**2.2.3: Promotion and Graduation Policy**

Explain the school’s policies for promoting students from one grade to the next, including criteria for promotion or retention. Indicate when and how the school will inform students and parents about promotion and graduation policies and decisions. If the school will offer high school grades within the proposed agreement term, include specific graduation requirements and the rationale for their selection. How will the graduation requirements ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities?

High School Promotion Policy

Chicago Public Schools requires high school students to successfully complete a minimum number of credits before they can be promoted to the next grade level and graduate. Listed below are the CPS high school and graduation requirements in alignment with College Readiness

**9th grade promotion**
To be promoted from 9th to 10th grade, students must pass at least three of their core subject courses during both semesters and must have successfully completed a minimum of 5 units of credit.

**10th grade promotion**
To be promoted from 10th to 11th grade, students must pass at least three of their core subject courses during both semesters and must have successfully completed a minimum of 11 units of credit. All 10th grade students must have completed at least 20 hours of community service learning in order to be promoted to the 11th grade.

**11th grade promotion**
To be promoted from 11th to 12th grade, students must have successfully completed a minimum of 17 units of credit.

**Graduation**
To graduate, students must complete a minimum of 24 units of credit and 40 hours of community service learning.

**Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and students with disabilities**
LEP students meet all graduation requirements with needed accommodations such as placement in English/ESL and home language support in other subject areas, as appropriate. Students with disabilities meet the general graduation requirements with appropriate accommodations and curricular modifications as determined by their Individual Education Programs (IEPs); students whose IEPs indicate an alternative mastery process receive a document of graduation..

High School Graduation Requirements

Evelyn Ann Charter Institute will utilize the CPS Hand book and follow their Minimum *High School Graduation Requirement* Policy (Board Report 06-0628-PO2) requires students to complete a minimum total of 24 credits in specific content areas in order to meet graduation requirements. Overall requirements can vary depending on the type of school and/or program (i.e. some schools may require additional courses in math, science, world language, etc.).

ϖ Appendix 2.2.2 In Appendix 2.2.2, applicants must provide the following: • An overview of the curriculum for each subject/course and level, including: ♣ A general description of the content and skills to be addressed; ♣ Whether the curriculum will be developed in-house or selected; ♣ The names of any selected curricular programs/textbooks; and ♣ The curriculum’s alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards and any additional standards used by the school, and an explanation how any gaps in alignment will be addressed.

• At a minimum, samples of the following curriculum resources developed for your school for one subject in one grade from each grade span that the school will serve (elementary, middle, high school): ♣ A Curriculum map; ♣ A Unit plan; and ♣ A Lesson plan. For additional guidance, please consult the Resource Guide. 2017 Request for Proposals – Operators New to Chicago Page 14

(see attachment)

**Section 2.3: Instructional Methods**

Describe the instructional approach and methods that will be used in the classroom. Include any specific requirements for implementation (e.g., co-teaching or aides, technology, physical space, etc.). • Cite research or existing models that support the use of these instructional methods, especially considering the school’s target population; and

 • Describe how the instructional methods will achieve the school’s mission and support implementation of any unique elements of the school’s design.

Carter G. Woodson purported and we agree that sharing information is not an education; a real education involves the heart. (Newmann , Secada, & Wehlage, 1995) supported Woodson’s notion when they stated that learners must be engaged and committed to learn before they can be taught. Authentic learning requires the learner to communicate an in-depth understanding of a problem rather than memorize sets of isolated facts, and it must result in achievements that have relevance beyond school. Thus, Evelyn Ann Charter Institute is designed to accomplish our mission by meeting and satisfying the diverse learning needs of all students via a rigorous curriculum, and student centered learning. Therefore, we will work aggressively to assess student needs, remediate skill deficiencies, and meet the needs of accelerated students. Our teachers will employ a comprehensive set of proven instructional strategies that have led to improved student outcomes during our research of other public schools with similar populations. We will also continue to build strong collaborative partnerships with next generation schools across the country and share best academic and operational practices. Additionally, in an effort to continuously improve, we will review current research on brain-compatible pedagogical methods that best optimize our particular students’ educational experiences and prepare them for rigorous post-secondary endeavors.

Newmann, F.M., Secada, W.G., & Wehlage, G.G. (1995). A guide to authentic instruction and assessment: Vision, standards, and scoring. WCER, Madison, WI.

<https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/142122.Carter_G_Woodson>

**Framework for Teaching and Learning at Evelyn Ann Charter Institute**

In order for Evelyn Ann Charter Institute students to achieve mastery and perform at their fullest potential, our framework for teaching and learning is informed by the following tenets:

* Multiple data points should be used to guide instructional decisions.
* Formative data should be used to guide flexible groupings.
* To accelerate each student’s growth, he/she should receive instruction at both his/her instructional level and grade level.
* Weekly professional development activities are rooted in systematic review of quantitative and qualitative student academic and behavioral data.

We anchor our practices on getting our students to and through rigorous four-year universities. In reimagining the school experience, we seek to combine established practices with educational technology to meet students where they are and accelerate each student’s individual growth. We believe success in the 21st century workplace requires students to have not only academic content and technical skills for a particular career, but sustained growth and reflection on our core values – empathy, persistence, independence and curiosity. In order for our students to meet the high expectations as outlined in our assessment plan, we are implementing a blend of instructional strategies. Each method is briefly described below.

**Strategic Use of Technology for Personalization**

As outlined by Carol Tomlinson[[1]](#footnote-1), instruction can be differentiated in terms of content, process, product, and learning environment to improve student performance. At Evelyn Ann Charter Institute, we rely heavily on technology to support differentiation. With our one-to-one device initiative, students have access to high quality content anytime and anywhere.

Technology has supported our ability to personalize learning in the following ways:

* Varying student to teacher ratios so that students receive small group attention as needed and so that the most effective teachers are impacting the most students
* Varying pacing based on student profile
	+ Assigning modules for online programs based on formative assessment data
	+ Providing enrichment activities for students that have demonstrated mastery on specific skills
* Building background knowledge and strengthening foundational skills according to the needs of each individual student
	+ Using teacher and student-created flipped videos, tutorials and interactive lessons to reinforce skills and concepts
* Allowing students to receive instruction through their preferred modalities
* Offering choice and access to information on virtually all topics
* Increasing peer to peer collaboration
* Increasing rigor through content creation and enabling students to share instructional strategies with peers (Bloom’s Taxonomy: Application, Analysis, Synthesis)
* Allowing students to accelerate and take specialized, online courses and/or student-created independent studies.

As mentioned earlier, data informs our instructional decisions. Technology will allow us to review data to differentiate curricular choices for our students. Though all EACI students will graduate with at least two years of the same World Language, we know that some ninth-grade students may need more Reading Support in English before pursuing competency in another language. Our team will build a comprehensive data profile for each student, which will include 9th grade ALEK Reading scores, and 9th grade Fall NWEA Reading score, to determine each student’s eligibility for World Language. Students who take World Language are participating in an Interactive Program. The program will allow us to combine online learning with face-to-face instruction to provide students with a customized learning experience. Similarly, our Reading Support teacher will provide targeted support to strengthen students’ foundational skills, which is informed by NWEA, ALEK and online reading intervention progress monitoring data. As a result, our intervention strategy will allow students to access core curriculum for a rigorous learning experience.

In our model, Evelyn Ann Charter Institute students and teachers act as partners and technology is the tool to design personalized learning pathways. When combined with the expertise of master teachers, technology enhances the learner experience by its ability to bring curriculum to life and facilitate authentic and nonlinear learning, provide multiple access points to rigorous content, foster social learning and student creation, and offer real-time feedback and progress monitoring data to ensure students receive just-in-time instruction.

**Supported Instruction**

Our teachers will plan instruction and strategically utilize technology to move from a teacher-driven model to a student-centered model, which includes student collaboration and independent practice. Students receive assignments through our learning management system, CANVAS but also have them reinforced by the classroom teacher as needed. On-line tools such as ALEK, ThinkCerca, and Gobstopper help to support and guide reading and writing assignments for students. ThinkCerca provides templates and support for students to write evidence based arguments and Gobstopper allows teachers to annotate any text with questions, prompts or video to support the reading. The graphic below illustrates the gradual release of responsibility as defined by the work of Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey that guides this strategy.[[2]](#footnote-2)



**Mini-Lessons**

Our teachers will introduce new concepts through mini-lessons to provide context and establish the learning outcomes of the lesson. Since we have seen that whole-class instruction does not meet the diverse learning needs of many students, we have redefined “whole class” as shown in the graphic above into smaller groups based on formative assessment data. Our mini-lessons are limited to no more than 15 minute segments based on the recommendations of The Midwest Brain and Learning Institute.[[3]](#footnote-3) The basic cadence of the mini-lesson is captured in the graphic above. However, it is important to note that teachers use more inquiry-based and inductive teaching methods to activate background knowledge and to help students connect information within and across content areas. During mini-lessons, a teacher will model and use focused questions to check for student understanding. These formative assessment checks may be in the form of online polls and exit slips and provides the teacher with instantaneous data on which students may need more support. The teacher will then regroup to further address individual student needs. Our flexible physical space allows for various permutations for student groupings. To increase student autonomy and ownership, each mini-lesson ends with independent practice, where the learner takes full responsibility of the learning outcomes.

**Small Group Rotations**

Ongoing and frequent feedback among the teacher and student and/or among peers is a key driver of the structure of a given lesson. Small group rotations are based on students’ learning needs. Hence, the groupings are homogeneous and are intended to provide explicit skill instruction and clarify any misconceptions. For example: if after reviewing content assessment data, the Algebra teacher found that ten students were having difficulty solving linear equations in the form: $y=mx+b$. In order to provide specific and targeted instruction, the Algebra teacher provides a mini-lesson to this group while the other students work independently on their weekly problem-solving set. During this type of guided instruction, students receive support from the teacher and peers. In small group rotations, students typically work together, but all students are responsible for an individual product to submit for feedback.

**Collaborative Group Work**

We believe students have the capacity to dramatically extend each other’s learning. Collaborative group work is determined by the task. For example: if in Environmental Science, students are discussing environmental issues concerning the people of Chicago. Students may generate a list of topics, which may include air pollution, water conservation, food deserts, etc. The task would be for students to choose a topic from the list that interests them. They have to form a group with other students interested in the same environmental concern and present an evidence-based argument that will solve this problem. In this case, the grouping would be heterogeneous as it is based on interest rather than skill. In collaborative group work, the group size in typically from 2 to 6 students. Each group is assigned a role and the roles change as the groups change. Depending on course requirements, students may submit a group product or an individual product. The product is scored on a rubric in which students complete a self-reflection and submit for peer and/or teacher feedback. We believe collaboration is an essential 21st century skill. Thus, we will assess our students on their collaboration skills on a common school-wide collaboration rubric and provide them with actionable feedback to continuously improve in this area.

**Socratic Seminars**

Socratic Seminars will occur regularly in our Humanities courses. These are small discussion groups, usually comprised of 15 to 20 students. According to the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)[[4]](#footnote-4), the elements of a Socratic Seminar include:

* Choosing a text: Our teachers will select authentic texts, often primary source documents that provide contrasting viewpoints or controversy.
* Preparing the students: Students will read through these documents and highlight claims, evidence, reasoning, and counter-arguments. Our teachers use technology tools to embed comprehension questions and reflective prompts for students to answer prior to the seminar.
* Preparing the questions: Teachers and students generate open-ended questions that elicit evidence from the texts to support students’ claims. Through online surveys, we continue to collect information about students’ interests. Hence, questions are contextualize to reflect students’ lives and real experiences.
* Assessment: The IRA and NCTE further highlight the importance of reflection as regular practice in Socratic Seminars. They state, “The most global measure of success is reflection, both on the part of the teacher and students, on the degree to which text-centered student talk dominated the time and work of the session.  Reflective writing asking students to describe their participation and set their own goals for future seminars can be effective as well.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

According to research report entitled, “From High School to the Future: ACT Preparation–Too Much, Too Late Why ACT Scores Are Low in Chicago and What It Means for Schools,” which was publish by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago, specific classroom practices such as evidence-based argumentation led to statistically significant higher ACT scores for students who engaged in this practice more than once a month.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**Team Teaching**

At Evelyn Ann Charter Institute, we strive to ensure our students’ educational experience is cohesive and integrated. We believe teacher collaboration is critical to the success of our academic model. Due to our intentional alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, we are constantly gauging what our students know and how to best facilitate their learning. Employing the Understanding By Design® Framework[[7]](#footnote-7) in our planning, the curriculum is framed around essential questions that spark curiosity and are relevant to students’ lives. As we grow, our master teachers will work with newer teachers to maintain horizontal and vertical articulation to reinforce skills and increase rigor.

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

**Common Rubrics**

Our success will depend on the use of common language when discussing student work and giving students meaningful feedback. Thus, we will create common writing and presentation rubrics to give students a clear road map for submitting high quality finished products. The Common Core State Standards require students to critically think, read, write, and speak across content areas. Our methodologies are centered on improving students’ cognitive and metacognitive skills in preparing our students to be college and career ready.

**Alignment with Professional Development and Assessments**

As outlined in our professional development plan, teachers have common planning time by POD weekly and also have three hours of professional development time each Wednesday. Instructional strategies are discussed and supported during these times based on needs identified during observations by the principal, curriculum coordinator or peers. In addition, teachers receive support and coaching on instructional strategies in real-time from the curriculum coordinator who will observe videotape and provide feedback on mini-lessons. Teachers are expected to use many different types of data to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies including review of student work, student surveys and EPAS data and are provided coaching time with the data strategist to do so.

1. http://www.caroltomlinson.com/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2008).  *Better learning through structured teaching: A framework for the gradual release of responsibility*.  Alexandria, VA: ASCD.](http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Books/Overview/Better-Learning-Through-Structured-Teaching.aspx) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.wmich.edu/chemed/documents/TheBrain-FriendlyClassroom.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/socratic-seminars-30600.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/socratic-seminars-30600.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/ACTReport08.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/siteASCD/publications/UbD_WhitePaper0312.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)