her vacancy will be filled by a student on the waiting list. If the student wishes to return to BCCS, families must submit a new application for the upcoming lottery process. As a returning student, the application will receive priority consideration, unless the student was expelled for a cause.

For the first year of operation, the deadline for student applications will be in March, with the Enrollment Lottery to take place in April. For all subsequent years, student applications will be due in February with the Enrollment Lottery to take place in March.

**d. Transportation:**

*Briefly describe how the school will meet the transportation needs of its students, including low-income and at-risk students.*

* *Attach a transportation plan. (Note: Please see pp. 25-26 of the Answer Manual, which outlines guidelines for submitting a transportation plan that meets the requirements of the Illinois Charter Schools Law.)*

Most BCCS families will travel to the school by either walking, private transportation or through the use of public transportation. The school will make special considerations for students under severe financial hardship and homeless students to ensure no student faces obstacles when arriving to school everyday. In the case where a student has an Individualized Education Plan that requires special transportation, BCCS will contact CPS, which will provide bus transportation for the student. Also, transportation for field trips are paid by the school and managed by the DFO. Field trips are important to allow BCCS students to engage with their learning beyond their classroom walls and in real world contexts. Field trips are connected to interdisciplinary units that are being taught during the humanities project block. Field trips can include exploring different cultural neighborhoods and the Illinois Holocaust Museum. Students will have up to ten field trips or experiential learning opportunities in a school year. BCCS will have authorization to contract with transportation vendors approved by CPS.

(Please see Appendix LL Transportation Plan.)

**e. ADA Compliance:**

*The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and requires accessibility in all aspects of school operations, including employment, buildings, programs and activities, communications, and information technology. Briefly describe the processes the school will implement to ensure ADA compliance and include a complete version of the ADA Compliance Table provided found on p. 26 of the Answer Manual. (Note: For additional information on ADA compliance requirements, please see the ADA Guidelines & Services document located in the Resources Section of the ONS website, http://cps.edu/NewSchools/Pages/Process.aspx .)*

BCCS strives to provide all students, staff, families and the community equal opportunities to participate in all instructional programs, extracurricular activities, community center events and services. To achieve this mission, everything (i.e. facilities, services, correspondence, etc) must be accessible, convenient and responsive to the ever-changing BCCS community. BCCS will establish a procedure for consistent analysis of the needs of the students, staff, families and community in order to ensure access to all.

**ADA Compliance Table**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ADA Compliance Activity** | **Staff Member(s) Responsible** |
| **Employment Practices:**-Address accommodations in hiring (written or auditory application procedure, etc)-Consider staff needs when designing master schedule (classroom location, playground duty, etc)-Ensure confidentiality and consideration to all who wish to make a specific request |  School Director |
| **Building and Activities:** -Ensure renovations to identified facility comply with ADA regulations (hallways, etc.)-Ensure relocation of activities from any inaccessible room or space identified on the ADA report-Obtain accommodations for parents or visitors to school events who have hearing or visual impairments or physical disabilities | School DirectorDirector of Finance and OperationsDean of Community CenterDean of Student DevelopmentSocial Worker/Counselor |
| **Policies, Practices, and Procedures:**-Ensure information contained in all policies, practice and procedures is accessible to all (ie. written and auditory)-Ensure all school procedures consider the needs of all (ie. lunch line, entering/exiting the auditorium, emergency evacuations)-Train teachers and staff to consider the needs of all students and families when developing curricula (ie. considerations for school presentations, school to home correspondence) | School DirectorDirector of Finance and OperationsDean of Student DevelopmentDean of Community CenterSocial Worker/Counselor |
| **Communication/Information Technology**:-Ensure that the proposed school website and all information technology in the proposed school, including hardware, software, and web-based applications are accessible to persons with disabilities and written in all necessary languages-Ensure all school-home correspondence is relayed such that it is accessible to all (ie. written and auditory) | School DirectorDirector of Finance and Operations Dean of Community Center |

**Section 3.2 Governance Model**

**a. Governance Structure:**

*(i) Describe the structure of the governing Board at the proposed school. (If an existing Chicago replicator, describe how the structure of the Board will adapt to support the additional grade configurations or the new school/campus.) Identify any proposed Board committees or advisory councils and explain their role, planned membership, and reporting structure as they relate to the governing Board and school leadership. (ii) Clearly articulate the procedures that the Board will utilize to continually monitor academic, financial, and operational aspects of the school. (iii) How will the Board evaluate the performance of the school leader. (iv) Specify where and how frequently the Board plans to meet.*

*• Attach a board calendar*

*• Attach board bylaws*

*• If applicable, attach proof of filing for 501(c)3 status by the applying entity.*

**Be the Change Charter School’s Governing Board**

BCCS’s Governing Board will oversee the school, as required by law. BCCS’s 501(c)(3) letter and Articles of Incorporation. (Please see Appendix MM Proof of 501(c)3 and Appendix NN Articles of Incorporation.) This type of governing structure best serves our School Director, teachers, and the students by allowing the school leadership to address the needs of the students at the school level with strategic direction and policy set by the board. The mission of the BCCS Governing Board is to oversee policy and advise the leadership for general promotion of BCCS so as to support the school’s vision and needs. The Governing Board provides the strategic support and accountability so that the school, its leaders, staff, and community, can focus time and effort to graduate young people who are empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates, and who will be empowered to make choices in their future academic and life endeavors.

**Governing Board Structure**

Under BCCS’s bylaws, the number of Board members is to be no less than seven (7), with additional board positions added by resolution of the Governing Board, not to exceed fifteen (15) Directors. The founding Governing Board currently has ten Board members. Each individual who becomes a member of the Governing Board after the adoption of these bylaws shall serve a term of three years. Members are voted in by the Governing Board at its annual meeting in the spring, and each member holds office until the end of his or her respective term, resignation, removal, or until his or her successor shall have been elected and qualified. No Governing Board member may serve for more than two consecutive, full three-year terms, excluding any ex-officio tenure.

Governing Board members are selected on the basis of their expertise, experience and willingness and ability to contribute to the success of BCCS. The BCCS founding Governing Board currently has regular quarterly meetings as well as additionally scheduled committee meetings. The working Governing Board will meet monthly in the school’s start up years and will carry out responsibilities that include but are not limited to the following:

* Evaluate the school’s progress in achieving its mission/vision and educational metrics
* Help communicate and promote BCCS mission and programs to the community and other networks
* Be alert to community concerns that can be addressed by BCCS’s mission, objectives, and programs
* Ensure effective organizational planning
* Develop organizational leadership and advisement procedures and norms for Board
* Review organizational and programmatic reports
* Manage resources effectively by reviewing and approving the annual budget, monitoring budget implementation through periodic financial reports, ensuring proper training of all board members to be effective stewards of public funding
* Ensure adequate resources for BCCS, through fundraising and grant-writing efforts, in a manner commensurate with each member’s ability
* Understand and develop the policies and procedures of BCCS
* Conduct personnel evaluation of the School Director, using such evaluation processes such as those from New Leaders for New Schools and High Bar
* Ensure and maintain accountability of legal and ethical integrity
* Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance

**Board Committees**

BCCS’s bylaws permit the Governing Board to create both standing and ad hoc committees, as needed. As stated in Article VIII, Section 2,

*“The Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a majority of the members in office, may designate one or more other committees, each of which shall consist of two or more members of the Board of Directors, which committees, to the extent provided in said resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in management of the Corporation; but the designation of such committees and the delegation thereto of authority shall not operate to relieve the Board of Directors, or any individual member of the Board of Directors, of any responsibility imposed upon them by law.”*

The BCCS Governing Board will have three committees is the school’s founding year, and each committee will take on specific, detailed functional oversight work to present recommendations back to the whole Governing Board for formal approvals. (Please see Appendix PP Board ByLaws/Conflict of Interest Policy.)

● The *Education Committee* will primarily ensure the high-fidelity implementation of the BCCS mission and vision through the school’s commitment to the humanities and its academic rigor, interdisciplinary curriculum, and teacher professionalism.

● The *Finance Committee* will oversee all aspects of the school’s financial operations responsibilities, including facility, budget, accounting, and the annual independent audit.

● The *External Relations and Development Committee* will liaison with local, state and national concerns and coordinate local and national civic/foundation contacts to generate revenues for BCCS, especially during its critical initial years as a start-up school. This committee will also manage the fundraising and development plan such that all annual goals that are set are met.

Additional committees will form as the Governing Board sees an appropriate need for the productive operation of the school. At the start of the school, the Board Officers, including Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and will be responsible for maintaining the health of the Governing Board, lead meetings, and ensure consistent member communications. The Officers will also study the current composition of the Governing Board and provide guidance for the design of the Governing Board to ensure it is effectively serving its purpose. In the founding years, they will be responsible for recruiting and renewing board members. As the Board expands and the school moves out of the its start-up years, the Board will determine if there is a need for a separate Governance Committee for the sole purposes of board recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the bylaws of the school as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board.

**Governing Board Procedures**

The BCCS Governing Board and School Director maintain a regular schedule to review and discuss annual academic, financial, and operational goals along with frequent reporting on progress toward those goals. This schedule will facilitate the Board’s ability to oversee and maintain accountability for the school’s progress and success.

The Board will provide support with regards to management but the School Director will ultimately make management decisions so that the school is on track to meeting its goals. The Board and School Director will maintain open lines of communication in order to ensure that the school is successfully operating. This proactive approach ensures both governance and management are attentive to critical measures and working to ensure the above metrics and goals are met.

**Academic**

The School Director will provide necessary reports and updates to the Board so that they Board can monitor the school’s academic performance. (For more information, please see Sections 2.3 Educational Goals and Assessment Plan.)

The Education Committee receives detailed information about the academic growth and current performance of the school, including:

* An analysis of the most recent assessment data, including NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), broken down into various sub-groups and analyzed in comparison to local, state, and national results, as well as for performance against goals and measures within the school’s accountability plan.
* Reports on outcomes of student projects and other key teacher-created assessments at each grade level
* Dean of Student Development’s Report, including information on rate of student participation in leadership development programs, student attendance rates, and student referral rates.
* An analysis on annual 5Essentials Survey

**Financial & Operational**

The Finance Committee receives detailed financial statements at their Finance Committee meetings. They present their conclusions and findings to the board.

The statements they will review include:

* A cash flow projection worksheet for a 12-month period which shows anticipated financial obligations and expected cash revenues based on the existing budget.
* A balance sheet which shows the financial position of the school that month, and summarizes assets, liabilities and reserves.
* An income statement which presents an analysis of net income or deficit of the school, which the Finance Committee and Board can use to assess the overall performance of the school by comparing income and expenditures.
* A variance report, summarizing the expenditures for the year to date by category and analyzes how far under or over budget each category is, with explanations of overspending as appropriate.

**School Director Evaluation**

After authorization, the Governing Board will work with resources like The High Bar, a consultant group that provides expertise, training, and web-based tools to support board development of charter public schools, to determine an evaluation tool that aligns with the school’s mission and vision and all items on job descriptions and includes qualitative and quantitative descriptions of all major work responsibilities. The BCCS Governing Board will then assemble an ad-hoc committee to evaluate the School Director on an annual basis. The Board Chair will serve on this committee, as will two other governing board members (one from the Finance Committee and one from the Education Committee) who volunteer or whom the Chair appoints. This committee will provide mid-year feedback and conduct an end-of-year evaluation for the School Director.

Information considered for both mid-year feedback and end-of-year evaluation includes, but is not limited to:

* Assessment data from all grades and subjects, including MAP, PARCC, performance assessments
* Results from the end-of-year 5Essentials Survey
* Financial reports and audits

**Governing Board Meetings**

As stated in the bylaws, the Governing Board will meet at least quarterly in addition to scheduled committee meetings. In the first year of school’s operation, the Governing Board will meet on a monthly basis in order to ensure a successful start-up year. The Board Officers can decide whether to schedule the annual retreat as of one of the monthly meetings or in addition to, depending on the agenda items and strategic planning that might be necessary. All Governing Board members are also expected to actively participate and attend the annual silent auction gala, which is the school’s leading fundraiser. Board meetings are held in a community space, known as Co-Prosperity Sphere, in the Bridgeport neighborhood.

(Please see Appendix OO Governing Board Calendar.)

**b. Organizational Chart:**

*Provide a narrative description of the attached comprehensive organizational chart, which should clearly describe the lines of authority and reporting structure of the school leadership, management organization, and any school advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils (if applicable) to the governing board. Explain the rationale for this proposed structure.*

*• Attach a comprehensive organizational chart that clearly shows lines of authority and accountability, including the Board, MO (if applicable), and network and/or school leadership.*

At the core of our school’s organizational structure is our commitment to the Consensus Decision Making (CDM) process to make all decisions. (For more information, see Section 2.1 Mission, Vision, and Culture and Appendix M Consensus Decision Making Chart.)

This process is used within the School Leadership and the Governing Board and reflects our school’s commitment to collaboration and democratic decision-making. Before a proposal to make a decision is made, members of the Governing Board are committed to gathering input and asking clarifying questions to the appropriate people, as evident in the Consensus Decision Making chart. The organizational chart shows the lines of communication staff, students, and the community utilize to share opinions, suggestions, and concerns. (Please see Appendix QQ Organizational Chart.)

While we are committed to this decision making process, we acknowledge that there will be situations where decisions need to be made in a timely manner in order to best serve the needs of the school. Decisions that cannot be made using CDM but considered pressing will be presented to the Governing Board depending on the jurisdiction of the matter and the following procedure will take place:

1. The Board will review the concerns from those who blocked the issue.
2. The Board will solicit specific input from Governing Board members most knowledgeable on that particular issue. For example:
	1. Financial issues will require input from members on the Finance Committee
	2. Grant issues will require input from the External Relations and Development Committee
	3. Legal issues will require input from members on the Board with a legal background

Issues that span two or more areas will require input from multiple members of the Governing Board. If an item cannot be decided following the CDM process, the Board Chair will make the decision to move to a decision making process, which will require a quorum of the Board members to be present and the decision will follow a majority vote for the transaction of that business item.

**c. Board Experience:**

*CPS expects that by the time of Tier 1 proposal submission, Design Teams will have identified at a minimum the proposed Board Chair, Vice Chair , and Treasurer . 24 Please identify who will fill these roles, as well as any other founding Board members already identified, and discuss their qualifications to serve on a public charter school Board.*

* *Attach the resumes of any Board members who have already been identified in the appendix. Label each resumes “Governing Board member\_[proposed position].” (Note: Resumes are also requested in Section 2.2.a. Roles and Demonstrated Experience. Applicants do not have to submit multiple copies of resumes. However, please note that resumes must be submitted at a minimum for the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer and should be labeled as such.)*

BCCS’s current Governing Board includes ten members; each member brings an area of expertise that will contribute to the success of the school. (See table below.) The BCCS Governing Board includes members who are experts in real estate, law, and education as well as members who have strong community presence and connections. The following table provides a quick overview of the skills and expertise represented on our board:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Governing Board** **Name, Affiliation, and Role** | **Areas of Expertise** |
| Michelle Browne, Prudential Rubloff, Development Broker | Real Estate (south side of Chicago), Non-profit board governance |
| Eliza Bryant, Center for Elementary Mathematics & Science Education, Elementary Math Educator *\*Term begins January 2014* |  BCCS Design Team Member, Education (primary) |
| Juan Chavez, Juan Angel Chavez, Inc.  |  Community member, Art, Art education (primary,  higher ed), Parent  |
| Don Glickman, Glickman, Flesch, & Rosenwein |  Real Estate Law |
| Bill Kennedy, UChicago UTEP, Foundations Year Co-Coordinator | Education (middle, higher ed), Former School Administrator |
| Ed Marszewski, Lumpen, Editor, and Maria’s Community Bar, Co-Owner | Community member, Small business owner, Entrepreneur, Community organizing, Parent |
| Kavita Kapadia Matsko, UChicago UTEP, Director of Teacher Preparation | Education (primary, higher ed), Non-profit board governance, Development/Fundraising |
| Amber Pareja, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, Project Director | Education, Research, Parent |
| Nick Restauri, Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione, Intellectual Property Attorney | Law |
| Peter Schuler, Prudential Rubloff, Residential and Investment Sales | Real Estate |
| Alice Wightman, Center for Housing and Health / AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Housing Services Specialist | Grant writing, Social Emotional Learning, Community organizing |

It is worth noting that three of our board members have experience serving on and leading non-profit Governing Boards, which will support the development of the board, especially as it transitions into a working board when the school becomes operational.

The Board Officers are comprised of the following board members who were nominated and then voted on by the Governing Board:

 Board Chair - Kavita Kapadia Matsko

 Board Vice Chair - Eliza Bryant (in January 2014)

 Board Treasurer - Nick Restauri

 Board Secretary - Alice Wightman

(Please see Appendix SS Board Development Plan.)

**d. Board Development:**

*(i) Identify the desired composition of the governing board, including key skills and constituencies that will be represented. (If an existing operator is proposing a new school/campus or additional grade levels, describe any additional skillsets that the Board may try to acquire to support the growth and/or any professional development that existing Board members may receive.) Note: Charter schools are required to describe the nature and extent of parent, professional educator, and community involvement on the Board (105 ILCS 5/27A-7(10)). (ii) Provide a plan for recruiting a governing board representing the diverse skill sets required for school oversight, in particular Board members with skill sets that are not yet represented on the founding Board. Identify any existing relationships with individuals or organizations that the Design Team can leverage as it develops its founding board. (iii) Specify the process by which board members have been selected and will be in the future.*

**Desired Board Composition**

According to the bylaws, the BCCS Governing Board may include up to fifteen members. Across these members, we seek to have at least one member with a strong command of each of the seven following areas of expertise:

1) Education

2) Real Estate

3) Finance

4) Legal / Non-Profit Law

5) Community Organizing

6) Development/Fundraising

7) Board Development

As detailed in Section C, above, the Governing Board currently includes six of the seven areas of required expertise. We are actively recruiting for board members who possess expertise in the remaining area of finance. While the Board is in the process of identifying candidates with a background of finance, Phillip Hall, our Director of Finance and Operations, and Krystle Goh, an advisor who will be a member on the Finance Committee, will continue to lend their financial expertise.

We also seek to include local community members on the Governing Board who bring diverse areas of expertise to the Board. Family or community members can be nominated to be on the Governing Board; the Governance Committee will then vet the candidates through the BCCS Board Membership Process (below). In addition, the Family-Teacher-Community Organization (FTCO) will identify members to serve on committees of the Governing Board. The Governing Board needs to have deep ties to the community to establish partnerships with other civic and business organizations serving the area; the BCCS Governing Board will ensure that the school has the strength of connection and commitment to making our school a success.

**Board Recruitment Efforts**

BCCS is actively recruiting additional Governing Board members to represent all areas of expertise with the hope to create a seamless transition when Board members eventually begin to rotate off the Board. For this reason, Sonia Wang, a Core Design Team member, is working closely with consultants at the Illinois Network of Charter Schools and The High Bar to develop the current BCCS Governing Board. A board member has also been designated with the task of supporting recruiting efforts to expand the board. The goal is to have at least three additional board members by January 2014 so that the board can be actively representative of the diverse skills that are critical for a comprehensive board as BCCS prepares to open its doors.

Members of the Governing Board are asked to nominate potential board members who will contribute positively to the school on an on-going basis. In addition, BCCS has begun work with the High Bar to develop a stronger recruitment plan as well as board development procedures and structures.

Lastly, the Board Chair is working with the Chicago Booth Social Enterprise Initiative’s new program, Alumni Board Connect to recruit potential board members specifically with a background in finance, which we acknowledge is an area of expertise currently lacking from our Governing Board. The program, which was recently launched, seeks to match alumni at least 3 years out from Chicago Booth graduation with boards of nonprofit organizations in the Chicago area.

**Board Membership Process**

Board members who are nominated and interested in pursuing membership on the Governing Board have followed or will follow the process below:

1. Nominations for the Governing Board, including members of the FTCO, are made to the

 Governance Committee.

1. Candidates complete an initial interview with a member of the Governance Committee.

 This initial meeting allows the current board member and candidate to mutually gauge

 whether the candidate is a right-fit for BCCS.

1. Candidates may choose or be recommended to speak with another Governing Board

 member and/or attend a meeting to gather more information about the BCCS Governing

 Board.

1. When the Governance Committee decides a candidate will be a good fit for the Board,

 they present the candidate to the full Governing Board, with the candidate’s CV made

 available and their reasoning for nomination.

1. All Board members are required to vote on each candidate utilizing the Consensus

 Decision Making Process.

1. Once the candidate is voted in as a Governing Board Member, they will receive an

 orientation packet as well as an invitation to a formal orientation. See Section f for more

 information on orientations.

**e. Conflicts of interest:**

*Describe how the Board will identify and address conflicts of interest. Please identify any existing actual or perceived conflicts of interest among the proposed founding Board members and explain how the Design Team/founding Board plans to address them.*

* *Attach a code of ethics that includes a formal conflict of interest policy and specifies procedures for implementing the policy.*

Board members will serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed, with prior approval, for any necessary expenses incurred by them in performing their duties as members of the Board. Any contract with the school involving a member of the Board, the Board member’s family, or the Board member’s place of work will be approved by the full Governing Board with the interested member abstaining. Each Board member is responsible to make known to the Board any circumstances that could involve a potential conflict of interest.

Salary and other remuneration received from the school by ex-officio Board members shall not be considered a conflict of interest for the purposes of this policy. However, *ex-officio* members shall abstain from votes involving the level of such remuneration.

(Please see Appendix PP Board ByLaws/Conflict of Interest Policy.)

**f. Board Transition, Training, and Self-Evaluation:**

*(i) Discuss the Design Team’ s role in interacting with or participating in the founding Board during the start-up of the school and after school opening. Describe a transition plan and associated timeline as the founding Board becomes the “working” Board. (ii) Describe any orientation or ongoing training that Board members will receive, including a timeline for training and topics to be addressed. (iii) Explain how the Board will evaluate its own effectiveness on an ongoing basis.*

**Board Transition**

Currently, BCCS’s founding Governing Board and Design Team are working together to design and support BCCS’s charter proposal and start-up endeavors. All Design Team members attend and participate in Governing Board meetings. There is a close, collaborative relationship while procedures and processes are being developed and solidified.

The founding Governing Board is intentionally comprised of key community leaders and experts who have a firm understanding of our mission and will assist in the start-up process and facilitate the transition to the working Governing Board once the school becomes operational. During quarterly meetings and on-going communications, the founding Governing Board has focused on developing the design of the school, contributing their expertise to the different components of the proposal process, and fundraising.

As the Board transitions into a working Governing Board in the final months of 2013, they will spend time developing board procedures and policies, recruiting other board members, and forming committees. BCCS is working to ensure that its Governing Board includes high quality individuals with previous experience on boards. Board Officers have been established in order to support this transition as well. The Officers will work closely with Sonia Wang, who has been the point person on the Design Team regarding matters related to building and developing the Governing Board.

Starting in January 2014, the Governing Board will operate as a working board, and members of the Design Team will not be participating members. As a marker of this transition, all Governing Board members will attend a Governance Retreat, which will provide protected time to set goals for the Board, receive training for their active role as a working board, and review policies.

Eliza Bryant, will formally transition from the Design Team into a Governing Board position in January 2014 and serve as the Vice Chair, which will further support the Board’s transition. In this role, she will bring to the Governing Board a deep understanding of the core values and history of BCCS as well as bring her educational background to the Governing Board. At the opening of BCCS, the Board will continue to shape the mission and vision, as well as revise policies, contribute to the fundraising and development plan, and oversee the school’s financial and educational performance.

**Governing Board Orientation/Training**

BCCS Governing Board Orientations will be held as needed, when new members are voted onto the Governing Board. The Orientation will be organized and led by the Board Officers and will be structured to provide new Governing Board members a chance to familiarize themselves with the school’s policies and procedures as well as the Governing Board’s structure and procedures. During the Orientation, new members will also be asked to complete the Individual Governing Board Member Appraisal, adapted from the High Bar’s Individual Trustee Appraisal, which will assess the skills they bring to the Governing Board as well as their work and communication style. BCCS believes a well-functioning organization is one that is transparent and knowledgeable of one another.

The Governing Board will participate in different trainings provided by The High Bar as well as the state that will increase their capacity to best serve their role as the governing structure of BCCS. This might include participating in a High Bar webinar, “Series on Board and CEO Partnership-Dynamics,” which will build the Board’s capacity to work with, support, and keep accountable the School Leadership, specifically our School Director. Committee members are encouraged to identify and attend trainings that are available specific to their committee’s focus.

In the immediate future, the BCCS Governing Board is looking into a more formal partnership with The High Bar, as they offer a membership for Boards like ours, whose schools have not yet opened their doors. This membership will provide consultancy support in preparing and training the Governing Board to be ready for the launch of Be the Change Charter School.

**Governing Board Self-Evaluation**

The BCCS Governing Board believes that efficient and effective performance of the Board itself can have a significant impact on the overall success of the school and is an essential component of good governance. Therefore, the Board will conduct an annual evaluation of its own work. Board Officers will conduct the evaluation with input from each of the Governing Board members. Board Officers will determine the format of the evaluation, but it must include a formal written evaluation. The evaluation process should be designed to encourage constructive feedback from all members of the Board and be aimed at improvement. In addition, the Board will also conduct Board Effectiveness Evaluations as needed to allow the Board to check the pulse of their own work and state of effectiveness. This evaluation serves as a tool to determine how the Board could improve its work as a governing structure of the school.

**3.3 Management Organizations (MOs):**

Not applicable for BCCS.**Section 4: Economic Soundness**

**4.1 School Budget**

**a. Financial Forms:**

*Complete the budget workbook. Instructions are provided on the first tab of the budget workbook. Please note that all assumptions should be clearly detailed in the budget workbook. If the space on the Excel worksheet is insufficient for any given budget line, please include an explanation in the budget narrative. Financial forms that do not include assumptions will be considered incomplete.*

*\* Attach excel version of complete school budget workbook*

BCCS has created a sustainable budget to sustain from incubation through year five. Additionally, we have drafted sample income statements and balance sheets.

(Please see Appendix TT BCCS School Budget, Appendix UU Sample Balance Sheet, and Appendix VV Sample Income Statement.)

**b. Budget Narrative:**

*Include a budget narrative that provides a high-level summary of the budget and describes how the budget reflects the mission, vision, education plan, and overall strategic development of the proposed school. Discuss how resources will be used to support identified school priorities, including any changes in that allocation over the first five years of the school’s existence. If applicable, provide supplemental assumptions and/or explanations for budget line items as necessary (if the assumptions are clearly detailed in the budget workbook, there is no need to repeat them here).*

BCCS aims to consistently generate a sustainable budget from year to year that provides adequate funding to every aspect of the school. While BCCS has initially created a bare-bones budget, that sustains itself on minimal funds, we intend on acquiring additional funds through grants and foundations as outlined in the Development plan below. In the 2011 RFP cycle, BCCS applied for and received grant money from US Department of Education, but returned the money after being declined a charter. We anticipate receiving money from the Department of Education once again. Additionally, BCCS plans to apply for the Walton Family Foundation’s operational grants in January 2014. These, the other funding sources mentioned in the plan below, as well as other funding streams that become available in the future will ultimately enhance the program offerings at BCCS by building sustainable infrastructure and strong program supports that will secure our mission.

The following narrative aims to highlight the decision-making and assumptions behind the expenses that are not already explained in the budget template or deserve additional space. At times, the narrative will refer to specific tabs and cells within the spreadsheet. (Please see Appendix TT BCCS School Budget.)

**Personnel**

**Base Salaries** -BCCS is committed to providing adequate compensation to its staff, but also recognizes the fiscal constraints during start-up and the initial years of a new school. All base wages (Column B, Rows 65-105) were determined by comparison averages of Chicago Public School position file salaries and other charter school salaries. BCCS assumes an annual rate of inflation to cover cost of living at 2%.

**Other Compensations** - BCCS believes that hard-work pays off. A member of the BCCS staff community who exemplifies the values of peace, voice, and action, as well as shows professional growth as an educator will be eligible for a bonus. Eligibility is determined by the school leadership and seen as consistent growth from an initial to a final evaluation conducted by the School Director. BCCS formal evaluations are based on the Charlotte Danielson Framework and include areas that address the specific values of peace, voice, and action. (For more details on what determines growth, please see section 2.5.) BCCS anticipates providing additional bonuses through alternate funding sources, such as grant and foundation monies, as available. Individual bonus amounts would be capped based on the amount of funds available. If eligible, staff members can receive up to the individual amount; whereas, those not eligible based on their evaluations will not receive a bonus.

**Chicago Teachers Pension Fund**- BCCS believes in hiring the highest-quality teachers available and expects to hire fully certified educators to fill any instructional roles. BCCS ensures that 100% classroom teachers will be certified educators. Because of this, all our instructional staff, and any other staff that comes to BCCS will participate in the Chicago Teachers Pension Fund (CTPF). BCCS is committed to contributing 6% towards the pension fund and requires staff to contribute 3%. This breakdown is comparable to other charter public schools in Chicago.

**403(b) Contributions** - BCCS recognizes that not all its staff members will be able to participate in the CTPF, but ultimately, all deserve the opportunity to have security in retirement. BCCS will offer to contribute 5% towards a 403(b) which is based on comparable averages of other Chicago-based non-profits and charter public schools.

**Revenues - Per Capita and SPED**

**Student Enrollment and LRE3** - BCCS plans to open with three Kindergarten classrooms, two first grade classrooms, and two second grade classrooms. In our start-up year, the Kindergarten rosters will be capped at 26, allowing for a maximum of 78 students, and the first and second grade rosters will be capped at 30, allowing for a maximum of 60 in each grade. In every subsequent year, our goal is that Kindergarten will be capped at 25 students each. Ultimately, BCCS aims to have no more than 30 students in any class.

BCCS aims to have an effective teacher to student ratio to maximize instructional time, but also recognizes the need of an increased enrollment to support the start-up process. As per the provided guidelines, BCCS assumes an LRE 3 student population of approximately 2% of the overall enrollment, but also assumes that student population will be distributed across multiple grade-levels.

**Fringe Benefits**- BCCS values providing its staff with the best benefit packages available. We want our staff to not have to worry about their health, dental, or short-term disability, so that they can put their full focus on the students. Please see *Personnel Costs and Employee Related Expenses* below.

**Revenues - Federal, State, and Expansion**

**Target Community and FRL** - BCCS has identified McKinley Park as its target community in the budget spreadsheet. Based on averages provided in the CPS Budget Template, McKinley Park has 44% of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch.

**English Language Learners** - BCCS has budgeted for two ESL teachers. We anticipate requesting funding to support our efforts in this area.

**Expansion** - BCCS has indicated (“Yes”) that it will be expanding by at least one grade-level each year during the contracted five years.

**Budget with Assumptions**

In many cases, assumptions are providing in the space provided on the budget template. This section of the narrative aims to do the following:

* provide an assumption for one that does not exist on the budget template
* extend an assumption for which there was not enough room on the budget template
* provide a more detailed assumption

**Revenues**

*Line 23 (Fundraising) -* For more information, please see section c.

*Line 24 (Student Fees) -* BCCS requires a modest student fee of $15/student for each trimester in attendance. For families that have more than one child enrolled at BCCS, this fee is reduced to $10/student. BCCS assumes an 85% acquisition rate of fees and that 50% of students will come from a multi-child home. (Please see the Calculations tab on the Budget Template for the calculation breakdown based on enrollment.)

**Direct Student Costs**

*Line 40 (Classroom Supplies)*- Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 41 (Educational Materials)*- Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 42 (Student Testing & Assessment)* - While BCCS intends to use a number of unit and schools specific assessments that look at authentic student work, we also recognize the desire to include more commonly used norm-referenced standardized assessments. BCCS plans to implement NWEA MAP benchmark assessments, have access to the computer-based PARCC assessment, and track literacy levels through the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. (Please see Section 2.3: Educational Goals and Assessmrnt Plan.) NWEA MAP costs $12.50 per student, whereas PARCC costs $29.50 per student. BCCS will also purchase one F&P BAS kit per grade level at $355.00 per kit. (Please see the Calculations Tab for a more detailed breakdown of cost based on enrollment.)

*Line 43 (Student Recruitment)* - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 44 (Instructional Equipment)*- Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 45 (Technology Equipment)* - BCCS believes in outfitting its classrooms with high-quality technology, but also recognizes the financial constraints at start-up. Initially, BCCS plans to have one computer in every classroom at a cost of $1,300 per computer. As grade-levels are added, the classrooms will receive a computer. Ultimately, BCCS hopes to have three computers in every classroom coupled with other devices (ie. ipads), but this will not happen until after year five. Additionally, a replacement reserve will be collected over the years with a goal to ensure that all classrooms are outfitted with high-quality technology.

*Line 46 (Furniture)* - BCCS is assuming one chair per student, six activity tables per classroom, one classroom rug, and two shelving units per classroom. On top of the calculated cost, BCCS added $100 per classroom for additional furniture or storage for each classroom as requested.

*Line 49 (Extracurricular Expenses)*- BCCS assumes that some extracurricular activities such as service days, after-school programs, and field trips may require additional funding. BCCS has allotted $300 per student--$100 a trimester--to cover any additional costs that may arise. This is comparable to other Chicago-based charter public schools.

*Line 53 (Student Information Logging System)* - BCCS plans to purchase a student information logging system like PowerSchool, to help track student data. Based on research and comparables at other Chicago-based schools, BCCS determined that it would cost $15 per student.

**Personnel Costs and Employee Related Expenses**

*Line 69 (Salaries****)*** - Please see the Personnel section of this narrative.

*Line 70 (CTPF Employer Contribution)* - Please see the Personnel section of this narrative.

*Line 71 (CTPF Employee Withholding)* - Please see the Personnel section of this narrative.

*Line 72 (403b)* - Please see the Personnel section of this narrative.

*Line 75 (Health/Dental/Life Insurance)* - BCCS assumes a total of approximately 9% combined coverage with about $400 (.75%) coverage for dental insurance and $300 (.50%) for life insurance. The remaining $4,300 covers health insurance.

*Line 76 (Worker’s Compensation)* - Based on research and comparables at other Chicago-based schools, BCCS assumes a1% coverage.

*Line 77 (State Unemployment)*- Based on research and comparables at other Chicago-based schools, BCCS assumes a1% coverage.

**Office Administration Costs**

*Line 95 (Office Supplies****)*** - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 96 (Furniture)* - BCCS anticipates that the majority of office furniture will need to be purchased during the incubation phase, and only supplemented as needed in the years after. BCCS will provide desks and chairs for office and administrative purposes; this includes for staff such as the school leadership, office staff, counselors, and school clinicians. In some cases, furniture will be shared when in a shared space. Clinicians, for instance, may not be present on the same day and will not need a desk for each. BCCS will provide desks, chairs and shelving/storage for up to 10 individuals. Please see the Calculations tab for a more detailed cost breakdown.

*Line 97 (Telecommunications and Internet)* - BCCS has been quoted at $290.00 per month for telecommunications and internet services through Comcast Business. This package includes seven phone lines and internet at 50mbps. The cost reflects year-round usage.

*Line 98 (Administrative Equipment)* - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 99 (Accounting and Audit)* - Based on research and comparables at other Chicago-based schools, BCCS assumes a fixed rate of $10,000 a year.

*Line 100 (Legal - Contractual)*- Based on research and comparables at other Chicago-based schools, BCCS assumes a fixed rate of $10,000 a year. During the incubation phase, BCCS will make use of already committed pro-bono legal services.

*Line 101 (Payroll Services)* - BCCS received a quote from ADP Payroll Services, a company that has worked with other similarly sized, independent charter public schools like Polaris. The costs associated with this service are as follows: $200 on-time set up fee, $216 processing charge for two payroll processings a month, $40 on-time fee for processing taxes, and a $5.50 per employee tax run. BCCS assumes an incubation period of approximately six months and that is reflected in the processing costs for salaried employees during that time.

*Line 102 (Printing and Copying****)*** - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 103 (Postage and Shipping)* - Full assumption in budget template.

**Occupancy Costs**

*Line 119 (Rent)*- BCCS lease agreement is for $12 per sq. ft. for the first year, and $12.50 for subsequent years. Owner financing charges for required build-out would be charged to BCCS as completed.

*Line 120 (Utilities)* - BCCS researched previous lease agreements between the Archdiocese and other educational organizations to determine a rate of $0.65/SF. In years one and two, BCCS anticipates being located in a building that is approximately 15,000 SF, adding 5,000 SF of space each year. After year three, BCCS may re-locate to a larger space that is 40,000-50,000 SF to grow to full capacity.

*Line 121 (Repairs and Maintenance)* - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 122 (Supplies****)*** - Full assumption in budget template.

*Line 123 (Contracted Services-Security)* - BCCS will have a salaried security staff. Please see the Personnel for specific wages and positions, and the Personnel section of the Budget Narrative rationales for salaries.

*Line 124 (Contracted Services-Custodial)* - BCCS will have a salaried custodial staff. Please see the Personnel for specific wages and positions, and the Personnel section of the Budget Narrative rationales for salaries.

*Line 125 (Contracted Services-Trash Removal, etc) -* BCCS intends to contract with Waste Management for trash removal services. Based on the number of people in the building, Waste Management recommended one 4-yard container to stand outside the building on school grounds. Waste Management quotes this at $145 per month, including fees for weekly removal ($85/month), city permits, fuel surcharges, and administrative costs ($60). BCCS will also pay a one-time container delivery charge of $60 during incubation. BCCS engineering and custodial staff will handle all snow removal and groundskeeping within the bounds of the school campus.

*Line 127 (Insurance)* – Based on broker’s estimate of $4,500 for D&O/ EPLI; $15,000 for liability including General, Professional, Hired and Non-owned Vehicles; $5,000 Umbrella and $300 Crime. Property would be determined once space is completed.

**Other Costs**

*Line 143 (Insurance)* – see above

*Line 145 (Fundraising Expense)* - Part of the Development Plan outlined below is to secure funds to bring on a Development Director as soon as possible. BCCS recognizes that as it grows, the need for private fundraising will increase. BCCS has learned that you must spend money in order to raise money, and this expense will have to increase as our goals increase. BCCS is assuming an expense of 20% of the proposed fundraising goal each year. (Please see sub-section c.)

*Line 146 (Contingency)* - BCCS understands that sometimes money needs to be spent in case of emergencies. We assume a contingency reserve of $45,000 in years four and five of operation.

*Line 147 (Replacement Reserve)* - BCCS plans to utilize replacement reserves to address depreciation of capital items.

**c. Development Plan:**

*Include a discussion of additional revenue needed to maintain financial viability, including detailing assumptions behind the calculation of need. Please identify existing relationships with potential funders, indicate current levels of interest, and articulate contingency plans in the event that development goals are not realized.*

BCCS plans to implement a robust fundraising and development plan in order to provide all the necessary materials and services we believe students, teachers and families need in order to be peaceful, vocal and active citizens in this world. Though we are equipped with a conservative budget as it is, fundraised and granted monies will provide BCCS with more flexibility when managing its funds. BCCS is able to maintain financial viability and the core academic curricula without fundraising, but will use any revenues raised to supplement the current program.

The fundraising and development plan will be implemented by the External Relations and Development Committee (ERDC) of the Governing Board. The ERDC’s responsibility will be to manage the fundraising and development plan such that all annual goals that are set are met. It is expected that the ERDC will collaborate with the Governing Board and the School Director to ensure that all monies are acquired and used with the mission, vision and goals of BCCS in mind at all times. The ERDC will be responsible for managing all basic fundraising opportunities like BCCS’s annual silent auction and they will also collaborate with the Governing Board for any Board events. Additionally, the ERDC will establish relationships with local and national organizations that have historically funded charter schools and other educational efforts.

Part of the development plan calls for securing enough funds to hire a Development Director. A Development Director will help BCCS grow the annual fundraiser and coordinate and research available grants that also support the mission and values of BCCS. Eventually, the Development Director will court major donors and supporters.

**Fundraising**

* *Planting Seeds of Change Annual Gala*- This annual silent auction has historically brought in over 100 guests, raised nearly $13,000, and established initial relationships with almost 100 organizations around the city and the country. It is anticipated that this single event will continue to raise awareness and increased revenue each year.
* *Governing Board Events* - The Governing Board will be expected to host 1-3 fundraising events throughout the year, such as happy hours or sponsored golf outings. The ERDC will be responsible for planning and coordinating the event, while board members will be responsible for any agreed to contributions, like guest attendance, donated items, etc.

**Grants and External Relations** - The ERDC is expected to establish and maintain ongoing relationships with local and national organizations that have historically funded charter schools and other educational efforts. Below is a list of organization, funds and foundations that BCCS will begin researching:

* The Walton Foundation
* U.S. Department of Education
* A Better Chicago
* Chicago Community Trust
* Chicago Public Education Fund
* Crown Family Philanthropies
* Michael and Susan Dell Foundation
* New Schools for Chicago
* Polk Bros. Foundation
* Pritzer Traubert Family Foundation
* The E-Rate Program for Schools

**4.2 Financial Controls**

**a. Financial Monitoring:**

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

*• Attach a listing of all financial reports generated, including frequency of generation, and responsible party.*

*• If available, attach fiscal policies for the organization.*

As an independent charter--one that is not overseen by a charter management organization--it is imperative that BCCS puts into action its commitment to fiscal soundness. The BCCS Governing Board holds primary responsibility for financial oversight through its Finance Committee. This committee will be comprised of any or all Board members with expertise in the area of finance. In addition, the Governing Board will select and hire an external firm to conduct an annual audit.

BCCS’s Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) will administer the daily fiscal functions of the school and ensure all legal compliance. The School Director will manage the DFO ensuring that all fiscal activities are checked and decisions are balanced. BCCS’s DFO will be will be able to analyze, reconcile and adjust account balances to ensure that all records are maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and are legally compliant. The DFO will also establish BCCS’s chart of accounts, as well as establish and implement a sound accounting software system.

Please note the various financial controls that BCCS plans to implement:

**Annual Financial Audit**

1. The Governing Board will annually appoint an audit committee by January 1 to select an auditor by March 1 prior to year end (June 30th).
2. Any persons with expenditure authorization or recording responsibilities within the school may not serve on the committee.
3. The committee will annually contract for the services of an independent, certified public accountant to perform an annual fiscal audit.
4. The audit shall include, but not be limited to the following:
	1. An audit of the accuracy of the financial statements
	2. An audit of the attendance accounting and revenue accuracy practices
	3. An audit of the internal control practices.
5. The Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) and the independent auditor will work to complete all required forms.
6. As required by Illinois state law, a copy of the audit as well as Form 990 will be filed with the state no later than December 1 of each year.

**Purchasing**

**Expenditures**

1. The DFO may authorize expenditures and may sign related contracts within the approved budget. The Governing Board must review all expenditures. This will be done via approval of a check register that lists all checks written during a set period of time and includes check number, payee, date, and amount. The Governing Board must approve contracts over $10,000.
2. The DFO must approve all purchases. Purchase requisitions, authorizing the purchase of items greater than $10,000, must be signed by the Governing Board.
3. When approving purchases, the DFO must do the following:
	1. Determine if the expenditure is budgeted
	2. Determine if funds are currently available for expenditures
	3. Determine if the expenditure is allowable under the appropriate revenue source
	4. Determine if the expenditure is appropriate and consistent with the vision, approved charter, school policies and procedures, and any related laws or applicable regulations.
	5. Determine if the price is competitive and prudent. All purchases over $10,000 must include documentation of good-faith effort to secure the lowest possible cost for comparable goods or services.
4. Individuals other than those specified above are not authorized to make purchases without pre-approval.
5. Individuals who use personal funds to make unauthorized purchases will not be reimbursed. Authorized purchases will be promptly reimbursed by a bank check upon receipt of appropriate documentation of the purchase.

**Credit Cards**

1. Credit cards must be issued to BCCS and have a limit of $5,000.
2. The School Director may authorize an individual to use a school credit card to make an authorized purchase on behalf of BCCS, consistent with guidelines provided by the School Director, DFO, and/or the Governing Board.
	1. The school card will be kept under supervision of the School Director, and authorized individuals must sign the credit card out and must return the credit card and related documentation of all purchases within 24 hours of the purchases, unless otherwise authorized by the School Director.

**Petty Cash**

BCCS policy is not to use petty cash and instead reimburse employees for pre-approved expenses.

**Contracts**

1. Consideration will be made of in-house capabilities to accomplish services before contracting for them.
2. The Bookkeeper and Office Assistant will keep and maintain a contract file evidencing the competitive bids obtained and the justification of need for any contracts over $10,000.
	1. Competitive bids will be obtained where required by law or otherwise deemed appropriate and in the best interest of BCCS.
3. Written contracts clearly defining work to be performed will be maintained for all contract service providers.
	1. Contract service providers must show proof of being licensed and bonded, and of having adequate liability insurances and worker’s compensation insurance currently in effect. The School Director may also require that contract service providers list the school as an additional insured. In the event of an emergency, the School Director may approve individual exceptions to this policy.
4. If the contract service provider is a sole proprietor or a partnership, the DFO will obtain a W-9 form from the contract service provider prior to submitting any request for payments to the Governing Board.
5. The School Director will approve proposed contracts and modifications in writing.
6. Contract service providers will be paid in accordance with approved contracts as work is performed. The DFO will be responsible for ensuring the terms of the contracts are fulfilled.
7. Potential conflicts of interest will be disclosed upfront, and the School Director and/or the members of the Governing Board with the conflict, will excuse themselves from discussions and form voting on the contract.

**Accounts Payable**

*Bank Check Authorizations*

1. All original invoices will immediately be forwarded to the Director of Finance and Operations for approval.
2. The Bookkeeper will review each invoice, attach all supporting documentation, and verify that the specified services and/or goods were received.
3. Once approved by the DFO, the Bookkeeper will stamp a check authorization on the invoice and complete the required information, including noting the specific budget line item that is to be charged for the specified expenditures. The School Director will provide his/her signature on the stamp/invoice.
4. The School Director may authorize the DFO to pay recurring expenses without the School Director’s formal approval (signature) on the invoice when the dollar amounts fall within a predetermined range. The School Director and DFO will generate a list of vendors and the dollar range for each vendor. This list will be provided to the Governing Board in writing and updated on an annual basis.

*Bank Checks*

1. The Governing Board will approve, in advance, the list of authorized signers on the school account. A minimum of the School Director, the Governing Board Treasurer, and the DFO should be allowed to sign within established limitations.
2. The Governing Board will be authorized to open and close bank accounts.
3. The School Director and DFO will be responsible for all blank checks and keep them secured.
4. Once approved by the DFO, the Bookkeeper writes the check based on the check authorization prior to obtaining the appropriate signature(s).
5. The School Director and Governing Board Treasurer will co-sign checks in excess of $10,000 for all non-recurring items. All checks less than $10,000 should be signed by the School Director or the DFO.
6. Checks may not be written to cash, bearer, or petty cash. Under no circumstances will any individual sign a blank check. The custodian of a check will have the check written to them as follows: “Their Name-Custodian.”
7. The Bookkeeper will record the check transaction(s) in the appropriate checkbooks and in the general ledger.
8. The Bookkeeper will distribute the checks and vouchers as follows:
	1. Original -- mailed or delivered to payee
	2. Duplicate or voucher -- attached to the invoice and filed by vendor name
	3. Cancelled Checks -- filed numerically with bank statements
	4. Voided checks will have the signature line cut out and will have “VOID” written in ink. The original check will be attached to the duplicate along with any other related documentation as appropriate.

*Bank Reconciliation*

1. Bank statements will be received directly or printed directly from online banking by the Bookkeeper and forwarded to the DFO.
2. The Bookkeeper will examine all paid checks for date, name, cancellation, and endorsement. Any discrepancies regarding the paid checks or any checks over 90 days will be researched and, if applicable, deleted from the accounting system.
3. The DFO and Bookkeeper will prepare the bank reconciliation, verifying the bank statements and facilitating any necessary reconciliation.
4. The DFO will compare the reconciled bank balance to the cash in the bank account and to the general ledger, immediately reporting any material discrepancies to the School Director.
5. The DFO and or Bookkeeper will prepare a monthly summary report to be approved by the School Director.

**Accounts Receivable**

1. Documentation will be maintained for accounts receivable.
2. Accounts receivable will be recorded by the DFO in the general ledger and collected on a timely basis.

*Cash Receipts*

1. For each fundraising or other event in which cash or checks will be collected, a Bookkeeper will be designated, who will be responsible for collecting and holding all cash and checks for the purpose of the fundraising activity.
	1. The Bookkeeper will record each transaction in a receipt book at the time the transaction is made, with a copy of the receipt provided to the donor.
	2. The cash, checks, receipt book, and deposit summary must be given to the DFO by the end of the next school day, who will immediately put the funds in a secure location.
	3. The Bookkeeper will count the deposit to verify the amount of the funds in writing.
2. Cash/checks dropped off at the school office will be placed directly into a lock box by the person dropping off the cash/checks.
	1. All funds are deposited into the lock box in a sealed envelope, along with any notes, forms, or other descriptions of how the funds are to be used.
	2. The Bookkeeper and the DFO or School Director or Office Assistant will open the lock box to verify the cash/check amounts, and sign off on the amounts received.
	3. The lock box will be emptied at least two times per week, corresponding to days when deposits are made.
3. Cash/checks dropped off in the classroom will utilize the classroom folders/envelopes. Each morning, the classroom teacher will collect any forms, payments, etc. that have been brought in by students that day and place them in a folder or envelope. The classroom teacher will deliver the folder/envelope to the Bookkeeper, who will process them by the lock box guidelines outlined above.
4. Mail received at the school must be opened by the Bookkeeper or Office Assistant.
	1. For any cash or checks received in the mail, the Bookkeeper will prepare a deposit packet itemizing the amount, source, and purpose of each payment, with a designated office staff member counting the funds and verifying this in writing.
5. Twice a week, the Bookkeeper will log cash or checks received into the Cash Receipts Book.
6. All checks will be immediately endorsed with the school deposit stamp.
7. A deposit slip will be completed by the Bookkeeper and initialed by the School Director for approval to deposit. The deposit slip will be duplicated and documentation for all receipts will be attached to the duplicate deposit slip.
8. Deposits totaling greater than $2,000 will be deposited within 48 hours by the designated school employee. All cash will be immediately put into a lockbox.
9. The deposit receipt will be attached to the deposit documentation and filed accordingly.

**Personnel**

1. The Bookkeeper and DFO will be responsible for all new employees completing or providing all necessary items.
2. The Bookkeeper and DFO will be responsible for maintaining this information.
3. An employee’s hiring is not effective until the employment application, background checks, W-4 form, and I-9 form have been completed.

**Payroll**

BCCS plans to contract with ADP Payroll Services for all related services. BCCS employees are expected to submit all appropriate information, including sick and vacation hours, by the determined payroll deadlines. The School Director and the DFO will insure that the services provided by ADP are adequate and efficient.

**Expenses**

*Expense Reports*

1. Employees will be reimbursed for expenditures within ten (10) days of presentation of appropriate documentation.
2. Employees will complete expense reports monthly, as necessary, to be submitted to the DFO.
3. Receipts or other appropriate documentation will be required for all expenses to be reimbursed.
4. The employee and the School Director must sign the expense report.
5. School Director expense reports should be approved by a member of the Governing Board and always be submitted to the DFO for processing and payment.
6. Expense greater than two months old will not be reimbursed.

*Governing Board Expenses*

1. The individual incurring authorized expenses while carrying out the duties of the school will complete and sign an expense report.
2. The School Director will approve and sign the expense report, and submit it to the DFO for payment.

**Finance**

*Finance Reporting*

1. In consultation with the School Director and Finance Committee, the DFO will prepare the annual financial budget for approval by the Governing Board.
2. The DFO will submit a monthly balance sheet and monthly revenue and expense summaries to the School Director, including a review of the discretionary accounts and any line items that are substantially over or under budget (+/-10% of established budget and $10,000). The report will be reviewed at the scheduled board meeting and action will be taken, if appropriate.
3. The DFO will provide the School Director and the Governing Board with additional financial report, as needed.

*Loans*

1. The School Director and the Governing Board will approve all loans from third parties.
2. Once approved, a promissory note will be prepared and signed by the School Director before funds are borrowed.
3. Employee loans, including salary advances, are not allowed.

*Financial Institutions*

1. All funds will be maintained at a high-quality financial institution.
2. All funds will be maintained or invested in high-quality, short maturity, and liquid funds.
3. Physical evidence will be maintained on-site for all financial institution transactions.

*Retention of Records*

1. Financial records, such as transaction ledgers, canceled/duplicate checks, attendance and entitlement records, payroll records, and any other necessary fiscal documentation will be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years. Certain documentation may be retained for a longer period of time determined by the discretion of the School Director or Governing Board.
2. The DFO will retain the records in his/her files for two (2) years; the records will be the responsibility of BCCS for the remaining five (5) years.
3. Financial records will be shredded at the end of their retention period.
4. Appropriate back-up copies of electronic and paper documentation, including financial and attendance accounting data, will be regularly prepared and securely stored off-site.

**Insurance, Liabilities, and Assets**

*Insurance*

1. The DFO will work with the School Director to ensure that appropriate insurance is maintained at all times with a high-quality insurance agency.
2. The DFO will maintain the files of insurance policies, including and up-to-date copy of all certificates of insurance, insurance policies and procedures, and related claim forms.
3. The School Director and the DFO will carefully review insurance policieis on an annual basis, prior to renewal.
4. Insurance will include general liability, worker’s compensation, student accident, and professional liability. Coverage will be in line with the limits listed in BCCS’s approved charter.

*Asset Inventory*

1. An asset is defined as all items, purchased or donated, with a value of $1,000 or more and with a useful life of more than one year.
2. The DFO will file all receipts for purchased assets.
3. The DFO will maintain an inventory or log of all assets. The log will include the original purchase price and date, a brief description, serial numbers, and other information appropriate for documenting assets.
4. The School Director will take a physical inventory of all assets within 90 days of the end of each fiscal year, indicating the condition and location of the asset.
5. The School Director will immediately be notified of all cases of theft, loss, damage or destruction of assets.
6. The DFO will submit to School Director a written notification of plans for disposing of assets with a clear and complete description of the asset and the date of disposal.

**Section 3.3 Facilities**

**a. Facility Plan**

*Describe plan to secure an appropriate facility for the school.*

*If proposing an independent facility, attach a proposed timeline for securing that facility and completing necessary renovations to make the facility suitable for school by the proposed opening date.*

Since January of 2013, the BCCS Design Team has been aggressively searching for a viable independent facility. The Design Team put together a Real Estate Development Team to secure an independent facility within the targeted community areas of McKinley Park and Bridgeport. The BCCS Real Estate Development Team consists of Peter Schuler and Michelle Brown, realtors at Prudential Rubloff Properties, and Rob Vagnieres Jr., Principal Architect of Robert C. Vagnieres Jr. & Associates in Bridgeport. The Real Estate Development Team has been critical in identifying viable facilities and advising the Design Team in negotiations, renovations, and decision-making. Additionally, as part of the Illinois Network of Charter Schools Fast Forward Consulting Program, the Design Team has consulted with Rich Wallach, Senior Project manager at Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF), who assists non-profits with their facility needs. In August of 2013, BCCS began working with Bailey Edward Architects, a firm committed to responsive architecture and engineering for schools, non-profits, and communities. Their project portfolio includes work within CPS and suburban schools, and they are working closely with the Design Team to evaluate the facilities, complete required reports, and develop a renovation plan.

Our facility priorities are to ensure the facility has enough space to meet the needs of the school and aspects of our mission, including the size and number of classrooms, enrichment rooms, administrative offices, large common multipurpose space, and a Community Resource Room.

BCCS currently has two options for facilities.

* In option 1, BCCS would lease space from the owner of the Bridgeport Art Center/East Bank Storage in Bridgeport, which would allow us to grow within the same facility to full capacity.
* In option 2, BCCS would lease a prior school building from the Archdiocese for the first two to three years of operation, and then relocate to a permanent facility that would hold the school at full capacity.

Overall, BCCS’s facility plan is divided into two phases: Phase 1 is a temporary facility for years 1-3, and Phase 2 is a permanent facility beginning in year 4. In Phase 1, BCCS will inhabit a 20,000 square foot facility that would suffice for the first three years. In year four of operation, BCCS will expand within that location or move into a separate facility that can hold the school at full capacity. We are committed to making sure that our facilities plan provides as much continuity and stability in terms of location as we can. The following Facility Timeline would apply for either option for facilities.

**Facility Timeline**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **September 2013** | Letter of Intent signed by BCCS and Leasing Facility Owner | Design Team, Real Estate Development Team |
| **January 2014** | Charter Approved by Chicago Public Schools Board |  |
| **February 2014** | Lease SignedConclude discussions on construction plan and timelinePut out RFP for renovations team | Director, Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) |
| **March 2014** | Permit drawings issued | DFO |
| **April 2014** | Permit comments addressedPermits issuedHire ContractorsObtain property insuranceFinalize renovations plan and ADA complianceSelect/order furniture and technology  | DFO |
| **May 2014** | Begin renovations/ADA compliance | DFO |
| **June** | Renovations/ADA compliance continues | DFO |
| **July 2014** | Completion of renovations/ADA complianceWalkthrough facility and create final punchlist | DFO |
| **August 2014** | Prepare building infrastructure (furniture, phones, copiers, etc.)Install/upgrade any necessary technology infrastructureSchool begins | DFO |

(Please see Appendix WW Facilities Timeline.)

**b. Space Requirements:**

*Provide an overview of the space requirements needed to successfully implement the proposed school, including a description of how the proposed site will need to evolve to support the school as it grows. Attach detailed space requirements for the proposed school, including any special features required to properly implement the proposed model*

As mentioned above, BCCS’s space requirements revolve around classrooms, enrichment classrooms, office space, large multi-purpose room (gym/assembly/lunchroom), and a community resource room (by year 3). The table below outlines how the school will evolve from the second year mark to full capacity at minimum.

**Space Requirements**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** | **Full Capacity****(Year 7)** |
| Number of Students | 198 | 257 | 313 | 369 | 423 | ~550 |
| Space Requirements | 15,000 sq ft. | 20,000 sq ft. | 25,000 sq ft. | 30,000 sq ft. | 40,000 sq ft. | 40,000-50,000 sq ft. |
| Number of Classrooms - 30x30 square feet | 7 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 20 |
| Enrichment Room (ex: art, music)(30x30) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Large common space (gym/assemblies/lunchroom) 3,000 square feet | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Office Space(10x10) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| Community Resource Room(30x30) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Peace Room(20x20) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Computer Lab(30x30) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

**Full Capacity**

At full capacity, BCCS will require a 40,000-50,000 square feet facility that will align to the instructional focus on interdisciplinary learning, demonstrate a commitment to families and community, and reflect the core values of peace, voice, and action within the physical space. BCCS will ultimately require up to 25 classrooms (30x30 square feet per classroom), a separate cafeteria (3,000 square feet) with kitchen space, a gymnasium/auditorium, and a computer lab. The goal is that classrooms will be outfitted with grouped desks or tables for collaborative work, whiteboards, SmartBoards, have wi-fi access to internet, and sufficient shelving for classroom libraries. Specialty classrooms will eventually be needed such as an art room and a science laboratory. BCCS’s facility will have a large main office space near the entry, support service office space including a nurse’s area, and two additional office spaces throughout the building. Having administrative and resource offices scattered throughout the teaching spaces allows for all members of the school to be engaged with one another at any given time. Other rooms include a peace room open for students who need a quiet, reflective space as well as a Community Resource Room, where family and community members can meet or attend workshops and trainings.

The facility will ultimately require six bathrooms, two each for boys and girls, as well as two staff bathrooms. There will be areas for maintenance services, such as a boiler room, janitor closets, the engineering office. Outside the school, there will be a clear drop-off and pick-up area for students, a parking lot for teachers and parents, and a playground/recess area including green space for a school garden. Other amenities that would reflect the school’s core values include wall space inside and outside of the school for murals, windows throughout the building, and small reading/study areas spread throughout the school. The BCCS facility will comply with all ADA requirements.

**c. School site:**

*Provide an overview of each proposed site and include the following supporting materials:*

*i.The address and a general description of the property, including its current owner and previous use.*

*ii. An Inspecting Architect’s Report completed by a CPS-approved architect (see Appendix F).*

*iii. An ADA Compliance Report completed by a CPS-approved architect (see Appendix G).*

*iv. If the property is not currently ADA compliant, a plan for bringing the building into compliance.*

*v. Evidence that the site is or will be secured (Letter of Intent or Memorandum of Understanding) and a description of your team’s plan to meet lease or purchase requirements.*

*vi. A plan detailing how rehabilitation work will address issues raised by the architect, meet applicable building codes, and support the proposed school’s educational program, including:*

*a.The scope of work to be completed.*

*b.A description of persons/managing parties responsible for project management and related qualifications.*

*c.A project timeline for any necessary renovations.*

*d.A completed Sources and Uses of Funds Report for Facility Development and the planned funding mechanism to cover projected costs.*

*vii.The address and a general description of a secondary or back-up facility, including its current owner and previous use.*

**Bridgeport Art Center**

BCCS has two facility options in mind. Option one is the East Bank Storage / Bridgeport Art Center, located on 1200 W. 35th Street in Bridgeport. Home to many artists’ studios and gallery spaces, this facility is a multidisciplinary space and offers an exciting opportunity for a school to be close to a growing arts community. Sharing a facility with such a mixed use space aligns well to our curricular model of interdisciplinary teaching and learning, as well as our focus on the humanities. Students at BCCS will be able to see real artists at work, explore the galleries, and engage in producing and exhibiting art themselves. Outdoor learning and recess space is also available one block away at Wilson Park.

The Bridgeport Art Center was founded in 2011 and shares the historic Spiegel Catalog Warehouse building with the East Bank Storage. The building is owned by Mr. Paul Levy, a real estate developer and co-owner of Prairie Management & Development. We have signed a Letter of Intent to Lease with Mr. Levy, and will be leasing a 15,000 square feet space in the building. (Please see Appendix BBB LOI-Art Center.) After year one, BCCS would build out to 20,000 square feet, and add 5,000 square feet per year. BCCS can decide to continue to grow within the facility by leasing more space every year. The Bridgeport Art Center has about 100,000 square feet per floor with over 400,000 square feet of space available within the building.

Much of the structural and mechanical, engineering, and plumbing (MEP) systems within the Bridgeport Arts Center are in good existing condition. The building will require only minor alterations to become ADA compliant, including re-finishing hallway floors, adjusting the handrails for the stairways, and improving the ramped accessible route. Other major renovations that will be required include building in walls throughout the space for classrooms, office space, and large multi-purpose space; as well as providing additional bathrooms and water fountains to be accessible to students and staff. (Please see Appendix XX Architect’s Report-Art Center, Appendix YY ADA Compliance Report-Art Center, Appendix ZZ Renovation Plans-Art Center, Appendix AAA Sources and Uses Report-Art Center.)

The BCCS Design Team is also aware of the unique requirements of an independent facility such as Bridgeport Arts Center. In buildings with multiple uses, there must be appropriate fire separation from other different uses (Code 15-56-280). Secondly, schools in heavy timber buildings (with sprinklers) have to be broken into areas smaller than 12,000 square feet with fire separations (Code 13-48-080). We will work with Bailey Edward to ensure that separations are provided.

**Back-Up Facilities**

BCCS also has identified two back-up facilities - St. Paul School Building at 2114 W. 22nd Place, Chicago, 60608. Built in 1892, St. Paul School has been renovated with new sprinkler systems, windows, and accessible lifts over the past decade and was recently in use as a school until June of 2013. St. Paul school building is a 20,000 square feet space that has twelve classrooms over three floors and two small office spaces, as well as a basement. BCCS would lease St. Paul as a temporary facility for the first three years, and would identify a permanent facility in order to move into by year 4. Classrooms are about 35 feet by 22 feet each. There are a few renovations required to achieve ADA compliance such as adding in lifts from the first to third floors. Construction would also have to include building bathrooms. St. Paul does not have a large gym or lunchroom space, but in the past the school has had access to the high school gym two blocks down. St Paul is partially accessible and has LULA lifts to the first floor but will eventually require an elevator from the first to third floor. The bathrooms in St Paul are accessible and minor work will be needed on existing stairs handrails to make them fully accessible. (Please see Appendix CCC ADA Compliance Report-St. Paul.)

The BCCS Design Team is also exploring the possibility of St. Michael School Building at 2315 W 24th Place, Chicago, IL 60608. Built in the 1950s, the facility has three floors, ten classrooms, and a large multipurpose room. (Please see Appendix DDD ADA Compliance-St. Michael.) For both St. Paul and St. Michael’s school facilities, we have begun the application process with the Archdiocese Real Estate Department to qualify to lease facilities and will be able to move forward quickly to obtain a Letter of Intent.