

<b>Proposed Charter School Name</b>	C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. Academy Charter Middle School
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<b>Public Contact Telephone Number</b>	917-270-3531
<b>District of Location</b>	CSD 19
<b>Opening Date</b>	Fall 2016
<b>Proposed Charter Term</b>	5 Years, 2016-17 through 2020-21
<b>Proposed Management Company or Partners</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term</b>	Year 1: Grade 5, 115 scholars Year 2: Grades 5-6, 230 scholars Year 3: Grades 5-7, 345 scholars Year 4: Grades 5-8, 460 scholars Year 5: Grades 5-8, 460 scholars
<b>Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span</b>	Grades 5-8; 460 scholars
<b>Mission Statement</b>	C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. Academy's mission is to enable all <b>C</b> hildren to <b>H</b> ave <b>O</b> pportunities to <b>I</b> nspire <b>C</b> hallenge and <b>E</b> mpower <b>T</b> hemselves and <b>O</b> thers; thus making a positive CHOICE TO make a difference in themselves, their families and their community.

C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. Academy Charter Middle School intends to change the lives of our community by producing scholars that are prepared for the future to be better individuals, family members, community advocates and/or supporters; and, career minded young men and women. We will be a powerful learning community with high levels of academic & social accountability. The core values of our community embrace: Knowledge, Scholarship, Leadership and Empowerment. As a community of professionals, parents and scholars, we will work to ensure that we govern ourselves by this educational aim: *to develop young men and women who are well-educated, motivated and determined to make an indelible mark on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by improving themselves through knowledge, scholarship, leadership and empowerment.*

To achieve this, we will establish a participatory structure of teaching and learning that reflects analytical and reflective teaching practices based on data, high levels of collaboration, and job-embedded opportunities for teachers to perfect their practice. This will be a core component of our school. The success of our school community is based on mutually respectful relationships among parents, staff, scholars and community members so that all will achieve their full potential.

We strongly believe that creating a *“culture of achievement”* and excellence for our scholars, will be key in getting our children to re-invest in themselves, their education, their families and their communities. We will begin with providing our scholars with a solid foundational knowledge in core academic disciplines and then challenging them to discover and explore these core disciplines, as well as others, to enhance their learning. Four essential “pillars toward excellence” will permeate the school community and assist our scholars with achieving personal and academic excellence. The action steps are the following:

1. **Knowledge:** Elevating and broadening their academic knowledge;
2. **Scholarship:** Taking ownership of their learning;

3. **Leadership:** Improving themselves socially and academically by holding themselves to the highest of standards;
4. **Empowerment:** Improving their community, both in school and at home, by taking one positive step every day to better their own lives and the life of another person.

### **The Key Design Elements of CTA are:**

***Standards Based Curriculum and Instruction with a Culturally Responsive Theme:*** Beginning with the NYS Common Core Standards, teachers will plan thematic units of study around our “CHOICE TO” theme of “Opportunity,” “Inspiration,” “Choices” and “Empowerment.” Scholars will read, explore and respond to these themes through writing, projects, technology applications, and media literacy, and implement them through community outreach. CTA teachers will employ the research-based instructional practices termed the ***Gradual Release of Responsibility Model*** by Pearson and Gallagher<sup>1</sup>. This will enable our scholars to receive tailored instruction in a more individualized way and learn through apprenticeship.

***Targeted Scholar Support and/or Enrichment:*** Scholars needing additional support will be identified and culled into teacher led remediation or enrichment groups to assist scholars with making gains to achieve learning goals and grade level expectations.

***Strong Behavioral Expectations and Personal Responsibility:*** Whole Brain Teaching<sup>2</sup> practices will be employed school-wide coupled with Sean Covey’s ***7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*** to assist building up scholars’ self-identity and personal leadership which will promote their ability to exemplify the traits of a CTA scholar.

***Weekly Scholar Caucuses and Leadership Seminar:*** Two distinct “caucuses” will be programmed into our scholars’ weekly schedule: one Academic and one Social. Both caucuses will be aimed at assisting scholars to meet their academic and personal goals. Leadership Seminars teach scholars the qualities of leaders and then have them demonstrate those qualities in their families and the community.

***Strong Commitment to Teacher Development and Support:*** CTA Leaders are committed to the success of our scholars. That success is predicated on having effective educators in each classroom. CTA will have Growing Leaders training which will represent our twice-weekly teacher development sessions.

***Cultivating Strong Family Partnerships:*** CTA will be closely linked to its families by offering a wide range of Parent Caucuses to assist families in supporting their scholar at home and improve themselves personally through strong ties to community based organizations and social service agencies. CTA will have an “open door” policy and hands-on approach to sustaining its families through the dedicated work of our Family Leader.

***Emphasis on Data, Technology and Media Literacy:*** CTA will be focused on providing high quality instruction by consistently reviewing scholars’ progress with informal and formal data assessment. This is reflected in teachers’ schedules with a weekly Data Review period programmed for them. Scholars and faculty will use technology to access achievement data, utilize academic intervention and support programs and learn how media images of males/females, minorities, and social culture, impact self-perception and influence communities. The study of Media Literacy will help CTA scholars view public images of themselves and work to sustain positive images and dispel negative images.

***Target Population Community Served:*** CTA seeks to serve the highest need scholars in CSD 19. We will recruit scholars who are considered “at-risk”; defined as scholars performing 1 to 3 years below their grade level expectations, including those with learning disabilities, and who are eligible to receive free or reduced price lunch. CTA will also use lottery preferences to enroll scholars with the same demographics and socio-economic statuses as our district of location. Additionally, we will aim to meet or exceed the targets established by the Board of Regents for scholars with disabilities and English Language Learners.

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<sup>1</sup> Pearson, P.D. & Gallagher, M. (1983) “The Instruction of Reading Comprehension,” *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8, p. 317-344

<sup>2</sup> Bifle, Chris. (2013) *Whole Brain Teaching*. McGraw-Hill, Harper Collins.

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## I. MISSION, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, ENROLLMENT, AND COMMUNITY

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### A. MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. Academy Charter Middle School (“CTA”) is to enable all Children to **Have Opportunities to Inspire Challenge and Empower Themselves and Others** to make a positive CHOICE TO be societal contributors.

C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. Academy Charter Middle School intends to change the lives of our community by producing scholars who are prepared for the future to be better individuals, family members, community advocates and career minded young men and women. We will be a powerful learning community with high levels of academic & social accountability. The core values of our community embrace: Knowledge, Scholarship, Leadership and Empowerment. As a community of professionals, parents and scholars, we will work to ensure that we govern ourselves by this educational aim: *to develop young men and women who are well-educated, motivated and determined to make an indelible mark on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by improving themselves through knowledge, scholarship, leadership and empowerment.* Our school will embody the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, that “*intellect plus character is the true goal of education.*” Our school will create critical, analytical thinkers who make choices that positively impact their academic and social growth through high levels of collaboration, benefitting from analytical and reflective teaching practices based on data, rooted in standards and embedded with opportunities for teachers, scholars and parents; to perfect their practices.

To achieve this, we will establish a participatory structure of teaching and learning that reflects analytical and reflective teaching practices based on data, high levels of collaboration, and job-embedded opportunities for teachers to perfect their practice. This will be a core component of our school. The success of our school community is based on mutually respectful relationships among parents, staff, scholars and community members so that all will achieve their full potential.

#### **Furthering the Objectives of New York State Education (NYS) Law §2850(2)**

Our school community plans to serve Grades 5-8. CTA is committed to maintaining a culture of achievement where “intellectuals” are celebrated and good character is fostered through academic achievement, personal growth and social empowerment. In accordance with NYS Education Law §2850(2), we intend to meet all six (6) objectives as stated in the New York State Charter School law. Our goals are the following:

1. Our primary goal is to **raise scholar achievement** through the unified integrated teaching of New York Common Core State Standards (CCSS) based academic curricula and develop leadership skills and qualities within our scholars.
2. We plan to be located in East New York, Brooklyn and target the scholars within the Community School Districts 19, 16 and 23; who are historically **at risk of academic failure**. We will **expand the learning opportunities for these scholars** by giving them the foundational academic and social knowledge that they need to take full advantage of the opportunities to explore, question and become involved in their communities. We will provide apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities with influential leaders, community activists and professionals to teach the traits of success embodied by people from scholars own communities. We will measure our success by the personal growth and renewed commitment and determination of our scholars, who would have otherwise continued to fail in middle school and possibly dropout of school after Grade 8.
3. CTA will implement and model **innovative teaching and learning methods** by keeping it simple: We will FOCUS. In the book, **Focus** by Dr. Michael Schmoker, he quotes Richard Vacca who wrote,

“Adolescents entering the adult world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens and conduct their personal lives.”<sup>1</sup> With that in mind, we will design our curriculum to offer scholars a plethora of rich experiences within traditional curricular contexts that are strategically aligned to our scholarly qualities and four themes in CHOICE. Through this approach, we will model FOCUS through direct focused instruction, guided practice through peer and teacher collaboration and provide targeted small group support, in an effort to gradually release responsibility of learning to scholars and meet the needs of all scholars. (Schmoker, 2011)

4. This approach will provide ***new professional opportunities for teachers and staff*** to create, plan and deliver instruction that is highly motivating, engaging and reflective for scholars, and delivers the level of growth and achievement we expect from our scholars.
5. CTA plans to ***provide parents and scholars with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities*** afforded to them. Our consistent involvement with our CTA families, from the initial meeting, provides our CTA families and scholars with the assurance that we are providing world-class support and services from the beginning of their school experience, until their graduation from Grade 8. We will offer parents a variety of workshops and career development, resume writing, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, GED, housing assistance, financial planning, and much more. Additionally, our partnership with Dr. Gerard Costa, via Montclair University, will enable us to engage in action research and clinical responses to emotional and/or mental issues that may plague our families and scholars.
6. CTA aims to provide the highest quality of education for all scholars and believes that we should be held ***accountable for high scholar achievement*** results that demonstrate high levels of scholar performance. Our goal is to have our scholars outperform scholars in CSD 19 by at least fifteen (15) percentage points each academic school year.

#### **B. KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS OF CTA:**

CTA’s school model is based on the following ***Four (4) Pillars of Excellence*** which we believe will aid our scholars in success.

1. **Knowledge:** Elevating and broadening their academic knowledge;
2. **Scholarship:** Taking ownership of their learning;
3. **Leadership:** Improving themselves socially and academically by holding themselves to the highest of standards; and,
4. **Empowerment:** Improving their community, both in school and at home, by taking one positive step every day to better their own lives and the life of another person.

Our key design elements are tied to how we will establish and build our four pillars of excellence in the following manner:

#### **Knowledge & Scholarship**

- ***Standards Based Curriculum and Instruction with a Culturally Responsive Theme:*** Beginning with the NYS CCSS, teachers will plan thematic units of study around our CHOICE TO theme of “Opportunity,” “Inspiration,” “Choices” and “Empowerment.” Scholars will read, explore and respond to these themes through writing, projects, technology applications and media literacy. Then, they will implement them through community outreach. CTA teachers will employ the research-based instructional practices termed the ***Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (GRR)***<sup>2</sup>. This will enable our scholars to receive individualized instruction and learn through apprenticeship.
- ***Targeted Scholar Support and/or Enrichment:*** Scholars needing additional support will be identified and culled into teacher led remediation or enrichment groups to assist scholars with making gains to achieve learning goals and grade level expectations.
- ***Strong Behavioral Expectations and Personal Responsibility:*** CTA will employ school-wide Whole Brain Teaching<sup>3</sup> practices coupled with Sean Covey’s ***7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*** to assist with building scholars’ self-identity and personal leadership.

#### **Leadership**

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<sup>1</sup> Bifle, C. (2013). *Whole Brain Teaching for Challenging Kids*. San Francisco: Whole Brain Teaching, LLC.

<sup>2</sup> Pearson, P.D. & Gallagher, M. (1983) “The Instruction of Reading Comprehension,” *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8, p. 317-344

<sup>3</sup> Bifle, Chris. (2013) *Whole Brain Teaching*. McGraw-Hill, Harper Collins.

- **Weekly Scholar Caucuses and Empowerment Caucus:** Each week, scholars will participate in an academic and a social caucus. Both caucuses will assist scholars with meeting their academic and personal goals. Monthly Empowerment Caucuses teach scholars the qualities of leaders and have them demonstrate those qualities in their families and the community. They also celebrate individual scholar success when consistent scholarly achievement growth is demonstrated.
- **Strong Commitment to Teacher Development and Support:** Scholar success is predicated on having effective educators in each classroom. CTA will provide professional development for teachers that occurs twice weekly. We also provide weekly data study, and ongoing coaching and feedback via Instructional Caucus and Data Study Meetings.

### **Empowerment**

- **Cultivating Strong Family Partnerships:** CTA will offer a wide range of Parent Caucuses to assist families with supporting their scholars at home. CTA will also provide self-improvement opportunities for parents through partnerships with community based organizations and social service agencies. CTA will have an “open door” policy and hands-on approach to sustaining its families through the dedicated work of our Family Leader.
- **Emphasis on Data, Technology and Media Literacy:** CTA will provide high quality instruction by consistently reviewing scholars’ progress with informal and formal data assessment. Teachers’ schedules reflect this focus and include a weekly Data Review period. Scholars and faculty will use technology to access achievement data, utilize academic intervention and support programs and learn how media images of males/females, minorities, and social culture, impact self-perception and influence communities. The study of Media Literacy will help CTA scholars view public images of themselves and work to sustain positive images and dispel negative images.

### **C. ENROLLMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

	<b>Ages of Scholars</b>	<b>Year 1 2016-17</b>	<b>Year 2 2017-18</b>	<b>Year 3 2018-19</b>	<b>Year 4 2019-20</b>	<b>Year 5 2020-21</b>
<b>Grade 5</b>	10-12	115	115	115	115	115
<b>Grade 6</b>	11-13		115	115	115	115
<b>Grade 7</b>	12-14			115	115	115
<b>Grade 8</b>	13-15				115	115
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>115</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>460</b>

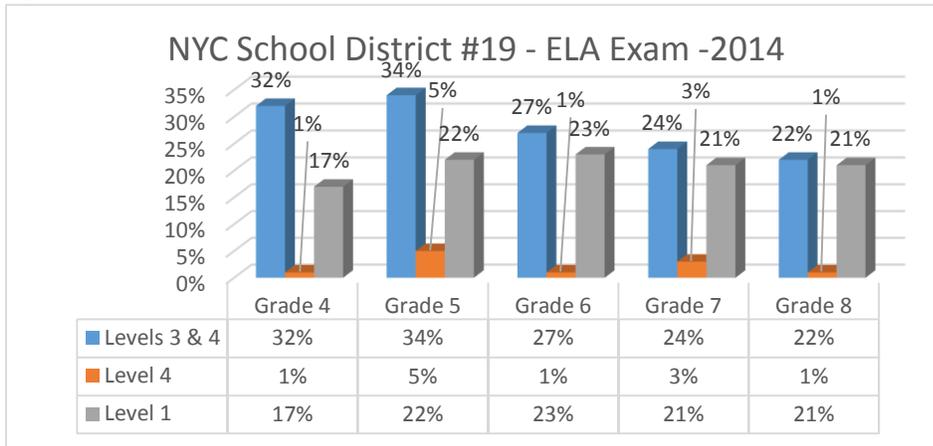
#### **Rationale for Projected Enrollment Size and Growth Strategy**

CTA plans to open its doors in the fall of 2016 with 115 scholars in Grade 5. We plan to establish 4 Leadership Cohorts (classrooms) of 28-30 scholars each. In the event of a vacant seat, we plan to backfill the vacancy from the anticipated waiting list for our school ensuring that all seats are filled. We expect an attrition rate of 7% based on the rates of charter schools within CSD 19 with comparable demographics. Because we will have Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) in classes that include SWDs and/or ELLs, the ratio of teachers to scholars is 15:1. Additionally, we will staff classes to include one Teacher Assistant per class. Beginning with Grade 5 in Year 1, we plan to add one grade level per year, 115 scholars each year, to reach our full grade and enrollment capacity of 460 scholars from Grades 5-8. Should there be any vacancies in successive years after Year 1, we will back fill those vacancies with scholars who may be on the CTA enrollment waiting list. A waiting list is anticipated due to the chronic underperformance of schools located within CSD 19.

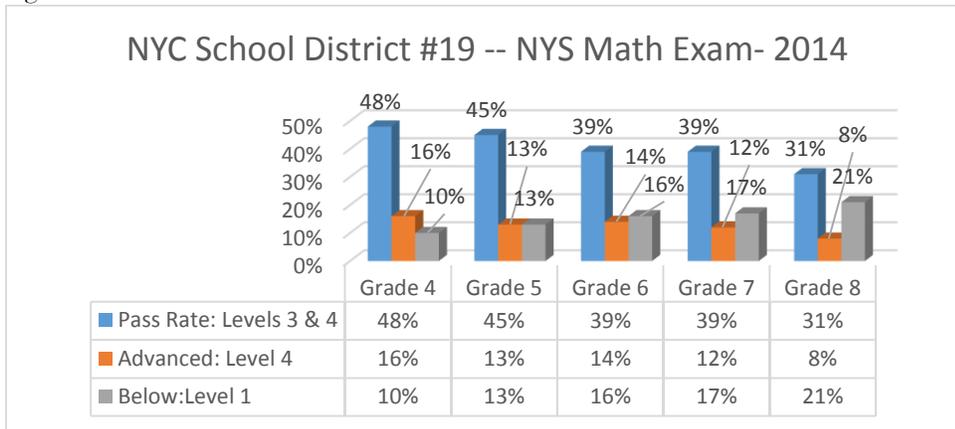
Due to the systemic gradual academic failure of scholars in CSD 19 after Grade 4 on standardized tests in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math); as evidenced on NYS Accountability Reports, for CSD19, CTA will serve scholars beginning in Grade 5. <sup>4</sup> (See Figure 1: NYC School District #19 –English Language Arts 2012 and Figure 2: NYC School District #19 – Mathematics 2012).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math/2013/2013ELAandMathemaitcsDistrictandBuildingAggregatesMedia.pdf>

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



*\*Statistics were culled from figures published by the NYS and NYC education departments' accountability reports and data resources for the 2013-14 school year.*

Statistics show that roughly 42% of scholars who are underperforming in Grade 5, particularly African-American and Latino males, will eventually drop out of school, never receiving a high school diploma.<sup>5</sup> Thus, we plan to change the historical trajectory of these scholars' by improving their academic success so that they are more likely to attend and be better prepared for high schools in New York City. Therefore, we aim to reverse the declining trend of scholar academic performance beginning in Grade 5. To achieve this, CTA will be guided by its mission to implement its key design elements and keep our scholars engaged with us from their first day at CTA up to their 8<sup>th</sup> Grade graduation.

**Recruitment Targets:**

CTA's top priority is to recruit a diverse scholar body that is reflective of CSD 19's population. In this district, 94% of 5-8<sup>th</sup> graders are eligible for FRPL and our recruitment plans will ensure that enrolled scholars mirror the community. For those identified in the school's mission, CTA is strategically recruiting in CSD's 19, 23, and 16 which are mostly comprised of scholars that fall well below the poverty line and are thus eligible for FRPL and who based on NYS proficiency data are at least one to two years below grade level. More than 65% of all NYS tested scholars in CSD 19 alone, were at Levels 1 and 2 respectively. In CSD's 23 and 16 combined, that percentage rose to over 78%.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.schottfoundation.org/urgency-of-now.pdf>

To **recruit scholars who are identified in our school's mission**, CTA will host meetings/presentations and provide flyers/brochures at faith-based organizations, early learning centers, libraries, local housing projects, food pantries, and local businesses; post updates on CTA's Facebook page, website, and Twitter account; list all services that will benefit SWDs and ELLs on our website and written materials; inform the CSD's Committee on Special Education as well as New York Immigration Coalition of our services and ask for assistance in community outreach. Our brochure has been translated into Spanish and we are working on translations into other languages represented in the community. Once we occupy our space, CTA will host school tours and information sessions. We will have translators available at these tours as well as during events like Open Houses and parent conferences.

To recruit **scholars with disabilities**, CTA will continue to reach parents of those scholars by working collaboratively with the district's Committee on Special Education (CSE) to identify those families. We will also work with the Superintendents' office of CSD19, local churches, community-based organizations, local hospitals and clinics, and CSD 19's Family Advocate; all of whom work closely with parents of SWDs. We will also visit all 12 housing complexes in East NY to target these families with flyers, information sessions and application drives.

To **recruit English language learners**, several of CTA's planning team have a close connection to the Hispanic/Latino communities in these districts and have thus been able to locate families, for whom Spanish is their home language, and speak with them at local churches, laundromats, restaurants, bars, hair salons, parks, other Hispanic owned and/or operated establishments, and areas in East NY where large concentrations of Hispanic families reside. We also have materials in Spanish as well as information posted on the CTA website in Spanish. We will continue to work with the local Coalition for Hispanic Family Services in East New York for their assistance with outreach to these families. Through these efforts, we will also recruit from the small, but influential group of Bengali families that have recently moved into the East New York area and assist their children with English language acquisition.

We will disseminate information in both English and Spanish languages that will allow families to access CTA's information so that they can make an informed decision about whether or not CTA is the right school for their child. The information will highlight our mission and key design elements; specifically our focus on teaching academics with a culturally relevant theme and an intentional teaching of leadership qualities and skills with the goal of uplifting scholars, their families and the community. We will continue to recruit and inform families by partnering with community-based organizations such as Man-Up which provides enrichment services to scholars of low-income families in communities with poor middle school performance.

CTA is not only targeting FRPL scholars, but also **scholars who are 1 to 3 years below their current grade level and considered at-risk**. As such, CTA will conduct extensive outreach across several neighborhood sections of Brooklyn; namely, East New York, Bedford Stuyvesant and Brownsville, to recruit our target population of scholars. These sections of Brooklyn represent those CSD's that have chronic academic failure of middle school scholars beginning in Grade 5. To further ensure that we will meet our targets, CTA will host meetings and presentations at local community centers, churches, food pantries and other community based organizations that serve families of scholars who receive government assistance and have special needs. These efforts will allow us to recruit **scholars who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program**. We will also visit the community's low-income houses and housing projects to recruit these scholars.

CTA plans to continue to hold information sessions about CTA's school design and plan until August 2015 for families in the target CSD's. The President of CEC 19 has agreed to assist us in recruiting scholars from CSD 19, by providing several venues for hosting sessions and will actively promote CTA's opening in CSD 19. Finally, to reach an even broader audience in CSD 19 and the other targeted areas in Brooklyn, we have launched the CTA website (<http://choicetoacademy.org>) which provides information about our school, its founders, and offers visitors a survey option to share feedback on our school design and model. We also have a Facebook page, which allows current users to share information about our school and recommend our school to families in Brooklyn as well as a Twitter account ([@choicetoacademy](https://twitter.com/choicetoacademy)) which allows us to update our "followers" on upcoming events and share information about our school.

### **Meeting and Exceeding Retention Targets**

The NYS Charter Schools Act requires that all charter schools meet the established retention and enrollment targets for the district in which they are located, as per established enrollment and retention target calculations for schools located within that same district. Given CTA's projected enrollment, the enrollment target for special education scholars is 12%; for scholars with Limited English Proficiency, 10.7%; and for scholars who receive Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), 87%.<sup>6</sup> These effective targets are well below what CTA expects to encounter when we enroll scholars.

**For all scholars including SWDs, ELLs, those scholars identified in the school's mission, and those scholars eligible for FRPL**, CTA will have a mentoring program coordinated by the Director of School Culture (DSC), Family Leader, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor. All CTA scholars will be assigned a mentor who will work with CTA scholars to develop their goals for personal development. Mentors will work with CTA scholars during Social Caucus, Leadership Seminar and after-school programs. Mentors will be charged with helping scholars cultivate the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, which will assist scholars in developing the qualities of a CTA SCHOLAR (Self-Discipline, Committed to excellence, Hungry for knowledge, Original, Leader, Articulate, Resilient and empowered to make positive choices every day). Additional to mentors, CTA scholars will receive weekly family check-ins with their classroom teachers, and school leaders, to ensure their overall progress. Teachers will also meet with scholars, at least once a week, for either remediation or enrichment.

**To retain SWDs**, CTA will work closely with Dr. Gerard Costa, the founding Director at Montclair University's Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health. We will utilize the center's "Relationship Based Approach" to educating children and will be the sole charter school in CSD 19 with a partnership with a nationally recognized medical school. In Year 1, CTA will employ two learning specialists; a Special Education teacher and an ELL Coordinator. Each following year of the first charter term, another learning specialist will be added. Services will be delivered in an integrated, co-teaching setting. For those scholars whose IEPs call for one-to-one or a small group setting, specialists will deliver those services in accordance with their IEP specifications. Scholars will also receive additional support via remediation classes that will offer technology-based programs such as Achieve 3000, Read 180, System 44, and Math 180. For SWDs, IEPs will be reviewed upon receipt by the Principal, Director of School Support Services (DSSS), and Special Education Teacher in consultation with the CSE. This group will ascertain the programmatic impact of the IEP and determine how the mandated services will be met at CTA. Scholars with IEPs will be closely monitored by the School Support Team (SST) comprised of the Principal (or his/her designee), DSSS, Special Education teacher, General Education teacher, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor.

**To retain ELLs**, the ELL Coordinator, Principal, and DSSS, will craft an Action Plan for integrated language services to be shared with and implemented by teachers with programmatic impact on that particular scholar. All ELL scholars will be instructed in the general classroom and receive language supports, as and if needed, with materials provided in their home language that will support and strengthen their acquisition of the English language; specifically academic vocabulary. ELLs requiring additional academic support will use Achieve3000, the *LBook* component of Read 180, ESL Smart, and Math 180. ELLs will be closely monitored by the ELL Coordinator, DSSS, and Family Leader.

CTA will also have a mentoring program coordinated by the Director of School Culture (DSC), Family Leader, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor. All CTA scholars will receive a mentor who will help scholars to develop their personal development goals. Mentors will work with CTA scholars during Social Caucus, Leadership Seminar and after-school programs. These mentors will consist of community volunteers, local elected officials, and personnel from community partners, such as, Man-Up and the Brownsville Youth Association. Mentors will be charged with helping scholars cultivate the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, which will assist scholars in developing the qualities of a CTA SCHOLAR (Self-Discipline, Committed to excellence, Hungry for knowledge, Original, Leader, Articulate, Resilient and empowered to make positive choices every day).

In addition to the above, a Retention Committee will be created, **for all scholars including SWDs, ELLs, those scholars identified in the school's mission, and those scholars eligible for FRPL**; in the winter of the first school year to identify and meet the specific

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<sup>6</sup> These targets were calculated using NYSED's Enrollment Targets Calculator located on its website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/OversightPlan.html>

needs of scholars and their families. The DSC and Family Leader will oversee this committee and ensure high retention of all scholars. CTA will also continue to include the input and assistance from community, faith based organizations and local elected officials.

### **Family and Community Support**

Based on CTA's strong ties to the community and the outcome of CTA's grassroots approach to gain commitment and support from CSD 19 families, elected officials and the CEC, CTA believes that there is strong desire and support for our school in East New York, Brooklyn.

Since September 2013, CTA has engaged in extensive outreach, specifically to families in CSD 16 and CSD 19, to gauge which families would choose CTA as a middle school for their current 3<sup>rd</sup> grade child, who would be entering Grade 5 in 2015. Out of the 350 of families that were surveyed and signed CTA's petition, 100% were either "Likely" or "Very Likely" to choose CTA. (See Attachment #2)

CTA has conducted formal and informal meetings with the above mentioned groups to present our school design and model and solicit feedback on our plan. During these meetings, parents and community members shared the educational needs of the community. Overwhelmingly, feedback reflected that the community feels CSD 19 middle schools do not provide enough academic support; adequately address bullying, harassment and intimidation; or support scholars' socio-emotional development and growth. We heard complaints that mental health issues often go unchecked, untreated and overlooked in the family, in schools and local medical clinics. CTA responded to these concerns by immediately garnering support from local community organizations, such as Brownsville Youth & Community Development Organization (BYCD), Man-Up organization, local churches, hospitals and outreach centers. These organizations support the mission of CTA by working with families and children to instill the qualities of leadership to inspire and empower children to make better choices for themselves now and in the future. BYCD and Man-Up have already agreed to have some staff members serve as mentors for scholars. They will also facilitate CTA's after-school programs and services.

We also forged a partnership with Montclair University's Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health.(CAECMH) Through Dr. Costa's work and partnership, we plan to address issues of emotional and mental health that typically occur in families and children in high poverty urban areas. All in the community were excited at this prospect, since CTA would be the only school in CSD 19 with this type of academic research-based clinical support. CAECMH will offer professional development to CTA teachers and staff, training them in current techniques in educating SWDs as well as addressing scholars and/or their families that may suffer from mental health issues.

After hearing about CTA's program, the community and family were eager to have a school, such as CTA, in East New York that could provide the type of school experience and education necessary for its children to be successful. (For more evidence of family and community support for CTA, see Attachment #2.) We also have had numerous conversations with the superintendent of CSD 19, who expressed her willingness to have one of the existing traditional middle schools share best practice teaching learning with CTA, upon receipt of charter.

Additionally, we have had several parent and community meetings at the Man-Up community center, at the CEC parent meetings, attended public health fairs and community block parties, and walking tours, in an effort to reach the parents and guardians of children eligible to attend CTA in 2016. We were met with an overwhelming reception by parents clamoring for better school options and safer schools for their children. All were eager to pledge their desire to see CTA open its doors in 2016.

### **Application, Admissions and Enrollment Process**

Beginning in January 2016, we will aggressively recruit families for scholar enrollment in September 2016, by participating in the Common Online Charter School Application on the New York City Charter Schools (NYCCSC) Center website.<sup>7</sup> We feel that this process will result in success given that this year alone, the NYCCSC received 212,500 applications for 21, 00 available seats. Discounting duplicate applications of those that applied to several schools, there were 70, 700 applicants for the same amount of available seats. This figure is up from over 69,000 applications received in 2013-14 school year.<sup>8</sup> This created a waiting list of over 49, 700 students. Therefore, we will use this method as one way for our families to apply, as well as using paper applications that families can fill out and obtain from the school site.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://riverdalepress.com/stories/Not-enough-seats-at-charter-schools,53777?content\\_source=&category\\_id=5&search\\_filter=&event\\_mode=&event\\_ts\\_from=&list\\_type=&order\\_by=&order\\_sort=&content\\_class=&sub\\_type=&town\\_id=](http://riverdalepress.com/stories/Not-enough-seats-at-charter-schools,53777?content_source=&category_id=5&search_filter=&event_mode=&event_ts_from=&list_type=&order_by=&order_sort=&content_class=&sub_type=&town_id=)

All applications must be received by the deadline (typically the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April of each year) to be placed in CTA’s lottery. An independent third party will conduct the lottery in the last week of April.

CTA families will be notified of acceptance or placement on CTA’s Waiting List by the first Monday in May of every year. Each letter will include instructions for securing the selected seat or spot on the Waiting List. Parents will then attend their first Family Leader Session in May to fill out all necessary paperwork, receive the CTA Family Handbook and all other pertinent information. To mitigate families not returning required enrollment forms by required deadlines, we will require that families complete the required documentation before they leave the Family Leader Session. We will have staff available to assist with completing the forms. We will also have bilingual staff members present, as well as forms available in Spanish, for those families who may require it. Additionally, two staff members who have expertise with scholars with special needs will be available to meet with families and address the scholar’s programmatic needs and how CTA can meet them. If it is deemed that the scholar’s needs cannot be met, as outlined in the IEP, we will then assist the family with setting up an appointment with CSD 19’s Committee on Special Education (CSE) to either modify the child’s current IEP so that he can stay in CTA and partake in the instructional program we offer, or find a comparable program in another school.

It should be noted, that although we aim to not lose any of our scholars due to the high levels of academic and social supports that we will offer, we do understand that scholar attrition may occur for a variety of reasons. We will track this data to pinpoint which is the most influential in determining whether scholars stay or leave. To ensure smooth transition for our scholar into their new setting, the family will be required to meet with the Family Leader and the Principal to discuss why they have chosen to leave and complete an Exit Form. The Exit Form will be used to inform how we can make the CTA School experience better for our current and prospective CTA families and scholars. The D.O. will then contact the receiving school to ensure that all records and information are transferred in a timely and efficient manner. The Family Leader will also contact the family within 3-6 weeks to make sure that our former scholar has transitioned successfully.

**D. COMMUNITY TO BE SERVED**

CTA seeks to serve the scholars in CSD 19 located in East New York, Brooklyn. The founder, planning team and CTA’s Board of Trustees have deep roots and ties to the East New York community. Some members have worked and still work as teachers and administrators in its public schools, lived in its communities, enrolled their own children in CSD 19 schools, joined local churches, and done the same in other nearby sections of Brooklyn. Therefore, CTA is confident that it knows and understands the challenges that the families and children in this community face.

The East New York community consists primarily of low-income housing residents, with over half of its residents receiving public assistance (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF], Home Relief, Supplemental Security Income [SSI], and Medicaid). As of the 2013 Census, East New York was 55% African American, 35% Hispanic or Latino, 6.4% Asian, 2% Caucasian, and 2.6% Other. It also consists of 12 public housing complexes where over 100,000 residents live.<sup>9</sup>

There has also been a recent influx of Bengali immigrants in the Cypress Hills section of East New York, Brooklyn.<sup>10</sup> Further, NYS has identified CSD 19 as a District in Need of Improvement based on scholar performance on the NYS English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) state exams.<sup>11</sup> Currently, CSD 19 has a total of 20 middle schools, with 4 of those being charter schools. (Figure 3)

**Figure 3 – CSD 19 Middle Schools**

Traditional Public Schools				Charter Schools
K089 Cypress Hills Community School (P.S. / J.H.S. 89)	K364 Gateway (I.S. 364)	K311 Essence School	K422 Spring Creek Community School	K386 Invictus Preparatory Charter School

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

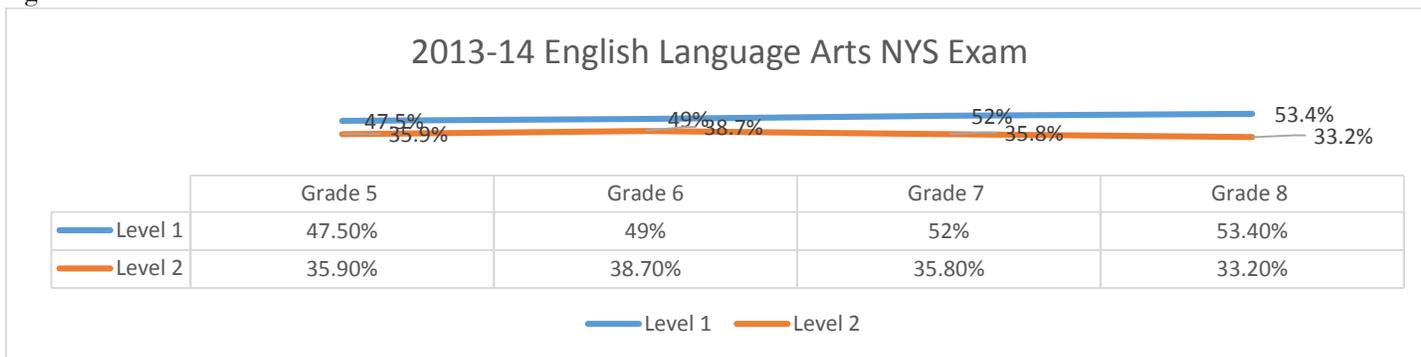
<sup>10</sup> <http://issuu.com/studybrooklyn/docs/community-district-5-brooklyn-neighborhood-report>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math/2013/2013ELAandMathemaitcsDistrictandBuildingAggregatesMedia.pdf>

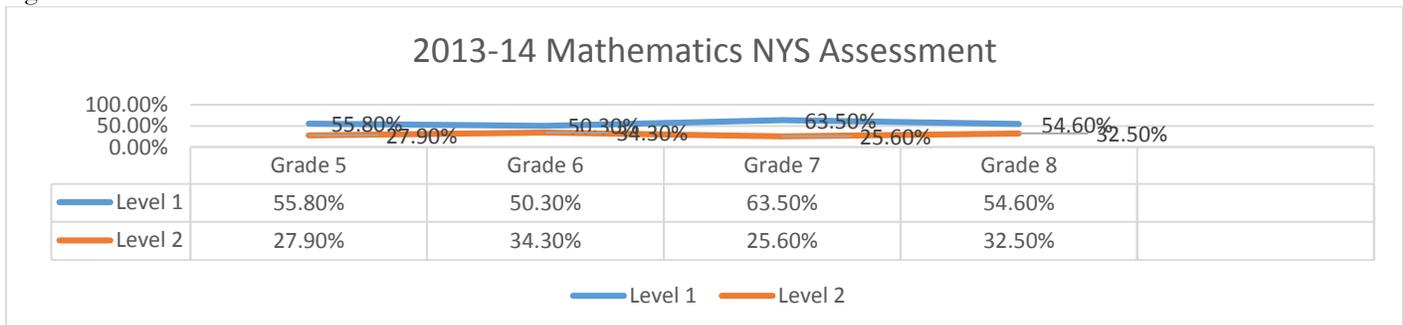
K166 George Gershwin (J.H.S. 166)	K174 The Dumont (P.S. 174)	K202 Ernest S. Jenkyns (P.S. 202)	K292 Margaret Douglas (J.H.S. 292)		K358 Achievement First East New York Charter School
K306 Ethan Allen School (P.S. / M.S. 306)	K678 The East New York Middle School of Excellence	K171 Abraham Lincoln Intermediate School (I.S. 171)	K452 Frederick Douglass Academy VIII		K740 Brooklyn Scholars Charter School
K409 East New York Family Academy	K404 Academy for Young Writers	K218 James P. Sinnott (J.H.S. 218)	K302 Rafael Cordero School (J.H.S. 302)		K359 The UFT Charter School

According to the 2012-13 NYS assessment data, more than 50% of scholars in Grades 5-8, scored at Level 1 on both ELA and Math state exams. The following tables (Figures 4 & 5) highlight the percentages of scholars who performed at Levels 1 and 2 for the 2012-13 school year.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**



**Rationale for how CTA will enhance the educational options for scholars:** CTA’s planning team has engaged with local stakeholders, including representatives from area institutions, elected officials, members of community organizations, local community boards, school leaders, and families, to gain a deeper understanding of the interest in and need for a new school and how CTA might best address the need. In the course of these conversations, stakeholders have consistently articulated the immediate need for additional middle and high school options in the East New York and Brownsville areas of Brooklyn. They also expressed their interest in CTA’s school design and model.

Community based organizations serving families and youth in East New York, have expressed their support by establishing formal partnerships with CTA in an effort to enhance the educational experiences offered to scholars in CSD 19 (see *Attachment 2*). Various local elected officials and community members have expressed their support for CTA through their invaluable input on our planning efforts, particularly concerning our outreach campaign (see *Attachment 2*). In addition, a number of local school representatives, including leaders from three charter schools, and three traditional public schools, have provided support by offering helpful advice and voicing their interest in future collaboration to enhance the educational opportunities afforded to all scholars in the district.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math/2013/2013ELAandMathemaitcsDistrictandBuildingAggregatesMedia.pdf>

Lastly, CTA’s planning team and some Board members, have met with families in CTA information sessions, community parent meetings, community events, and one-on-one discussions to gain a deeper understanding of their hopes, interests, and concerns with public schooling in CSD 19. These families have also provided feedback on aspects of our model, including our extended day and how we structure learning during the school day. In many instances, parents with whom we have met and who support our school have committed to assisting CTA’s founding members, in networking with other parents in the local community. These families and parents have also expressed a genuine interest in having additional middle school options that meet their children’s needs.

#### **E. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

CTA has engaged in an extensive and arduous community and parent outreach campaign to inform the public of our intent to assist with providing better educational options for scholars in East New York, Brooklyn and its surrounding neighborhoods. Members of CTA’s planning team have actively advertised and publicized CTA throughout East New York, Brooklyn and the surrounding neighborhoods since the summer of 2013. The parents, community members, local elected officials, as well as, traditional school officials have expressed concern about having “another charter school” come into their communities. However, after presenting our school’s mission, design and plan, they became more receptive to the prospective of having a school like ours, service the children in their respective communities. Our efforts to inform the community, present our mission and vision and receive feedback have included “walking tours”<sup>13</sup>; parent and community meetings; meetings with elected officials from the targeted area in Brooklyn; posting flyers and brochures; attending community board meetings; meeting with principals and the local school district’s superintendent; online outreach via social media and surveys and speaking with parents on a one-on-one basis on the street and at various public meetings.

The public was encouraged to offer comments on the proposed school plan via email, Twitter, Facebook, CTA’s website, survey and in person at meetings and on walking tours. (Some of the comments and feedback are included in *Attachment #2*.) To date however, we have not received any feedback that was negative or required us to make any significant changes to our school plan and/or design.

CTA plans to continue its expansive outreach by hosting Information Sessions at one of the largest religious centers in Brooklyn, the Christian Cultural Center Church (CCC) located in East NY; meet with Charles and Inez Barron, (the former and current NYC Council Representatives for District 42, which includes East New York and Brownsville); continue to meet with surrounding elementary and middle schools to establish and cultivate potential partnerships; continue to meet with CSD 19’s Family Advocate; parents of children with disabilities and or ELLs; parents who have children that could potentially attend CTA in the future; and other Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and agencies in the East New York, Brooklyn and surrounding Brooklyn neighborhoods.

#### **F. PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL IMPACT**

##### **Programmatic Impact**

CTA plans to open with 115 5<sup>th</sup> Grade scholars and reach its maximum enrollment of 400 scholars by the 4<sup>th</sup> year of year of our charter, if we are authorized. At maximum enrollment, CTA will enroll approximately 1.5% of CSD 19’s total scholar population. Therefore, we do not believe that we will have a substantial impact on the schools in CSD 19.

Additionally, no other middle school in CSD 19, albeit public or non-public has a model quite like CTA’s. Though there are a few middle schools similar in philosophy to CTA, in that they infuse character education and place a high emphasis on achieving academic success into their programs; they fall short of achieving this deal because they lack a deliberate emphasis on a home-school-community-scholar connection. We, at CTA, place a great deal of emphasis on ensuring our core academic foci are rooted in our Four Pillars of Excellence. These pillars correspond to our CHOICE TO themes of “opportunity”, “inspiration”, “challenge”, and “empowerment”. These themes are evidenced in culturally relevant content. It is also reflects in our scholars’ ability to represent that academic and personal learning, within their own community.

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<sup>13</sup> “Walking Tours” are defined as physically walking the geographic area of targeted scholar enrollment in the neighborhoods of East New York, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville, Brooklyn.

## Fiscal Impact

CTA's first-year operating budget is estimated at \$1.5 million. In Year 5, we estimate the operating budget for CTA to be \$6.2 million. Thus, in Year 1, CTA would be operating on only 0.09% of New York City Department of Education's total operating budget; and only 0.036% of its budget in Year 5 at CTA's maximum student enrollment growth. These figures do not represent a significant fiscal impact on NYCDOE. As a result, it is highly unlikely that CTA will have a disproportionate effect on other public or non-public schools in the CSD 19 area. (See Budget Attachment for actual numeric fiscal impact.)

Along with CTA's minimal fiscal impact on the local CSD, we do plan to have a larger positive impact on the programmatic options for scholars in CSD 19. We have been in constant contact with the Superintendent of CSD 19 to identify an existing school in CSD 19 willing to share practices across schools in an effort to promote best practices. The Superintendent has agreed to further conversations once we are chartered, to solidify this intended partnership. In anticipation of the NYCDOE's initiative to create district-charter school collaborations, we have already contacted the National Urban Alliance (NUA) which specializes in providing top notch professional development and support to schools in high-needs urban school districts.<sup>14</sup> Thus, we plan to continue these efforts.

## II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

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### A. ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

CTA's achievement goals align to its mission and vision for establishing high standards for academic achievement by its scholars in the following areas:

<b>English Language Arts</b>
<b>CTA Goal I:</b> All CTA scholars will meet or exceed NYS standards in reading, writing and speaking English Language Arts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Absolute measure:</b> Each year, at least 75% of CTA scholars, who attend CTA for at least two years, will achieve a score of Level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA Examination.</li><li>• <b>Comparison measure:</b> Each year, the total percentage of scholars passing the ELA exam, with a score of 3 or above, will exceed that of all scholars from CSD 19 in the applicable comparative grade levels.</li><li>• <b>Growth measure:</b> Each year, each grade-level cohort of scholars will reduce by one half, the gap between the percentage at Level 3 and 4 on the previous year's state ELA exam and 75 percent at Level 3 and 4 on the current year's state ELA exam.</li></ul>
<b>Mathematics</b>
<b>CTA Goal II:</b> All CTA scholars will meet and exceed NYS standards in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Absolute measure:</b> Each year, at least 75% of CTA scholars, who attend CTA for at least two years, will achieve a score of Level 3 or 4 above on New York State Math Examination.</li><li>• <b>Comparison measure:</b> Each year, the total percentage of CTA scholars passing the Math exam, with a score of 3 or above, will exceed that of all scholars from CSD 19 in the applicable comparative grade levels.</li><li>• <b>Growth measure:</b> Each year, each grade-level cohort of scholars will reduce by one half the gap between the percentage at Level 3 and 4 on the previous year's state Math exam and 75 percent at Level 3 and 4 on the current year's state Math exam.</li></ul>
<b>Science</b>

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<sup>14</sup> The National Urban Alliance (NUA) has worked with a number of school districts NYC CSD 19 such as Newark, NJ; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**CTA Goal III:** All CTA scholars will meet and/or exceed NYS standards relevant to Science achievement.

- **Absolute measure:** Each year, at least 75% of CTA scholars, who attend CTA for at least two years, will achieve a score of Level 3 or 4 on New York State Science Examination.
- **Comparison Measure:** Each year, the total percentage of CTA scholars passing the Science exam, with a score of 3 or above, will exceed that of all scholars from CSD 19 in the applicable comparative grade levels.
- **Growth measure:** Each year, the percent of scholars in the middle school accountability cohort passing the science exam with a score of 3 or above will exceed that of the cohort of all scholars from the local school district by at least 10%.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

**CTA Goal IV:** CTA will achieve Adequate Yearly Progress

Each year the school will attain a status of “In Good Standing” under the state’s NCLB accountability system.

To evaluate these goals, CTA plans to utilize several accountability tools and measures such as beginning of the year diagnostics and inventories, Achievement Network’s CCSS based assessments, NYS ELA and Math exams, curriculum based assessments, rubrics, and NYS Learning Environment surveys.

**B. SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR**

CTA believes that scholars, teachers and CTA leaders, must make teaching and learning their priority. Because CTA’s mission and goal is to serve predominantly at-risk scholars in the CSD 19 area and its surrounding communities, a longer school year and school day is necessary to effectively support our scholars academically and socially. The school schedule and calendar provides students with the equivalent of 209 days of instruction, as opposed to what students in CSD 19 and across NYC, receive. Currently, students in NYC public schools attend for 180 calendar days, for approximately 7 hours per day. In contrast, CTA scholars would attend school for 209 days, including Saturday School. This number excludes 15 additional days of Summer Academic Empowerment sessions. CTA scholars would also have an elongated school day; from 8 AM to 5:30 PM; a total of 9.5 hours per day, 5 days a week; with an additional 4 hours on Saturdays.

Our longer school day and year, and summer program provide CTA scholars, especially those at risk of academic failure, with critical time on task to meet proficiency standards and engage in studies outside core subjects. Team taught classes will be offered in all core disciplines for special education and ELL scholars to support the instructional program and meet the diverse needs of the learners. This enables CTA to fulfill its mission and meet the target outlined in Section I. A of this document.

**Table 2: Instructional Time**

Content Area	Minutes per Day	Minutes per Week	Minutes per School Year
ELA	90 minutes	450 minutes	81,900 minutes
Math	90 minutes	450 minutes	81,900 minutes
<b>Other content areas that occur weekly</b>			
Social Studies	45 minutes/2x per wk	90 minutes	16,380 minutes
Science	45 minutes/3x per wk	135 minutes	24,570 minutes
Physical Education (PSR)	45 minutes/2x per wk	90 minutes	16,380 minutes
Enrichment/Remediation	45 minutes/2x per wk	90 minutes	16,380 minutes
Saturday School (ELA) 88 additional school days	90 minutes	90 minutes	7,920 minutes
Saturday School (Math) 88 additional school days	90 minutes	90 minutes	7,920 minutes

*\*See Attachment 3A for a sample CTA scholar and CTA teacher schedule.*

Although ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies, appear as separate courses in the schedules and are accounted for separately in minutes; CTA will integrate these disciplines by building upon and deepening scholars’ background knowledge across disciplines through literacy.

The weaving of topics and content across disciplines aligns with CTA’s belief that scholars should experience school as they experience life; as an integrated harmonious unit. Thus, the schedule allows for the appropriate amount of time for CTA scholars to receive direct instruction of the content, receive practice and support approximating the content at their independent and instructional level, then apply the content in a real-life/world context. This approach to time allocations benefits all CTA scholars, particularly those who may be identified as at-risk, SDWs, and/or ELLs in that they will still be exposed to the grade level content, yet, be provided an “adjustable seat” to their learning, thus not allowing for the “remediation of remedial skills with remedial work.”

With 209 school days (inclusive of Saturdays, exclusive of the summer), all scholars will have a total of 10,763.5 hours of instructional seat time. This is in comparison to NYCDOE public schools which average 6.5 hours per school day; 5,850 hours per school year. All scholars will benefit from increased seat time, as it provides more time to for scholars to learn, practice, study and work to master content. Because CTA intends to target at-risk youth, this will be essential to their growth and progress. This will also be extremely beneficial to special scholar populations of at-risk scholars, SWDs and ELLs as they will receive specialized supports to maximize their learning.

CTA’s school calendar and schedule create the time teachers need for data analysis, collaboration with colleagues and school leaders, and unstructured scholar interactions. CTA believes that setting aside time for these activities will result in the development of meaningful professional relationships with CTA families, colleagues and school leaders. Weekly, CTA teachers will engage in 5 hours of professional development and planning which is inclusive of Instructional Caucus, Teacher-Leader Planning<sup>15</sup> and Job-Embedded PD. Teachers will also receive 4 ½ hours each week of Data Study. During Instructional Caucus time, teachers will hone and perfect their instructional craft. CTA believes that teachers are one of the most important factors to helping children achieve their highest potential. Therefore, to ensure teacher success, CTA will consistently provide teachers with the knowledge, tools and resources needed to continue to inspire, challenge and empower our scholars through regular high quality job-embedded professional learning and development opportunities.

In consideration of the above, the CTA calendar includes Professional Development Days and Teacher Seminar retreats. In Year 1, CTA will have off-campus quarterly staff retreats. The latter allows CTA teachers and staff to build collegiality, and leverage their educational efficacy to provide CTA scholars with the level of instruction and support required for their academic achievement. CTA staff will review the school calendar every January to identify opportunities to add more school days, if necessary. The CTA Board will approve all changes to the school calendar. *(See Attachment 3B for a detailed version of the School Calendar.)*

**Saturday School:** Saturday School runs from 9 AM to 1 PM and is designed to offer an additional 90 minutes of both Math and ELA instruction This additional instruction will be structured to deepen the learning of weekly instruction and focus on strengthening skills and building-up deficiencies. All CTA scholars will be strongly encouraged to attend.

**Summer Empowerment:** The summer empowerment session is designed to provide an additional opportunity for CTA scholars to earn the credits needed for promotion or graduation, should those scholars not meet all promotional or graduation criteria by the end of each school year. It is also designed to provide enrichment and/or remediation support to those scholars who have been identified as Academically Gifted, SWDs, at-risk or ELLs. Attendance for CTA’s summer session is optional for all other scholars.

**Grouping Scholars:** Each grade level cohort of approximately 115 scholars will be grouped into four homeroom groups of 28-30 scholars that move through the school day together. Each homeroom will be named after a college or university. Classrooms will be mixed-ability with respect to scholars’ prior achievement, Academically Gifted, At-Risk, SWDs and/or ELL status.

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<sup>15</sup> **Teacher Leaders** will be those CTA Teachers that are identified as those taking a lead role among teacher teams either by grade level or content area. Their role will include but is not limited to, supporting other teachers on their team with lesson development and/or implementation, mentoring, dissemination of important CTA information as it relates to scholars, families, and/or the curriculum, etc.

### C. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

All CTA curriculum will be aligned with the CCSS; the NYS Social Studies Framework; the (NGSS); and CTA’s four themes of opportunity, inspiration, overcoming challenges, and empowerment. To ensure close alignment to CCSS and its academic and behavioral demands, the CTA planning team used the EQuIP (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) Rubric<sup>16</sup> to evaluate all curricular programs under consideration for use at CTA. Use of the EQuIP rubric assisted in measuring the quality of commercial curricular programs claiming alignment to the CCSS. The rubric also helped CTA’s planning team build capacity for evaluating and identifying high quality curriculum programs. This process of verifying programs as to whether or not they are guaranteed and viable curricular, will help to develop and establish CTA’s own internal curriculum, which will embody CTA’s school culture while adhering to and meeting the demands of the CCSS.

Based on the above, CTA’s planning team selected **Expeditionary Learning (EL)** for *ELA* which encompasses both Reading and Writing. This curriculum is touted on NYS’s education website, [EngageNY.org](http://www.engage.org), as a curricular resource for implementing a CCSS based curriculum in the intermediate grades.<sup>17</sup> CTA selected EL due to its results of significantly improving the ELA performance of middle school scholars; with growth being evident after year 2 of the program’s implementation in schools with similar scholar demographics as CTA.<sup>18</sup> EL’s model “*inspires and empowers teachers to unleash the potential of their scholars.*”<sup>19</sup> This model directly links to CTA’s pillars of excellence and supports CTA’s goal to have culturally responsive themes as the underpinning of the curriculum. It also supports data-driven practices, includes structures that build scholars’ persistence, compassion and independence; all themes that underlie the mission and goals of CTA. Its modules are designed to get scholars excited about learning through, what the CCS deems “complex” literature that have all four CTA themes of opportunity, inspiration, overcoming challenges, and empowerment. The texts also contain compelling topics and will allow scholars to take ownership of their learning as they explore the various themes through literacy and application across the disciplines. At the same time, teachers are able to establish the instructional practices that support CTA’s culture of achievement. Additionally, EL’s design principles align with CTA’s Pillars of Excellence. These design principles are: incorporate success, learn from failures; diversity and inclusion; applying knowledge to the natural world; and service to and compassion for others in around the local and global communities. (EL Principles #5 and, 7 – 10, respectively)<sup>20</sup>

In *Math*, CTA will use the suggested curriculum modules on EngageNY in concert with Power Teaching i3 (PTi3)<sup>21</sup>. The latter is an instructional method that touts “a fresh approach to instruction that increases the motivation to learn, engages scholars, and results in academic success.” CTA believes that delivering the EngageNY curriculum modules, using the PTi3 instructional approach will maximize scholar success in math. The EngageNY modules are structured by math concepts applicable to and aligned across grade levels. They also align with the CCSS, are research-proven instructional strategies and are classroom resources that promote rigor and scholar engagement. Each module takes approximately 4-5 weeks of instruction and incorporates time for remediation, maintenance and/or enrichment of math concepts based on individual scholar needs. To facilitate the latter, we will use Math 180 and Achieve 3000, to effectively monitor scholar progress, deepen conceptual and computational mathematical understanding and provide support to scholars when necessary.

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<sup>16</sup> EQuIP (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) is an initiative of the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network designed to identify high-quality materials aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). EQuIP builds on a collaborative effort of education leaders from Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island that Achieve facilitated. The outcome of that effort was the development of the “Tri-State Rubrics” and a quality review process designed to determine the quality and alignment of instructional lessons and units to the CCSS. <http://www.achievethecore.org/equip>.

<sup>17</sup> “EngageNY is developed and maintained by the NYS Education Department to support the implementation of key aspects of the New York State Board of Regents Reform Agenda.” Excerpted from the “About EngageNY” section of the website [www.EngageNY.org](http://www.engage.org).

<sup>18</sup> According to EL’s impact study, entitled *Impacts of Five Expeditionary Learning Middle Schools on Academic Achievement*, dated July 8, 2013, “... the significant growth performance was found in middle school located in NYC that enrolled an elevated percentage of Hispanics and English Language Learners, but still similar to local scholar populations with respect to special education status, eligibility for free or reduced price meals, and prior achievement.” These schools have similar scholar demographics to the scholars CTA expects to enroll and target. [http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/education/EL\\_middle\\_schools.pdf](http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/education/EL_middle_schools.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Expeditionary Learning. “Expeditionary Learning Core Practices: A Vision for Improving Schools.” New York, NY: Expeditionary Learning and Outward Bound, 2011.

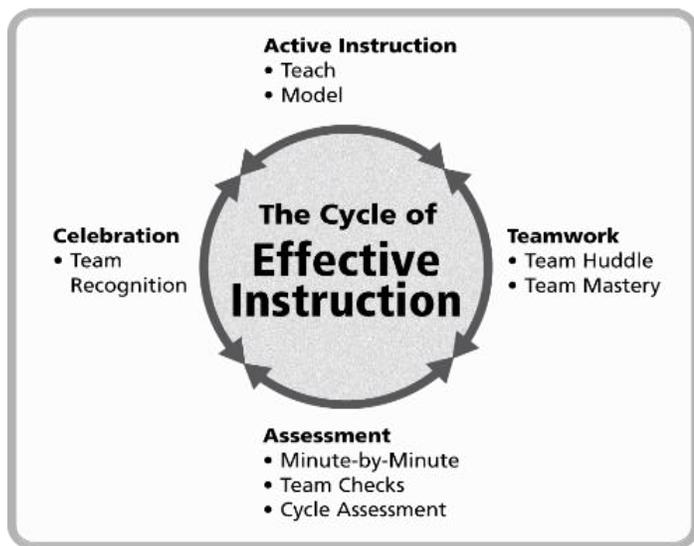
<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.sfapowerteaching.org/>

To tailor the units to include our school’s mission and make them more applicable to our scholars, CTA will use performance tasks, provided in the selected curriculum, to drive instruction at the beginning of each module. PTi3 also aligns with CTA’s instructional approach to using the GRR (referenced in Section I of this document) model coupled with empowering scholars with the intrinsic desire to consistently better oneself. PTi3 encompasses over 25 years of action research (the process of the researcher participating in their own research, as they the primary consumers of the findings) supported by John’s Hopkins University (JHU) and the Baltimore City School District. CTA will use these resources to provide high impact math instruction to CSD 19’s most at-risk scholars. Figure 8 depicts the cycle of effective instruction that PTi3 establishes, which personifies the GRR instructional model that is expected at CTA.

**Figure 8**

This figure shows the cyclical and reciprocal approach of instruction where scholars are given knowledge through explicit teaching; then scholars apply that knowledge, move toward ownership of that learning (scholarship), and take on leadership aspects by celebrating and recognizing individual and group successes; thus empowering one another.



At CTA we agree that, “the meaning of ‘knowing’ has shifted from being able to remember and repeat information to being able to find and use it.” (National Research Council, 2007) Therefore, CTA subscribes to the belief that scholars learn best when they are provided with a strong knowledge base and then allowed to broaden, deepen and grow their knowledge through application and exploration. With the PTi3 model and the CCSS based curricular modules, CTA believes it will accomplish this fact.

In **Science**, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) will be employed as the framework for building and fostering an inquiry approach to teaching and learning Science. This framework has already been vetted using the EQuIP rubric by the Achieve organization.<sup>22</sup> One of the academic instructional methodologies CTA will use is the National Aeronautics and Space

Administration (NASA) teaching materials, along with the Lab-Aids SEPUP experience; which provides opportunities for scholars to deepen their knowledge and understanding of science through hands-on learning and active world exploration; incorporating math, reading and writing and other skills. Scholars will be able to easily see how what they learn in school is applicable to not only themselves, but their families, communities and the global economy. Through this application of knowledge, all CTA scholars will feel that school is relevant and affords them the ability to achieve true recognition that knowledge, scholarship and leadership lead to empowerment.

Using the Science modules provided on [EngageNY.org](http://EngageNY.org) and aligning them to the content contained in the ELA texts in use at the school, CTA will aim to ensure scholars have solid foundational knowledge to continue to build upon and extend their understanding of other disciplines. CTA leaders and teachers will look for alignment in content and/or processes, where applicable. To determine the viability of this alignment, CTA’s instructional team will follow the guidelines using the EQuIP rubric to make final determinations. As the school year progresses, CTA’s instructional team will review other curricula, to see if they might better serve the needs of the school and scholars.

<sup>22</sup> The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are K-12 science standards created through a collaborative, state-led process. 26 Lead Partner States provided leadership to the standards writing teams. These lead state partners continue to provide guidance to states as they consider adoption of the NGSS. The new standards are based on the *Framework for K-12 Science Education*, which was developed by the National Research Council, the staffing arm of the National Academy of Sciences, and released in July 2011. The vision laid out in the *Framework* identifies what scholars need to know and be able to do to be a functional citizen, which includes being scientifically literate and an effective member of the U.S. workforce. <http://www.achieve.org/next-generation-science-standards>

**Social Studies** – To enrich scholars understanding of the human experience across continents and cultures; CTA will use *History Alive!* as the interactive inquiry-based social studies curriculum. *History Alive!* allows scholars to connect history to their own lives while mastering social studies standards. Teachers can support ELA instruction in this curriculum with reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities, as well as Reading and Writing toolkits. It also allows for the tailoring of instruction for ELLs, scholars with IEPs and enrichment. Additionally, it integrates technology into classroom instruction for teacher and scholar use.

**Arts and Music** – The Arts and Music are essential to all CTA scholars understanding and engagement in our school culture. One of CTA’s goals is to actively provide all scholars at CTA with a holistic school and life experience. Therefore, arts and music play an integral piece in the education we afford CTA scholars. Scholars will be expected to discuss how an artist’s world views are present in his/her work(s); and how the artist cultural and individual experiences, play/played a role into the perspective that they present in their work(s). The texts in ELA will provide the base knowledge, then scholars will expound upon that base knowledge in block instruction in arts and music on a weekly basis.

**Physical Education** –CTA believes that all scholars should be conscious of their physical health and well-being. Physical fitness aids in overall mental and emotional health. It also boosts overall academic success. Every day, CTA scholars will engage in physical activity for 20-30 minutes during lunch, as well as participate in physical stress relief (PSR) classes 2x per week. PSR will demonstrate to scholars, alternate ways to deal with stress, relieve tensions and make a lifelong commitment to maintaining good health and wellness. Additionally, the design of the after-school programs will focus on physical health, nutrition and well-being. These programs will be developed in consultation with our partner organizations; Man-Up and the Brownsville Youth Organizations whose goals are similar to CTA’s in that they too aim to empower youth to make positive choices through mental and physical health and wellness.

**Integration of Technology**— Technology integration is a core component to equipping CTA scholars with the tools necessary for success in college, career, and in life. It also provides unlimited access to knowledge and the means to deepen and explore that knowledge. With that in mind, all of CTA’s curricular resources will contain a digital component to accommodate deeper exploration. Teachers will also use digital resources to monitor and track scholar progress, support struggling learners and enrich the learning experience.

Purposeful incorporation of technology in lessons, as a means to connect scholars with local and world communities, while extending and deepening scholars understanding so they can apply literacy and math concepts to real life will be a necessary component at CTA. Scholars will complete and present various projects in any variety of media (i.e. Power point, Web-Quest, IMovie, Hyper-Studio, creating a skit or commercial, etc.) meeting the goal of technology incorporated instruction at CTA. CTA believes that technology is an essential inclusion in school since our world lives and breathes through it. Therefore, CTA will work to ensure that all CTA scholars are educated through the responsible use of technology and then expand their knowledge to understand it as media literacy. CTA plans to provide all scholars and staff with one-to-one access to a computer or laptop.

CTA will also embed media literacy in ELA and Social Studies through the exploration of social media. The exploration of social media will assist scholars with expounding upon societal beliefs and stereotypes perpetuated by the media about peoples, cultures and individuals. Scholars will consider how the media propagates certain perceptions and images about race and gender. Scholars will determine the effects of these images on their communities, their families, and how they see themselves in the world. Scholars will develop ways that they can dispel negative images, and perpetuate positive ones, using the internet and social media.

## **Instructional Approach**

Our school’s instructional approach is based on the framework of Pearson and Gallagher’s **Gradual Release of Responsibility** model.<sup>23</sup> This framework emphasizes the “TO-WITH-BY” approach. CTA teachers will model and encourage CCSS behaviors through a focused

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<sup>23</sup> Pearson and Gallagher, “The Instruction of Reading Comprehension”, University of Illinois, National Institute of Education, Washington, DC. October 1983.

demonstration of skills and strategies. Skills and strategies will be explicitly modeled for scholars. Then, scholars will engage in guided practice of those behaviors, strategies, and skills. Lastly, scholars will work independently on a variety of tasks and assignments that allow them to perfect the practices and internalize those CCSS and life habits. Once scholars have perfected the practices, scholars will engage in either project-based, inquiry and/or group work. To illustrate how this implementation will be attained, scholars will take a baseline assessment in September, to ascertain where they are academically, in all core content areas. Once this information is gathered, teachers will create a grade level scope and sequence, in all core content areas, using the aforementioned curriculum and curricular approaches, in alignment with CCS demands.

We believe that this approach, when implemented with purpose and consistency in-line with what the support research states, is one of the most effective approaches to instruction. Pearson and Gallagher’s 30 year research states that “*scholars learn best when teachers employ a more facilitative approach than teacher centered and directed approach.*” (Pearson & Gallagher, pg. 34) Also, by using this model, it is our belief that scholars will achieve success because they will be learning through apprenticeship and guided experiential learning which will, in effect, hone and perfect their current skills as they acquire new ones. Additionally, to work in concert with our resolve to create scholars who personify high levels of academic and social excellence, we will implement best practice instructional strategies in teaching and learning derived from the book entitled *Best Practices: Teaching in America’s Schools*, by Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels, and Arthur Hyde. Teachers will move from more traditional approaches of instruction to adding newer alternatives, widening their repertoire of instructional methods. Teachers will be trained to instructionally move from “**LESS TO MORE.**”

The following is a diagram of the progressive practice expected of all teachers at CTA:

**Table 6: CTA’s Instructional “Less to More” Teaching Habits**

<b>Teacher Instruction Is LESS. . .</b>	<b>Teacher Instruction Is MORE. . .</b>
Whole class, teacher directed; teachers give out information	Facilitative and guiding so that scholars understand how to get and make sense of the mass of data
Scholar passivity; sitting, listening, receiving, and absorbing information	Cooperative with scholars in creating scholar goals which are used to help scholars learn content and develop information processing and problem solving skills
Presentational; having one-way of transmission of information from teacher-to-scholar	Creates mini-lessons to focus on small group instruction for struggling scholars, ELLs and Special Education scholars
Silent; scholars completing worksheets independently, void of thinking and collaboration with peers and/or partners	Inclusive of all scholars where individual needs are met through group, partner and/or individualized activities
Scholar goals are to master content; rote memorization of facts and details becomes the most important skill scholars are expected to master	Use of assessments that include a variety of strategies to identify scholar’s ability to utilize thinking skills and mastery of content
Management by punishment and rewards	Collaborative and cooperative; order maintained by developing the classroom as an interdependent community
Reliance on only standardized and unit tests to evaluate scholars’ performance; focus is on the importance of "one right answer" on a test	Reliance on descriptive evaluation s of scholar growth, including observational/anecdotal records, conference notes, and assessment rubrics
Information is limited to what is available in the classroom or the school	Scholars exploring outside of school is a natural part of their learning experience
Technology focus is on learning about computers rather than its application	Purposeful incorporation of technology in lessons as means to connect scholars with local and world communities while extending and deepening scholars understandings

Fundamentally, the Principal and CTA Instructional Team will be charged with ensuring that teachers establish **10 non-negotiable teaching patterns** in their classrooms which define the difference between effective teaching and ineffective teaching for CTA. The following illustrate the **10 “Non-Negotiable” Teaching Patterns of CTA**:

1. Teachers get to know scholars intentionally and regularly. They create a classroom community to mimic the one created within the school.
2. All lessons incorporate small-group teaching, one-to-one conferencing, group and/or partner work.
3. Lessons are designed to “meet the edges,” focused on higher end learners with scaffolded support for struggling scholars, ELLs and Special Education scholars; to foster complex and creative thinking but still maximized for learning effectiveness.
4. Lessons offer scholars opportunities for exploration and the expression of learning. Scholars have the choice to vary the product and/or project they produce.
5. Teachers regularly use informal assessments to monitor scholar understanding and employ several techniques to track scholars’ progress.
6. Teachers collaborate with scholars and encourage peer collaboration. Teachers encourage academic discourse<sup>24</sup> and support a meta-cognitive conversation in all classrooms.
7. Teachers employ varied instructional techniques according to best practices in instruction. Less teacher telling, more teacher facilitating and coaching.
8. Teachers reflect daily on their lesson delivery and its impact on scholars learning.
9. Teachers use clear rubrics foster high quality work and evaluate scholars’ processes, as well as, the product that scholars produce.
10. Teachers cultivate a “taste for diversity.” There is consistent use of examples, illustrations, and materials related to varied cultures integrated in lessons. Ultimately, the world is expanded for our scholars by seeing possibilities and opportunities through many different eyes.

The patterns above, set the stage for CTA’s methodological implementation of the research-based instructional frameworks described in this response. At CTA, we firmly believe that “order precedes instruction.” With that, we embrace the Responsive Classroom model of Whole Brain Teaching which will be implemented throughout our school.

***Guidelines regarding how teachers will be observed, coached, supervised***

Prior to the school year, CTA teachers will participate in three weeks of professional development over the summer. Teacher training will include, but will not be limited to; creating a classroom environment that supports the type of teaching and learning discussed above, goal setting, as well as utilizing data effectively.

During the school year, teachers will receive daily support from school leaders via varied forms of informal feedback such as “on the spot” coaching, one-on-one meetings, emails, study/discussion groups and digital Feedback Logs. In addition, CTA will hold semi-monthly faculty caucuses at the beginning and end of each month. One caucus will focus solely on curriculum and instructional improvement while the other will focus on supporting scholar’s social development and personal growth.. The Social Caucuses is designed to facilitate conversation and idea sharing with their peers where they will either support someone else or be helped to work out their own issue that they may be dealing with at that time. Scholars learn and reflect on each of the scholarly quality in relation to CTA’s themes and create personal goals for themselves. They will use their personal goals, to empower themselves to be the best person they can be. Each caucus will be headed by a CTA staff member. The Social Caucus will serve as a forum for scholars to voice their opinions in a safe space and demonstrate their respect, tolerance and support for one another. This component is essential in building the idea that once we have knowledge of ourselves and others, we then are in place to inspire and empower one another to making a better

In that way, all staff will be able to meet collectively to engage in conversations around specific academic and social issues, as well as detect and analyze overall patterns and/or trends affecting the school. Teachers will maintain reflection logs to record the implementation of instructional strategies and track their impact. School leaders will review logs weekly to identify professional development opportunities

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<sup>24</sup> “*Academic Discourse*” is defined as conversation between teacher and scholars, and/or, scholars-to-scholars, that include the speaking of and about content specific vocabulary, content specific concepts and deeper understanding and analyzing of ideas, themes and/or concepts, within academic disciplines.

for teachers. Logs will be used to sincerely cultivate a supportive professional and collaborative learning environment for teachers where they feel safe to perfect their practice by “learning by doing.”

CTA leaders will employ an open door policy as well as provide ongoing coaching and support for teachers on an ongoing basis as requested and based on observed areas of need.

**D. ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

Assessments at CTA will be used as tools to gauge scholar progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the Achievement Goals section of this application. Assessment data will also be used to determine mastery, and/or, progress towards mastery of the Common Core State Standards and the social-emotional growth and development of all scholars. Assessments will be administered to gather information about where scholars’ current level of mastery is in relation to the CCS, and also to plan needed instruction, intervention, and scaffolding. We will also look holistically at school-wide assessment data, such as learning environment surveys, to determine how our school is progressing toward our school-wide goals. This data will be disaggregated to determine the overall effectiveness of curricular programs; as well as their effect on special scholar populations, including SWDs, scholars who qualify for FRPL, and ELLs. The Principal, DCI and BSSS, will look at these populations closely and make adjustments to our programs as needed in an effort to close the achievement gap for our scholar population.

Thus, CTA has chosen a number of developmentally appropriate diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments that will be used to capture an accurate and well-rounded academic picture of each child. Information gathered will be used by CTA school leaders to strengthen the academic programs and to formulate plans to address specific areas of need. Assessment data will also be shared by CTA teachers, with CTA families, during their bi-weekly Family Outreach and/or at CTA Family Data nights.

CTA’s assessment system at **glance** is as follows:

Assessment	Type	Frequency	Purpose/Use	Who Will Use?
<b>Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)</b>  <b>Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI)</b>  <b>Scholastic Phonics Inventory (SPI) (For incoming 5<sup>th</sup> Graders only)</b>	Diagnostic	September, January, May	Determines starting scholar growth point and tracks scholar achievement to date. Teachers will use the data to set SMART goals for scholar. Data will be used to adjust instruction to meet scholars’ needs while teaching and make use of additional teaching resources, such as Read 180, etc., if needed.  School leaders will use it to determine professional development needs of staff as they work to meet the needs of scholars. It can also help determine any curriculum adjustments that may need to be made.	Teachers, School Leaders
<b>Interest Surveys</b>	Formative	Multiple times a year	Determines scholar level of motivation and/or interest in any given topic or activity. Teachers will use to make decisions about topics to study in class or create projects.  DSC, Social Support Leader, and Guidance Counselor will use to structure social events, plan trips, arrange guest speakers, and other social events geared to enrich the learning experience of CTA scholars.	Teachers, DSC, Social Support Leader and Guidance Counselor
<b>Exit Tickets</b>	Formative	Daily or Weekly	Determines scholar level of mastery after any given lesson. Teachers will use to modify instruction	Teachers

			based on scholars' approximation of daily learning.	
<b>CCS-Based Rubric Grades</b>	Formative	Multiple times a year	Determines how scholars' are meeting the standards in any given content area. Grade level and content specific teachers will work collaboratively in developing rubrics to assess scholar work. The rubrics will assess standards addressed in a specific unit. Teachers will use the rubrics to determine whether scholars are far below, approaching, meeting or exceeding standards. Grades from scholar work will be used as evidence of scholar progress for parent conferences. Grades will also be used to determine scholar's individual needs.	Teachers
<b>Exit tickets, Quizzes, Homework</b>	Formative	Daily & weekly	Determines scholars' ability to retain information and how far/close they are to mastering a given concept or topic.  Will be used to evaluate mastery of skills and content in addition to traditional assessments, including weekly quizzes and unit tests. Assessment results will assist teachers in determining which scholars require additional support and which may benefit from enrichment.  Assessment data will also be used to examine trends and identify areas in which an entire class may be struggling. For scholars and families, these assessments will provide routine feedback about scholar progress in each course.	Teachers
<b>Curriculum End of Unit Assessments, Projects, and/or Presentations</b>	Summative	Every 6-8 weeks	Determines scholars' ability to master topics and sub-standards within a given content  Determine scholars' ability to internalize knowledge of content and demonstrate scholarship through ownership of that knowledge.	
<b>Empowerment Projects</b>	Summative	May	Will be used to determine how scholars have internalized their social experience and social education at CTA. Teachers and school leaders will use this data to determine the success or failure of CTA's Social Caucus, Life Skills, and social supports. School leaders will work to determine program modifications or additions as needed.	Teachers, School Leaders

<p><b>NYS State Assessments (ELA, Math, Science)</b></p> <p><b>NYS Regents Exam (Grade 8 only)</b></p>	<p>Summative</p>	<p>March/April</p>	<p>Determines which state standards scholars' have mastered within a given school year.</p> <p>These assessments that identifies scholars' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in reading comprehension and writing.</p> <p>Assessment to identify scholars' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in Mathematical skills.</p> <p>Regents identify scholars' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in Algebra, Living Environment and/or Earth Science.</p> <p>Teachers and school leaders will use the data to make determinations about changes to lessons and/or curriculum programs and supports.</p>	<p>Teachers and School Leaders</p>
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**Diagnostic Assessments:** Diagnostic data will be distributed by the DSSS and/or DCI, to all teachers, school leaders, scholars and parents before the end of second week of school. CTA will administer the following assessments to incoming scholars: the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) in ELA; the Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) in Mathematics; the Scholastic Phonics Inventory; as well as, teacher created interest surveys. These assessments be administered at the beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end-of-year. Teachers will use data from these assessments to refine SMART goals. During the DSMs, teachers will receive training and support as to how to analyze data effectively and glean scholars' strengths and weaknesses down to the deficiency of skills and/or concepts. In addition, diagnostic data will help teachers understand their scholars overall interests in school and their academic ability across content areas. Teachers will also use this data to formulate Action Plans for each scholar with support from the DCI, DSSS, Principal, DSC, ISLs, and/or Teacher Leaders. As part of the RTI process, the DSSS and DCI will use diagnostic assessments to determine incoming scholars' knowledge, skill levels, interests, and signs of special needs.

**Ongoing Formative Assessments:** Teachers will use interim assessments provided with curricular programs and conduct regular checks for scholars' understanding during instruction as formative assessments. Teachers will be expected to document anecdotal evidence of scholar learning from one-on-one conferencing and small-group instruction. These daily assessments will provide data regarding scholars' strengths and weaknesses relative to CCS and inform teachers and school leaders as to which skills need enrichment or remediation. Teachers will also be encouraged to conduct ongoing formative assessments on a daily and/or basis in the form of Do-Now's, exit tickets, weekly quizzes, and self and peer assessments of scholar work. Additionally, teachers will assign daily homework as an immediate assessment tool to gauge scholars' approximation and understanding of lessons taught. Data collected from ongoing formative assessments will be used to tailor instruction based on scholar's individual needs. Teachers will use data to inform their instructional decisions on a daily and weekly basis. Teachers will use active observation, approximation of tasks within lessons, scholars' in-lesson responses, do-now's and/or exit tickets as informal assessments embedded within daily lessons to check for scholar learning and understanding. Teachers will also assign homework daily for further insight into scholars' thinking and understanding.

**Summative Assessments:** Teachers will also administer end of unit summative assessments for all core subjects. These assessments may include exit inquiry projects, essays, presentations, computer-based exams, and/or other performance tasks. *(See Section II.D for further description of the creation of rubrics to ensure assessments uniformity across classrooms.)* Prior to any assessment, scholars' will receive

clear explanations of expectations for performance via rubrics, exemplars, study aids, and/or any appropriate scaffolds that may be used to approximate the task(s). The End of Unit Assessments contained within the curricular programs will be utilized to track scholars' grasping of content. Summative tasks will be used to document, follow and report scholars' progress, and assist in ensuring scholars are meeting intended learning outcomes.

**New York State (NYS) Tests:** CTA will follow the schedule for administering New York State assessments. These assessments help us to understand individual scholar mastery of CCS in relation to the NYS tests, gauge school progress over time, and measure scholar academic performance as compared to CTA school goals, and other similar schools within CSD19. This will help us to determine if our scholars are progressing in relation to their peers in the city and in the state. It is our goal to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies for all special populations of scholar scholars within the school. The results from state assessments from the previous year will be analyzed by the Principal, DCI, and DSSS; as well as, grade level teacher teams. The findings will be used to determine which standards need more teaching time; different instructional methods for scholars, and/or, special populations of scholars; and/or, additional resources.

During the summer, teachers will review NYS standardized tests and any standards-based grade level interim assessment data available for incoming scholars. From this review, teachers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each scholar and establish grade-level learning goals to address the largest areas of weakness. Teachers in conjunction with school leaders will set Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic and Timely (SMART) academic achievement goals for each scholar. These goals will guide instruction during the first few weeks of school until assessment results are available for CTA's diagnostic.

**New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT):** ELLs will take the NYSESLAT to measure increases in language proficiency. If a scholar scores at Proficient or Advanced level, the scholar will no longer be regarded as ELL. If the scholar scores at Beginning, or Intermediate level, he or she is eligible to continue to receive Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services. This assessment will measure the individual progress of our ELL scholars as well as gauge the effectiveness of our curriculum and program supports.

**Empowerment projects:** Empowerment projects are digitally documented events that demonstrate how scholars interact with either their families, others in the community, or in partnership a community-based organization. The interactions must document how the scholar empowers someone or something, through either inspiring another, providing help to overcome a challenge, and/or be a part of a community change that benefit the lives of persons within that community. We believe that these projects will personify CTA's mission of providing all children with opportunities to inspire, challenge, and empower themselves and others; becoming positive societal contributors.

**Reporting to Parents:** Teachers and various CTA school leaders will be in frequent contact with parents through phone calls, emails, letters, and face-to-face appointments, to discuss their scholar's progress. Each marking period, which occurs every 10 weeks, teachers will prepare reports that include a checklist reflecting the scholar progress towards or mastery of CCS. There will be 4 formal family conferences each year; one in August, November, March and May. Parents will also be able to access their scholars' assessment data, class assignments, notes from the teacher and school news via SchoolNet-- a data management system provide by Pearson Education of which all CTA parents will have access.

**Reporting to CTA Staff and the Board:** CTA school leaders will lead bi-weekly Data Study meetings where all teachers gather to discuss class and scholar level progress. During these meetings, school leaders will review Action Plans and lead best practice sharing discussions. These meetings will also serve as the vehicle for cultivating Teacher Leaders within the school community. The Principal will establish the protocol for Data Study meetings, codify the meetings outcomes and quantify its effect on the improvement of scholars' achievement. Once this is established, the codified outcomes and effects on scholars' achievement will inform topics for future professional development to further nurture and deepen teacher edification and efficacy.

Each teacher and school leader will monitor each scholar's academic and social progress using these data points, along with "soft data" points that elicit information such as; socioeconomic status, family background and history, scholar interest, home language, learning ability/disability, etc. CTA teachers will create Achievement Data Portfolios (ADPs) for each of their scholars. (The ADPs are part of the school-wide database that will house all assessment data). Each ADP will contain all assessment outcomes, and teacher conference notes for

each class and each individual scholar that will be collected. Teachers will create and establish SMART achievement goals for each class and review data weekly to guide lesson and curriculum development to achieve those goals. These will be the items discussed bi-weekly, during either the Data Study Meetings (DSMs) or Instructional Caucus.

School leaders will officially review all ADPs, monthly, for insight on individual teacher progress toward attainment of classroom learning targets and SMART learning goals, effectiveness of instructional practices, and overall curriculum effectiveness. School leaders will also review ADPs to gauge teacher progress with their own professional practice, how they are assisting scholars in meeting their goals, how they are incorporating what is learned in Professional Development sessions, and school-wide expectations into their everyday practice. Information gleaned from the ADPs will assist in understanding where to focus professional development, guide teacher pedagogical efficacy and/or refine curriculum.

During DSMs and/or Instructional Caucuses, grade-level and class-level data will be shared and discussed with all teachers by CTA school leaders and Teacher Leaders. The data presentation will include overall trends by content areas. Teachers will collaborate to further analyze the data, identify the cause of trends and develop ways to address it. Teachers will then adjust instruction or seek professional development to improve outcomes for scholars. Teachers' professional improvement and progress will be assessed by CTA's ILT through informal and formal observations, Learning Walks<sup>25</sup>, digital Feedback Logs and other relevant data that will be reviewed on a weekly and monthly basis. Interest surveys will be used to create a menu of PD topics, in rank order, which will enable us to offer teachers varied PD on a monthly basis, in areas of teacher interest as well as need as assessed by school leaders.

The BSSS will create a monthly Scholar Success Report (SSR) for presentation to the Principal and Board on a monthly basis. SSRs are reports that cull all of data of the formative assessments taken by all scholars for that month. It will delineate by class, grade level, content area, and individual scholars' names; the progress of all CTA scholars as evidenced on in-house assessment data. Upon hiring of the DCI in Year 3 of operation, the DCI will assume this responsibility. Upon Board review, the CTA school leaders and the Board's Scholar Accountability committee will meet to discuss what action steps, if any, are needed to address anomalies, inconsistencies and/or poor scholar performance that may be evidenced in the report.

**Rational for Selecting Assessments:** At CTA, we believe that assessments are a vital part of successful teaching and instrumental to measuring learning. Instruction needs to be calibrated according to scholars' knowledge, skills, ability and interests. Tests, quizzes, and performance evaluations help teachers identify effective and developmentally appropriate instruction.

Use of the SRI, SMI, and SPI reading, math and phonics assessments in September, will provide baseline measures of scholar's math and reading skills according to the CCS. Presentations, exit projects, essays, homework and other formative assessments, allow teachers and school leaders to gather relevant information as it pertains to scholar progress. In combination with data from standardized exams and other methods mentioned above, teachers will be able to diagnose strengths and weaknesses, measure scholar's progress over time and adjust instruction as needed. It is for those reasons that CTA has chosen the aforementioned methods of assessment. All assessments indicated have proven successful in schools similar to CTA.

## **E. PERFORMANCE, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION STANDARDS**

### **CTA Scholar Performance**

CTA scholars will be expected to perform academically by meeting and/or exceeding CCS standards for their respective grade levels. They will also be required to achieve a score of "3" or higher on all or most of their assessments and tasks that will be scored by a rubric. CTA scholars will also be expected to meet all other behavior requirements as set forth in the CTA Scholar/Parent Handbook. (*See Attachment #4*)

### **Promotional Criteria**

For CTA scholars in Grades 5-7, promotional criteria will be based on the following:

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<sup>25</sup>A **Learning Walk** is a brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what scholars are **learning**, **learning** strategies, scholar interaction with the content, and scholar engagement.

1. 90% or better attendance rate;
2. Receive a final grade of 80%\*, or higher in all core academic subjects (i.e. ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies) based on CCS aligned interim and summative assessments, and curriculum based assessments;
3. Complete all Empowerment Projects as assigned;
4. Receive a Level 3 or higher on all NYS standardized assessments (ELA and Mathematics).

*\*For scholars with IEPs, CTA will modify promotional criteria in accordance with their respective IEP goals.*

The DSSS, Guidance Counselor, Social Worker, and applicable CTA teachers will create an alternate action plan for scholars who experience difficulty staying on track for promotion or graduation (as evidence by formative and summative assessment data). This will include creating SMART goals with bi-weekly progress monitoring combined with intensive interventions and support. In addition to any remediation classes that may be assigned, these scholars will also receive a “Big Brother/Sister” from the Man-Up organization, whose will check-in with the scholar and their family daily to provide additional support for meeting learning targets and SMART goals.

### **Graduation Requirements**

To graduate from CHOICE TO Academy as an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Empowered Scholar, scholars will:

1. Meet NYS grade level benchmarks, by achieving Level 3 or 4, on NYS standardized tests for ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. **–25%**
2. Two Empowerment Projects must be completed. (January and June)— **15%**
3. Write a reflective essay piece on what they have learned at CTA, the impact the CTA school experience had on them, their impact on the school, and the community. **–10%**
4. Engage in at least 3 acts of empowerment and 3 acts of inspiration, over the course of their tenure in CHOICE TO Academy, to be established within the Life Skills curriculum course and planned with the Social Support Leader. *(Not applicable to scholars who have been enrolled for less than 8 months in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade at CTA)* **–15%**
5. Have 90% or better attendance rate **– 10%**
6. Attain a 75 or better in all core subject areas. **–25%**

We believe that the promotional criteria and graduation requirements align with the CTA mission, in that it, maintains high academic standards for all scholars. Additionally, CTA scholars must demonstrate their individual approximation of our Four Pillars of Excellence and internalization of our core themes, by engaging in the work leading up to the completion of the Empowerment Projects.

### **Sample Promotion/Exit Standards**

The sample promotion/exit standards for Grades 5-8, will reflect scholars’ attainment of CCS in ELA, Mathematics, and Social Studies:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>ELA (Reading and Writing)</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
Grades 5-8	Develop personal, cultural, textual, and thematic connections within and across genres as they respond to texts through written, digital and oral presentations, employing a variety of media and genres.	Cite text evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
Grade 8	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences. *	Identify aspects of the text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (i.e. loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

*\*This standard will be built upon beginning in Grade 5. As scholars build their reading and writing stamina, this standard is expected be achieved by all scholars in Grade 8.*

### **Mathematics Standards expected to be attained at each grade level:**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Sample Promotional Standard(s)</b>
<b>Grade 5</b>	Graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems. Represent and interpret data.

<b>Grade 6</b>	Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume. Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities.
<b>Grade 7</b>	Solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. Solve real-life and mathematical problems involving angle measure, area, surface area, and volume.
<b>Grade 8</b>	Understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. Understand congruence and similarity using physical models, transparencies, or geometry software.

#### F. SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

The goal of CTA is to create a “*culture of achievement*” through personal and social responsibility and accountability. All in our school community have a role and active responsibility in the support and preparation of our scholars for the 21st Century. We expect that every person within the school community will be transparent and communicative; collaborative in their approach and accountable to the school community for creating and maintaining the culture.

The Principal will lead the school community by example. The Principal will communicate the standard for excellence by setting high expectations for themselves, staff, scholars, parents and all stakeholders within the community. Those expectations will be communicated through high-level goals set for all staff members, parents and potential community partners. These goals will be tracked through the achievement of quarterly SMART goals. This aligns with the ***Four Pillars of Excellence***, in that, strong communication gives every community member *knowledge* of expectations and school goals. With that knowledge, all are expected to take ownership (*scholarship*) for ensuring that CTA meets and exceeds those expectations and goals (*leadership*). And thus, each person will make better choices for themselves, their families and the larger community; *empowerment*.

An integral component to our school culture consists of teachers implementing the WBT (Whole Brain Teaching) model in their classrooms, as a method of modeling and enforcing scholar responsiveness and engagement. In Eric Jensen’s book, ***Engaging Scholars with Poverty in Mind***<sup>26</sup>, he reports that:

*“Engagement shows up as a vital achievement factor in most studies, although it’s not always explicitly called engagement; sometimes it’s “disguised” as feedback, cooperative learning, project learning, or interactive teaching (Hattie 2008). Engagement is especially important for low-socioeconomic-status (SES) scholars. In their study of more than 1,800 scholars living in poverty, Finn and Rock (1997) found that school engagement was a key factor in whether scholars stayed in school.”*

This research directly correlates to the intimate knowledge and professional experiences that the CTA Board and its planning team have witnessed and experienced in urban schools and school districts with a high number of FRPL, minority and socio-economically disadvantaged scholars. Strong Behavioral Expectations and Personal Responsibility: Whole Brain Teaching<sup>27</sup> practices will be employed school-wide coupled with Sean Covey’s ***7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*** to assist with building scholars’ self-identity and personal leadership which will promote their ability to exemplify the traits of a CTA scholar.

WBT successfully employs various strategies and techniques to engage multiple areas of the brain while having scholars work peer-to-peer. For teachers, WBT methods generate highly active and engaging classrooms, enhance classroom management and produce increased scholar learning outcomes. (Bifle, 2013) Therefore, it is our hope that this model will preemptively reduce any scholar having negative attitudes toward school and re-invest them in their own education. Additionally, CTA’s value system is communicated to scholars through the definition of what it means to be a CTA SCHOLAR:

<sup>26</sup> Jensen, E. (2013). *Engaging Scholars with Poverty in Mind*. Alexandria: ASCD.

<sup>27</sup> Bifle, Chris. (2013) *Whole Brain Teaching*. McGraw-Hill, Harper Collins.

Self-Disciplined  
Committed to Excellence  
Hungry for Knowledge  
Original  
Leader  
Articulate  
Resilient

These qualities will be taught using aspects of Sean Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. Each habit correlates to one of the CTA Scholar traits. During the Social Empowerment Caucus, each Scholar trait with its correlating habit will be taught and modeled explicitly. Teachers will then guide CTA scholars to exemplify that trait, in and around the school. CTA staff will recognize scholars for their efforts during monthly Empowerment Seminars, Morning Recitation, and/or in class. Celebrating scholar accomplishments enforces CTA's ideals, values and culture. Teachers and scholars will also be trained in implementing "restorative practices" if a confrontation should arise between scholars and/or teachers and scholars. Restorative practices are a framework for building community and for responding to confrontations through authentic dialogue, coming to a common understanding, and making things right. These will be taught to teachers and staff during the Summer Intensive in August for staff, prior to scholars attending in the fall. Scholars will be taught these practices during the first 3 weeks of school during Life Skills period.

The DSC will take the lead in ensuring that all staff, scholars, parents and community-based organizations support and nurture the social aspect of the school's focus on the "culture of achievement." The DSC will work with CTA support staff (Social Worker, Family Leader, Guidance Counselor, etc.) to ensure that all teachers understand, practice and implement Whole Brain Teaching (WBT), restorative practices and other social-emotional supports.

A School Leadership Council (SLC) will be created to address issues of concern for the school community by crafting viable school wide solutions to solve those issues. The SLC will meet once a month and be comprised of approximately 5-7 teachers; 2-4 scholars; the DSC; and the Principal, or his/her designee. Scholars that will be chosen by the DSC, based on the outcome of grade level scholar voting for grade level representation on the SLC. Each grade level will vote in October of each school year, for their scholar representative. The scholar representative must have at least 2 letters of recommendation from their teachers, and have a grade point average of no less 85% in all core academic subjects. This will give our scholars a vehicle to participate in CTA's continued development and refinement as a school community and foster scholarship, leadership and empowerment qualities.

The SLC will work in concert with the Principal and the DSC, to effectively respond to the needs of the school community. They will work proactively to address any systemic issue or concern; be organized in their approach to hearing, deliberating and resolving issues that arise; and accountable to the larger school community for assisting with and supporting the governance of the school. Through these concerted efforts, scholars will demonstrate respect for themselves and others. Scholars will be responsible, demonstrate good character, be accountable for their actions, and be intrinsically motivated. The goal will be to create scholars who are leaders in the community -- inside and outside of the school building.

### **Morning Recitation and Caucus**

We are firmly committed to assisting our scholars with developing a mindset of scholarship, leadership and empowerment. To that end, we will start every school day with the recitation of CTA's scholarly creed and scholar acronym motto referred to in the **Scholar/Parent Handbook** in *Attachment 4*.

**Weekly Scholar Caucuses and Leadership Seminar:** Two distinct "caucuses" will be programmed into our scholars' weekly schedule: one Academic and one Social. These caucuses and seminars will be facilitated by CTA teachers and/or leaders. Both caucuses will be aimed at assisting scholars to meet their academic and personal goals. Leadership Seminars teach scholars the qualities of leaders

and then have them demonstrate those qualities with their families and the community. The caucuses will utilize the *restorative practices approach* for establishing protocols and procedures for affective statements, restorative questions, fair processes, responsive circles and restorative circles.<sup>28</sup> The Academic Caucus will focus on helping scholars develop and attain their academic goals. The Social Empowerment Caucus will be similar, except scholars will develop and work toward achieving personal and social goals. The establishment of these caucuses and the systems for facilitation will promote our scholars ability to develop their scholarship and leadership abilities. It also allows for the exemplification of scholars “living” the CTA mission of seizing “. . . *opportunities to inspire, challenge and empower themselves and others.*” The caucuses rely on the belief in the human experience to bolster and foster personal leadership but also the inter-dependency of us all and the need to support those who are closest to you so that you can stand tall. During the caucuses, scholars will learn about each scholarly quality, (*listed in Section 3.F of this application*) as well as the components of restorative practices. As scholars begin to internalize scholarly qualities and how to invoke a restorative practice, they will begin to own the caucuses by leading discussions and facilitating group interactions and conversations.

**Evaluating School Climate and Culture:** The DSC will evaluate the school culture and climate. In Years 1 & 2, CTA will use the NYCDOE’s Learning Environment Survey as well as the action research tools supplied in Frey’s book, which measures the strength of the “*culture of achievement*” within any given school. (Frey, Fisher, & Pumpian, 2012) By Year 3, data will be normed so that progress can be accurately and concretely measured to monitor and maintain growth. The data will be compiled, analyzed and monitored by the DSC and the members of the SLT and submitted monthly to the Principal and the Board. (*See Attachment #5—CTA Parent and Scholar Handbook.*)

**Scholar Discipline:** Scholars must adhere to the following basic premises:

- **LEARNING IS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF SCHOOL.**  
Anything that interferes with learning will not be permitted. Come prepared with materials and assignments.
- **SCHOLAR ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT TO THE SCHOOL**  
Scholars are expected to display positive attitudes such as honesty, respect, tolerance, and courtesy.
- **SCHOLARS ARE TO ABIDE BY THE SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY.**  
Clothing must be clean and wrinkle free
- **SCHOLARS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT A SAFE SCHOOL.**  
School staff in cooperation with parents and scholars must ensure safe and secure places for teaching, learning, and school-related events. Weapons and acts of violence will not be tolerated.
- **SCHOLARS MUST LEARN TO AND GET ALONG WITH OTHERS.**  
Scholars can expect courtesy, fairness, and respect.  
Scholars must offer courtesy, fairness, and respect.  
Harassment and intimidation will not be tolerated.
- **SCHOLARS MAY EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS.**  
Use suitable methods of expression and wait for an appropriate time.  
Do not use foul or racist language or obscene gestures.
- **ATTENDING SCHOOL EACH DAY IS VERY IMPORTANT.**  
Scholars must be in school on time, every day and prepared for instruction.

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<sup>28</sup> Costello, B., Watchel, J., & Watchel, T. (2009). *The Restorative Practices Handbook for Teachers, Disciplinarians and Administrators*. Philadelphia: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

To maintain and foster a safe and nurturing learning environment; discipline, instruction and learning must go hand-in-hand. We cannot accomplish one without the other. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all staff to enforce good discipline, high expectations and exemplary behavior from our scholars. Good discipline and exhibited scholar behaviors will be rewarded and acknowledged by CTA teacher(s), staff, school leaders, and the entire school community. Therefore, disruptive scholars must be held accountable for their behavior. Each teacher is to maintain an academic and behavioral anecdotal record for scholars. These expectations are the same for scholars identified as SWDs. However, scholars who, due to their disability, may require additional support in meeting the outlined expectations, those SWDs will meet in consultation with the SST, district CSE, and/or other parties, to create a behavior plan to address the specific needs of that scholar. Should a scholar violate a policy or rule, as specified in the CTA Scholar Handbook, the following CTA Disciplinary Ladder of Referral will go into effect:

***CTA Disciplinary Ladder of Referral for Teachers***

1. Speak to scholar.
2. Contact parent via telephone
3. Letter to parent
4. Meet with parent(s)
5. Referral to Restorative Circle with scholar’s after-school mentor and Social Caucus Leader
6. Referral to Guidance/Social Support Leader (Conference with Parent)
7. Referral to DSC (Conference with Parent)
8. Meeting with Principal for Disciplinary Conference (With parent, DSC, and scholar)

CTA will follow the guidelines set forth in the NYCDOE School Discipline Code and Policy to determine which behaviors are deemed Level 1, 2, 3, or 4 Infractions<sup>29</sup>, and have adapted certain policies and procedures contained herein, from that code. In the event that a CTA scholar exhibits behavior(s) that warrant any CTA staff member to make use of a “teachable moment” through discipline, the following restorative practices protocol will be enacted:

**Level 1 Infraction**

CTA staff member will ask 3 questions:

1. *Did we talk the talk?*
2. *Did we walk the walk?*
3. *Do we need to change something or do something different?*

These three (3) questions are aimed at getting the scholar to think about what they did, reflect on whether or not the action or reaction was the most ideal, and then they are allowed to correct the error in some way. This reinforces our belief that our scholars need to have strong foundational knowledge of self and others, so that they can begin to make positive choices every single day. One of our culturally responsive mantras to, “Do the next right thing,” will be manifest at this level.

**For Level 2 Infractions**

The CTA scholar will participate in a **Leadership Circle**. The purpose of the Leadership Circle is to discuss the issue and concerns about the specific incident that the scholar engaged in to precipitate the Level 2 infraction. This is when the broader scholar community sits in the circle to share how the knowledge and/or effects of the incident affects them. The scholar participants are chosen from the offending scholar’s Social Caucus cohort, as they have already built a trusting relationship with one another. Two (2) CTA leaders will be in attendance (Principal and DSC), as well as the Social Worker. The protocol for conducting the Leadership Circle is as follows:

1. Participation Guidelines will be handed out and briefly discussed to ensure compliance with the guidelines.
2. If one party was harmed by the offending scholar’s actions, they will be asked 4 questions to elicit what happened, how the incident caused them harm, how they have been coping since the incident, and what they feel should happen to “make things right.”
3. Comments from other members of the Caucus cohort will be heard. Time not to exceed 5 minutes.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/188AF3E2-F12B-4754-8471-F2E9B344AE2B/0/DiscCodebooklet2013final.pdf>

4. The offending scholar will then be asked a series of questions to elicit their motivation, thought process, results, and if the outcome was one that was positive for all involved. They then will be asked what they feel they need to do to “make things right”, and given the opportunity to make a commitment statement to implement that change.
5. A final meeting between the CTA leaders, offending CTA scholar and his/her family will be conducted to discuss the final decision for disciplinary measures.

**For Level 3 Infractions and Above**

Scholars who violate and/or continuously violate CTA’s Code of Conduct for infractions such as fighting, bullying, hazing, or sexual harassment will receive an in-school suspension.

**G. SPECIAL SCHOLAR POPULATION AND RELATED SERVICES**

CTA is committed to providing all scholars with a high quality educational and social experience.

**Academically Gifted Scholars:** CTA will identify its academically gifted scholars, by analyzing all available academic data and determining those scoring at least a Level 4 on NYS standardized tests, scoring at least one grade level above set standards on internal metrics for reading, phonics, and math,—using the diagnostic assessments currently planned (Section II.D). Advanced scholars will receive individualization in many of the same ways that at-risk scholars will, including small group work done in classrooms and focused lessons, however, the tasks and activities that they will be charged with completing, will be designed to extend their thinking and deepen their learning. These scholars will also be offered the opportunity to take NYS Regents exams in Grade 8.

**Academically Struggling Scholars:** When faced with a scholar who struggles academically; albeit an ELL, scholar with an IEP, and/or one who may be academically gifted, teachers will bring all data regarding that scholar to the weekly Data Study Meeting (DSM). Through the review of assessment data, classroom observations, IEPs, surveys and/or social issues/concerns, teachers and leaders will collaboratively develop strategies for scholar improvement. This process will serve as CTA’s Tier 1 Response to Interventions (RTI). Every week at the DSM, teachers will provide an update on the progress or lack thereof, of those scholars that were identified in the prior week’s DSM. Those scholars will be monitored for progress. Should there be little to no progress by Week 3 of the interventions, said scholar will be referred to the School Support Team.

Any CTA scholar not meeting their academic and/or personal goals will be monitored by the School Support Team (SST). The SST is comprised of the Principal (and/or, his/her designee), DSC, DCI, BSSS, a Teacher Leader, Social Support Leader and Special Education and/or Bi-Lingual Teacher. These scholars will have been brought to the attention of the SST by the Teacher Leader(s) who attend the DSMs. The SST will meet official on a semi-monthly basis, however, the SST can be called to order by the Principal should to a scholar be identified within a week where the next regularly scheduled meeting is not being held. The SST will enact CTA’s Tier 2 RTI protocols to decide and provide interventions to accelerate the scholars’ rate of learning and/or support the scholars’ mental, emotional and social well-being. An Action Plan will be created at the SST and shared with all staff members that have a direct impact with the scholar’s academic and/or social development. Three actionable items will be created and implemented with the scholar for a term of 3-4 weeks. This will promote the creation and establishment of the “mini-IEPs”. This plan will be created in collaboration with parent input with the final plan to be shared with the parent to ensure total implementation. This process will serve as the school-wide Tier 2, RTI.

Should a scholar not respond to the Tier 2 RTI interventions, then that scholar will be reviewed again by the SST and may be referred for Special Education services. The SST will be in charge of collaborating with the CSE to create an appropriate IEP for the identified scholar. The BSSS will be responsible for overseeing the School’s special education program. This includes but is not limited to; ensuring that all copies of IEPs are distributed to the appropriate teachers and all records are maintained according to all appropriate laws, rules, policies and procedures; managing the review and referral process in the SST meetings; ensuring the provision of services for those scholars; all record keeping as it relates to IEPs; and, all required documentation and reports will be kept in a secure location.

**Scholars with Disabilities** When Action plans are developed for SWDs, the SST will work in consultation with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for CSD 19, to further ensure that all possible educational resources and aids are being maximized prior to requesting

alternative placement within the district. However, CTA will exhaust all possible educational alternatives and family assistances before invoking this request. The expected percentage of scholars that may be enrolled at CTA will be comparable to CSD 19's average of 10-11%. Strategic, targeted instruction, via small group instruction<sup>30</sup> will be implemented for SWDs as well. SWDs will take part in daily remediation support instruction via technology applications such as Read 180, System 44, Math 180 and/or Achieve 3000. SWDs will also be mainstreamed with the in-class support of a paraprofessional and Special Education/Intervention teacher thus creating an inclusive setting. This will be done through an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) model of instruction where there are two teachers (one General Education, one Special education) and a paraprofessional or teacher assistant. All CTA staff who will be recruited to deliver special education instruction and/or provide support to scholars who are identified as SWDs will be required to have all applicable NYS teaching certifications necessary to service and/or teach SWDs. Additionally, any prospective teaching assistant or paraprofessional will need to have at least two (2) years prior experience working with SWDs, and/or have a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with a concentration of study (major) in special education or its equivalent.

Through a strategic partnership to effectively facilitate and enhance the support to SWDs and their families, CTA will work closely with Dr. Gerard Costa, the founding Director at Montclair University's Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health (CAECMH at MSU). CTA will utilize the center's "Relationship Based Approach"<sup>31</sup>; derived from the Developmental, Individual, Relationship-based Approach (DIR), based on the work of Dr. Stanley Greenspan; to educating and leveraging the social skills of SWDs and at-risk youth, as opposed to traditional practices of suggesting medical treatment or recommending alternative educational settings. CAECMH at MSU will provide training and professional development to CTA staff, teachers, and school leaders on how to best work with SWDs, and scholars who may suffer with mental illness, as well as their families. As such, CTA will be the sole charter school in CSD 19 with a partnership with a nationally recognized medical school that has nationally accredited expertise in the field of successfully supporting schools with special populations of SWDs. (See Attachment for Letter of Support from CAECMH at MSU.) In Year 1, CTA will employ two learning specialists; a Special Education teacher and a Bi-Lingual Teacher. Each following year of the first charter term, another learning specialist will be added. Services will be delivered in an integrated, co-teaching (ICT) setting.

#### **Scholars identified as ELLs**

Scholars may be identified as ELLs based upon the following factors:

1. If the Home Language survey, completed by the scholar's parent/guardian upon enrollment, indicates that the primary language spoken at home is one other than English, and/or;
2. Previous ELL identification from another public school district, and/or;
3. Previous administration of the NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), and/or;
4. The scholar speaks and/or understands little to no English.

Any scholar who potentially may be identified as an ELL, will be given the NYS Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL). This test will be administered upon enrollment at CTA to the applicable scholars. Scholars who receive a score of "proficient", their home language will be designated as English. Those scholars scoring below proficiency, will be determined as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and will be eligible for language instructional services. These scholars will also take the NYSESLAT annually, until they achieve proficiency or advanced proficiency on the exam. Upon achieving the latter, these scholars will be exited from receiving language services with a specific academic and instructional support plan to be developed by the SST.

In accordance with all applicable laws including Title IV of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, scholars identified as ELLs will not be excluded from any curricular and/or extra-curricular activities based upon the inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. As such, ELLs at CTA will take part in strategic, targeted instruction, via

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> The Developmental, Individual Differences, Relationship-based Approach (DIR) is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach developed by Drs. Stanley Greenspan and Serena Wieder. The relationship-based approach focuses on using an intensive integrated intervention which is individualized to match the child's level in the social-interaction development hierarchy. Relationship-based developmental experiences build skills in the core processes of relating, attending, communicating, and thinking. Difficulties in relating and communicating are believed to be secondary to sensory and motor processing deficits. The ultimate goal of the intervention is to help the child develop appropriate affect and form a sense of self as an intentional and interactive individual.

small group instruction<sup>32</sup> within the regular core instructional blocks. In addition to the classroom teacher providing tailored instruction within the core instruction, the Bi-Lingual Teacher will provide push-in support to the general classroom to offer guidance and support for those scholars. The Bi-Lingual teacher will also work with those scholars when they are working in their remediation and/or enrichment courses. During Data Study meetings, the general education teachers and Bi-Lingual teacher will meet to coordinate the above instructional efforts. The Bi-Lingual teacher(s) recruited for CTA will be expected to have all NYS teaching licenses and/or certifications applicable to individuals who regularly service this group of identified scholars.

ELLs will use Read 180, Math 180 and/or Achieve 3000; all of which have a dual language component within the respective programs. They will also be able to use the *LBook* feature of Read 180 which aids in their linguistic and sequential understanding of language and vocabulary. ELL scholars will take the applicable curricular assessments, as well as, CTA’s required assessments to track and monitor their academic performance. The DSSS and Bi-Lingual teacher will be responsible for gathering the results of this data for review by the SST, as to the program’s effectiveness, on a monthly basis. The SST will submit any recommendations for changes to the program, to the CTA Leadership Team. CTA leaders will then decide to implement any recommendations for change and/or meet with the SST to devise next steps.

**For all scholars including SWDs, ELLs, those scholars identified in the school’s mission, and those scholars eligible for FRPL**, CTA will have a mentoring program that will be coordinated by the Director of School Culture (DSC), Family Leader, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor; All CTA scholars will be assigned a mentor who will work with CTA scholars to develop their goals for personal development. Mentors will work with CTA scholars during Social Caucus, Leadership Seminar and after-school programs. Mentors will be charged with helping scholars cultivate the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, which will assist scholars in developing the qualities of a CTA SCHOLAR (Self-Discipline, Committed to excellence, Hungry for knowledge, Original, Leader, Articulate, Resilient and empowered to make positive choices every day). Additionally, CTA scholars will receive weekly family check-ins with their classroom teachers and school leaders, to ensure their overall progress. Teachers will also meet with scholars, at least once a week, for either remediation or enrichment which is delineated in the scholars and teachers’ respective schedules as “Enrichment/Academic Support”.

In addition to the above, a Retention Committee will be created, for all scholars including **SWDs, ELLs, those scholars identified in the school’s mission, and those scholars eligible for FRPL**; in the winter of the first school year to identify and meet the specific needs of scholars and their families. The DSC and Family Leader will oversee this committee and ensure high retention of all scholars. CTA will also continue to include the input and assistance from community and faith based organizations, local elected officials, parents, scholars, and other stakeholders within the community. Specifically **for SWDs**, the retention Committee will work alongside the CSD19’s CEC and CSE, to discuss and create the most effective strategies to retain these scholars and engage their families.

For those scholars identified in the school’s mission and FRPL

### III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

#### A. APPLICANT GROUP CAPACITY

The CTA applicant group is dedicated and committed to the mission and vision of CTA. We collectively bring personal and professional experience, expertise and resources necessary to develop CTA as a successful charter middle school. Below is a list of the founding applicant group members:

Name/Current Role	Current Employment	Relevant Experience/Expertise	Proposed Role(s), If Any
<b>Kimberly Mackey Founder</b>	Educational Consultant & Curriculum Specialist, Pearson North America	Educator, Literacy Coach, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Principal and Principal	Founder, Proposed Principal
<b>Maria Arellano</b>	Dean of Students	Teacher, Director of Program Development and expertise in	Planning Team, No Proposed Role

<sup>32</sup> All small group instruction will take place during “Enrichment/Academic Support” periods which are evidenced in the Sample Teacher and Sample Scholar Schedules in Attachment 3; specifically 3a and 3b respectively.

		implementing high quality positive behavior programs.	
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The vision for CTA comes from the Founder, Kimberly Mackey. Ms. Mackey was inspired five years ago to start a school due to her dissatisfaction with scholar outcomes in high poverty districts and schools. After researching and further developing the school model, Ms. Mackey shared her vision with other members of the planning team; some Board members included. The group presented the initial model twice to the NYCDOE through the New Schools process. Each time, the group was advanced to the final round but did not attain approval. Over the last 5 years using feedback, research and experimental implementation, Ms. Mackey has honed the original school design. After implementing these ideas in a Newark public school and seeing the results of marked academic progress and scholar learning gains,<sup>33</sup> Ms. Mackey returned to Brooklyn in July 2013 to once again attempt to open a school.

With the assistance of the NYC Charter Center’s “Apply Right” Program, CTA advisors and input from the East New York community and surrounding neighborhoods, the founding team has been relentless in their commitment to seeing CTA open its doors. Since August 2013, CTA’s applicant group remain in daily and weekly contact via email and phone calls; as well as monthly video conference calls and in-person meetings. Kimberly Mackey is the writer of CTA’s application and has led all planning meetings to date. Currently, no member of CTA’s planning team has been identified to assume any definitive role at CTA; except for Kimberly Mackey as the founding Principal. All planning team members have agreed to submit to CTA’s hiring process upon receipt of charter of CTA. This is to ensure that the best possible candidate is chosen for each identified position. CTA will follow policy for hiring outlined in the Hiring Policy

**B. BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND GOVERNANCE**

**The Proposed Founding Board of Trustees**

<b>Trustee Name</b>	<b>Board Position</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>	<b>Voting Member (Y/N)</b>
<i>Courtney Rodriguez, Esq.</i>	President	2 Years (renewable)	Y
<i>Mikila Thompson</i>	Vice President	2 Years (renewable)	Y
<i>Twana Smith-Patterson</i>	Treasurer	2 Years (renewable)	Y
<i>Shaunise Spivey</i>	Secretary	2 Years (renewable)	Y
<i>Ian Arellano</i>	Member	2 Years (renewable)	Y
<i>Kimberly Mackey</i>	Member	2 Years (renewable)	N
<i>CTA Parent (TBD)</i>	Member	2 Years (non-renewable)	N
<i>CTA Staff Member</i>	Member	1 Year (non-renewable)	N

**Experience and Community Involvement**

The proposed Board of Trustees has a breadth and depth of knowledge in one of more areas of new school development, school leadership and operations management. They also have strong ties to the community in which CTA plans to open. Some members have worked as teachers and/or administrators in its public schools, lived in its communities, enrolled their own children in CSD 19 schools, joined local churches, and/or have done the same in other nearby sections of Brooklyn.

The initial Board of Trustees is committed to recruiting and retaining additional board members with proven records of accomplishment in finance and/or business management. Potential board members must also be advocates in supporting and expanding opportunities for children that live in underserved communities in New York City; specifically East New York, Brooklyn. Potential board members will also be recruited through a variety of activities and venues, which include referrals from current Board members, periodic recruitment at professional conferences/meetings, CTA activities or events, advertisement in local newspapers and/or community events. The CTA Board of Trustees will maintain a strong working relationship with Community Boards 3, 5, and 16 (local community boards in East New York,

<sup>33</sup> Prior to Ms. Mackey’s tenure at Thirteenth Avenue school in New Jersey, in the 2010-11 school year, the school received ratings in the following categories: Academic Achievement, College and Career Readiness, and Scholar Growth. In each category the school received 18%, 0%, and 10%, respectively. Upon Ms. Mackey’s arrival in the 2011-12 school year, and implementation of the social support and instructional approach described in this application, the school received the following scores along the same categories: 50%, 0%, and 50%, respectively.  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/pr/2013/13/133570715.pdf>

Brownsville and Bedford Stuyvesant), elected officials, local chamber of commerce, clergy, professional and social organizations. These affiliations will provide CTA with a pool of qualified and highly committed individuals from which potential board members may be selected. The ultimate composition of CTA's Board of Trustees will reflect strategic expertise, resources, and perspectives needed to achieve the mission and objectives of the school. We will ensure that the founding board members are committed to securing expertise in all designated fields and that the qualifications and qualities of prospective board members further develop the work of the Board and school's mission.

**Courtney Rodriguez** is currently a public defender for indigent persons in urban areas. Formerly an NYCDOE teacher in the South Bronx, Ms. Rodriguez is also a former Teach for America member and was known throughout the Mott Haven community for her work with at-risk scholars and their families. **Mikila Thompson** advocates for youth headed into the juvenile penal system. **Twana Smith Patterson**, previously the Assistant Director of the Boys & Girls Club in Bellport, NY, brings non-profit operations and fundraising experience to the board. **Shaunise Spivey** is a youth mentor through her religious organization and currently is an Assistant Director of Human Resources at Philadelphia Corporation Aging, a state non-profit organization. **Ian Arellano** currently serves as a Financial Analyst for Merrill Lynch and oversees over \$400 million in client assets and liabilities. He has extensive experience in financial management and planning with strong ties to the business community.

***See Attachment 5a: Charter School Trustee Background Information (including educational and employment history or attached resume).***

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The CTA Board of Trustees (the "Board") is responsible for the fiscal, academic and regulatory oversight of the school and for ensuring that CTA meets the NYS Charter Law requirements and achieves its mission. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that the school is operating in compliance with its charter and all applicable federal and state laws as well as overseeing the school's performance in achieving its mission of educating 5 through 8th grade children. The trustees' major responsibilities will include setting strategic goals for the school, hiring, overseeing, and evaluating the executive director and principal, approving annual budgets, responding to parent complaints, and maintaining ultimate responsibility and accountability for the school to the Board of Regents consistent with the application to be set forth in the charter agreement, and implementation of the proposed educational programs so scholars may meet or exceed the performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents:

- a. Fulfilling all NYS scholar assessment requirements for public schools.
- b. Obtaining sufficient financial resources to implement the school's programs.
- c. Adhering to CTA's Code of Ethics and conflicts of interest standards for matters brought before the Board.
- d. Final responsibility for operational decisions of the school, although day-to-day decision making authority shall be delegated to the Principal of CTA.
- e. The Board understands that their compliance and oversight responsibilities will be developed in an Oversight Plan prepared by them with the State Education Department.

Potential Board Candidates must be at least 18 years old and demonstrate:

- i. Commitment to the mission of the school.
- ii. Commitment to the academic achievement of all CTA scholars, regardless of English language deficiency, special education needs, or limited family income.
- iii. Understanding of Board duties.
- iv. Willingness to attend Board and committee meetings and perform Board work.
- v. Expertise in relevant fields, such as education, business management, accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing, fund-raising, and/or community outreach.
- vi. Capacity to examine performance data, financial documents, and management reports and make informed decisions in the best interest of the school.

The CTA Board has final authority over all aspects of the school. Their fundamental responsibility is to ensure that the school has the adequate resources it needs to fulfill its mission. The Board of Trustees shall fix the number of trustees of C.H.O.I.C.E.T.O. Charter School

from time to time, which shall not be less than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15). The balance of the trustees shall be elected pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.04 of the CTA Bylaws. (See Attachment 5b.) Board meetings will be held once every calendar month. Notice of such meetings shall be posted in the school's main office, no less than 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting. Notice of Board meetings will also be listed on CTA' website, sent home with individual scholars, and communicated via school "phone blasts."<sup>34</sup> General board member responsibilities include:

- Maintaining and clarifying the school's mission and vision;
- Appointing, supporting and evaluating the performance of the Principal;
- Attending and preparing for all scheduled Board meetings and trainings;
- Reviewing the school's educational programs for success;
- Making informed decisions based on data to ensure the success of the school;
- Recruiting new board members;
- Communicate with the school community, parents and the Board of Regents;
- Review and provide feedback on all documents that are presented for Board review;
- Be willing to fundraise, or otherwise personally provide financial support to CTA;
- Delegate responsibilities to others in accordance with the by-laws and Code of Ethics;
- Serve on any committees to which they are pledged to serve; and,
- Be present at a majority of fund raising, and/or parent or community outreach events.

The Board will have four executive positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The President's responsibilities include: general supervision, direction, and control of the affairs of the school, subject to board control, and such other powers as the board may prescribe; presiding at board meetings and conducting general management of meetings and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the board are carried into effect. The Vice Presidents responsibilities include: performing if the President is absent or unable to fulfill his or her duties and when so acting as President will have all the President's powers and be subject to the same restrictions and performing other duties as the board shall prescribe. The Secretary's responsibilities include: keeping the minutes of the school, maintaining records of board membership and decisions and interpreting the by-laws in the case of a dispute and other duties the board may prescribe. The responsibilities of the Treasurer include: serving as custodian of school funds and will provide the appropriate segregation of duties to create strict internal fiscal control policies, informing the Board of the school's ongoing fiscal condition and presenting an annual report setting forth in full the financial conditions of the school.

The CTA Board will also have five permanent committees:

1. **Executive:** The Executive Committee shall consist of no less five (5) members, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Principal and such other Trustees as may be designated by the Board. The President shall chair the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall set the policy agenda, coordinate committee agendas and set the agenda for the full Board of Trustees. An action taken by the Executive Committee may be subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees. A member of the Executive Committee shall record the minutes of each meeting and include a report on any actions taken. Such member shall forward the minutes to the Secretary and the Secretary shall distribute the minutes of such meetings to the Board.
2. **Governance Committee:** The Governance Committee shall be composed of at least three members as recommended by the President or elected by a majority of the Board. The Governance Committee shall develop an evaluation process for and evaluate school leadership. This includes development of succession plans as well as evaluating the Board's performance and developing recommendations to change board member roles and responsibilities. The Governance Committee is also responsible for reviewing governance policy and practice; assessing board composition, organization and committee structure to recommend improvements. The Committee is responsible for identifying, interviewing and recommending new board members. The

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<sup>34</sup> "Phone blasts" are automated announcements that are delivered by an automated phone system that calls all listed phone numbers within a database. The DO will be responsible for maintaining CTA's scholar database so that parents will receive these announcements in a timely manner.

Governance Committee shall also be responsible for presenting a slate of candidates for election as officers of the Board of Trustees and the orientation of newly chosen trustees.

3. **Finance Committee:** The Treasurer or an Assistant Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee. The Finance committee shall be responsible for reviewing budgets and financial reports, as well as, for supervising the management of CTA's finances. The Finance Committee shall review, analyze and recommend for approval the annual audit. On a periodic basis, the Finance Committee shall review investment policies, objectives and performance. It shall work closely with C. TA's financial staff and school leaders to implement this oversight role.
4. **School Development Committee:** The School Development Committee shall develop and implement fundraising goals and programs. Its responsibilities may include setting annual fundraising goals, developing periodic capital campaigns, creating community fundraising/development communications and cultivating financial support from the community. The School Development Committee shall also strengthen parent and community communication and outreach programs.

**Academic Accountability Committee:** The Academic Accountability Committee shall evaluate CTA's academic performance, mission achievement and progress toward preparing scholars for success in college and active citizenship. It will examine state, city and school level data to determine whether CTA is its charter goals. Based on this assessment, the Academic Accountability Committee will make recommendations regarding the allocation of school resources to support attaining the school's goals. Recruitment and Retention of Board Members

CTA's Governance Committee will determine the Board's need for additional members and conduct an internal assessment to determine the skillsets required of potential new board members. General requirements for new CTA Board members include individuals who are passionate about CTA's mission and program. Prospective Trustees must be community-oriented professionals with pertinent experience that aids in their ability to support the CTA's success. The Governance Committee will oversee identification of potential candidates. Candidate searches may include outreach to the professional networks of current Board members and other CTA stakeholders.

*Please see Attachment 5b for the CTA By-laws (which describe the process for adding and orienting new Trustees).*

At this time, CTA plans to recruit future four additional board members with expertise in the following areas: charter school governance, real estate, real property law, and fundraising. To recruit parent and staff representatives to CTA's Board, The CSI board of trustees' governance model includes a parent and a faculty member. The parent representative will have full voting privileges; the staff member will be an ex-officio member.

**CTA Parent Representative:** CTA will assist the school's parents in organizing a parents' group which will meet regularly and coordinate events, workshops and other activities with CTA's Family Leader. Parents will then have an opportunity to elect the parent they want to represent them on CTA's Board. Operational issues that parents raise will be directed to the Principal and/or DO. Any policy issues raised will be discussed at the parent group meeting, and if there is consensus, the parent representative will bring the issue to the Board.

**CTA Staff Representative:** We will also encourage faculty to participate fully in all aspects of CTA's school community. The faculty will elect their own representative to serve ex officio on the Board. The faculty representative will direct operational issues to the Principal and/or DO and policy issues to the Board.

**See Attachment 5b Proposed CTA By-Laws**

**See Attachment 5c Proposed CTA Code of Ethics**

### **C. MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

CTA has set forth an organizational structure that separates instruction from operations. Our school has identified an **Executive Director**, who will serve as the school's academic, instructional and financial oversight manager. Her resume is in Attachment 8b. CTA will also have a school site instructional leader, **Principal**, who will serve as the founding principal and aggressively recruited by the Executive Director.

The school will grow each year, making for additional staff members to be added to the staff. The Board is responsible for hiring the Principal, who will serve as the primary instructional, operational and strategic leader of the school. The Principal reports to the Executive Director and the Board, but is evaluated by the Executive Director.

The Principal will serve as the lead instructional leader, having support from the **Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI)** in Year 3. The Principal and DCI will ensure that all curricular frameworks, lessons, and teaching/learning is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (including the RTI programs), as well as, designed using the GRR instructional model for all instruction. CTA will also employ a **Director of School Culture (DSC)** in Year 1. The DSC will ensure that all scholars have set rituals and routines, ensure compliance the school's behavior code, oversee implementation of WBT and restorative practices approach school-wide, maintain and revise (as needed) the Life Skills curriculum, and communicate effectively with the parents to ensure they are active members of our community and involved in their children's education.

The **Family Leader** reports to the DSC. The DSC will work with the Family Leader to review documentation and logs to ensure that all scholar reports are up-to-date; review CTA family data to ensure that all families have been contacted and have physically visited the school to meet with the Family Leader. The DSC also coordinates Parent Workshops with the Family Leader, organizes the bi-weekly caucuses with the Social Worker and Guidance Counselor, and ensures effective implementation and adherence to the Scholar Discipline Code by scholars and teachers, and all other matters that pertain to preserving the mission of the school and cultivating our "culture of achievement." DSC, along with the Principal, evaluates the Family Leader, Social Support Leader, Guidance Counselor, Scholar Support Coach, and other personnel, later identified by the Principal, whose primary role is to assist the DSC function in his/her role.

The **Director of Operations (DO)** will handle all finance and operations business for the school. S/he will ensure that the school's finances are well managed, the school's facility is adequately prepared to service children and all other aspects of finance and operations that pertain to the school. S/he will be hired by the Principal. The DO's responsibilities are to manage any facilities staff, the cafeteria manager (if applicable), and any office staff that work in the aspect of finance and operations. The DO will also work alongside the contracted financial management service company of the Charter School Business Management (CSBM); to ensure that the services provided are consistent with the goals, mission and vision of our school.

The Principal will also hire a **Director of School Support Services (DSSS)** in Year 1. The DSSS will be responsible for overseeing all RTI support programs for SWDs, ELLs and at-risk scholars are effective for these special scholar groups. The DSSS will also supervise Special Education and Bi-lingual teachers to ensure focused and detailed academic and social-emotional support for special scholar populations and their families. The DSSS must have knowledge of Special Education law, best practice instruction for ELLs and SWDs, and servicing at-risk youth. He/she will also coordinate all internal and external programs or services that may assist in the compliance of state or federally mandated educational services for certain scholars. Additionally, the DSSS will coordinate all state tests and state testing data; compile such reports and produce those reports for the ILT, teachers and the Board. Parents will receive individual data from their child's teacher and the school's online parent reporting portal.

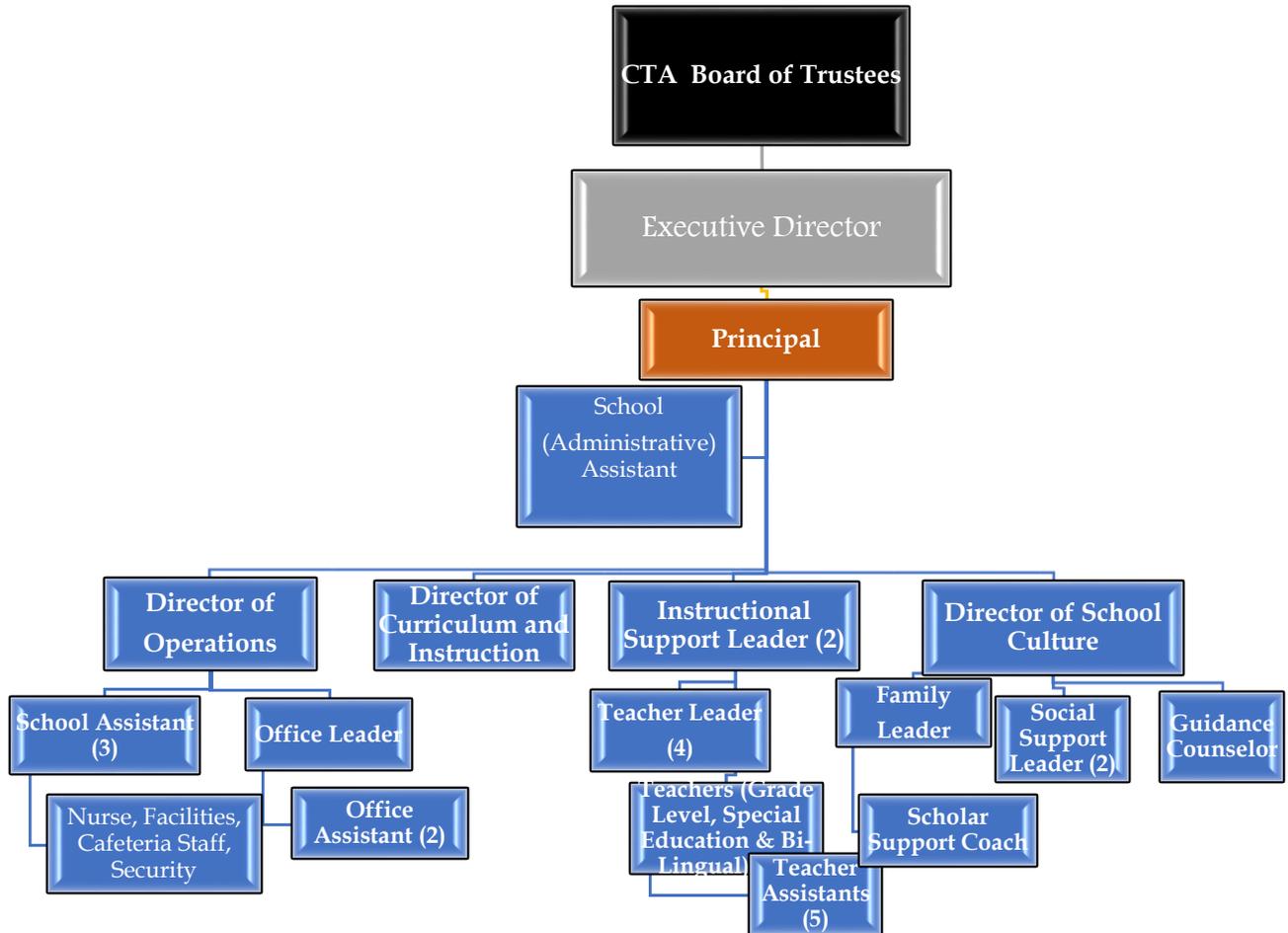
In Year 2, the Principal will identify an **Instructional School Leader (ISL)** from an internal and public pool of applicants. The ISL will act as an instructional coach for teachers in that h/she will provide one-on-one guidance as teachers work to implement best instructional practices. H/She will also recommend instructional improvement techniques, review all scholar achievement data, progress towards SMART goals and learning targets, and evaluate teachers. A second ISL will be hired, by the Principal in Year 3 of CTA's operation. The ISL(s) will also support and supervise the Teaching Assistants in the classrooms.

All CTA Directors and ISLs report directly to the Principal. All will be evaluated formally, semi-annually. We have outlined roles and responsibilities for these key positions in Attachment 8a.

CTA’s organizational structure is one that includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are described in Section IV.B. of this application.

The Principal, along with the DCI, DO, DSC, ISLs, and DSSS, will comprise CTA’s Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). The hierarchy of reporting is illustrated in Figure 9:

**Figure 9. Hierarchy of Reporting**



In determining CTA’s staffing needs, we considered the demographics of CSD 19, the information we have collected through our community outreach efforts, including conversations with neighboring school leaders, as well as the staffing plans of other schools in CSD 19 that serve the same grades and demographics as CTA will serve. The number of teaching positions across each grade level is based on projected enrollment each year, coupled with the school’s desired average class size of no more than 25 scholars, by different grade levels (see *Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention* for further information on our enrollment), and social-emotional support of all scholars. As the school expands each year, the number of staff will increase to ensure that scholars’ academic and non-academic needs are fully and effectively addressed.

In Year 1, we intend to employ approximately seven (7) teachers. As a new school, all staff members will share duties and responsibilities outside the scope of their titles to ensure the best possible beginning and successful continuation of our growing school community. By hiring 7 teachers at the start of the school year, we begin with a core group of educators who will support our scholars academically to the highest degree possible.

**Teacher Hiring:** The ideal qualities of a CTA teacher are: humility; high expectations for scholars and themselves; see collaboration as the vehicle to improving their professional practice; view teaching as a *vocation* and a *calling*. Although this appears altruistic, research shows that the single most important factor determining a child’s education is the quality of her or his teacher. CTA teachers will demonstrate exemplary teaching skills, set high expectations and believe that their scholars, including underachievers, can and will meet their full potential. CTA believes that recruiting, developing, supporting and retaining high-quality teachers are essential to the success of the school.

School leaders will select teachers based on the criteria outlined in the Job Description section for Teachers in Attachment 8a. Selection will be made from a pool of applicants that are culled from resumes received via online recruiters of educators such as indeed.com; nemet.com; idealist.org; NYC Teaching Fellows; and others. We will also print advertisements in the New York Times and NY Daily News newspapers; as well as throughout the communities we plan to service. Teachers must have a Master’s degree appropriate NYS certification credentials, and demonstrate subject matter competence. If a teacher does not have a valid New York State Teaching Certificate and/or NCLB “highly qualified” status, they must meet one or more of the criteria listed in section 2854(3) (a-1) of Education Law.

To be hired at CTA, all potential candidates must submit to the following:

1. Submit resume, Letter of Interest, and copies of all NYS teaching licenses
2. Phone Interview with a member of CTA’s ILT;
3. Perform a demonstration lesson with lesson plan, submit teaching portfolio and complete a written response;
4. Panel Interview with CTA’s ILT
5. Face-to-Face interview with Principal;
6. Recommended for hire

The Principal will evaluate the instructional staff utilizing the Kim Marshall Teacher Evaluation Framework 3 times a school year, informal observations, review of scholar achievement and growth data to gauge teacher effectiveness; and Attendance, just to name a few.. Details of the evaluation process are included in Section D-Evaluation, of this application.

**Retention of Effective Teachers:** CTA fully understands that retaining effective teachers will be critical to the overall success of our school. Thus, we will make every effort to retain our most effective teachers by providing opportunities for professional growth by becoming a Teacher Leader or other positions where they offer their expertise and support to their colleagues. We will also offer a supportive and collegial professional work environment; including professional development, leadership mentoring, workshops, and a competitive salary similar to schools throughout New York City. CTA will also implement a “pay for performance” bonus to teachers who have achieved their academic SMART goals and maintained them for 2 consecutive school years; and have consistently contributed to the overall effectiveness of the school’s climate and culture as evidenced by receiving formal ratings of “Highly Effective” on the teacher evaluation tool, for 2 consecutive years. Individual base salaries will be determined at a rate that is 3% above their teacher counterparts in the NYCDOE. Each year, CTA will aim to achieve at least 80% satisfaction rates of all teachers and staff; with the school’s leadership, learning environment, and professional development opportunities, as determined by CTA’s School Climate Survey. These results should translate into high retention rates of faculty and staff.

Teachers who receive annual rating of “Effective” for 2 consecutive years, will receive a 3% salary increase each year they maintain their “Effective” rating after the second year. Teachers who receive a rating of “Developing” or “Ineffective” for any school year, shall be placed on an Instructional Improvement Plan to be in effect for 90 days, by the Principal or DCI. Within those 90 days, the affected teacher is to adhere to the plan as outlined to demonstrate the desired teaching practice. The teacher will be observed by the Principal and/or DCI 3 times formally, and no less than 6 times informally during the 90 days. The teacher will meet with Principal and/or DCI weekly to discuss progress or lack thereof, toward achievement of the guidelines within the 90-Day Action Plan. At the conclusion of the 90 days, the Principal will decide to either rescind or continue employment.

As the school grows, between Year One and Year Five of its charter, additional personnel will be hired to service the growing enrollment of the school. Staffing needs will be strongly dictated by the needs of the scholars. Our continued outreach towards at-risk scholars will necessitate adequate instructional staffing. To deal with the human resource challenges as the school grows to scale, CTA will engage in year-round activities to market the school to prospective candidates, leverage DOE systems to identify candidates, and consider candidates from all pathways (traditional, alternative certification, transfers) when vacancies arise. We will also use our partnership with National Urban Alliance to specifically attract, recruit and retain the type of teachers whose educational philosophy align with CTA's mission and vision and desire is to work in schools with the scholar populations that we intend to service.

**Teachers for Special Populations (SWDs, ELLs, and At-Risk Scholars):** Because scholars will be regularly assessed using formative assessment tools and informal observations teachers will be able to effectively plan instruction based on scholar needs. Every 8-12 weeks at the end of curricular units, scholars will have assessments in all core subject areas (Math, ELA, Science and Social studies) The data will be tracked and realistic, measurable goals will be set and infused into the learning objectives. Scholar data will also be used in determining RTI and additional academic supports needed to improve scholar academic achievement. CTA will also review NYS standardized testing data as an additional guide in determining specific interventions that need to be taken.

With that in mind, CTA will observe the performance of Special Education, Bi-Lingual teachers, in relation to scholar data to see if teachers are leveraging scholars' achievement and meeting the individual needs of scholars who are in these populations. We will continue to actively recruit Special Education and Bi-Lingual teachers that have an expressed desire to teach in schools and communities that reflect CTA's demographics and community make up. Using the professional affiliations, of CTA's founding Principal and planning team members, with their respective alma maters Brooklyn College, St. John's University and New York University; as well as teacher recruitment organizations such as NYC Teaching Fellows and MSU's Urban Teacher program, we fill these specialized areas of need.

**Teacher Assistants:** To determine the experience, training and skills of teacher assistants, CTA will define the values and professional qualities that the school expects of its teachers and what is required to best respond to the needs of scholars and the school community. CTA teachers and school leadership, will be involved in the interview and selection process. We will require all potential candidates to submit a resume, written applications, interviews, and perform a demonstration lesson. Once hired, every new teacher assistant will be assigned to a teacher who will serve as their mentor. Mentoring will be instrumental in leading to the development of teacher competencies within the candidate that may lead to a permanent teaching position at CTA thus allowing us to grow from within. CTA will also take advantage of district resources for mentor and new teacher trainings and development.

#### **C1. Charter Management Organization**

We do not intend to contract with a charter management organization.

#### **C2. Partner Organization**

We do not intend to partner with any organization.

### **D. EVALUATION**

#### **Education Programs**

CTA believes that scholars' success is predicated on the effectiveness of the systems, programs and other resources that a school puts in place. We, therefore, must evaluate our curricular programs and instructional practices and make changes as necessary to consistently provide scholars with a high quality educational experience. The Principal, DSSS and ISL(s) collaborate to oversee the effectiveness of CTAs education programs.

Each year, the Principal sets annual SMART<sup>35</sup> goals that are in alignment with the school's charter goals, board guidance and school growth plans. Annual SMART goals address the academic, operational and fiscal performance of the school. Once in place, the Principal also sets quarterly Learning Targets to gauge progress toward meeting annual SMART goals. Professional development topics for school staff throughout the year will correspond to annual goals and quarterly learning targets. In alignment with these goals and targets, the Principal leads the DCI, DSSS and ISLs in working with teachers to develop grade, class, teacher and scholar level annual goals and quarterly learning targets. To ensure proper implementation and fidelity to goals and programs, teachers will be evaluated informally, weekly. Formal observations will be done three (3) times per year using the Kim Marshall Teacher evaluation tool. All teacher evaluations will be done by the Principal, DCI, ISLs, and DSSSS. However, only the Principal can promote, retain or rescind employment for any teacher.

Goal and target measurement will be tied to scholar assessment performance. We will aim for 1.5 to 2 years of academic growth for scholars whose in-coming performance level was three or more years below grade level. The Principal will use the NYS standardized tests and scholar growth data, to determine the effectiveness of implemented programs in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. All goals and learning targets will be monitored for attainment by the Principal, DCI, DSSS, and ISLs. When the goals are related to school climate and culture, the DSC, in collaboration with the Family Leader, and Guidance Counselor, will monitor and evaluate progress of goal attainment. Where the goals and targets are falling below where expected, each group of school leaders will meet to discuss ways to improve attainment of said goals and targets. Where progress is as expected or exceeds goals or targets, CTA will continue to set higher level goals and targets that will continue to move our school forward.

CTA will disaggregate all data by classroom, grade level and content area to assess our instructional programs for strengths and weaknesses; to identify trends in scholar performance, and identify needs for teacher and/or classroom support, and professional development. To evaluate the effectiveness of programs as it relates to special populations; (ie. SWDs, ELLs, and at-risk scholars), data will also be disaggregated by these special categories to assess the implementation and effectiveness of our programs, academic support and RTI process. *(As described in Section II of this application.)* The data will be reviewed and discussed with teachers during Data Study meetings and Instructional Caucuses, which are scheduled 3 times and twice weekly; respectively. To address any negative data trends or concerns; general education, special education and bi-lingual (when applicable) teachers, will develop an 8 week Action Plan, in consultation with the DSSS. The Action Plan will consist of refined learning targets and assigned responsibilities for staff, to encourage improvement until the next data point. These Action Plans will be submitted to the Principal for approval. Once approved, the action plan will be shared with the scholar's parent during a regularly scheduled Family Outreach meeting, which occurs bi-weekly. *(See Attachment 3).* The Principal, DCI, and DSSS, will conduct teacher observations and lesson reviews, visit the afterschool program, and hold frequent feedback sessions with teachers, during the tri-weekly Data Study meetings, to monitor fidelity to the Action Plans.

The Board and authorizer will evaluate the educational programs via annual reporting and scholar achievement data. Should scholar performance not meet goal and/or target measurement, the Principal must create an Action Plan to improve scholars' performance.

The Principal will create interim goals within the Action Plan, which are to be measured every 8-12 weeks, by the Principal and DCI. The Principal will submit progress reports to the Board's Scholar Accountability sub-committee for review. Should the sub-committee review the reports and find that the Principal fails to meet the goals outlined in the Action Plan, and will not reach the annual goals, as agreed, the Principal and the Board will meet to discuss reasons why the trend exists. Continued stagnate scholar achievement data will factor into the semi-annual rating of the Principal. If the Principal receives two (2) consecutive ratings of "Ineffective" or "Developing", the Board will exercise its right to conduct a search for a new Principal. The incumbent Principal, may exercise his/her right to re-apply for the position, however, the Board will retain the right to extend or terminate an offer of employment.

The Principal, DSC, DSSS, DCI, DSC, and ISLs, will evaluate CTA on six (6) key competencies:

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<sup>35</sup> SMART Goals are goals that are Specific Timely Measurable and Achievable. All goals at CTA, albeit target goals, are designed using this format. They are created to meet academic, social and school performance goals.

1. Ensuring thriving scholars and a healthy school community;
2. Quality Learning Experiences for all scholars;
3. Safe, Supportive, and healthy learning environments;
4. Learning communities focused on continuous improvement;
5. Meaningful scholar, family and community engagement/partnerships;
6. Effective school leadership and resource management.

Evaluations will occur in March of Year 1 of operation. Every proceeding school year, evaluations will occur semi-annually; January and April of each school year. We will evaluate these 6 competencies using the following data collections, but are not limited to:

- a) Attendance and retention rates;
- b) Formal and Informal data assessment results;
- c) Scholar demographic and subgroup results;
- d) Family and Scholar surveys;
- e) Staff surveys;
- f) School culture indicators that include discipline reports, and staff involvement and participation in extra-curricular activities and programs;
- g) Fiscal reports and indicators that evidence the school's ability and capacity to utilize resources in a creative, innovative and fiscally responsible way that maximizes budgetary priorities and facilitates meeting the needs of the school.

The DO will prepare all reports indicating and delineating the above, to be presented to the Principal and the Board, along with any recommendations, at the Board's annual meeting in June.

### **Fiscal Soundness**

CTA will measure its fiscal soundness and hire CSBM to ensure the fiscal health and efficiency of the school. During Year 1 and 2 of CTA's operation, CSBM will train the DO and other office staff to monitor and maintain the financial health of CTA, in-house. By Year 3, the DO will prepare all monthly reports and meet with the Principal, to review and monitor the operations and management of the school. Operational measures will be developed for each area of management and operations; including cash flow and expenditures, afterschool programs, food and transportation services, and the physical condition of the school building. CSBM will evaluate the effectiveness of the department by looking at fiscal indicators like spending trends, organizational systems, and payroll filing. The Principal and CTA Board Treasurer will oversee and monitor CSBM's services. This will include weekly meetings with the Principal and at least monthly meetings with the Board Treasurer.

### **Operational Soundness**

The DO will measure operational soundness by overseeing the purchase, expenditures, facilities, inventory and equipment check, scholar data and scholar services ( such as food, transportation and health services).

### **Teacher Evaluation**

At CTA, we firmly believe that every school community member should embody our Four Pillars of Excellence and work diligently to play their part in creating our culture of achievement. One of the single most important factors in raising scholars' level of achievement is the teacher. We at CTA, wholeheartedly believe this and will hold our teachers in the highest regard, but also to the highest of standards.

For all teachers, we will use the NYS approved teacher evaluation tool developed by Kim Marshall. This evaluation tool was selected based on its comprehensive approach to evaluating teachers, which includes evaluating them on classroom and instructional practices; family and community outreach, professional responsibilities and teacher follow-up with families and scholars. The evaluation tool consists of six (6) domains covering all aspects of a teacher's job performance. They are: 1) Planning and Preparation for Learning; 2) Classroom Management; 3) Delivery of Instruction; 4) Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up; 5) Family and Community Outreach; and, 6) Professional

Responsibilities. Teachers will receive three formal evaluations per year using the Marshall evaluating tool resulting in receipt of a performance score on the following four tier grading scale of:

- 4 -- Highly Effective**
- 3 – Effective**
- 2 – Developing**
- 1 – Ineffective**

As to the incorporation of scholar achievement data into factoring a teacher’s rating, the data that will be used, will be annual NYS standardized testing data, and/or, scholar growth data.<sup>36</sup> Scholar growth data will be calculated based on the percentage of gains that scholars’ have made on progress monitoring assessments of SRI, SMI, SPI, and Achieve 3000. These will make up approximately 25% of a teacher’s overall annual rating, as required by NYS Education Law §3012-c. Because every teacher, regardless of content area taught, will be responsible for providing support to scholars’ via remediation and/or enrichment, every teacher will accumulate data to attribute to their overall end of school year rating. Our teachers’ value-added scores will be weighted accordingly:

- a) Formal Observations, (30 %);**
- b) Informal observations (15%);**
- c) Implementation of feedback (10%);**
- d) Scholar achievement data (25%);**
- e) Attendance and Punctuality (10%); and**
- f) Family/Scholar Surveys (10%).**

The Teachers will be informally evaluated by the Principal, DSSS, DCL, DSC, and ISL(s). However, only the Principal, DCL and ISL(s) can formally evaluate all teachers.

**Evaluation of CTA School Leaders:** The Principal will be evaluated twice annually during the school year; (mid-year and end of year) by the Board’s Governance Committee. The Principal will be evaluated using the Kim Marshall Principal Evaluation rubric, along with the school’s performance in achieving its academic and non-academic goals; and the Principal’s attainment of his/her individual goals. This rubric scores the effectiveness of the school leader on six (6) domains covering all aspects of the principal’s job performance; (1) Diagnosis and Planning; (2) Priority Management and Communication; (3) Curriculum and Data; (4) Supervision, Evaluation, and Professional Development; (5) Discipline, and Parent Involvement; (6) Management and External Relations. The Principal’s goals will be closely linked to the school-wide goals and will also include interim goals that propel the school’s goals forward. The Principal’s interim goals will also incorporate one component under each domain to demonstrate perseverance towards excellence in leadership. The Board will approve the Principal’s goals, but the Principal will approve all other goals established by school staff.

The Principal will evaluate the DSC, DCL, DSSS, D0 and ISL, twice annually using the Kim Marshall Principal Evaluation rubric, and make decisions about compensation (following CTA compensation guidelines), promotion and/or termination by April of every school year. Each of those staff members will be evaluated on the basis of fulfillment of their respective role and responsibilities, as set forth in his/her job description, and their overall contribution to promoting and maintaining CTA’s school mission and culture. It is also within the discretion of the Principal to evaluate these staff members informally, through observation of compliance to all duties specified and assigned throughout the school year, as needed.

#### **Evaluation of CTA’s Board of Trustees**

CTA’s Board will evaluate themselves, as to effectiveness and its ability to meet its annual and interim goals. Every August, the Board will establish annual and interim goals. Should the Board need to revise its annual and/or interim goals, a special session will convene in January of each school year, to proclaim the revised goals and inform the CTA school community. The goals set by the Board, will directly support and align with the school’s mission and charter goals. Annual board goals will address: 1) school finance; 2) academic targets; 3) regulatory performance; and 4) school operations. Twice annually, and more if necessary, the Board will use the formal self-assessment included in *Effective School Boards: Strategies for Improving Board Performance*, by Eugene R. Smoley. It will enable the Board to monitor its progress toward achieving the goals. The Board will engage an advisor during Years 1 & 2 of operation, to assist with fully complying with Board governance. Additionally, individual board members will undergo a self-assessment to further ensure that all

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<sup>36</sup> When NYS standardized testing data is unavailable, scholar growth data will solely be used.

board members are fully competent and compliant with the Board’s regulatory structure, as well as attend national board trainings twice annually.

**Evaluation of Scholar and Family Satisfaction**

To gauge CTA’s school’s environment and culture, surveys will be created by the DSC, Family Leader, and the Social Support Leader to be approved by the Principal. We will administer the Family, Scholar Interest, and School Climate Surveys in January and June of each school year. CTA’s SLT will ensure that all families participate in the survey to aid in obtaining viable results. After Year 1, this will be the responsibility of the Parent Association. The surveys are identified with the child’s name, grade level and teacher. CTA will tabulate the survey results and include them as part of each respective teacher’s value-added score and final end of year rating. CTA’s administrative team will analyze each item first, then disseminate to individual staff during one of the bi-weekly Instructional Caucus. Because certain questions will pertain to specific content areas and the learning experience taking place in the classroom, it will correlate to certain teachers that teach those subjects. Thus, we can determine which teachers accumulate which scores and assign the proper value-added score.

The DO will forward the results to CTA’s Board of Trustees. The Board will publish and share the results with the public at each monthly meeting following the receipt of the survey results. Parents will also receive the results via weekly teacher check-ins, monthly school newsletters, and CTA’s school website and at monthly parent meetings.

**E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Title	Purpose	Audience	Frequency	Instructor
<b>Summer Intensive</b>	Teacher orientation to school culture, policies, routines, instruction and goals. Teachers begin curriculum planning, data analysis and goal setting.	All teachers	3 weeks in August: <b>Week 1:</b> CTA Mission and School Culture; <b>Week 2:</b> Curriculum & Instruction; and <b>Week 3:</b> Purposeful Use of Data & Technology	CTA Leadership
<b>Prep Periods</b>	Teachers will prepare for the remainder of the teaching day, call/meet with parents, meet with CTA leaders	Classroom	50 min daily	Self-directed
<b>Teacher Observations</b>	Teachers receive feedback from school leaders on lesson delivery, instruction, classroom management & scholar engagement	Teachers	Daily	CTA Leadership, Teacher Leaders
<b>Data-Study Meetings</b>	Teachers will reflect on data collected on CTA scholars via observations, unit exams, diagnostic exams, etc.	Grade-Level	Tri-Weekly	Teachers, Teacher Leaders, CTA Leaders
<b>Job-Embedded</b>	Reflection on instructional practices in comparison to scholar achievement. Study best practice instruction to leverage teaching and learning	Teacher Leaders, Teachers	Bi-weekly	CTA Leadership, Self-directed
<b>Instructional Caucus</b>	Curriculum and Instruction:	Grade Level Teachers and out-	Bi-Weekly	CTA Leadership, Teacher Leaders

		of classroom support personnel		
<b>Faculty Caucus</b>	To discuss specific academic and social issues, detect and analyze overall patterns and/or trends that may begin to emerge in scholars’ academic and social progress or lack thereof; then develop Action Plans to address the issues school-wide. T	Grade Level Teachers and out-of classroom support personnel	Semi-Monthly	CTA Leadership, Teacher Leaders
<b>Digital Platform</b>	Input of scholar assessment data that has not otherwise been uploaded into the digital platform,	All CTA Staff	Ongoing	Self-Directed

Based on the above chart, professional development will be ongoing and job-embedded; specifically through daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly coaching meetings and grade/content team meetings. In addition to the bi-weekly caucuses that teachers will attend, semi-monthly faculty caucuses will be held at the beginning and end of each month. One faculty conference will be designated strictly for the discussion of our school’s progress toward the improvement of curriculum and instruction while the other, solely to assisting teachers and other staff members with supporting scholars socially.

CTA teachers will also engage in study groups, one-on-one coaching, participate in Critical Friends groups, collaborative collegial circles, fishbowl experiences, video study groups, and any other form of effective PD practices that have been proven to increase teacher efficacy and leverage scholar achievement. CTA staff will also participate in four (4) staff retreats throughout the school year. These retreats will be designed not only to build and foster morale, but also to remind staff of our school’s mission and resolve to meet and/or exceed our goals together as a team and CTA family.

Teachers’ professional improvement and progress from the professional development learning, will be assessed through informal and formal observations, Learning Walks, Feedback Logs and other relevant data that will be collected on a weekly and monthly basis. CTA leaders will use observation and the results of scholars’ academic progress to ascertain the effectiveness of professional development at CTA. Interest surveys will be used to create a menu of PD topics, in rank order, which will enable us to offer teachers varied PD on a monthly basis. The PDs will then be tailored to those areas where teachers expressed an interest, as well as, topics that are necessary for teachers to continue to be highly effective at CTA and raise scholar achievement. Thus, we will create a school platform where all staff members can use digital playlists for self-directed learning. Staff who pursue these alternate forms of learning must create a reflection piece where they provide insights into what they learned and share it with members of the CTA community. PD topics will include but not be limited to, supporting SWDs and/or ELLs in the classroom; planning lessons from the CCS to meet the needs of all learners; supporting at-risk students in the ELA and/or Math classroom; etc. This process will be monitored by the DSSS and DCL.

To minimize the physical amount of paperwork to be done, most of the PD and feedback will be provided via a digital platform such as Canvas or another type of digital application. It is our goal to mirror for our teachers and leaders, the type of learning that we want to have CTA scholars engaged in. PD will be provided using digital playlists, blogs, videos, etc. Staff will be able to engage in self-selected deeper learning based upon which topics are most relevant and interesting to them, as well as gaining the overall learning for our school. During the two job-embedded PD times that occur every weekly, teachers will be able to take part in deeper learning.

**F. FACILITIES**

CTA will be located in East NY, Brooklyn within CSD 19. An assessment of our facilities needs based on our educational program and anticipated enrollment suggests that in Year 1 up until full enrollment in Year 4 of full enrollment; we can utilize space efficiently at approximately 80-85 square feet (sf) per scholar. We thus have calculated our space requirements to be the following:

<b>Space Required at Full Enrollment</b>	
<b>16 classrooms</b> (800 SF each)	<b>3 Specialty Rooms (Music/Art/Language)</b> (600 SF each)
<b>2 Science Labs</b> (1500 SF each)	<b>4 Small Group Instruction Rooms</b> (400 SF each)
<b>2 Computer Labs</b> (900 SF each)	<b>4 Administrative Offices</b> (800 SF each)
<b>1 Library</b> (2000 SF each)	<b>2 Teacher Lounges</b> (900 SF each)
<b>Gym/Assembly Space</b> (5000 SF)	<b>Cafeteria</b> (3500 SF)
<b>Totaling: 36,500 SF</b>	
<b>Space Required in Year 1</b>	
<b>1 Specialty Room</b> (600 SF)	<b>5 Classrooms</b> (800 SF)
<b>2 Small Group Instruction Rooms</b> (400 SF)	<b>1 Science Lab</b> (1500 SF)
<b>1 Computer Lab</b> (900 SF)	<b>2 Administrative Offices</b> (800 SF)
<b>1 Teachers' Lounge</b> (900 SF)	<b>Gym/Assembly/Cafeteria Space</b> (3500 SF)
<b>Totaling: 13,800 SF</b>	
<b>Estimated Lease Price = \$276,000 + utilities (\$2.50 per SF; 34,500) = \$310,500</b>	

*\*At full capacity of 460 scholars, we estimate that we will need the following spacing accommodations based on our programmatic needs: 80-85 square feet (SF) per scholar x 460 scholars = 36, 000 to 39,100 SF.*

The board does not choose co-locate within an NYCDOE school building. CTA has instead identified a private facility to meet the needs of the school in the first charter term. In Year 1, CTA will occupy the former St. Sylvester’s Catholic School located at 386 Grant Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208. The four-story building has approximately 36,900 square feet and can fit up to 20 classrooms in addition to administrative space. It also has a large auditorium/gym space with a mezzanine, and a separate cafeteria space. The building also meets ADA space requirements. The building will undergo moderate renovations to meet the needs of CTA in its first year of operation.

Both the founding team and board members of CTA went through extensive research to obtain a private facility within CSD 19. This endeavor was reflective of the feedback received during several meetings with parents, local elected officials and surrounding schools. That feedback was that the community would be more willing to embrace our school, so long as DOE co-location was not an option for us to incubate and subsequently grow our school. With this information, we worked diligently with CSBM to create a budget that could withstand a private lease, sustain our school financially and have surplus to either build or renovate a stand-alone private facility.

CTA’s permanent home will prospectively be located at 231 Junius Street, Brooklyn, NY 11212. This building is being built out by a developer specifically for CTA. The total square footage available in this building is approximately 24,000 square feet. Because this space is currently a one-story building, the developer plans to build the space up so that we can support the growth that CTA will have by Year 4. The building will be ready to occupy the full space by Year 5 of the charter term. The build out will allow for programming space of approximately 105 square feet per pupil. The permanent space will have a recreation area attached to the building. This will allow our scholars to have the adequate spacing that they need to fully participate in various teams, clubs and recreational practices that support our social-emotional development creed.

The rent assumptions in the 5 Year budget are based solely on the Term Sheets for St. Sylvester’s School, to which CTA’s Board of Trustees have agreed. The total projected rental cost in Year 1 will be \$310, 500, negotiated to be \$20 per square foot for the square footage that the school occupies in each year. To date, discussion are still ongoing, as it relates to pricing, cost effectiveness and other programmatic spacing requirements for the permanent space which is to-be built.

## **G. INSURANCE**

As part of our commitment to excellence and fiscal and operational soundness, CTA will purchase all necessary and NYS required insurance policies to protect the school, its Board and all staff members from claims and liabilities that may arise while operating as a school and/or in the course of doing business as CHOICE T0 Academy Charter Middle School. This includes all insurances for property, casualty, liability and workers' compensation. We have consulted with Tina Payne of Austin & Company, Inc. for a proposal for insurance coverage and costs. The coverage costs are estimated as the following:

- ❖ General Liability -- \$1 million
- ❖ Directors and Operators - \$1 million
- ❖ Umbrella Liability -- \$10 million
- ❖ Scholar Accidents -- \$50,000
- ❖ Catastrophic Accident -- \$1 million
- ❖ Scholar Accident Medical -- \$ 50,000/per accident
- ❖ Property, Automotive, Crime, Business Interruption -- \$1.5 million
- ❖ Workers' Compensation -- \$2 million

Please see *Attachment #6* for a more detailed report of insurance costs and subsequent breakdowns of coverage.

## **H. HEALTH, FOOD, AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

### **1. Health Services**

We will work with the NYCDOE and the local Department of Health to ensure that CTA has a registered nurse for our scholars. In the event that the NYCDOE and/or Department of Health fail to provide us with adequate and appropriate assistance, CTA will contract a part-time nurse to provide health services at our school. The nurse will review all incoming medical records of our scholars to assure adherence to all state and federal regulations as they pertain to screening of medical records for admittance in to public schools. The nurse will also maintain those records and be responsible for the disbursement of medication to scholars. If the nurse is not physically on the school premises, then his/her responsibilities will default to the DO. As per the CTA School Safety Plan, all staff members must be CPR trained and AED certified to use the equipment. However, in the event of an emergency only those staff members identified as "First Responders" will report to the emergency site or location.

All scholar health records will be stored in a locked and fire resistant file cabinet housed in a secure room. Only authorized staff members will be allowed access into those files. All CTA families must provide emergency contact information and Health Proxy information. The school will and must follow all NYS requirements and will ensure that all scholars' have up-to-date immunizations and are allowed only 30 calendar days by which to cure such, if the immunizations are not all up-to-date. Any parent who wishes to exclude their child from receiving immunizations may do so according to law, by providing a written request citing religious beliefs.

### **2. Food Services**

CTA intends to use the Office of Food and Nutrition of the NYCDOE to provide breakfast, lunch and snack to our scholars. Prior to attending CTA, all prospective families must fill out the School Meals application as required for scholars to participate in the federal free and reduced priced breakfast, lunch and snack programs. CTA assumes that over 80% of its scholar body will be eligible for the program thus allowing for these meals to be provided as assumed. Whether CTA is housed in a co-located or private facility, we will utilize the NYCDOE's food service provision. Should the private facility not have sufficient food storage and refrigeration equipment, these items will be purchased by CTA to ensure proper food safety and storage. CTA will also ensure complete compliance with all applicable guidelines in regards to nutrition, meal pricing, determination of eligibility, and NYS and federal reporting guidelines.

### **3. Transportation**

CTA's DSO will coordinate the transportation services for its scholars by working alongside the NYCDOE's Office of Pupil Transportation(OPT), in accordance with Education Law §2853(4) (b) and §3635. On behalf of CTA, the DO will submit a Transportation Request Form to OPT to coordinate sufficient transportation services for all scholars. OPT will also assist the DO with coordinating transportation efforts for those

scholars for whom it is mandated as per their IEP; as well as state and federal law. Lastly, CTA will set aside school funds to pay for transportation to and from field trips and any/all school events, programs or functions that are held off school property. Currently, OPT offers the following services as per the NYC Chancellor’s Regulation A-801:

Distance from Home to School				
Grade Level	Less than ½ mile	½ mile or more, but less than 1 mile	1 mile or more but less than 1 ½ miles	1 ½ miles or more
5-6	No Transportation Provided	Eligible for half-fare bus passes only	Eligible for full fare	Eligible full fare
7-8			Eligible for half fare	

**I. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

CTA is focused on creating a reciprocal, healthy and nurturing bond between the school and families. CTA is thus committed to empowering scholars and their families by creating a highly engaged culture. The Family Leader will ensure this occurs. This role’s responsibilities include interacting with CTA families to engage them with the school, providing them with guidance on leveraging community resources and addressing any family needs or concerns that would assist in promoting and establishing a strong, positive bond with CTA. CTA will build on this through monthly meetings with all members of the school community to solicit feedback toward school improvement, share school news and performance and enlist volunteers and support for the school’s programs.

CTA will encourage the development and maintenance of an active Parent Association (PA). Through the efforts of the Family Leader, Social Worker and DSC, parents will be encouraged to organize. CTA will encourage the PA to maintain open lines of communication, develop and support plans for family and community engagement, fundraise for the school, organize parent volunteers and provide critical feedback for improvement of the program. Additionally, CTA teachers will communicate with the families of CTA scholars on a weekly basis. This is realized in the time that is built-in to the teachers’ schedules one period (45 minutes) per week identified as Family Outreach. This is not the only time that teachers will be expected to contact CTA families. However, the weekly time, is solely for this purpose to intentionally demonstrate the importance of this practice. Communication may entail, but is not limited to, the academic and social progress of scholars, share upcoming CTA events and/or topics to be discussed at the monthly CTA meetings, and any other pertinent information.

Under the guise of the School Culture and Climate Committee (SCCC), will conduct workshops for families that will allow them to share their opinions on school policies, and overall function of the school. In addition, the SCCC will create a weekly schedule of workshops for parents to attend during the week. The workshop topics will be developed based on the Family Interest surveys that CTA families will complete upon acceptance of their child into CTA. The SCCC will evaluate the survey data and create the workshop topics. These workshops will be key in assisting CTA families with parenting issues, coping with adolescent child(ren), financial planning, GED, and/or job training assistance. They also fulfill CTA’s mission of empowering children and families so that they can make the best decisions for their family’s future.

CTA will actively support the PA by providing space to meet, access to communication tools, and information that parents need to organize activities. CTA will translate printed materials and have bilingual staff to ensure effective communication with all scholars and their families. The SCCC will work alongside the PA and make every effort to attend PA meetings and events, and have an open door policy, fostering a collaborative partnership between CTA and its families. The PA will be expected to facilitate interaction between CTA and its families through social events, meetings, and other events. A representative of the PA may attend Board meetings to offer updates on events and important information. Parents can attend Board meetings and offer input during the public comment period of each Board meeting.

**Community Involvement:** Through our implementation of Empowerment Projects, and mentoring programs, our scholars will interact directly with the community and community-based organizations and/or programs. Empowerment projects are projects that CTA scholars will complete to show how they have internalized our themes of taking advantage of opportunities to improve oneself and/or the community,

inspiration, challenge. They are mandatory for all scholars ensuring a direct connection with and involvement of the community. For scholars, this fosters the real world application of school developed knowledge, as well as, encourages multiple entry points for all involved to foster beneficial relationships, empathy, and the understanding that empowerment comes from connection.

CTA has established formal partnerships with several community organizations to support and further the mission of the school. The role of these partnerships is to enhance the school experience for CTA scholars. These partners provide their expertise to CTA in some of the following ways; (1) developing leadership qualities in CTA scholars; (2) provide research-based clinical support to scholars or families who may be dealing with mental health issues; (3) develop and deliver quality professional development to CTA staff so they are better equipped to deal with families and scholars; (4) assist CTA scholars with acquiring professional work skills and interface with the community in a productive manner; as well as many other ways.

#### **Established Partnerships**

**\*Montclair State University’s Center for Autism Early Childhood Mental Health (CAECMH at MSU)** – This partnership assists CTA with improving and empowering the lives of children and families, particularly scholars with disabilities and/or scholars or families dealing with mental health issues. CAECMH at MSU will also provide professional development and support to CTA staff in dealing with those families and children with on-site as well as online professional development via web conferencing.

**\*The Man-Up Organization--** This partnership will work alongside CTA by co-developing the Mentoring Program and crafting a Cultural Awareness program to assist in the growth and development of scholars at CTA. Also working with the schools’ SCCC to develop Cultural After-School Programs, Computer Training, Community Advocacy, Mentoring Programs, an Urban Athletes University, Boys & Girls Summer Day Program, Employment Assistance and Anti-Violence Programs for CTA scholars and its families.

**\*Brownsville Youth Association** – This partnership will offer mentoring to our male scholars and sports programs for any scholar.

**\*Got it Going on Girl! (GIGOG)** – The goal of GIGOG is to partner with C.H.O.I.C.E. T.O. by providing training and licensing to program facilitator’s with the GIGO curriculum that is tailored to the specific needs of adolescent urban girls. The curriculum includes the GIGO Facilitator’s Guide, GIGO handbooks, and will combine issue discussions, with physical activity, presentations, community service, field trips, and special events. Ongoing support will be provided through an online “Community of Practice” where facilitator’s participate in an online live forum with a GIGOG founder or guest speaker.

*Evidence of these partnerships are annexed as Attachment #3.*

**Anticipated Partnerships:** CTA has and continues to do extensive outreach to further engage and involve community stakeholders to be active participants in our school. Some organizations who expressed interest are, but are not limited to; Washington-Koen Media, the National Urban Alliance, Bedford Stuyvesant YMCA, Ingersoll Community Center, Police Athletic League (PAL), United Community Centers, Bangladeshi American, Community Development, Strong Families and Communities (SCO), East New York Restoration, and local businesses in the East New York, Brownsville, and Bedford Stuyvesant communities.

## **J. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

CTA’s Board of Trustees will have ultimate responsibility for approving fiscal policies and providing academic, fiscal and regulatory oversight of the school. CTA will hire Charter School Business Management, Inc. (CSBM) to implement day-to-day financial operations, prepare for annual audits and manage CTA’s financial responsibilities in close collaboration with the Principal and DO during the school’s first three year of operation. As of August 2014, CSBM successfully handles the financial responsibilities for over 100 charter schools in New York City. Their experience includes drafting the NYSED’s fiscal guide for charter schools as well as professionally developing charter school boards and leaders around the country on the topic of financial management.

CSBM will work with CTA staff to develop and ensure adherence to the school’s fiscal policies and procedures as well as track scholar enrollment and scholar eligibility for programs such as FRPL and special education. CTA will hire an independent auditor each year to review the school’s financials and ensure it is operating in a fiscally sound manner. By the end of year 3, CTA will have CSBM identify and train in-house staff to take over the day-to-day financial responsibilities, including preparation of the annual budget. During year 4, the Principal will take on all senior level financial responsibilities with CSBM’s training and support. Throughout the charter term, the Board

will evaluate and approve the annual budget and review financial reports on a monthly basis, which include year-end projections, cash-flow analysis, and budget-to-actuals reports.

The Board will ensure that the budget is accurate, supports the school's mission and educational priorities, that the financial management plan is comprehensive, and that each CTA Board and school staff member upholds his/her fiduciary responsibilities.

#### **K. BUDGET AND CASH FLOW**

CTA's conservative financial model demonstrates that we can operate successfully in a private facility and deliver core academic programs without funding beyond those received from Federal, State, and City funds. In the budget presented, our revenue estimates are based on attaining 100% enrollment. We believe this is conservative based on the school's plan to account for attrition through over enrollment. The "per pupil" rate has been held at \$13,527 over the 5 year projection. During the pre-planning year, CTA's revenue stream will come from the CSP grant of \$200,000. CTA will use these funds to cover the following costs:

- \* Hire Principal in December 2014 to be on payroll in January 2015. The Principal will act as chief executive and chief academic officer and will focus on staff and scholar recruitment and curriculum development. They will also work with DSSS to plan for school year and professional development.
- \* Hire Director of Operations in February: Director of Operations will work with CSBM, develop the CTA Personnel handbook and other policies for board review and approval as well as prepare the facility.
- \* Hire Director of School Culture in April: Will focus on professional development and planning of year 1 of curriculum as it relates to school culture and climate, Social Caucuses, and Life Skills.
- \* Hire Office Leader in May: will focus on scholar data and begin working on scholar files.
- \* Accounting cost, working on general ledger, payables, etc.
- \* Training for board members
- \* Recruitment of scholars and staff
- \* Purchase of materials for planning of Year 1 curriculum and technology for staff
- \* Insurance, payroll, benefits.

During year one of operation our revenue stream will come from the CSP grant of \$200,000, Title Funding, DYCD Grant, NYSTL funding and per-pupil revenues. We plan to use these funds to cover the following items:

- \* 60% salaries and benefits (please review our staffing list for positions and number of staff)
- \* 22% facilities (building space)
- \* 17% operational and contracted services: (largest line item is technology which includes computers for staff, computers and/or laptops for scholars, and software expenses (i.e. Power School, Read 180, Microsoft office licenses etc.) Our contracted services include a nurse, CSBM, legal, payroll, and certain Special Education Services. The bulk of our revenue will be received every other month from our per pupil invoice.

During our five year projection, our revenue stream will come from the CSP grant, Title Funding, DYCD Grant, and NYSTL funding. We plan to use these funds to cover the following items:

- \* Salaries with a 3% increase each year.
- \* CTA will have a retirement plan and will contribute a 3% match to each employee.  
We will hire an additional office staff member, and school assistant in year two, along with a full time guidance counselor, and a Teacher Leader in year 2. We will hire a full time nurse, full time cafeteria manager, and an ISL in year 3. In Years 4-5, we have our biggest increase in staff members due to the increased number of scholars. We are adding an additional positions of ISLs, an additional Social Support Leader, a Scholar Support Coach, additional office staff and an Administrative Assistant.
- \* Average of 67% will be spent on salaries and benefits
- \* 22% will be spent on facilities
- \* 11% will be spent on operation expenses and contracted services

\* We will have \$75,000 in an escrow account for dissolution.

This budget assumes only the base amount of the \$500,000 CSP grant; however we believe we are eligible for the entire \$750,000 because we meet the requirements. We have a program designed to meet the learning needs and raise achievement of scholars who are eligible for FRPL, scholars who may be at least 1 to 2 years below grade level, and we are located in the East New York section of Brooklyn, where there is an underserved scholar population.

**L. PRE-OPENING PLAN**

The following table outlines CTA's pre-opening plan:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Anticipated Resources</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
<b>Officially ratify bylaws and code of ethics</b>	Upon receipt of charter	November 2014	N/A	CTA Board
<b>Begin terms of service for Board Members</b>	Upon receipt of Charter	November 2014	N/A	Board
<b>Recruit new Board members with expertise to fill roles that are currently needed for school start up</b>	Ongoing		Access to common Board recruitment websites	Board and Founder
<b>File for federal 501©(3) tax exempt status</b>	Upon receipt of charter		Legal forms, filing fee, support from CSBM	Board
<b>Establish school bank account</b>	Upon receipt of charter	November 2014	Support from CSBM	Board and Founder
<b>Complete lease negotiations for private facility</b>	November/December 2014	December 2014	Support from Charter School Facilities Organization, secure real estate attorney	Board and Founder
<b>Approve all fiscal policies and procedures</b>	November/December 2014	December 2014	Consultation from CSBM	Board
<b>Contract a finance management company</b>	December 2014	N/A	Monetary funds to contract with CSBM	Board and Founder
<b>Hire Principal</b>	December 2014	N/A	N/A	Board
<b>Recruit and hire Director of Operations and Director of School Culture</b>	December 2014	February 1, 2015	Access to public education recruiting websites; funds to advertise positions in local newspapers	Principal
<b>Teacher and Staff Recruitment</b>	January 2015	Until filled	Access to public education recruiting websites; funds to advertise positions in local newspapers	Principal, Director of Operations and Director of School Culture
<b>Scholar recruitment</b>	January 2015	March 31, 2015	Funds for production of flyers, brochures and	Board and all staff

			other print materials available in English and Spanish	
<b>Establish all relevant financial systems (i.e. payroll, billing, etc.)</b>	February 2015	March 2015	Consultation with CSBM, funds for office supplies, digital platforms,	Director of Operations
<b>Conduct Scholar Lottery, notify parents of acceptance and waiting list</b>	April 2015	April 30, 2015	Secure 3 <sup>rd</sup> party auditor, funds for mailings and reproduction of application materials in English and Spanish	Principal, Family Leader and Director of School Culture
<b>Send transportation and food service information to NYCDOE and OPT</b>	April 2015	Ongoing, as needed	Ensure all incoming scholar application materials are complete, accurate and are inputted in the scholar database; Consult with NYCDOE Charter School liaisons to secure the forms	Director of Operations, Office Leader
<b>Begin planning for staff professional development and training; inclusive of curriculum planning</b>	March 2015	July 2015		Principal, Director of School Culture and Family Leader
<b>Begin purchasing of furniture and other resources for successful school start-up</b>	April 2015	Ongoing and as needed	Access to school budget and funding resources; consult NYC Charter School Center's vendor list	Director of Operations & Principal
<b>Contract with Insurance companies</b>	May 2015	May 2015	Consult with Tina Payne from	Director of Operations
<b>Send acceptance packets to families for prospective scholars</b>	Mid to late April 2015	Late April 2015	Funds for mailings	Family Leader, Director of School Culture and Office Personnel
<b>Collection of scholar records</b>	Mid-April 2015	July 1, 2015	Funds for mailings, and reimbursement for commuting if records are to be picked up from various locations	Office personnel, Family Leader
<b>Finalize Staff Handbook</b>	February 2015	N/A	Funds for reproduction	Principal and Director of School Culture
<b>Finalize Scholar/Family Handbook</b>	March 2015	N/A	Funds for reproduction	Principal, Family Leader, and Director of School Culture

<b>Ensure all state and federal registrations, certificates, etc. are on file to ensure compliance and successful opening</b>	May 2015	June 2015	Consult Board attorney and other legal expertise to ensure full compliance	Director of Operations, Office Personnel, Board Secretary
<b>Begin organizing and conducting Family/Scholar Orientations</b>	Mid-May 2015	Early July 2015	Funds for light refreshments and reproduction of printed materials	Principal, Director of School Culture, and Board
<b>Complete all staff and scholar schedules</b>	May 2015	July 2015	N/A	Principal
<b>Ensure that all scholars have been entered in digital database to ensure accurate and efficient record keeping</b>	April 2015	June 2015	Ensure all the digital platform is fully functional to hold and secure scholars information	Director of School Culture and Office personnel
<b>Contract for security and school nurse</b>	June 2015	N/A	Funds to secure contractual services; consult NYC Charter School Center for list of vendors.	Director of Operations
<b>Arrange accounts for phone, internet and other utilities as necessary</b>	March 2015	June 2015	Funds to secure preliminary accounts for utility lines	Director of Operations
<b>Purchase technology needed for start-up</b>	May 2015	July 2015		Director of Operations
<b>Apply for any and all available grants for additional funding</b>	January 2015	Ongoing	Elicit assistance from CTA Staff members	Board, Principal, Director of Operations and Director of School Culture
<b>Ensure all contracts are executed properly</b>	March 2015	August 2015	Potential legal review of all contracts	Director of Operations, Board Treasurer
<b>Conduct Teacher Institute as per finalized PD plan</b>	Mid-August 2015	End of August 2015	Funds to secure and off-site facility, light refreshments and materials for trainings	Principal, Director of School Culture
<b>Ensure that class lists are completed and all scholar and teacher files are accurate and up-to-date</b>	April 2015	July 2015	Maintain scholar database	Director of Operations, Office personnel
<b>Scholars Begin</b>	<b>August 2015</b>			<b>All Staff</b>

#### **M. DISSOLUTION PLAN**

In the event of CTA's closure or dissolution, the Board of Trustees, upon the termination of the charter, will proceed with dissolution pursuant to the procedures of the charter and direction of the authorizer and the Board of Regents. CTA will follow any and all procedures as required by NYSED to ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process, including compliance with Education Law §219 and 220.

**Parent Notification:** Parents will be notified on the following business day, upon notification by the CTA Board of Trustees of the school's closure via flyers, mail and phone. It will also be posted on the school's website. The President of the Board of Trustees will host a public parent and community meeting to inform both the parents and the community of the revocation of the school's charter. The transition of scholars from CTA will be addressed and the list of available alternate local public and charter schools that can accommodate the educational needs of their children will be shared. All CTA staff will assist families with the enrollment transition.

All scholar records will be transferred to the receiving schools and/or school district. Parents will be notified that a copy of such records will be available to each scholar's parent or legal guardian upon request. The Director of Operations will oversee this process under the supervision of the Board President and the Executive Committee. The Board President and/or his/her designee will contact the appropriate representatives of local public or charter school(s) as mandated by Education Law 2851(2)(t). This will take place no more than 10 days after the revocation of the CTA charter.

**School's Assets:** In case of CTA's dissolution, the Board will retain an accounting firm to conduct a complete audit of all school assets after which all outstanding debts will be paid. Within 30 days following completion of a comprehensive audit, CTA will transfer its liquidated assets to the appropriate NYS educational institution or dispose of any and all remaining assets as outlined in CTA's By-Laws. The Principal and Director of Operations under the supervision of the Board President and/or his /her designee will manage this process.

**Escrow Account:** CTA will establish an escrow account of no less than \$75,000 within the first three years of operation, to cover the legal and audit expenses associated with the dissolution of its operations. This commitment will be reflected in the budget in \$25,000 increments during CTA's first three years of instruction.