**Executive Summary**

*The Executive Summary should be a stand-alone document that gives a succinct narrative overview of the application. It should be no longer than 2 pages and should include the following components:*

* *Proposed School type, model, grades served, enrollment/growth plen*
* *Grades served*
* *5-year enrollment table that includes:*
  + *Number of students in each grade for each year of the initial five-year contract term*
  + *Total number of enrolled students for each year of the initial five-year contract term*
* *Mission, vision, educational philosophy, and culture*
* *Academic goals*
* *Demonstrated capacity to open and manage a high-quality school, including brief explanation of how proposed school type and model will drive success for expected student population.*
* *If applicable, cite the targeted community(ies), the rationale for the proposed community(ies), and high-level overview of community partnerships*

**Proposed School**

Be the Change Charter School (BCCS) will be an innovative K-8 public charter school centered around three core values: Peace, Voice, and Action. Drawing from many diverse backgrounds and experiences, BCCS's mission is to provide a school environment in which people 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.

To us, "being the change" is about changing how schools and districts define what it means to educate all children. Beyond students achieving well on traditional measures, like test scores, we define success as the ability of a school community to work together in supporting the intellectual, social, emotional, and civic growth of students, teachers, and families. Through doing so, BCCS will break down barriers and teach students to effectively collaborate across difference, stand up for themselves, their ideas and others, and make meaningful change in their lives, their community and the world.

BCCS's instructional philosophy is centered on an interdisciplinary approach to studying the humanities, in which teachers and students explore themes and real-world problems through the lens of different disciplines. By studying the humanities, BCCS students will develop critical thinking, inquiry, and collaboration skills. BCCS graduates will be empathetic, resilient, and curious advocates, empowered to make choices in their future academic and life endeavors.

BCCS staff will work together to create meaningful, standards-based interdisciplinary units that both pique the interests and meet the academic needs of all its students. Central to teaching and learning at BCCS is an integrated curriculum that attends to the academic, intellectual, artistic, social, emotional, and civic growth of each student. 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.

**Grades Served and Enrollment Plan**

BCCS seeks to open in the McKinley Park/Bridgeport neighborhoods to serve all surrounding neighborhoods with a K-8 school educating 550 students when at full capacity in 2020. We will open with grades K-2 in the fall of 2014 and add three new kindergarten classes each year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Kg** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** | **Total** |
| 2014 | 78 | 60 | 60 |  |  |  |  | 198 |
| 2015 | 75 | 64 | 59 | 59 |  |  |  | 257 |
| 2016 | 75 | 64 | 58 | 58 | 58 |  |  | 313 |
| 2017 | 75 | 64 | 58 | 58 | 57 | 57 |  | 369 |
| 2018 | 75 | 64 | 58 | 57 | 57 | 56 | 56 | 423 |

**Academic Goals**

BCCS believes formative and summative assessments designed by teachers which are aligned with unit standards are the most insightful for instruction. BCCS will assess student learning and understanding within our interdisciplinary curriculum through unit performance tasks and student portfolios, which include evidence of students achieving academic and social-emotional goals. The use of these authentic assessments closely tied to our curriculum will transfer to high student achievement on standardized tests such as NWEA and PARCC. BCCS has set goals to be in the 90th percentile in terms of national growth of students on NWEA MAP Reading and Math, 90th percentile in terms of national attainment on NWEA MAP Reading and Math, and have 90% of students meeting or exceeding standards on the PARCC assessment by year five. With these goals, BCCS will ensure its place as a Tier 1 school as outlined in CPS’s School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP).

**Community Rationale**

Our target communities are diverse in race, ethnicity, and socio-economic levels, and have had significant changes in population over time. In this way, these areas represent a microcosm of the greater Chicago area. We believe in the importance of valuing, respecting and honoring diversity. Over the past three years, beginning in Bridgeport, the BCCS Design Team has worked to engage with parents, community leaders, and organizations to learn more about the strengths and needs of the communities, 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. The mission and vision of BCCS aligns to the needs indicated by community members for more quality schooling options, opportunities for decision-making within the school, a thoughtful approach to racism and discrimination, and services and programs that meet the diverse needs of students.

**Demonstrated Capacity to Open and Manage a High Quality School**

The Design Team, who will become members of the School Leadership and the Governing Board, has a demonstrated track record of the skills and competence necessary to the school’s success. Two members have worked successfully in the design, incubation, and start-up phase of new charter schools approved by Chicago Public Schools Board of Education. Together the team has great expertise in educational leadership, school finance and operations, curriculum development, and facilitating professional development. In addition, our Governing Board consists of ten individuals with deep expertise in education, law, community partnerships, real estate, and board governance. The BCCS Design Team and Governing Board believe that the following proposal demonstrates BCCS’s ability to provide this important educational option for students on the south side of Chicago.