

APPLICATION SUMMARY	
Proposed Charter School Name	Sofara International Charter School (SICS)
Proposed Board President Name	Kevin G. Wells, Esq.
Proposed Board President E-mail Address	[REDACTED]
Proposed Board President Telephone No.	[REDACTED]
Public Contact Name	Nadhege Ptah
Public Contact E-mail Address	SofaraInternational@gmail.com
Public Contact Telephone Number	212-591-0299
District of Location	New York City Community School District 5
Opening Date	August 27, 2016 for students
Proposed Charter Term	5 Years
Proposed Management Co, Partners or Replication School Model	Not Applicable
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	350 students in grades K-6
Projected Maximum Enrollment & Grade Span	650 students in grades K-12 in future charter terms
Mission Statement	Sofara International Charter School will graduate every student with strong literacy, math, science and second language skills, and a strong sense of international-mindedness, giving them the ability to be successful in college, career, and real life as future leaders in their community and global society.

Brief Summary - Sofara International Charter School (SICS) offers an international educational opportunity usually provided by the most prestigious private schools for children of diplomats and multinational corporate executives. The difference is that the SICS educational program will be open for applications from ALL students, tuition free as a public charter school. SICS will utilize the rigorous, world renowned educational standards set by the International Baccalaureate (IB) continuum of programs and used as an international benchmark for the creation of the Common Core State Standards. The IB framework is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, which are reflected in the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. To ensure high student achievement and program quality, SICS will work with the International Baccalaureate Organization as well as utilize the services of two educational organizations: The Global Language Project, which will assist with our foreign language program, and HYPOTHEkids, a STEM-based initiative that will assist with the SICS' science and math applied learning program.

Students who take the K – 6 SICS journey will participate on an internationally minded exploration of inquiry-led experiences, guided by the IB framework of the Primary Years Program & themes to organize teaching and learning strategies. SICS will begin with grades K-2, adding one school grade each year at a time, following the Primary Years Program (PYP) curriculum framework. All content areas will be tied together in a web of knowledge that enables students to apply basic learning skills and content to real world challenges. These authentic, hands-on opportunities create a path through which students can apply their learning and send their achievement soaring.

The IB was established as a means to bring together the best of different education systems worldwide and create a diploma that, because of its rigor, prepares students for entrance to any university in the U.S. or abroad. IB seeks to instill habits of mind that make students ready for University, career and real life by embedding academic, social, emotional, and intellectual learning in its framework.

Every SICS student will participate in activities outside the classroom as well, incorporating the history and features of their community, city, state, nation and world beyond. The SICS environment will encourage

students to remove the walls of their classroom and look for answers to questions posed locally and globally with field study and service-learning, approaches where they participate in projects and generate solutions to social, economic and governing problems. Thinking globally, each SICS student will be part of a learning community that permits foreign language acquisition where they will be supported in becoming bilingual and bi-literate. This is an invaluable component of meeting SICS' mission of creating globally competitive students in addition to the understanding that knowing two or more languages is positively associated with intellectual and academic achievement. SICS students will have exposure to a universal world language (French) in a 50/50 content immersion model with other languages available as enrichment. Experience with this seemingly complex model and its key design elements has already proven to be not only manageable but extremely effective, particularly with Title I students, in boosting student achievement.

A natural fit within the IB PYP is the utilization of Universal Designs for Learning (UDL), a "set of principles that provides teachers with a structure to develop their instruction to meet the needs of a diverse set of learners."¹ UDL incorporates multiple means of representation of learning material to students, multiple means of expression and action, and multiple means of engagement. The aspect of embedded choice empowers students to find aspects of classroom content that interest them and to approach learning from a place of strength. This tool is essential in supporting Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELLs). To support and ensure student achievement, the SICS portfolio assessment system incorporates standards referenced grading (SRG) that enables students and teachers to see exactly where they are academically and where they need to progress to. Habits of mind will be measured and worked on through IB-embedded, holistic measures and SRG supported portfolios.

SICS intends to serve the children of CSD 5 in which a dense urban, racially and ethnically diverse population of lower-middle class families are often academically underserved. SICS will enroll a high need population of students mirroring the demographics of CSD 5: with 96% of 3rd graders eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch; 16% of 3rd graders as ELLs; and 22% of students with learning or physical disabilities. Many children will be recruited who come from bi-literal families with children exposed to two languages since infancy. SICS will also be open to families with multiple risk factors for academic failure. SICS has devised a recruitment and retention plan ensuring enrollment of adequate numbers of ELLs. SICS will support its students with strong, research-validated academic programs and an organizational structure that builds teacher effectiveness as well.

With small class sizes, students will be supported by two teachers, one of whom will be their academic intervention specialist and supported. This is a flexible staffing position that may hold different certifications in each classroom depending on student need. Classroom teachers are thoroughly supported in working with their students by specialty staff that includes an IB Coordinator. The instructional staff will be supervised and supported by a Director of Teaching & Learning whose main responsibility will be to ensure the instructional strength of the school. The DOTL will report to the founding Executive Director who is a certificated practitioner of the IB model.

SICS will institute an extended calendar year allowing for 190 student contact days and more hours of instruction in core classes per week than NYCDOE schools (see II.B.). During February, April and July, SICS will hold intersessions aligned with school holidays, when students may take classes for remediation or enrichment. The calendar design allows SICS to mitigate knowledge and skill deterioration over such breaks. Sofara International Charter School will be open to ALL students who seek an international education based on the International Baccalaureate continuum of programs, in a multi-lingual setting. SICS will serve Kindergarten through sixth grade with a projected enrollment of 350 students by the end of its first charter term (working toward IB PYP authorization by year 2).

¹<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary/Toolkit/CurriculumMapping/UDL.htm>.

SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Section	Page Number
I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment and Community	3
A. Mission Statement and Objects	3
B. Key Design Elements	4
C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention	9
D. Community to be Served	13
E. Public Outreach	16
F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact	17
II. Educational Plan	18
A. Achievement Goals	19
B. School Schedule and Calendar	21
C. Curriculum and Instruction	23
D. Assessment System	28
E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards	31
F. School Culture and Climate	34
G. Special Populations and Related Services	35
III. Organizational and Fiscal Plan	42
A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity	42
B. Board of Trustees and Governance	44
C. Management and Staffing	46
C1. Charter Management Organization	N/A
C2. Partner Organization	N/A
D. Evaluation	50
E. Professional Development	52
F. Facilities	54
G. Insurance	55
H. Health, Food, and Transportation Systems	56
I. Family and Community Involvement	56
J. Financial Management	58
K. Budget and Cash-Flow	59
L. Pre-Opening Plan	61
M. Dissolution Plan	62

Attachment Number and Description	Attachment Page
1. Admissions Policies and Procedures	1-4
2. Samples of Evidence of Community Outreach	5-19
3(A). Sample Daily Schedules	20-21
3(B). First Year Calendar	22-23
4. Student Discipline Policy	24-28
5(A). Charter School Trustee Background Information	Excluded from page limit
5(B). By-Laws	29-36
5(C). Code of Ethics	37-39
6(A). CMO Information	N/A
6(B). Proposed Management Contract	N/A
7. Partnership Information	N/A
8(A). Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures	40-54
8(B). Resumes for Proposed School Leaders	55-57
9. Budget and Cash Flow Template	Spreadsheet
10. Replication/Strategic Business Growth Plan	N/A

Acronyms to know:

IB – International Baccalaureate

PYP – Primary Years Program

POI – Program of Inquiry (the school’s curriculum scope and sequence)

FLE – French Language for Foreigners/ as a Second Language (equivalent to a TESOL teacher)

FSA – Family School Association

PART I: MISSION, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, ENROLLMENT, AND COMMUNITY

A. *Mission Statement and Objectives*

Mission - Sofara International Charter School will instill every student with strong foundational literacy, math, science and second language skills, and a strong sense of international-mindedness, giving them the ability to be successful in college, career, and real life as future leaders in their community and global society.

Objectives - SICS' core objective is to ensure a high level of academic success for every student through the inquiry-led approach found in the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework of its Primary Years Program. In doing so students at all learning levels will have the opportunity to find and develop their role in a globally competitive society. As graduates, our students will have acquired a unique skill set that will allow them to succeed in higher educational environments leading to success in career and real life. **We will:**

- **Instill** universal foundational skills and strategies imbedded in the principals and practices of the Primary Years Program – meeting students where they are and building up their skills by having qualified, skill targeted teachers
- **Create** critical thinkers with depth of knowledge - promote and improve questioning skills and the ability to view the world from a variety of perspectives through the IB focus on international-mindedness
- **Provide** developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in an authentic manner – as part of the IB inquiry-led applied learning approach
- **Grow** students socially and emotionally in addition to academically and intellectually – working on habits of mind that are imbedded in the IB Learner Profile Attributes and Attitudes
- **Produce** bilingual, biliterate graduates – giving every student a chance at high achievement and global competitiveness through second language acquisition in French imbedded in the IB Skill of Effective Communication
- **Promote** college, career and real life readiness - through IB's authentic, holistic teaching and learning using real-world experiences, development of leadership qualities, and exposure to a variety of industries and career paths
- **Create** skilled team members who can thrive in all situations, including globally, through the IB focus on multiple points of student engagement
- **Graduate** every student ready to be successful, high achievers, in their chosen academic path

SICS will materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2)

In Community School District 5 (CSD5), children struggle with numerous risk factors that include coming from foreign language homes, generational poverty, family instability, poor nutrition, interrupted education, and homelessness. Addressing this dynamic utilizing the framework of the International Baccalaureate's (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP), SICS will be able to wrap students in a learning environment addressing their social, emotional, intellectual *and* academic growth that allows for the mitigation of the effects of various risk factors with its holistic approach. With SICS' key design elements, and sub-elements that all fall within the IB framework, SICS can materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2) by:

1. SICS will improve student learning and achievement with IB's Applied inquiry and the cross subject (trans-disciplinary) approach to instruction that infuses literacy and math throughout the curriculum giving every student extended academic time. The IB inquiry led framework is a rigorous, internationally recognized, K-12 inquiry approach that will allow SICS to implement its programming and fully engage students. Curriculum and intervention tools include instructional resources with proven effectiveness, such as Reading A-Z Headsprouts. SICS will also use an extended day and yearly instructional calendar, ELA/Math tutoring sessions, and collaborative teaching teams in each classroom. Each team consists of an Academic Intervention teacher who can hold a variety of educational specialties based on student need. Strategic support staffing includes full-time ESL, French/FLE, and Spec. Educ., teachers.

2. SICS will increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on those who are at-risk of academic failure. As part of the IB instructional planning template, SICS teachers utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL), one of the best methodologies for developing and providing instruction to at-risk students.¹ SICS also increases

¹ US DOE <https://www.osepideastthatwork.org/UDL/intro.asp>

² Reading is Fundamental: Motivating Kids to Read Keeping Kids Off the Summer Slide <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/keeping->

opportunities with: a well-developed RTI plan; a full time Academic Intervention Teacher in each classroom (see II G.); utilization of individualized learning plans; small group tutoring in ELA, math, ESL, and foreign language; the opportunity to Choose-Act-then Reflect on their experiences, and an extended school calendar to minimize skill and knowledge erosion (the slide effect)² while providing an opportunity for readiness and enrichment programming. The SICS foreign language immersion component is designed to increase learning opportunities for every student, by creating stronger well rounded students, which benefits all students at-risk of academic failure including those with special needs.³ The use of an inquiry led model that promotes applied learning through all subjects, makes all learning and content areas accessible, especially to English Language Learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) who may have trouble deciphering the technical language and abstract concepts of traditional subject curricula. Finally, the IB holistic approach enables SICS to address the achievement gap often found with males in comparison to females⁴, which manifests across subject areas in varying ways;

3. SICS will encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods by the incorporation of an IB Coordinator to support faculty in engaging students in creative inquiry and problem solving, innovative critical thinking, personal reflection, and collaborative learning beyond the basic standards required by the Board of Regents. Through the IB framework of practices and principles of teaching and learning, there is an immediate shift in instructional delivery that allows teachers flexibility to innovate while planning focused differentiated innovative instructional methodologies driven by holistic assessment data. The IB framework, Gomez 50/50 content immersion, and applied learning components each require teachers to keep up with current community, career, and world trends as each program promotes authentic learning in a real-world context that must be applied in real-life. The SICS teacher support system includes opportunity for inter-visitation and collaboration with other schools to observe and share pedagogical practices. These shifts include involving students in planning for their own learning and assessment, flexibility in creating true depth of knowledge opportunities, and developing creative new ways for students to continuously build on their knowledge base.⁵

4. SICS will provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system. A public IB PYP elementary school with the SICS design does not exist within CSD 5. At SICS, a global perspective, unique combination of programming, true family inclusion, authentic real world learning, and diversity are what will drive choice in education. Parents and students will have expanded opportunities through collaborations developed with community and international organizations. Through the Family School Association (FSA), parents will access technology, life skills workshops, and access to community service information and more (see III I). An international perspective will open up the world of opportunities to every SICS student with the truly worldwide IB network of schools. In NYC, segregation by race or ethnicity is usually attached to socioeconomic status as well. In CSD5 31.9% of the African American population under 18 can be further divided into 3 different language groups of African origin: French, English and Arabic.⁶ SICS will offer diversity at a time when NYC schools rank 3rd in line of most segregated⁷.

B. *Key Design Elements*

Educational Program - Each of SICS' IB mission-driven design elements enables all students to meet or exceed New York State Common Core Learning Standards and materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2). Further, they respond directly to the needs of the community and fill gaps in educational service not yet met in CSD 5. With a targeted language support design and targeted academic intervention teacher in each class, SICS will meet the needs of CSD 5's large ELL, SWD, and population of students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) with an engaging approach to teaching and learning proven to promote higher achievement.

² Reading is Fundamental: Motivating Kids to Read Keeping Kids Off the Summer Slide <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/keeping-kids-off-the-summer-slide.htm>

³ Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/documents/ImmersionResearch_TaraFortune.html

⁴ National Bureau of Economic Research <http://www.nber.org/digest/may06/w11660.html> Nat'l Educ. Longitudinal Study of 1998

⁵ Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, 2009, p.59 http://mtpyph.weebly.com/uploads/9/0/6/9/9069240/mtpyph_doc.pdf

⁶ US Census Bureau; 2008-2012 American Community Survey

⁷ National Center of Educational Statistics: Institute of Education Sciences <http://nces.ed.gov>

The key elements under the umbrella of the IB PYP framework are below:

* **An international focus** is the hallmark of all IB schools and is infused into all that students' experiences. Students gain a strong sense of self and a sense of their place in a global society. A SICS student will explore content through a comparative approach that includes both local and global perspectives. For example, a study of environments can extend into what varying cultures eat around the world. All content and class exploration is used as an opportunity to extend student thinking and broaden their perspectives.

* **Dual language** capability is an integral part of the international focus embedded within the IB framework manifested as the acquisition of a second language. It is a unique aspect of the rigorous IB framework that promotes international perspective and cultural awareness. Ultimately it enables students to be marketable leaders on a global scale. The underlying understanding was captured by Nelson Mandela who stated, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." SICS students, therefore, have the goal of becoming fully biliterate and bilingual through an intensive focus, beginning in Kindergarten, on foreign language. Through second language acquisition, they will heighten the mastery of cognitive skills and abilities, aptitude, and habits of learning that in turn improve student academic progress.

Based on the needs of the CSD 5 foreign language student population, SICS has chosen the very successful Gomez 50/50 Content Model for its English-French dual language component. The 50/50 content model will not put at-risk students at further risk, but will actually ensure competency in literacy in both languages as it promotes the fortification of native language while acquiring a second language.

* **Inquiry teaching and learning** is accomplished through the lens of science and social studies and further reinforced in all other subjects. This trans-disciplinary approach is accomplished by using the six specific IB thematic "Units of Inquiry" per year. Each Unit of Inquiry revolves around an overarching theme, such as Sharing the Planet, and anchored by a central idea derived from real-life. Each Unit of Inquiry provides an opportunity to achieve depth of knowledge, as students are guided in the use of diverse resources to collect and analyze details, evidence, and facts in alignment with current Common Core Learning Standards and instilling strong foundational skills in literacy and math.

* **Applied Learning** represents the opportunity to apply what is being learned as it allows students to synthesize knowledge and understandings. Attached to each Unit of Inquiry will be hands-on performance tasks and activities or applied learning projects that promote the trans-disciplinary journey through the content areas and into the larger world. This provides students with a platform for deep discussion of content. IB trained teachers, using Universal Designs for Learning, will guide students to identify and research questions and issues; students will then apply their newly gained knowledge, research data, and skills to generate solutions to scenarios and problems of concern to them. Students will also have the opportunity to extend and test out ideas as part of their dedicated Library Lab time.

* **The building of Skills, Attributes and Attitudes** is a focusing tenet of the IB frameworks. They are pervasive throughout the curriculum as points of perspective from which to view content, themselves, and the world. There are the 10 Learner Profile Attributes, 12 Attitudes and 5 overarching Skills. Attributes include concepts such as maintaining balance in what we do and knowing how and when to be a risk-taker. Attitudes address notions such as integrity and appreciation while Skills speak to actions such as how to research and self-manage. The Skills, Attributes and Attitudes are also a defining feature of school culture and environment and promotes community **service as part of learning**.

* **Choose-Act-Reflect (CAR) time:** The action cycle is the simple yet powerful tool used to teach children how to take action. By going through the three steps of choosing, acting and then reflecting back upon the results of their choice, students are able to grow socially and emotionally while putting learning into real world context.

* **Holistic Assessment and Individual learning plans** are used to promote academic, intellectual, social and emotional achievement in students with a 360 picture of student progress data collected. Data is then used to create goals based on standards alignment with both the IB and NYS Common Core standards.

* **The IB Coordinator**, as part of SICS meeting quality control for the International Baccalaureate Organization, will coach teachers on the implementation and professional growth (see III.E) in IB practices within their respective programs of instruction.

To further support achievement of the mission and implementation of the IB program, the SICS education model will also include:

* **Pedagogical Staffing** - Each SICS classroom will have two teachers to reduce the student-teacher ratio and allow deeper differentiation in teaching and learning. Using flexible staffing, one teacher will serve as **Lead Academic Teacher**, the other serving as **Academic Intervention Teacher** who can manifest as a General, ESL, certified Special Education teacher, Reading specialist or other teacher, who will meet the needs of the student population. Fulltime **ESL (out of classroom)**, **Foreign Language Acquisition Teacher (FLE)**, and a fulltime **Special Education Coordinator** will complete the essential teaching staff. Every teacher will be qualified in their area of teaching. SICS is committed to having the most engaging and prepared instructors in front of its students by providing support in skill development and leadership of teachers.

* **Extended Learning Time and Calendar** – The SICS class schedule consists of 60 minute periods that allow for full inquiry and discovery time and the incorporation of language review segments. SICS' school day and school year allows for more instruction in core classes per week than traditional public schools. Student learning is extended through 10 days of instruction added to the general calendar in a district where students are mandated for 180 days (*see II.B.*). A Summer Academy, an August Summer Safari, and three School Break Inter-Sessions allow SICS to mitigate the back slide in both academics and behavior that takes place over long school breaks. The calendar design allows SICS to mitigate the effects of knowledge and skill loss by offering both readiness and enrichment classes during this time.

Each of SICS's key design elements above are directly correlated to the NYS CCLS. Currently, no other charter or district school offers this combination of programming. Of the current 25 traditional and charter elementary schools in CSD 5, none offer SICS's combination of dual languages with inquiry-led applied learning methodology of teaching and learning through IB. As a district with an overall performance rating of 3 out of 10⁸, it is evident that students may benefit from an innovative learning approach.

Enrollment Preference (see I D for discussion): **As per** Education law §2854(2), any child who is qualified under NYS laws for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to SICS and will be enrolled providing they submit a timely application by the first day of April each year and SICS has not reached its maximum enrollment. As per Education law §2851(4)(e), enrollment preferences “shall be provided to pupils returning to the charter school in the second or any subsequent year of operation and pupils residing in the school district in which the charter school is located, and siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school.”

Serving the Diverse Needs of All Students: Since **IB is a framework, and *not* a curriculum**, it allows each school to develop a set of programs to meet the needs of their student body as well as local or national mandates. SICS has developed its set of programs in line with the framework but also to further Education Law §2850(2) and give our students the skills and tools needed for **college, career, and real-life**. SICS has used the IB framework to develop a comprehensive program to meet the needs of at-risk students in general and in the CSD 5 catchment area. **Each component under the IB key design, is embedded and supported ensuring that the SICS mission and goals are attainable (including foreign language).** Differentiation in teaching and learning as well as individualized attention and intervention are optimized within the SICS key design elements as students learn through and in realistic contexts with many differing entry points that suit readiness, proficiency and enrichment learning challenges. This is possible through the exploratory nature of inquiry-led teaching and learning which allows students to learn and express their knowledge in their own way while being guided with individual learning plans that focus on each child's needs and targeted teaching staff.

Further indication of the IB framework enabling SICS to serve the diverse needs of all students is its selection in 2011 as one of the sets of standards against which Common Core was measured to determine its success in meeting its goals⁹. This approach to teaching and learning has been deemed a successful practice by both the US Department of Education Magnet Schools Assistance Program¹⁰ as well as NYSED.¹¹ Currently, 56% of IB schools in the U.S. are Title 1 and

⁸ www.insideschools.org

⁹ <http://www.ibo.org/iba/commoncore/documents/IBCommonCorePositionStatement.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html>

growing.¹² Their growing success is because the IB framework elements are comprehensive.

Successful Model: Both in NY and worldwide there are many elementary IB schools that can be presented as success models. The IB model is backed by research that demonstrates the benefits of inquiry-led teaching and learning, science and applied learning in the classroom, and bilingualism. In NYC there are several elite private schools offering an IB program whose graduates go on to be accepted into the most sought after Universities. The schools presented here are comparable to SICS' demographics and programming choices and clearly demonstrate the success of IB with at-risk students . IB focused inquiry-led applied learning will be used to help students turn their inquiries from theory into practice as high achievers.¹⁴ Increased achievement is possible because students are involved in creating and producing a system, event, or service that forces them to draw upon and utilize what they learn in the content areas.

An IB World School - With a population of K-5 students with many of the same SIFE risk factors as those in CSD 5, Graciela Garcia Elementary School is an authorized IB World School that utilizes the Gomez 50/50 content language immersion model. It has been recognized by the Texas State Education Agency as one of its high performing schools of 2013 and 2014. At *Garcia*, almost 100% of the students participate in their Free or Reduced Lunch Program, over 13% are categorized as mobile (migrants missing more than six weeks of the school year, 83% are Limited English Proficient (LEP), and 95% are economically disadvantaged.¹⁵ Despite these known risk factors, 5th grade students have steadily outperformed their peers on state assessments.¹⁶

Garcia began implementation of the IB framework in 2006 and received authorization as a World School in 2009. Each school year they were able to steadily improve achievement and surpass their district peers by 2010 in both ELA and Math. The latest scores available for 2014 show a 5th grade math proficiency rate of 91% compared to 88% in the district and 87% in reading compared with 85% in their district. A closer analysis of 2014 shows 82% of their LEP population met or exceeded state standards as well as 85% of FRLP students and 71% of SWDs¹⁷.

Garcia's comprehensive language immersion program, is the SICS identified Gomez 50/50 content model (see II C. Education Plan). This model differs from others in that students learn a language through core content and project based work. Students are continually exposed to the designated language in authentic, real-world scenarios and have ample opportunity to communicate and build vocabulary in English and the foreign language fitting perfectly with the IB framework. The Gomez approach is also noted by NYSED as one of its three goals for instructional delivery of modern languages. Of the three NYSED goals, the Gomez model meets all of them including the use of functional communication and developing cultural understanding in addition to content immersion.¹⁸

While some fear learning a second language will cause delays in primary language development this is a myth. A look at Garcia's ELA and Math averages compared to State averages proves otherwise. Studies also demonstrate that :

Multiple benefits for acquiring a second language during the primary years include:
• Dual language immersion programs do not cause delays/interference (Howard & Christian, 1997)
• Students in these programs score high in their primary language as measured with a variety of assessments (Christian et al., 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001).
• Students from different ethnic, all benefited academically, intellectually, and socially regardless of social class
• Benefits were significant across subgroup categories such as language background, socioeconomic status, gender, and students with disabilities (Howard, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2005c; Christian et al., 2004),
• Students who participate for five years in immersion scored as well as, or better than, all comparison groups on achievement tests

¹¹ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/documents/GCCS.07-14-11.pdf>

¹² National Center for Education Statistics Fast Facts. Retrieved 2 April 2012 from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=158>.

¹⁴ Measuring What Counts: Memorization Versus Understanding A discussion on the benefits of applied learning. Eeva Reeder, February 11, 2002. <http://www.edutopia.org/measuring-what-counts-memorization-versus-understanding>

¹⁵ http://garcia.psjaisd.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=133012&type=d&pREC_ID=262212

¹⁶ Texas Education Agency annual School Report Card

http://garcia.psjaisd.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=133012&type=d&pREC_ID=262213

¹⁷ Great Schools <http://www.greatschools.org/texas/pharr/9111-Graciela-Garcia-Elementary-School/?tab=test-scores>

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us>

¹⁸ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/lote/pub/modernl.pdf>

(Thomas, W. P., V. P. Collier, and M. Abbott. 1993)
• Participation in early second language shows positive results in areas of standardized testing (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997).
• Students who speak a second language score 140+ points higher on the SAT --Reading, Writing and Math ²⁶
• Children who study a second language show greater cognitive development (Hakuta, 1990)
• Second language study shown to increase listening skills, memory, & greater understanding of one's own language (Lapkin, et al., 1990)
• Children develop a sense of cultural pluralism, openness and appreciation of other cultures (Met, 1995)
• Bilingual workers earn 5% to 20% more than monolingual workers. ¹⁹
A full professional treatise on the benefits of early second language learning & bilingualism is posted on the <u>Center for Applied Linguistics</u> web site, in Kathleen M. Marcos's report "Second Language Learning: Everyone Can Benefit." ²⁰

Inquiry-led Applied Learning - There is ample research that supports inquiry-led applied learning inclusion in school curriculums. While at SICS it serves the mission of preparing students to be ready for a global society and job market, NYSED has recognized the benefits as laid out in their document *Career Development & Occupational Studies: Elementary Core Curriculum*.²³ In it applied learning is described as allowing teachers to create and deliver powerful classroom lessons that bring student learning into a real-life context. Moreover, research has shown that inquiry led learning helps form depth of knowledge, foster a desire to explore a wider range of issues and problems, and gives students an authentic way to present their knowledge (Grant, M. & Branch, R.M. 2005). Knowledge application is imbedded in the IB framework and is directly tied to SICS being able to reach and surpass its achievement goals. Spires, et al (2012) found that "knowledge representation is critical to knowledge construction and meaning making" and that students tap into the linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial modes of learning allowing SICS to reach our ELL and SWD who need multimodal input. Applied inquiry is also associated with effective teaching and learning, enhanced social skills, builds intrinsic motivation, and incorporates the social and global elements that impact a curriculum such as increasing problem solving ability, and improving communication, organizational and research skills (Kucharski, et al 2005). Additionally, learning through applied inquiry enables students to clearly apply the knowledge gained to new tasks.²⁴

* Finally, in addition to several successful *private* IB World Schools such as The Dwight School, United Nations International School, and the International School of Brooklyn there are also public schools that are successfully using the IB framework or successfully using IB elements. These include:

In the public school domain :
Brooklyn Prospect Charter School which has had success in building an IB program in the upper grades to the point that it is expanding into the lower grades. In the three years of recorded data, students in grades 6-8 scored between 6% and 20% higher than the State average and made Adequate Yearly Progress with each of its student subgroups. ²⁵
R. Saragusa Elementary School in Yonkers, NY is another public IB school with growth scores, over its 11 year IB implementation period, that show their students outperform their peers on State exams. A look at their 4 th grade data shows that between 2000 & 2010 students achieving level 3 & 4 pass rates on State reading exams went from an average of 35% to 68% while the number of students at level 1 average rate decreased significantly going from 11% to 5%. ²⁶
<u>Community Roots Charter School</u> is successfully using a holistic model of education that is inquiry based and looks to develop core values as does IB. They show strong test scores and student enrollment numbers. NYC Schools using IB components with success include the inquiry-based approach at <u>Harlem Village Academy CS</u> , the hands-on learning at <u>Growing Up Green CS</u> , and the real world service-learning component at <u>Democracy Prep Elementary CS</u>

¹⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/06/second-language-infographic_n_4136915.html

²⁰ <http://www.cal.org/earlylang/benefits/marcos.html>

²³ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/cdlearn/documents/CDOS-Elem-CareerandUniversal.pdf>

²⁴ Howard-Jones, P., Taylor, J. & Sutton, L. (2002). The Effect of Play on the Creativity of Young Children During Subsequent Activity. *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 172(4), 323-328. This study investigated whether the experience of unstructured play in a preceding task may influence the creativity of young children in subsequent activity. The results upheld the hypothesis.

²⁵ NYSED DATA <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?year=2013&instid=800000063976>

²⁶ <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000034777&year=2010>

The SICS team is deeply aware that models of success do not guarantee success in and of themselves and that there must be continuous attention to its implementation strategies. With strategic analysis, strategic planning, and strategic collaborations, SICS will be able to design, implement and deliver a strong academic program that **will materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2) in Community School District 5.**

C. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

Two classes per grade with 25 students per class will be enrolled in K-2 year one at a total of 150 students. Each successive year SICS will add 50 Kindergarten students for a total of 350 students in year 5 in grades K-6, which will allow SICS’s students to benefit from the full Primary Years Program, as is developmentally laid out in the IB framework, in its first charter term. In keeping students for the full program length SICS will prepare them to the fullest for the rigors of Middle School.

Based on SICS’s backfill policy and district elementary school averages, a 3% attrition rate is anticipated beginning with 3rd grade in year 2. Throughout the charter term, and barring any regulation to the contrary, SICS will backfill any seats vacated by attrition in its K through 2nd grades due to the intensive nature of the

Enrollment Plan – proposed charter term includes 3% attrition rate in years 2-5						
Grade	Ages	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
K	4-6	50	50	50	50	50
1	5-7	50	50	50	50	50
2	6 – 8	50	50	50	50	50
3	7 – 9		48	48	48	48
4	8 – 10			46	46	46
5	9 – 11				44	44
6	10 – 12					42
Total		150	200/198	250/244	300/288	350/330

dual language component and best practices for second language acquisition. Additional backfill considerations are delineated in Attachment 1.

SICS’ founders have presented an enrollment plan to ensure proper growth *and* implementation of both its IB program, which is inclusive of the foreign language component, and the school structure. Phasing in growth with the inclusion of one grade per year ensures the maintenance of instructional integrity, successful implementation of our applied inquiry model and fidelity to the IB program. In addition, proposed class sizes are small enough to create focused differentiated and individualized instruction while being large enough to sustain the social needs of a growing population in CSD 5 and its surrounding areas.²⁷

Rationale - Meeting Enrollment Targets Established by the Board of Regents²⁸

Demographics – Community analysis shows that CSD 5 hosts **Francophone and SIFE families representing over 4450 households**,²⁹ and an average 12% SWD population that in reality is as high as 23% in some schools. There is an average 10% ELL population, of which an average 20% will have an IEP, and a more than 86% FRLP student population that SICS will need to be ready to enroll³⁰. Based on this data, we anticipate SICS recruitment targets to be:

At-Risk Targets	NYS Enrollment Calculator Averages for CSD5				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
FRLP	91.1	91.9	92.2	92.7	91.9
SWD	15.0	15.8	16.4	17.5	17.7
ELL	14.3	14.6	14.7	15.2	14.6

Another phenomenon developing in CSD5 is the general gentrification of the population. Updated demographic data is not yet available, but SICS anticipates over the course of the first charter term enrolling from this growing population of students that do not fall into the traditional category of at-risk but are in fact at risk of being underserved in the CSD 5 schools. The IB framework, as aligned with the CCLS, and applied learning opportunities in the SICS programing are such that students can move to enrichment and be challenged at all levels of academic performance.

²⁷ <http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Demographics/2012-2021GrierPartnershipReport.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

²⁹ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

³⁰ <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000047161&year=2012>

Sofara International CS

Given the demographics of the district, SICS will appeal to a variety of students with its distinguished programming. As shown in the tables below, SICS will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets through a variety of means such as collaboration with community organizations and supporters, continued grassroots outreach, and use its 800+ email list-serve of supporters to disseminate enrollment information and timelines. SICS will create an enrollment marketing pack for this purpose.

Recruitment: To ensure SICS meets or exceeds its enrollment benchmarks it will employ the following grassroots and non-grassroots types of recruiting activities:

<i>To recruit ELLs:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recruitment materials (and applications when requested) will have SICS enrollment information printed in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Fulani, and Wolof.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will advertise in local & foreign language media, including Radio Africa, Franca-Amerique, <i>Al-Hoda</i> (Arabic-language daily), and <i>El Diario La Prensa</i> (Spanish-language daily).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will conduct continued outreach with the Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL) to share ideas and resources for recruitment as well as applications and enrollment materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with cultural organizations including the 2500+ member Senegalese Association of New York, the Malian Association, the Morija French Speaking Church, Little Africa, East Harlem Bilingual Head Start, HANAC Community Services Center - Immigration Programs (Harlem Office) and others that may have SIFE children to hold collaborative recruitment presentations and help give out enrollment material.
<i>To recruit FRLP students:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using DOE approved vendor Vanguard Direct Strategic Marketing, SICS will reach the wider community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with local public assistance providers, community churches, food banks, and local food markets to assist us in identifying families to receive applications and/or attend presentations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will engage Tenant Associations & public housing associations with marketing material and extended tenant outreach as well as post flyers and hand distribute them at libraries, parks, heavily populated subway and bus stations,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will outreach at local free health care providers and academic programs including working with Physicians First & The Reading Team to provide SICS recruitment material to their families
<i>To recruit SWD:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will meet with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for CSD 5 to inform them of the SICS mission, provide targeted material, and provide dates for SICS recruitment events for parents that include clear information of the correlated benefits of learning disabilities and inquiry-led applied learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will conduct pre-enrollment community information sessions for parents of students with disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will continue to cultivate relationships with Spec. Educ. coordinators of pre-K and early childhood developmental programs to hold recruitment presentations, school tours, and targeted workshops. SICS will target the approximate 140 NYC preschools that specifically service special needs children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will partner with The Reading Team, an academic enrichment program, and the St. Aloysius Education Clinic that provide services to students with IEPs to conduct recruitment sessions.
<i>To recruit students whose families may be less informed about available options:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with pre-school and daycare school leaders, parent coordinators, PTA leaders, and guidance counselors, promoting SICS as a unique educational experience throughout all terms of its growth. SICS will hold informational sessions for parents several times in the year at pre-schools and daycares, or for multiple schools at once.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will continue to cultivate relationships with on-the-ground Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that serve students who would be eligible to attend SICS, or their parents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will conduct outreach at local community centers such as The Children's Aid Society and public school Principals who may suggest students in need of a new environment for readiness or enrichment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will hold information sessions, arrange presentations, encourage family visits to SICS, and make announcements at meetings of the Community Board and CEC 5. Outreach sessions will be publicized using flyers, advertisements, social media, and

contact with community organizations.

RETENTION: SICS will retain students with engagement through its Family School Association, home visits, workshops, enrollment applications, parent handbook, on-going parental feedback, email blasts, school website, and school events, ascertaining as we go current needs of the families and students. Anticipating enrollment of students with multiple risk factors, SICS will utilize a combination of direct and holistic approaches to retention as outlined below.

Universal School-wide Retention

The IB framework and Program of Inquiry is design to provoke learning in dynamic ways that encourage students to want to know more and do more. IB holistic elements utilized in daily practice actively engage and support learning for all students. Being encouraged and pushed to think freely, and be validated in that thinking is unique to an IB school in that it continuously pushes free thought, free motion, and to take action on what students are passionate about. The exposure to a global societal perspective and being taught the skills needed to thrive as a member of that society is unique to SICS in CSD 5. The ability to take learning into authentic settings as part of an elementary school curriculum will open the minds of and build achievement for each SICS student. This type of educational environment is not available in CSD 5 and is what will drive retention. Additionally, all students will be offered **intervention**, even those not identified but in need of specialized services (*II.G.*), which may include the specialized skills of any one of he **Academic Intervention teachers** during **tutoring** time (see *II.G. / III.I. and Budget Attachment 9*). Also, all students will benefit from the implementation of mentoring and coaching of students, particularly males, through identified research based programs and organizations such as MAN UP³¹, which is a SICS supporter.

The SICS **Community Outreach Liaison**, whose main responsibility is to outreach and support community based initiatives, will work with families to ensure students’ needs that may create barriers to academic access and progress are addressed. SICS has a strong family engagement plan that includes, among other initiatives, the formation of a **Family School Association** that is coordinated by our Community Outreach Liaison with the guidance of the Social Worker. The plan includes leveraging the services of SICS’ supporters and other community organizations. Through the **IB** framework students will work on developing a core set of **attributes and attitudes** that cannot be separated from academic and intellectual growth. In doing so, students and families will feel welcome and included within the school community leading to increased rates of student retention.

To retain ELLs:

- SICS has incorporated the dominant native French language of district families as instrumental in retaining ELL and SIFE students as it addresses community stakeholder requests.
- SICS’ 50/50 content dual language model enables students’ to have language and content reinforced in both languages.
- The IB framework ensures content is reinforced across all subjects areas allowing students repeated exposure in new ways.
- With an Academic Intervention (AI) Teacher in every classroom, ELLs will have access to focused differentiated instruction enabling greater academic success.
- If warranted, fulltime classroom instruction may be conducted by an Academic Intervention Teacher certified in ESL to further support language acquisition.
- Language support is provided through both direct ESL and FLE (aka French as a Second Language) teachers whose classes are at regularly scheduled periods.
- SICS teachers, as part of the school-wide PD plan, will receive training in ESL SIOP strategies in support of ELL students.

To retain FRLP students:

- SICS students will have the benefit of our well developed, multi tiered, Response To Intervention (RTI) program for both academic skills and strategies as well as second language acquisition.
- Through the key design elements under the IB framework and supporting elements, students will experience success in many areas. This incorporates an in-house **Social Worker** in year one and a **Guidance Counselor** beginning in year three.
- If warranted, fulltime classroom instruction may be conducted by an Academic Intervention Teacher certified in literacy or math specialists to promote and ensure success.
- SICS’ holistic model supports the family with the inclusion of workshops, extended educational opportunities, and resource location for parents such as career and job openings.
- Students and their families will have the benefit of support and resources of the **Community Outreach Liaison** and consistent

³¹ <http://manupcampaign.org>

continuous teacher-school-parent communication.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will create the ability for students to take ownership of their learning through its portfolio assessment system that utilizes Standards References Grading to help clearly drive their progress.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS students will have the ability to take ownership of their learning and explore & discover beyond the walls of a classroom and teacher lead instruction added expanded opportunities for learning
To retain SWDs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All incoming Kindergarten and Grade 1 students</i> will be screened by the F & P assessment and students falling below the designated point of entrance at grade level will be referred to the Special Education Coordinator and teacher to begin a plan of intervention, or enrichment as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWDs will benefit from class instruction that incorporates SIOP techniques as a regular part of instructional delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inclusive support structure allows students to take risks while learning as they are supported by a co-teaching setting for both Math & English Literacy as well as in French immersion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Intervention Team to support social/emaotional/behavioral growth and a School-based Support Team that includes a Social Worker and experienced Spec. Educ. & ESL specialists and is ready to add support with a well developed RTI plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each SWD will be supported by an Academic Intervention Teacher (AIT) who specializes in their academic, social, emotional, and intellectual needs within the classroom environment at all times.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AITs will differentiate lessons and find suitable modes to learning that are both traditional and innovative. This includes lessons co-planned for with the specialty teachers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to be in a least restrictive academic environment with flexible transitional inclusion plans (see <i>II.G.</i>).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEPs will be closely monitored to ensure that there are authentic annual progress goals set for each student with their teachers & through the school-wide transitional inclusion plan if needed (see <i>I.G.</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will have multiple points of engagement through instructional staff and the Community Outreach Liaison who will facilitate workshops and trainings on subjects to support their student and family.

Community Support and Interest – (see Attachment 2 for full description) The educational statistical realities of CSD5 continue the parent drive for innovative choices in their children’s education. As such, SICS has received, and continues to receive, enthusiastic encouragement from community parents that span the educational continuum of public, private, independent and home-schooled children. This support has come in the form of: 235 Sofara facebook page likes; 135 digital petition signatures and comments; parent attendance of 25 plus at each of SICS’ 5 townhalls and parent forums; additional parent outreach on behalf of SICS; in-kind service support including food for events & clerical work; lobbying additional groups and organizations; and giving letters of support. For example, the Harlem4Kids parent group, which has over 2000 parent members, endorsed Sofara. Based on their feedback, community parents have been most excited about the prospect of having an educational program that considers the future trends, includes foreign language and has the reputation of being a rigorous, quality school choice. Harlem parents are increasingly requesting foreign language evidenced through the increasing numbers of bilingual public school programs and waitlists at Harlem bilingual schools. Examples include PS 368 in Harlem offering Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish and Harlem Village Academies offering Mandarin. French dual language programs currently rank 3rd in popularity behind Spanish and Chinese in NYC.³²

Community advocates, leaders, and educators have also shown support of the opening of SICS and its IB programming through 22 letters of support and mentoring, and co-sponsoring events. As part of a grassroots public outreach plan, SICS has spoken directly with many families at community events and has collected over 800 signatures of support on a community petition that is continuously updating. The signatures represent families from the 5 boroughs. Of them, 370+ signatures are from families based in District 5 with approximately 130 signatures coming from Francophone ELL households. The majority of all other signatures come from surrounding districts 7, 4, 6 and 3. In the last 2 months of this year alone, SICS has collected over 85 intent to enroll signatures for the 2016 school year.

While community members are adamant about issues with co-location SICS has still received support on the merits of its educational plan. Harlem’s Congressman Charles Rangel, Councilmember Inez Dickens and Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez have each given renewed letters of support. In our numerous discussions with other politicians, like Senator Bill

³² <http://frenchmorning.com/en/2014/02/15/non-franco-parents-value-quality-continuity-french-bilingual-schools/>

Perkins,, they expressed support for the SICS grassroots efforts and have been pleased with SICS’ proactive community outreach. SICS’ team members have spoken with every political decision maker from District Leaders and Community Board members to State and Federal representatives in and outside of our districts. In many cases, community residents and elected officials that are generally opposed to charter schools have told us that they like the SICS school design and are willing to collaborate once SICS is authorized. Further evidence of support and outreach is in *Attachment 2*.

Adequate Enrollment & Admissions:

As we know from compiled figures,³³ Harlem, the South Bronx, and Central Brooklyn make up 50% of applications for charter school seats demonstrating parent voice for choice in Harlem. For the 2013-2014 school year, Manhattan received 16,994 charter seat applications. Harlem alone received 7,631 applications for its 2,858 seats. A look at Central Harlem estimates for the 2014-2015 school year there were approximately 1,806 CSD5 seats with 4,637 applications leaving a 2831 seat shortfall with a higher 3910 seats needed for the adjacent CSD 3.

These estimates leave 6741 potential applicants for SICS demonstrating a parent demand that SICS can help to meet. Additionally, according to the NYC district Demographic Snapshot, there is historically a gap of approximately 300 seats between Pre-K enrollment and available Kindergarten seats. SICS would certainly help meet this need.

Considering the parent intent to enroll petition, the ages of the children from the general support petition as well as the parent concern and support exhibited at community forums it is reasonable to anticipate SICS will meet enrollment targets. Additionally, we can expect **families from the over 4450 Francophone and SIFE households** to apply for a seat at Sofara International Charter School.

At all recruitment events, SICS will provide students and families with an opportunity to fill out an application for the lottery. Applications will also be available on the school’s website and as described below. Translators will be available for FAQs. SICS will leave copies of applications in all locations described above. In the event that there are more applicants than available seats, SICS will conduct a lottery (*see Attachment 1*). Students not selected through the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which they were drawn., SICS will mail an enrollment packet (*see III.L*) to each admitted student and call all accepted students notifying them of mandatory enrollment sessions, which will be held on multiple days and at multiple times of day. If any student declines his or her spot, SICS will call students who are on the waiting list. The Board will monitor enrollment targets closely. SICS’ Admission Policy and Procedures in Attachment 1 provide specifics on the application, admissions & enrollment process, backfill strategy, and the public lottery plan.

Ensuring Access: To reduce barriers to enrollment SICS will utilize the common application provided through the NYC Charter Center that is available in multiple languages common to those spoken in CSD5, in addition to having paper copies available through SICS. SICS’ Board, ED and Director of Operations will monitor the enrollment student categories to ensure a balance of representation of subgroups and targets are met. SICS is committed to ensuring access for all students including those with physical disabilities and will arrange for ramps, move or arrange classrooms, or provide paraprofessionals to accommodate student access. SICS will work closely with families to ensure each student is accessing all areas available to them, and continuously evaluate its programs and processes for student accessibility particularly for at-risk students.

D. Community to be Served

Proposed Population SICS Would Serve: CSD 5 is a district designated a failing district. ELA aggregate scores are at 13.34 % and 13.12% in Math. Considering this fact, approximately 86% of students are an at-risk priority. SICS would therefore be enrolling students from failing schools, performing below grade level, and who are living below the poverty level. Based on community input and data analysis, SICS will target the households of Francophone ELLs and those in which Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) reside. This includes ELL students with IEPs (***see I.C., Application and Attachment 1***). In Addition, the CSD 5 environment struggles to educate its multilingual population and students with special needs who have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP).³⁴ District demographic data shows that:³⁵

Hispanic students make up 40% of the population,	53% are African-American – including 3 ethnic subgroups
--	---

³³ <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/Lottery2014FinalReport.pdf>

³⁴ <http://data.nysed.gov/specialed/index.php?instid=800000047161&year=20122013>

³⁵ <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=800000047161&year=2013&createreport=1&enrollment=1&avgclasssize=1&freelunch=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1&elemSci=1>

Sofara International CS

3% are Asian or Asian-American	1% are American Indian or Alaska Native
3% are White	33.8% of residents are foreign-born
45.4% have a female head- of household with related children under 18	38.7% are at or below the poverty level
	Drop-out rate in CSD5 zip code 10027 = 79% ³⁶
Most students are in high need subgroups e.g. 96% of 3rd graders are FRLP; 16% are ELLs; and 22.4% are SWD. ³⁷	
31.9% of African Americans <u>comprise households of 3 language groups: French, English and Arabic.</u> ³⁸	

The table below shows academic performance in 2014 of at-risk 3rd graders in CSD 5:

Population	ELA			Math		
	% scoring (Level 1)	% scoring proficient (Level 3)	% scoring advanced (Level 4)	% scoring (Level 1)	% scoring proficient (Level 3)	% scoring advanced (Level 4)
Overall	56%	13%	1%	50%	13%	4%
FRLP	56%	13%	0%	51%	13%	4%
SWD	77%	4%	0%	69%	8%	2%
ELL	81%	4%	0%	63%	5%	2%

Given the lack of academic preparation as demonstrated through the breakdown in the above charts, many students are being underserved and do not see education as a pathway to success. To

break the cycle of poverty and disillusionment, we must provide a rigorous 21st century academic program of preparation beginning in elementary school with the SICS key design elements (see I. B) in which students are motivated, learn to self-monitor, reflect on and balance their actions, explore and discover, and experience learning in a real world context.

Value of the School in CSD 5: Understanding the value of SICS in CSD5 is clearly evident from school performance data as well as recent public demands of parents for sustainable quality schools, which includes recent press releases from the Community Education Council. SICS’ mission is aligned with the 2014 District Statement of Needs for Community Boards 9, 10 and 11, which are each part of CSD 5. The Community Boards stated an increased need for foreign language education, an increased STEM focus in schools, programs that widen the scope of international and collegiate opportunities, and to build skills in youth that offset the cycle of poverty³⁹. SICS’ is ready to fulfill these needs and has designed its key elements to meet community needs rather than trying to find students to fit the school’s design. Currently, schools serving SICS’ CSD 5 families don’t offer the combination of design elements parents told us they wanted. The general parent sentiment is reflected in this parent’s comment: **“This school would be a dream come true for parents & children in CSD 5. I hope that this gets off the ground sooner than later!”**⁴⁰ This sentiment comes from the unique international focus of SICS design elements offered under the IB in which its approach to teaching & learning *encourages the use of different and innovative teaching methods.* SICS design also sets itself apart from other IB schools that utilize the framework as an American model of education rather than an international one.

The core IB elements have struck a chord with parents, particularly the benefits of learning a foreign language within a global perspective. To meet their needs, parents would have to enroll their children in a private IB school costing approximately \$40,000 per year in tuition and fees. To ensure consistent applied learning education, parents would then have to seek out an enrichment program. SICS combination of inquiry led IB learning in a continuum would be an immense value to CSD5 children, especially the ELL, SIFE, and SWD populations, by providing parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

Value to School Community: CSD 5 and surrounding general public and charter public schools can look forward to sharing in collaborative projects and learning experiences, which SICS will build up as a hallmark of an IB school. SICS will invite

³⁶ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_5YR_S1501

³⁷ These are the overall percentages for the district; for budgeting purposes, however, SICS has used the lower “effective target” number provided by the Regents, in order to create the most conservative budget possible.

³⁸ US Census Bureau; 2008-2012 American Community Survey

³⁹ www.nyc.gov/html/mancb10/html/about/needs.stm, www.cb11m.org/node/5

⁴⁰ Helen Narina Schmidt – CSD 5 parent via online petition comment section

schools for inter-visitations, workshops, networking sessions, EDcamps, and opportunities for student driven community learning and action collaboratives.

Rationale for Selecting the Community and Capacity to Serve It

Reason for Selecting this Community: Each member of the Sofara International Charter School founding team is invested in the Harlem community as parents, grandparents, residents, educators, and/or merchants and has a vested interest in creating an educational renaissance for our community’s children. The team is clear on the educational issues and concerns in the community and have the skill set and network to ensure SICS is fully supported in creating a thriving school community. The founders have experienced first hand turmoil and struggle of finding free, quality public education that meets the needs of and expectations for their children. The statistics tell us that traditional pedagogical methodology is not suited for a District in crisis and “In Need of Improvement.”

Through extensive research and school visitations, the *SICS* team designed a school that will increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on those who are at-risk of academic failure. Data shows a cycle of ‘failure to educate our children’ taking place. An example can be seen in one of the districts lowest performing schools where AYP was not reached for *any* of the student sub groups in ELA nor math in the past 3 year reporting period through the 2013-14 academic year⁴¹ and has just been designated “persistently dangerous” by NYSED. Additional data analysis suggests a tragic educational dynamic effecting **teachers** too with turnover rates reaching 36%. In order to serve this population where **only** 3% of students overall scored at level 3 in ELA, unique, targeted programming and teacher support must be implemented for success to flourish.⁴² It is this pattern of statistical data throughout the district that has moved this grassroots founding team to commit itself to improving student achievement and innovating education with sound, rigorous academic opportunities. This begins with:

o A well developed teacher support system	o Targeted specialty teachers
o Strong ESL & SWD support	o Intervention specialist team teachers
o Flexible hands-on instruction	o Progressive self-advocacy with portfolios
o Opportunity for additional tutoring	o Real-life learning in context
o Gender validation	o Extensive family engagement and support

Enhancing Educational Options within the District: Currently there are no District 5 schools that offer the combination of SICS’ key design elements under the IB framework. SICS has chosen to answer the community’s call for bilingual education by having a full 50/50 dual language program, a commitment to applied inquiry teaching and learning and an internationally-minded focus to prepare our children for a global economy. While doing so, SICS has also kept a focus on the needs of the student population to be able to ensure high achievement for ELLs and SWDs with elements such as the holistic, SRG based, assessment system. Other district schools have individual components of SICS programming but the IB framework enables all components to be implemented in one school environment.

SICS’ key design elements will directly support students in areas of greatest need with innovative programming including: • Individual learning plans with goals set based on standards alignment for all students; • Differentiation through targeted AI teachers in every class, UDL, tutoring sessions, 1:1 pull-out; • ESL/ESOL specialist(s) and Second Language Specialist provide small group or individualized instructional support for all students with literacy gaps; • Multimodal opportunities to demonstrate knowledge; • Regularly scheduled Singapore Math based readiness tutoring taught in small group or 1:1; and

Students With Multiple Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extended calendar that represents additional learning time • Push in specialists and small group tutoring for guidance and remediation • Differentiation through blended tools enhances time with content & gives new approach to mastery of material • Fully developed PD plan to support teachers assessment & instructional delivery • IB and SRG support student ability to self monitor needs and progress • Applied learning brings content into focus strengthening understandings
-----------------------------	--

⁴¹<http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=80000047142&year=2013&createreport=1&enrollment=1&staffcounts=1&38ELA=1&38MATH=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1>

⁴²<http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=80000047142&year=2013&createreport=1&attendance=1&teacherqual=1&teacherturnover=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1>

Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trans-disciplinary approach ties all content together in a web of knowledge • A rich language based environment promotes critical thinking and discussion about • Instructional grouping allowing instruction to proceed at appropriate pace and level of rigor
---------	---

Family and Community Support within Sending District: (see *Attachment 2*) Support for Sofara International Charter School has been strong. In addition to the *Community Support and Interest* laid out in *section I C.* above, groups of parents have requested and attended private meetings to discuss the potential of SICS for their children. They walked away each time in support of our mission and programming and indicated their intention to apply to the school (signatures received). Meeting topics included foreign language, Kindergarten enrollment, options at SICS for home schooled children, and enrollment & lottery procedures. In conversations from all stakeholders, we have repeatedly been told that they want a rigorous school within the district (see *I.E. below*). This is evident in the hundreds of parents who have signed our community support petitions (paper and digital) and the formal support from local CBOs and businesses. These CBO’s represent the educational, financial, spiritual, parental, and cultural arenas, in addition to the political, for a total of 22 organizations.

Community residents have expressed two concerns. The primary concern has been colocation with traditional public schools. The secondary concern has been the NYCDOE’s lack of funding for innovative programming at the traditional public schools. Those residents opposed to charter co-location, were pleased about the academic program and even more enthused that SICS has identified possible private space for incubation allowing students to thrive in their own special environment.

E. Public Outreach

Means of Outreach: Since 2013 SICS has conducted outreach in CSDs 5, 4 & 3. SICS has been engaged in an intense grassroots effort of community outreach to inform parents, and Harlem at large, about Sofara International Charter School. In all outreach, SICS informed the community about the school, and provided our website, email, phone number, flyers, and invitations to community meetings. *Attachment 2* provides detailed evidence of the public review process. SICS provided information about its intended location, the target population, a description of the educational program offered and other pertinent information through means such as holding Town Hall meetings (with sufficient public notice), engaging local area press, list-serves and Twitter

Portion of Community outreach (not all inclusive): Soliciting Community Input.		
Outreach Activity	Date & Location	Community Comment/Input Rcvd.
Town Hall meetings Public Outreach Media – public, print, radio, web channel	Neighborhood parents meet-up monthly 2013-15 Shugah Baybees Dev. Ctr. - August 2013, July 2015 Maysles Cinema – Jan 2014 Parent Info forums June 2014, Feb 2015, July 2015 Radio 90.3 Harlem Talk - August 2014, June 2015 News Journal Advertisement October 2014 Huffington Post Interview, Jan 2015	- Want inclusion of African based languages and high level of “quality” - STEM classes not just for afterschool - We want progressive education model - Full language immersion would be too much, strong English is needed -School needs to address more than at-risk kids
Sponsored Events	First Jr. Lego League - Cooper Hewitt Museum August 2015 Sabree Educational Services Sept. 2013, 15 Kinetic Art Exhibit – Feb 2014 Kwanzaa Celebration, Dec. 2013	- What will you do for our boys? - Our kids need more exposure and time with engineering - We have to catch students early for intervention
Superintendent, CEC 5 & meetings CB 10, 11, & 9	- Continuous CEC & District 5 offices CEC 5 monthly meetings	-Include new programs, curriculum and practices than available now - Consider opening a Middle School - Don’t co-locate
Meetings with Political Leaders	Various locations/Ongoing & Continuous Congressman Charles Rangel and his COS Senator Bill Perkins and his COS	<u>Assemblyman Keith Wright</u> - consider the impact and effect of co-locating <u>Cordell Cleare, COS, Senator Bill Perkins</u> –

Local State Federal	Councilwoman Inez Dickens Assemblyman Keith Wright Assemblyman Roberto Rodriguez William Allen, District Leader Westchester Democratic Club	maintain strong cultural relevancies in the curriculum and provocations - Foreign language is key
Meetings with Educational Orgs. in Harlem Charter School Leaders & Trustees	-Continuous Harlem Hebrew Academy, Future Leaders Institute, Harlem Children’s Zone, Global Community Charter School, MESA, North East Charter School Network, The Reading Team, Democracy Builders	- Include after school component; include non academic opportunities during inter-sessions - Be flexible with teacher positions in order to meet student needs
Cultural	-Continuous Senegalese Assoc. of - November 2013 -15 Malian Association - Dec 2013, Feb 2014 The Schomberg Center 2014 Moriija French Church – continuous	French & Arabic languages are needed and continuous family input with communication from school
Business	Continuous Harlem Commonwealth Council, Silicon Harlem, City National Bank and others	Letters of Support received - Strong sense of economics is needed for students to remain successful

Solicitation of Community and Public Input or Comment: We sought to secure the public’s input and comments regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students and our design to meet those needs. At all public in-person presentations, SICS representatives provided time for and received public comment and feedback through discussion and feedback cards. The public was also invited to contact SICS with comments.

Response to Comments Received from the Community: The applicant group carefully considered community feedback in its school design as summarized in the chart above and incorporating the elements. The progressive IB inquiry model, foreign language and Intersession options were based on feedback from the community as well as SICS’ plan for interactive parent workshops and more.

Continuing Community Engagement: SICS has established relationships with the organizations described above, and will continue to cultivate relationships with them after the application is submitted. We will also continue to meet with the CEC5 and Education & Libraries Committees for CB10, CB11 and CB9, keeping relations ongoing. SICS will continue to cultivate partnerships with local schools and create professional collaboratives. SICS’ website, phone number and email will remain active after submission of the application, allowing continued community feedback and input.

Informing Students in the Community & Providing Equal Opportunity to Attend SICS: Once SICS is authorized, our founders will continue outreach for the purposes of recruitment. This includes outreach to every pre-school and daycare in the district, as well as to parents and families that signed our support petitions. We will utilize our community and professional networks to reach out to service providers helping at-risk children, organizations aiding immigrant families, and faith-based organizations. We will continue our grassroots work of flyering at libraries, parks, major subway stations, public housing complexes, and local businesses.

Equal Opportunity for Attendance: If needed, SICS will hold a public lottery to determine which students are accepted to the school. The lottery will be conducted in accordance with NYS Charter Schools Act. SICS’ admissions policy, described in *Attachment 1*, guarantees that students from CSD 5 will have equal opportunity to attend the school.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Programmatic Impact: We believe SICS will serve the needs of the CSD 5 community in a variety of ways. The high standards and expectations of academic excellence through **the IB framework** will serve as a beacon or magnet for recruiting and retaining CSD5 students and attracting others into the district. This opens the opportunity for SICS to work with Harlem based schools to market the school choices available in the district and draw in more students and families to create a positive programmatic impact. In addition, SICS would be meeting the requested needs of the community as seen through our outreach activities and the existing charter school application to seat ratio. SICS’ Year 1 enrollment would constitute approximately .0125% of the 12,607 NYCDOE public school children in the 25 elementary schools of CSD 5. Therefore

SICS will not have a negative programmatic impact. In Year 5, at the expected full enrollment of 350 students, SICS' student would reflect approximately .0275% of the student population, assuming no overall CSD 5 increase in elementary school enrollment. With respect to non-public, independent and parochial schools, SICS is not anticipated to have a great programmatic or financial effect on these institutions, but may enroll a percentage from such schools throughout the City. SICS expects that many of its students will come from low-income families that would not have had the means to pay for tuition-based private schools. Of the parochial schools in the district, SICS' impact on them is expected to be minimal as they have different academic themes that parents seek out.

Fiscal Impact: SICS will have minimal fiscal impact on DOE public schools. For purposes of this analysis, SICS expects the DOE will transfer \$14,027 annually for each child enrolled during the **2016-2017** school year. This figure, along with the "District Budget" (inclusive of DOE programmatic expenditures & exclusive of pension or debt service costs), is based on assumptions provided in guidance from the DOE. Leaving flat the DOE total budget, the SICS impact is negligible. In the first year (2016-2017) of the charter enrollment of 150 students has a financial impact of only 0.00010% of the total \$20.6 billion DOE budget. In subsequent years, the financial impact remains minimal. By operational Year 5, \$4,909,450 will be transferred from the NYC School District to SICS which represents 0.00026% of the NYC School District's overall budget.

PART II EDUCATIONAL PLAN

RATIONALE: With experienced IB educators on its founding team and the International Baccalaureate Organization Regional Manager sitting on its Advisory Board, SICS will open in Candidate Status⁴³ with the IBO. Growing into an International Baccalaureate World School, SICS' students will be fully serviced through the Primary Years Program with an, inquiry-led applied learning approach to teaching and learning that commits to French in a 50/50 model as its choice of language. Imbedded in the IB framework are all of the key design elements found herein. Through IB we understand that our community's children can learn in an innovative setting, they can learn a foreign language, and they can learn to apply their knowledge in the real-world while actually interacting and exploring the world beyond their neighborhood.

In the IB Primary Years Program (PYP), the approach is a **trans-disciplinary** instructional model in which the student learning environment is coherent because authentic teaching and learning takes place through a web of knowledge, as opposed to compartmentalized, disconnected teaching and learning experiences. Studies investigating the implementation of inquiry-led science education, inquiry-led information literacy programs and other inquiry-based educational innovations have resulted in guidelines for building a culture of inquiry⁴⁴. These guidelines are all evident in the **IB** educational program model as the model represents a broad range of instructional possibilities including **Open Inquiry, Guided Inquiry, and Structured inquiry. Students benefit from the IB model because:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An IB student who gains awareness of the relevance of what they are learning and how it's used in real life. They feel encouraged to participate in learning because the school environment exudes a high level of engagement.⁴⁵ As they grow students become more creative, positive and independent.⁴⁶
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PYP students are in a constant state of questioning and supported with resources and an environment conducive to inquiry, free thought & discovery through, Socratic seminar discussions and the school library as a lab.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School library factors alone can account for improvements of 2% to 9% in student achievement⁴⁷.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even at the elementary school level, the IB student will obtain ELA test scores in grades 3-5 that are statistically significantly higher than peer scores (as seen in a South Carolina study of 16 district schools [Jordan 2009]).

SICS has engaged the Global Language Project (GLP) and the founders of HYPOTHEkids for support to ensure rigor, efficacy, and curriculum and program quality. **GLP** is an innovative educational movement seeking to equip disadvantaged public-school students with the skills to compete in a globalized world and work force. Through GLP's **free** and

⁴³ There are 4 phases in the process to becoming an authorized IB World School. 1) The school must be operational for two years 2) Administrators attend IBO exploratory workshops. 3) IBO candidate status is the program implementation phase and includes IBO consultations & quality reviews) 4) authorization

⁴⁴ <http://www.terc.edu/staff/238.html>, p://cominfo.rutgers.edu/~kuhlthau/publications.htm

⁴⁵ www.ic.edu/ib/aboutic/basis-for-practice.pdf

⁴⁶ <http://www.tojet.net/articles/v11i1/1111.pdf>

⁴⁷ Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-based Learning http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/focusoninquiry.pdf

comprehensive foreign language acquisition school support emphasizes research backed experiential learning that was created by leading educational professionals around the country.⁴⁸ Currently, GLP works with traditional and charter public schools such as **PS 368 Hamilton Heights Elementary, who has implemented** Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish in grades K – 5 and **Harlem Village Academies'** Mandarin program at the YMCA. Further information on GLP may be found at www.globallanguageproject.org **HYPOTHEkids**, a K-12 STEM education initiative of Harlem Biospace (Columbia University), develops students' science and engineering abilities through in-school and afterschool lab hours, summer programs, and a girls' science club.⁴⁹ SICS will collaborate on curriculum development and its efficacy through action research. With these three supporters, strategic planning, and targeted supportive staffing, SICS will deliver a well-rounded, rigorous, CCLS aligned curriculum Program of Inquiry in CSD 5.

A. Achievement Goals

Programmatic Educational Goals

1. Students will be proficient readers, writers, listeners, and speakers of both English and French language (bilingual & biliterate) at or above proficiency grade level in line with NYS learning standards.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of mathematics including application, practical and conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem solving at or above proficiency grade level.
3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in the understanding and application of technology and scientific reasoning in alignment with NYS learning standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.
4. Students will understand and be able to critically analyze local, global and U.S. issues, history and geography and their impact on human existence at their developmentally appropriate level.
5. SICS students will make adequate yearly progress.
6. Students will demonstrate the acquisition of foundational academic, social, intellectual and emotional preparedness for college, career, and real life according to IB practices and criteria.
7. At-risk populations will be fully supported in becoming high achievers by ensuring qualified, trained, skill targeted teachers are in every classroom providing differentiated instruction.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS	
Mandated	Each year the school will earn a score at or above the 75th percentile of all schools on the section "Performance" of the citywide Progress Report.
	75% of 3rd-6th graders enrolled at the school on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA, Math and Science exams
	75% of grade level cohorts will perform at grade level on Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) benchmark assessment system. Grades K-2
	Each year at least 75% of graders 3-6 will perform at grade level on TerraNova Common Core assessments
Value Added / Growth	For operational years 3 through 5, grade-level cohorts of the same students (i.e. students who are in the school for two years in a row) will reduce by one-fourth the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA & Math exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam
	For school years in which the number of students scoring above proficiency in a grade level cohort exceed 75% on the previous year's ELA & Math exam, the school is expected to demonstrate growth (above 75 percent) in the current year
	For students who remained in school for the entire year, they will show one year's growth on F&P or TerraNova CC between September and June of each school year
	SICS' overall New York State ELA and Math Exam passage rate for students in grades 3-6 will be

⁴⁸ http://www.globallanguageproject.org/about_mission.php

⁴⁹ <http://hypothekids.org>

	minimally 10% higher than the CSD 5 average passage rate
School Based / IB	At least 90% of students in grades 3-6 will perform at or above Level 3/Superior on a school designed IB based rubric that measures autonomy and self-direction in the fulfillment of their Individual Learning Plans
	At least 90% of students in grades 3-6 will perform at or above Level 3/Superior in a school designed IB based rubric measuring critical thinking and problem solving in their end-of unit products and artifacts
	At least 75% of students in grades 3-6 will perform at or above Level 3/Superior in a school designed IB based rubric measuring applied learning skills in their end-of unit products and artifacts.
	All students will know how to access information and use technology to learn & communicate as evidenced by the successful completion, in grade 5/6, of an IB Exhibition project that demonstrates a depth of knowledge and the use of a wide range of skills at level 3 according to a IB based school-designed rubric

Foreign language achievement goals for French at SICS will be used to evaluate our students' attainment of *minimum* foreign language achievement according to our expected opening enrollment grades. **American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages** (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines⁵⁰ and NYS Language Other Than English (LOTE) standards were used to set achievement goals. Goals are termed novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished, which are developmentally appropriate and correspond to the CC bilingual LS goals of Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, Expanding and Commanding. Students will have foreign language support to achieve these goals through ESL, ESOL, & FLE/FLES classes in addition to reinforcement in the all English content classes. The following chart is a sample of minimum delineated grade goals:

Period	Students enrolled on BEDS day	Summative Assessment	Goal for students
End of Grade K	One year	ELLOPA	65% Novice-mid level oral skills: intermediate-low. Listening
		Letter recognition	75% recognition all French & Arabic letters in print
End of Grade 1	One year	ELLOPA	75% Novice-mid level oral skills: intermediate-low. Listening
		Letter recognition	75% recognition all French & Arabic letters in print
End of Grade 2	One year	ELLOPA	75% Novice-high level oral skills: intermediate-low. Listening
		Letter-vowel blending	75% decode letter-vowel combinations in print
		Reading	75% Novice-mid level
End of Grade 3	2 consecutive years	Letter formation	75% write all letters of alphabet
		SOPA	90% Novice-high level oral skills: intermediate-low. Listening
		Letter-vowel blending	90% decode letter-vowel combinations in print
		Reading	90% Novice-mid level
		Letter formation	90% write all letters of alphabet

Applied Learning achievement goals will be used to evaluate our students' attainment of *minimum* science skills. CCLS and **Next Generation Science Standards**⁵¹ were used to set achievement goals for K-2 and 3-6. To remain consistent in grading and assessment, Goals are novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished.

Grades	Observable Feature of Practices	Summative Assessment	Goal for students
--------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------------

⁵⁰ <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>

⁵¹ <http://www.nextgenscience.org/k-2ets-engineering-design>

K – 2 growth based on consecutive years	1) Asking Questions & Defining Problems	Standards Referenced Grading Rubrics are used for: *Performance Assessments - Goal directed, multimodal tasks with established criteria *Process-focused Assessments - Observations in varying contexts (checklists & learning logs)	(K) 75% Novice- Formulating specific questions 25% Intermediate - Generating Clarifying questions 65% Intermediate - Developing & Using Models 65% Intermediate - Analyzing and Interpreting data
	2) Developing & Using Models		(1st) 80% Intermediate - Generating Clarifying questions 50% Advanced - Formulating empirically testable questions 85% Intermediate - Developing & Using Models 80% - Advanced - Analyzing and Interpreting data
3 - 5 growth based on consecutive years	3) Analyzing and Interpreting data	*Selected Responses - One dimensional (tests & quizzes) *Open-ended Tasks - Students are presented with stimulus & asked to communicate and original response.	(2 nd) 75% Advanced - Formulating empirically testable questions 75% Superior - Analyzing & evaluating questions as testable 75% Advanced - Developing & Using Models 90% Advanced - Analyzing and Interpreting data
	1) Asking Questions & Defining Problems (specifying qualitative relationships)		(3rd) 75% Intermediate- Questioning & Defining of Relatable Problems 75% Advanced – Planning & Carrying out Investigations 65% Intermediate – Constructing Explanations & Designing Multiple Solutions
	2) Planning and Carrying out Investigations/test solutions to problems		(4th) 85% Advanced- Questioning & Defining of Relatable Problems 75% Superior – Planning & Carrying out Investigations 85% Advanced – Constructing Explanations & Designing Multiple Solutions
	3) Constructing Explanations & Designing Multiple Solutions		(5th) 90% Superior- Questioning & Defining of Relatable Problems 90% Superior – Planning & Carrying out Investigations 90% Superior – Constructing Explanations & Designing Multiple Solutions

Further information regarding our assessment tools is included in response *II.D. Assessment System*. Continual progress monitoring towards meeting the Accountability Plan goals will be addressed at four different levels: **1)** student level with the teacher using individual, aggregate and disaggregated assessment data to inform instruction; **2)** classroom level by administrators using individual, aggregate and disaggregated data to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction; **3)** school-wide level by the Board using aggregate and disaggregated data to make programmatic and resource allocation decisions; and **4)** by the authorizer.

B. *SICS Calendar and Daily Schedule* (See Attachment 3 samples)

SICS is providing an extended year academic program that includes Summer Academy (July), Summer Sofari (end of August), and voluntary vacation Intersessions. Instructional days follow the NYC DOE calendar for school break but not all holidays. SICS’ daily schedule utilizes 60 minute class periods and the benefit of 60 additional minutes of instructional time four days per week over general public schools. Over the course of a year, SICS’ students will have had additional 10 instructional school days *exclusive* of Intersession days. SICS’ calendar design allows for **mitigating the adverse effects of knowledge and skill loss over extended breaks often referred to as the “slide” effect.**

Sofara International CS

Student Work Day/Week Assumptions:	
• Student school day 7:30am - 4:15 pm Mon-Thur	• Students arrive to eat breakfast at 7:30am
• Class and morning routine begins 8:00am	• Tutoring for at-risk students 4:20 – 4:50pm
• Early release Fridays will be at 3:05 pm to accommodate teacher PD	• Mid-morning recess of 20 mins.
• Lunch 70 minutes includes 30 minutes eating, 20 minutes recess, and 20 minutes of Choose Act Reflect (CAR) time	
* Students in grades K-6 will experience a trans-disciplinary day of learning that may blur the lines of traditional class periods and timelines. Sample flow First grade Student French language inquiry time:	
Circle time (French literacy (20 mins.)	Inquiry provocation or review (15 mins)
Language Centers (20 mins) on alternating days or when needed	Inquiry lesson (50-70 mins)
	Content French vocabulary review (15 mins)
* Students will have the following instruction delivered through a combination of “inquiry time” and additional, direct instruction:	
• French Inquiry -Science and/or Social Studies 90 plus Bilingual Applied Learning 60 minutes daily = 150 minutes	
• English Literacy 90-120 minutes daily	• English Math 60-120 minutes daily
• Arts minimally 120 minutes weekly	• Small Group Tutoring 30 minutes three times per week
• P.E. minimally 225 minutes (to include Health and nutrition studies)	
• Additional French as a Foreign Language instruction (FLE) 120 minutes per week	
Teacher Work Day/Week Assumptions:	
• Teacher school day will be 7:55am - 4:50pm daily	• Teachers begin teaching at 8:00am
• 4:20 – 4:50 Small group or 1:1 at-risk tutoring three times per week.	
• 4:20 – 4:50 Family engagement once per week (this may include data analysis, co-planning or meetings that will inform parents)	
• Preparation periods twice daily	• Grade level & Specialist co-planning 3 times weekly
• Lunch uninterrupted 50 minutes daily	• Student mentoring 20 minutes daily (CAR)
• Staff meeting, PD , or workshop every Friday, 3:15 - 4:50pm (90 mins)	

Choose-act-reflect (CAR) time represents a variety of student on student and teacher on student mentoring and character building; this is to promote natural inquiry as well as life skills such as socializing, creativity, leadership, collaboration, and communicating with others. Teachers may use this time to mentor students who need extra help with core academic subjects with supplementary tutorial mini lessons or social emotional support.

Intersessions: In February, April and July, SICS will hold Intersessions to run 3-7 days. During these times, voluntary programming will be offered. Programming may incorporate academic remediation, enrichment, community service opportunities, or academic related fieldtrips. Teachers will staff Intersessions in addition with a minimum of six sessions offered per year. Intersession classes will be small intimate groups, creative, and fun, allowing for higher levels of student engagement and understanding. Students who are academically at-risk will be encouraged to attend but all students will be able to participate in the Intersessions as well as **Summer Academy**, which represents SICS’ summer school program. Summer Academy, starting the first week of July, will give priority to students who are both at-risk and have not met the Level 3 standard set for NYS yearly exams. Instructors who are teaching at the Summer Academy will be intervention specialists. Summer Academy will be three hours long, and focus on strengthening student skills based on their needs.

Planning and Professional Development: Teaching teams will have two co-planning prep periods per day, one designated period per week to plan with specialist teachers and 90 minutes on Fridays for collaborative staff meetings, PD, workshops, and common planning following early release. Four full day PDs are built into the calendar, as are 3 data analysis days. Teachers will receive **consistent, targeted** support in creating success among the student body that includes access to the full-time IB Coordinator. Staff will be coached through a nurturing and empowering method that mirrors the expected student environment (PD see *III.E*).

Instructional Grouping: Instructional grouping will be decided based on student need and instructional purpose and consist of an array of scenarios. With an AI teacher in every class whose special qualifications can vary based on student need,

grouping and 1:1 instruction can, for example, be based on language, academics, intervention services, heterogeneous peer led learning and mentoring, or grouped for project work based on student driven inquires. This may include push-in and pull out groups for intervention **or** enrichment. A **half class model** may be used as a regular part of intervention & instruction where half the students from two separate classes go to their specialty class while the other halves remain with their classroom teacher(s). This effectively turns a class of 25 into 12 with 6 students for each of the two classroom teachers, allowing for more individualized student attention or create leveled ability grouping.

Supplemental Instruction: Students with diagnostic test scores in Math and ELA, SOPA, or NYSESLAT that indicate a need for additional remediation will be assigned to focused tutoring from 4:20–4:50pm as part of RTI. Small group composition will be mandatory. Tutoring will take place on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. For details about supplemental instruction for ELLs and SWD (see *II.G*). SICS daily additional instructional time, Summer Academy, Intersessions, and Tutoring are all examples of ways that SICS will provide additional instruction for its students. SICS will also have the ability to offer additional support through the use of educational interns from Columbia University, NYU, and the Amity Institute who may offer teacher supports and small group tutoring.

C. Curriculum and Instruction

Overview: The SICS curriculum, known in IB as a Program of Inquiry (POI), will be unique to our school. A POI represents a school-wide foundation of curriculum, which vertically and horizontally aligns a scope and sequence that will ensure rigor as students progress in grade levels. The POI, to be designed in the pre-opening phase, is created by developing a cohesive plan of instruction that interconnects all teaching subjects under six focused themes already set within the IB Primary Years Program (see *below*). Instructional books and materials are used as resources incorporated into the Units of Inquiry to aide in instructional delivery. The ability to create a unique POI allows the creation of **solid curriculum programming that establishes high engagement** and is tailored to the needs of SICS' students with complete vertical and horizontal alignment across grades and with learning standards. In addition, it will allow SICS to effectively serve the diverse needs of all students (see *I.D. Meeting Student Needs chart*) as ELLs, SWDs and all at-risk students are fully supported throughout the curriculum and instruction of their day. This includes the French instructional time (see *II.G*).

All elements of the POI, including the instruction delivered 50% in French will have the intent of allowing students to gain the global readiness skills in alignment with the SICS mission. International elements in the POI will introduce language, culture, belief systems and multiple perspectives that increase effective communication skills and higher level critical thinking abilities to our students. Collaborating with HYPOTHEkids, Global Language Project and the IBO's Online Curriculum Center (OCC), SICS' Executive Director and DOTL will create the initial vertically and horizontally aligned POI that will thereafter be managed by the DOTL. Using **ManageBac**, a program designed to help IB schools organize and analyze data, units of inquiry will be built in year one and stored for the teaching community to access for reflection and revision as they are implemented. Reflection and revision are a normal and expected collaborative teaching and assessment tool of a PYP school.

Foundational Tools: Within the IB PYP trans-disciplinary approach dedicated ELA and Math periods are also used for direct instruction in these content areas. Therefore, SICS will incorporate core instructional tools and materials as well as targeted instructional supports. Based on the SICS program design and their success with student achievement, the SICS POI will incorporate the following key foundational instructional programs to enhance ELA, Math and Applied learning instruction:

- **Core Knowledge Language Arts** focuses on foundational literacy skill strands. The Skills Strand builds students' decoding skills while the Listening & Learning Strand builds students' language comprehension ability;
- **Singapore Math - Primary Mathematics Common Core** has a consistent and strong emphasis on problem solving & model drawing through hands-on learning that promotes the critical thinking we want to see in students
- **Engineering is Elementary**, a curriculum designed by the Museum of Science, Boston, provides curricula that teachers can use to work toward the goals set by the Next Generation Science Standards⁵².

Ensuring Alignment with NYS Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS): The **IB** continuum of programs are

⁵² <http://discovermagazine.com/2013/dec/15-e-is-for-engineering#.UwZzZvldXh4> DECEMBER 2013 ISSUE Discovery Magazine: Teaching Kids to Think Like Engineers, By [Breanna Draxler](#), Tuesday, November 05, 2013

rigorous, well developed and have within them a high level of expectations and standards that are already in alignment with CCLS. SICS’ POI will be aligned to the NYS CCLS as part of the development and continuous reflection and revision of its Units of Inquiry. Under the umbrella of the IB PYP framework, the POI will have the flexibility to meet CCLS. To ensure SICS’ POI remains standards aligned, sufficient collaborative and continuous time, coaching, feedback opportunities and IB PD will establish clear cohesive understandings of how the CCLS alignment should be infused into the units of study. The ManageBac system will house the units and standards which teachers can link together as they plan and develop the units and accompanying lessons. Below is a small sample of highly visible alignments of taught & assessed curriculums of IB within CCLS⁵³:

ELA - IB & CCLS Alignment Sample	MATH – IB & CCLS Alignment Sample
• Students will demonstrate independence in communication	• Students will make sense of & persevere in solving problems
• Students will understand other perspectives and cultures	• Students will reason abstractly and quantitatively
• Student can respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose and discipline	• Students will construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
• Students will comprehend as well as critique	• Students will model with mathematics
• Students value evidence	• Students will use appropriate tools strategically
• Students will build strong content knowledge utilizing text across content areas (transdisciplinary)	• Students will look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Units of Inquiry: The SICS POI will be further developed into detailed, school-wide, Units of Inquiry based on the perspectives of the six IB themes and driven by a central idea in each unit. Each grade cycles through the themes of:

- How the World Works;
- Who We Are;
- Sharing the Planet; and
- Where We Are in Place and Time;
- How We Organize Ourselves;
- How We Express Ourselves.

ManageBac, SICS’ data management system, will allow collaborative unit planning between teachers as well as across the entire school. Specialists, and other staff, can add comments on extension activities, differentiation needs, and collaborate on lesson development.

Each unit, taught through either science or social studies, includes teacher questions to be answered, called Lines of Inquiry, and leaves time for student driven Lines of Inquiry to be researched. As trans-disciplinary learning takes place students will use the central idea to explore concepts in every content area from that same starting point but from different perspectives. A sample of a Program of Inquiry horizontally aligned with an IB theme in K-5 is represented in the following chart. Theme – Who We Are: *An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.*

	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
	<p>Central idea: Senses are tools for exploring our environment.</p> <p>Concepts: Form, Function, Reflection</p> <p>Subject focus: Science, PSPE</p>	<p>Central idea: Understanding what makes us special and different helps us to learn and grow</p> <p>Concepts: Change, Connection,</p> <p>Subject focus: Science, PSPE</p>	<p>Central idea: The choices we make affect our health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Concepts: Responsibility, Connection, Reflection</p> <p>Subject focus: Science, PSPE</p>	<p>Central idea: Human body systems are all connected</p> <p>Concepts: Form, Connection, Responsibility</p> <p>Subject focus: Science, PSPE</p>	<p>Central idea: The decisions we make affect who we are</p> <p>Concepts: Perspective, Causation, Reflection</p> <p>Subject focus: PSPE, science</p>	<p>Central idea: The physiology of the brain affects how we learn</p> <p>Concepts: Function, Causation, Reflection</p> <p>Subject focus: Science, PSPE</p>

⁵³ <http://www.ibo.org: connection IB to the Core>

Who We Are	Related concepts: Systems, Biology	Related concepts: Similarities, Differences, Identity	Related concepts: Wellness, Balance	Related concepts: Systems Interdependence	Related concepts: Decision-making	Related concepts: Intelligence, Behavior, Identity
	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The five senses How we use the senses The importance of our senses 	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical, social, spiritual and emotional characteristics Similarities and differences between ourselves and others Personal abilities and interests 	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food groups and a balanced diet The role of sleep and exercise in a healthy body The importance of self-esteem 	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human body systems How the body systems are connected Our responsibility in maintaining a healthy body 	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making How and why citizens shape our community The outcome of our decisions / choices 	Lines of inquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the brain functions Learning styles and multiple intelligences How our decisions affect the brain

Example 2nd grade Transdisciplinary content: PE/Health & Nutrition; Literacy skill- character motivation / Writing skill – descriptive language (factual details) in non-fiction writing; Math – weights and measures; Art – The art of cooking with color; Provocations – farmers market, visit community seniors home, host a community mini marathon

*Teaching about and through the subject areas is done when it enhances the trans-disciplinary model, but not when the integration results in teaching and learning that is contrived and superficial.⁵⁴

In the Classroom

Science and Social Studies: Science and Social Studies are the subjects through which all inquiry-led applied learning springs from in a PYP classroom and from which the SICS’ Program Of Inquiry and Units of Inquiry are created. Students explore the world and cultures, conduct experiments, draw inspiration, involve themselves in the community through science and social studies. It is these subjects that are the critical catalysts to **accelerating learning in all content areas such as reading comprehension through non-fiction text**. Students are taught to draw upon numerous resources for first-hand knowledge acquisition with non-fiction texts, interviews, and experiences rather than textbooks. It is from science and social studies that discovery and hands-on applied learning is launched and driven by teacher and student lines of inquiry.

For example, a class exploring marine life in their inquiry class may:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>fictional</i> stories with marine animal characters while exploring the <u>craft</u> of personification Attend several <u>expeditions</u> with both their French and English language teachers (i.e. beach, conservation center, aquarium, Central Park pond, fish market). Further extend their learning by <u>writing</u> a marine based realistic fiction piece Explore charting, graphing, calculating, or defining ratios of marine life in <u>math</u> <u>In art</u>, students may then create a marine habitat tri-orama, and use marine sounds to create a digital music piece or Learn how dams are used to generate electricity in <u>applied learning</u> class.

⁵⁴ Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education 2009: 57

Student led *lines of inquiries* are anticipated along the lines of exploring what fish in other areas or countries look like and asking: Where are the worlds largest dams?; What happens to marine life when dams are created?; or How does salt water become fresh water?

Applied Learning: *As expressed in section I.B, the benefits of applied learning for at-risk students, including ELLs & SWDs is immense.* As an extension of their inquiry SICS will offer focused dedicated time minimally three days per week for applied learning classes where inquiry flourishes through hands-on discovery. This time is devoted to furthering inquiry through literary and technological means. Students, with access to a wealth of primary resources, will be able to research a host of topics *and* experiment with their understandings, including constructing & building. Structured as a Library Lab environment, SICS' will change the mold of a quiet place to read into an interactive inquiry & research space. Library is exciting as students become independent researchers and begin to recognize their ability to choose their own inquiries. Learning activities tied to the classroom curriculum help students learn about research tools and become adept at investigating their own interests. Soon the connection between inquiry, their own interests, and the library labs' resources is evident. Applied Learning (AL) teachers will be aided in applied learning lesson development by **HYPOTHEkids** and the IB Coordinator.

Foundational Resource: To ensure alignment with the IB Program of Inquiry, when needed, AL teachers will draw lessons from **Engineering Is Elemental (EiE)**, a research based, field-tested curriculum that aligns with the scope of topics to be covered in elementary school. It was developed using the principals of Understanding by Design, which promotes authentic learning while incorporating elements needed to address SWD needs. The IBO uses a modified form of the UbD™ template for the Primary Years Program.⁵⁵

EiE will be used to include:

- An array of engineering sectors for students such as environmental, mechanical, acoustical, materials, and chemical;
- Exposure of students to the career possibilities within various engineering fields;
- Lessons that appeal to girls and an urban school environment; and
- Learning that creates depth of knowledge with inexpensive materials and free teacher resources including⁵⁶: How-to Videos; Practical prep tips for each EiE lesson; Classroom videos featuring teachers facilitating each lesson in a real classroom; Graphics – posters and presentations; and Extension Lessons that further link EiE with other classroom subjects just as with the PYP

Foreign Language: In PYP schools, all students by the age of seven have the opportunity to learn an additional language. Beginning in Kindergarten, SICS' students will experience the French language in a 50/50 **content** immersion model in which teachers work together as a teaching team. They will jointly plan the weekly instruction and share and implement teaching concepts based on the IB PYP methodology. Inquiry time will be taught in French (S.S. & Sci.), ELA and Math taught in English, and the remainder of the student time will be in the “language of the day” that will alternate each day.

SICS' will utilize the unique and successful **Gomez Content 50/50**⁵⁷ program to:

- Divide language of instruction by content area as well as by time, which is especially well suited for areas with high numbers of ELLs, such as CSD5.
- Focus subject-area instruction in only one language for consistency of vocabulary and conceptual development of that subject in the same language.
- Allow teachers to develop conceptual and linguistic connections with students
- Provide flexibility in second language acquisition by incorporating a ‘language of the day’,
- Increase vocabulary in real world context during inquiry-led applied learning time
- Include reflective vocabulary review time to strengthen literacy capabilities particularly during inquiry
- Build literacy skills evenly in both languages, particularly when coupled with the trans-disciplinary approach in which

⁵⁵ <http://www.authenticeducation.org/ubd/ubd.lasso> Authentic Education is a New Jersey Registered Professional Development Service Provider with over 20 years of experience in school reform at the national level.

⁵⁶ <http://www.eie.org/eie-curriculum/eie-curriculum-components>

⁵⁷ http://www.utb.edu/vpaa/coe/Documents/CI%20Yvonne%20Freeman%20Documents/YFreeman20Dual_2005.pdf

knowledge acquisition takes the form of an interconnected web.

- Incorporate the use of bilingual student literacy centers to strengthen content-based vocabulary
- Reinforce what is taught in the second language in English and vice versa.

Support for mastery of a second language will come from direct instructional time in a FLE class for French and, if needed, ESL/ESOL for English minimally three times per week or 120 minutes. Flexible programming, such as the half class model, will be used for ESL/FLE instruction if student need dictates. Importantly, language-immersion classes will be supported with interns from the Amity Institute⁵⁸ who are native speakers of the immersion language and who can share knowledge of cultural traditions that support students' understanding of global perspectives. Full-time, native-speaking teachers in immersion classrooms play an important role in the success of the international school model, particularly in the younger grades.

English Language Arts: PYP students will naturally conduct discovery through literacy as they use a variety of literature and texts to develop depth of knowledge. SICS Units of Inquiry will focus on increasing text complexity, student exposure to expository and informational texts, and expanding students' academic vocabulary—key components of the CCLS for literacy. Literacy in French inquiry will be drawn off of the same skills set as in English literacy instruction through transference of knowledge that is introduced during French circle time, mono & bilingual learning centers and vocabulary review time. English literacy, however, is time for direct instruction on the skills needed to decode and comprehend texts through critical analysis. Inquiry content will be infused but is not the main focus. The focus is on instilling strong foundational literacy skills to ensure **every** student works toward mastery of the college readiness skills posed in the CCLS while building capacity in oral and written communication.

During direct instructional time students are scheduled for 60 minutes per day of dedicated literacy in English split as three days for Reading and two days for writing. The POI will emphasize explicit instruction that addresses conventions of grammar, usage, mechanics of academic language, and writing processes through the use of engaging text and interactive technology. This allows teachers to gather formative Standards Referenced Grading (SRG) data from assessments that correspond to concepts covered in the text and allow for individualized instruction.

Foundational Resource: Direct reading and writing skill instruction will be delivered through the incorporation of Core Knowledge Language Arts program (CKLA). CKLA was chosen as a companion to the IB framework because it uses the element of play through centers for learning, creates a cross content web of knowledge and focuses on diversity and culture. This interconnected, exploratory methodology follows the SICS philosophy and is backed by sound research.⁵⁹ In addition, CKLA is CCLS aligned and focuses on critical foundational skills which promote the SICS goals. The Skills strand teaches reading and writing in tandem so that, for example, blended sounds learned in reading are immediately applied in practice to their spelling in writing. This is a crucial element in promoting mastery for our ELLs, SWD and SIFE students. For grades K-3 there are two components to foundational skills. One is skills and the other is listening and learning in which oral language, vocabulary, and background knowledge sufficient to understand what is decoded.⁶⁰ CKLA will blend well with the trans-disciplinary model that promotes a richness of vocabulary as it also includes important historical and scientific events, ideas, and people in its material. Beginning in 4th grade, CKLA will reinforce the IB methodology of reflection and critical thinking about ones own work. CKLA allows students to use these same steps as they move flexibly back and forth between components of the writing process that mimics what mature writers do.

Mathematics: Part of SICS' vision is to instill a lifelong passion for mathematics in our students. SICS will achieve this with a rigorous core mathematics program that fosters the college readiness skills of forming conjectures and drawing real-world connections to content. During French inquiry, math is infused into content as is needed to add varying perspectives to content, emphasizes problem solving as it relates to the world around us and how using math is valuable within everyday life. This improves students' ability to communicate math thinking both verbally, as well as in writing. Students will see math in all

⁵⁸ Amity Institute's Educational Internship Program provides future educators from other countries the opportunity to gain teaching skills under the direct supervision of a certified teacher in an American classroom. www.amity.org

⁵⁹ <http://www.coreknowledge.org/research>

⁶⁰ <http://www.coreknowledge.org/ckla-k3>

subjects as it becomes a factual part of the learning environment and students are asked to think about and draw upon their prior mathematical knowledge. This type of math environment breaks down any barriers to access and understanding for any student at-risk. In addition to math as inquiry, students will have direct skills instruction in a manner that is fun and engaging. During direct instructional time students are scheduled for an additional 60 minutes per day of dedicated math in English.

Foundational Resource: SICS will utilize **Singapore Math Primary Mathematics Common Core (PMCC)** to supplement student inquiry work, a key resource in the development of the CCLS⁶¹. This type of resource is essential in achieving the SICS goals and mission. **PMCC** has a consistent and strong emphasis on problem solving and model drawing, which is a perfect fit to the IB PYP. Students focus on in-depth understanding of the essential math in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' (NCTM) Curriculum Focal Points, the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, and the CCLS. Teachers will adapt the curriculum if needed to meet the IB structured learning concepts translating them to learning goals measured through SRG, which builds investment in the mastery of mathematical concepts. Students with multiple risk factors, as those entering SICS, will benefit from such an in-depth analysis of their progress.

ART – SICS has set aside time in the week for each child to utilize art to further express their knowledge and understandings. In the PYP art is infused throughout the curriculum as students work on many content area projects. SICS will deliver instruction on visual and performance art through a dedicated teacher on staff. This gives students minimally, two artistic modes of expression. With common planning time pre-scheduled and the school-wide use of ManageBac to share Units of Inquiry, the art teacher will plan projects aligned with each grade's theme of study.

D. Assessment System

Approach to Assessment: At SICS assessment has a positive connotation as it focuses on what a learner can do currently instead of what they can't do. As such, SICS will use a Standards Referenced Grading portfolio assessment system driven by the collection of evidence that clearly demonstrates where students are in meeting grade level benchmarks and standards. The authentic, holistic nature of portfolio assessment is embedded in the PYP framework for both teachers and students as a natural process leading to achievement. It promotes self-monitoring and self-management by students who have flexibility in presenting evidence of their ability to meet standards-aligned goals set in their learning plans. Portfolio assessment will enable SICS to track student progress for both the skills and habits of mind as well as progress toward achievement of Common Core Learning Standards using Standards Referenced grading (*see description below*). Evidence pieces are therefore meaningful and prevent a portfolio from becoming a work folder.

Use of Assessment to Evaluate Academic Progress: Training for teachers on portfolio development and maintenance is part of the pre-opening IB PD and continues in the school year with the support of the IB Coordinator and DOTL. Training will include ELL and SWD specific issues and dynamics in assessment.

SICS will maintain a comprehensive assessment policy that begins with the collection of baseline data from naturalistic observation, home visits, IEPs, diagnostic testing, and any prior school documentation on each child compiled during Summer Sofari (the time set aside on the calendar in August). From there, **teachers** devise initial individual learning plans with student input through conferencing. Assessment is continuous and ongoing in the classroom as students are taught self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-advocacy. Specific data that connects to a standard is sought. For example, teachers will include in a portfolio end of unit summative performance task scoring rubrics while students may choose specific unit tasks that demonstrated a skill being addressed in their individual learning plan that is standards driven.

Each class' Academic Intervention Teacher (AIT) is responsible for assessment collection and analysis in the classroom (see "Structure" below), however, all teachers will collaborate during common planning time to use assessment data in a variety of ways to revise pacing, differentiate lessons, remediate skills or content, group students, select students for interventions, assess professional growth and progress, and communicate with students, parents, and families. Assessment is pre-planned as SICS' Units of Inquiry are embedded with standardized PYP Skills needed to achieve learning within it thereby giving teachers and students clear alignment (across content areas) to meeting standards. Teachers will plan out a bi-monthly student teacher conference schedule to ensure each student is reached for dedicated 1:1 portfolio conference time in addition to addressing whole class and small group progress as needed. Throughout the year portfolio assessment also includes collecting artifacts from diagnostic tools, evolving learning plans through RTI and IEP's, and annual state exams. The Data

⁶¹ <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/frequently-asked-questions/>

Analysis Team will use portfolios to assess student interventions and inform key decisions aimed at improving academic outcomes for underperforming students.

Purpose and Use of Assessments: In addition to the daily use of formative assessments, including those provided through CKLA, Singapore Math, PYP rubrics, and Engineering is Elemental, SICS will utilize the tools in the chart below to assess student progress toward school-based and State-based benchmarks & goals.

SCHOOLWIDE	
NYSITELL & NYSESLAT - to determine eligibility as ELL and English Language Learner proficiency in the English language (August - Or When Student Enters School)	
ELLOPA/SOPA – to determine student competency in second language acquisition in alignment with American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and NYS Language Other Than English (LOTE) (Semesterly). Conducted by classroom FLE teacher with assistance from Global Language Project staff.	
SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASKS These include Inquiry, Math and Applied Learning units of study used to gather artifacts for portfolio assessment. (End Of Unit)	
<p><i>Portfolios</i> - to promote self-awareness, self-advocacy, and ownership of learning, students will create a standards referenced, goal driven, true picture of their progress with the collection of artifacts. Students build investment and self-advocacy by monitoring their own performance and growth within each standard and identify opportunities for improvement as they keep a portfolio of their growth and work with teachers’ guidance to create Individual Learning Plans. Teachers will assess the many ways students make use of their experiences through authentic assessment, which is vital for SWD and ELL students.</p>	
The IB 6th grade Exhibition is a final project meant to demonstrate all aspect of the PYP learned (June)	
<p><i>Holistic IB Rubrics</i> – to accompany the SRG system, students will use holistic rubrics to guide their growth in the IB Attitudes, Skills and Attributes such as, communication skills, cooperative behaviors, responsibility, tolerance, and risk-taking. These rubrics will be developed as school-wide measures by the DOTL& IB Coordinator as well as by teachers as units of study are planned to measure progress in habits of mind.⁶² Some students may receive individual rubrics as needed.</p>	
Grades K - 2	Grades 3 - 6
<p>August/February/June SICS will utilize <i>Fountas & Pinnell</i> to assess student benchmark progress toward achieving strong literacy foundational skills and provide teachers with diagnostic information that informs and adjusts teaching techniques, student learning plans, grouping strategies and targets lesson development.</p>	<p>(August & February) SICS will utilize <i>TerraNova Common Core</i> to determine benchmark competency in meeting CCLS in ELA and Math.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYS ELA & Math Exams (Annual) ● NYS Alternate Assessment (Annual, if needed) <p>Datafolio assessment (Eligible Spec. Educ. students)</p>

Selection and Development of Assessment Instruments: School-wide assessment at SICS will be supervised and managed by the **Director of Teaching and Learning** (DOTL) through the assistance of a Data Analysis Team and the utilization of ManageBac (*see below*), which allows all stakeholders private access. Student portfolios will be managed by the classroom teachers who will select assessment instruments suitable for the data sought. Teacher selection will be the result of common planning with teachers, specialists, IB Coordinator and the DOTL. Coupled with the insight gained from working directly with teachers, the DOTL will adjust, select, and further develop the school-wide instruments of assessment. The DOTL will make recommendations to the ED who has the final decision. All decisions will be data driven both in and out of the classrooms, whether by teachers or administrators.

Collection & Dissemination Structure: As described in detail below, assessment data will be centralized through the ManageBac data analysis system through which all stakeholders will have access. *See below and II.G*

Special Student Populations and Related Services for additional collection and dissemination protocols.

Again, assessment at SICS will be supervised by the Director of Teaching and Learning who will utilize a School based Support Team (SBST) and Data Analysis Team to collect, manage, and support the collection, analysis of assessment data as well as enable student differentiation and teacher coaching toward student achievement. The data collected will come from the Academic Intervention Teachers, Individual Learning Plans, Response To Intervention protocol, Transitional

⁶² <http://www.habitsofmind.org/node/713>

Inclusion Plans, Portfolios and the school-wide assessments as listed above.

The SBST, as described in section II.G., will support teachers in assessing students and creating plans and interventions based on data analysis in the case that students are not meeting benchmarks and standards. The **Data Analysis Team** is composed of the DOTL, ED, IB Coordinator, Spec. Educ. Coordinator, ESL teacher and minimally two AI teachers. The Team will meet bi-monthly to coordinate school-wide assessment administration, support teachers with collection, monitoring & dissemination of assessment data and administration of diagnostic assessments.

The Team will analyze all student data including selected portfolios to identify trends for students that are underperforming despite the assistance through AITs, RTI, and the SBST. They will analyze data to aide in decisions to adjust instructional intervention strategies, determine targeted PD and coaching needs for teachers (use of tools *and* areas of instruction), and identify needed resources among other assessment related responsibilities. Team members will have determined class targets to work with. This includes informal classroom observations, (peer) coaching of teachers as a learning community, and developing modifications in teacher instruction or strategies for student engagement and for students who are underperforming. All stakeholders will be able to input, interact with and analyze student data as part of ensuring student achievement through the ManageBac system. Parents will have the ability to discuss data with teachers by phone, email, or in-person meeting. They will also receive full teacher reports twice per year and, for students in RTI or Transitional Inclusion, additional progress reports every 6-8 weeks. The ED & DOTL, in addition to disseminating data on the school-wide ManageBac data system dashboard, will meet with the Board Education Committee monthly to discuss analysis results. Together key decisions may be made that inform decisions about student promotion, strategic planning & budgeting, and determine school progress toward student achievement goals.

Management of Assessment System: SICS will utilize the **ManageBac** data management system to store, manage, and examine trends in performance in aggregate and disaggregated data groups. This system is designed to aide with curriculum planning, assessment & reporting, attendance & behavior, and parent engagement through access. SICS will be able to manage both IB specific requirements and standard school items, including attendance, behavior, standards, and testing data. SICS will have the ability to cross reference information from multiple data points for each student. It will be known how categories such as behavior or attendance are affecting achievement in particular classes and subjects, either individually or within cohorts. Incredibly advantageous is that ManageBac allows for collaborative unit planning not just between teachers but across the entire school. Specialists can add comments on extension activities, differentiation needs, and collaborate on lesson development. In turn, this will also allow the ED, who is responsible for managing the system and ensuring data is input according to plan, the Board and the DOTL to make informed decisions based on curriculum analysis that effect achievement. ManageBac also gives the school community a tool for managing student portfolios digitally. Portfolio assessment in this way is not a mystery and becomes part of a truly authentic assessment analysis system where clear evidence of student achievement can be linked to learning goals, benchmarks and standards. The Data Analysis Team will track and create comparative reports for everything from attendance to diagnostic grades. Students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the Board will all have the needed access to assessment data, through the ManageBac Dashboard portal.

Evaluation of Progress: See III.D for specifics on the evaluation of SICS' assessment system and its teachers as part of meeting the goal of increased student achievement and college and career readiness.

By using a holistic assessment system that in turn uses the IB and CCLS as the integral foundation for achievement, SICS will be able to create rubrics that can be used to quantify and chart student progress toward meeting goals, benchmarks, and standards. As a school that is in a constant state of reflection toward meeting its goals and fulfilling its mission, everyone in the school community will lead the use of data within their domain. The Board will take the lead in the use of data to monitor the progress of strategic plans and oversight of policies in closing the achievement gap. The ED, who is responsible for ensuring student achievement, will take the lead in the use/cross-collaboration/cross-dissemination of data to all stakeholders to ensure school-wide processes, procedures, programs, plans, and support mechanisms are benefiting students and meeting the mission of the school. The ED and DOTL are responsible for ensuring all assessments are in alignment with Common Core State Standards, New York State Law, and applicable policies of the Board of Regents, including the New York State Testing Program. **The DOTL** will take the lead in the use of data to drive both teacher and student support, including curriculum scope, design and implementation, track various cohorts, and evaluate teachers and the efficacy of PD

and methodologies. The DOTL is responsible for ensuring all staff has access to, and the ability to navigate, assessment data. The DOTL facilitates teacher collaboration in interpreting and acting on data as leader of the Data Analysis Team. (see **III.D. and III.E.**) Academic Intervention Teachers will take the lead in the use of data to drive instruction and student achievement holistically within their classroom (see below) and Students will lead the use of data through their Individual Learning Plans and portfolios to drive their achievement.

As a school community, staff will have early release Fridays, in addition to grade level common planning time, that may be used to reflect on data results and student achievement. The staff has three full data analysis days built into the school calendar and daily co-planning time between Lead & Academic Intervention Teachers (see II.B.). Scoring and data entry, if needed, will be scheduled on early release days for collaboration among instructional staff. In K-2, classroom teachers administer F&P assessment and input results into ManageBac. In grades 3-6 the DOTL coordinates and supervises test administration and data input as they deem appropriate. The Board and its Education Committee will have unfettered access to the ManageBac Dashboard and analysis reports in addition to monthly meetings with the DOTL and ED to monitor and plan out key decisions related to assessment and achievement of students.

Reliable Measures: Standards Referenced Grading (SRG): SICS will use mastery of standards to drive all elements of instruction, including planning, classroom instruction, assessment, and data analysis. SICS will derive its SRG standards and benchmarks from NYSCCLS, NGSS, ACTL/LOTE standards, and IB standards (see II.A.). The SRG system aligns with SICS’ mission of growth and self-advocacy and being ready for college, career, and real life. Students’ report card grades reflect their most recent levels of mastery within each learning goal instead of the average of all scores, a method traditionally used in most schools. SRG also allows improved communication with parents in terms they can understand and will ensure that SICS builds a rich **culture of pertinent data**. Using SRG, the Common Core Learning Standards are broken down into individual learning goals. To remain consistent in grading and assessment, Goals are novice, intermediate, advanced, distinguished and superior, which are **equivalent to a 1 to 5 point scale**⁶³.

Categories such as attendance and homework submission are graded separately. A student who performs at grade

● Level 5 - Mastery of the learning goal itself and above is graded as a “ Superior ”
● Level 4 - Mastery of a higher-level learning goal independently results in a grade of “ Distinguished ”
● Level 3 - Mastery of a learning goal consistently without teacher help results in “ Advanced ”
● Level 2 - Students who can reach “Advanced ” only with teacher help are graded as “ Intermediate ”
● Level 1 - A student who cannot reach “Advanced ” even with teacher assistance is given a “ Novice ”
Therefore, a second grade student who has a CCLS aligned goal to Identify the main topic and retell 3 key details of a text and has reached that goal independently would receive a “Distinguished”.

level with academic content will not receive a lower grade because they are often late to school. Rather, attendance is viewed holistically and worked on as a self-management life skill that receives its own benchmark-based grade on the IB centered rubric. These types of categories are covered through the holistic design found in the IB Attitudes, Skills, and Learner Profile Attribute goals and are part of teacher student conferencing and portfolio work.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

SICS will meet the same performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Regents for students in other public schools.

Achievement & Support: SICS believes a school should hold high expectations for students with multiple supports and opportunities for them to meet these expectations. These supports will come in the form of rigorous instruction accompanied throughout by focused monitoring and clear and timely feedback. Students who are at risk academically will receive constant attention and intervention, including frequent communication with their families (see II.G. and III.I.). In alignment with SICS’ mission, SRG empowers students to take ownership over their own academic performance and track their growth in real-time, thereby building investment in their education during the school year. SRG standards are not random or arbitrary.

Performance: SICS is a Standards Referenced Grading school in full alignment with NYSCCLS, NGSS, ACTL, and IB standards. As students meet the benchmarks set for them and ultimately master the standards, evidence is compiled in their portfolio. Therefore, it is clear as to whether or not students are meeting the standards at their grade level. These students will

⁶³ <https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards-for-english-language-arts-and-literacy>

have the benefit of numerous additional intervention supports (*see II. G*). Parents of tudents not meeting standards will know their child is at risk of not achieving grade level as they will have been part of the process from the beginning through teacher outreach, access to student reports on the parent portal of ManageBac, individual goal plans, progress reports, and meetings with specialists and leadership.

Promotion: .All student promotion in K-6, unless modified criteria has been officially set such as that in an IEP, will be based on students reaching an overall benchmarked level 3 on the 5 point scale, as explained in *II.D*, where they would be deemed “Advanced”. This determination would come from the multiple measures of achievement found in students’ CCLS aligned SRG portfolios. Students in grades 3-6 will benefit from multiple measures of achievement where State test scores are not the primary or major factor in promotion decisions.

Students who are promotion in doubt will have a final promotional decision based on their SRG portfolio assessment presentation and review of additional data, including from RTI progress reports and other interventions (*see II.G*.) The DOTL, Spec. Educ. Coordinator and classroom teachers will conduct the review. Specialist teachers are consulted when relevant. The reviewers will then make a recommendation to the ED, who will make the final decision, which may be conditional upon achievement in Summer Academy or the participation in flexible programming with a Transitional Inclusion plan. ‘At risk of retention’ notices will be disseminated to parents no later than February. Students required to attend Summer Academy will have a final promotion evaluation conference with parents no later than August 15th. Students not meeting grade level standards, and who do not have modified promotional criteria or supplemental plans, will not be promoted.

SWDs required to take, but receive a below grade level score on the Datafolio assessment will have the same opportunity for promotion review as all other students. ELLs who have been enrolled in an English Language School less than 2 years will not be held to promotional standards⁶⁴ In keeping with the holistic model, second language acquisition is not considered in promotion to the next grade. Rather, if minimum student achievement goals are not met, interventions, support and modifications to instructional delivery will be made to ensure student achievement.

Final Exit Standard: SICS clearly understands the **developmental needs** of children within the range of ages at each grade level. When, in the extreme case, there is a student who is deemed to be incapable of dealing with the demands of middle school, or thought to be at-risk thereof, parents will immediately be brought into the process of intervention and support. All students who are candidates for retention will have a Learning Plan that will include all possible resources including that of a formal evaluation and modified promotional criteria. In all cases of students with IEPs, the promotional standards contained therein will be followed. To complete the Primary Years Program at Sofara International Charter School, a student must demonstrate mastery of skills and academic content at the 6th grade level or above, in all subject areas, as outlined in the NYSCCLS. Students can demonstrate their achievement with the multiple measures found in their SRG portfolio and their final 6th grade Exhibition project. If a SICS student must be retained, then the classroom teacher, DOTL, and family will meet to discuss how the upcoming year will offer the student different and sufficient supports to ensure the student’s success.

Sample Promotion/Exit Standards from the CCLS College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards			Next Generation Science Standards
Exit Grade	ELA	Mathematics	Inquiry-led Applied Learning
2 nd Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reading Responding to Literature: Make connections between self, text, and the world around them (text, media, social interaction). * Informational Text: By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Geometry: Reason with shapes and their attributes. Recognize and draw shapes having specified attributes, such as a given number of angles or a given number of equal faces.1 Identify triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and cubes. * Measurement & Data: Solve word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation people want to change to define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool.

⁶⁴ <http://docs.nycenet.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-24/A-501.pdf>

	<p>2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>* Foundational Skills: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. a. Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words. b. Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams. c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels. d. Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes. e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences. f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.</p> <p>* Writing Responding to Literature: Create and present a poem, narrative, play, art work, or personal response to a particular author or theme studied in class, with support as needed.</p>	<p>problems involving dollar bills, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies, using \$ and ¢ symbols appropriately. Example: If you have 2 dimes and 3 pennies, how many cents do you have?</p> <p>* Number and Operations in Base Ten: Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract. Fluently add and subtract within 100 using strategies based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction</p> <p>* Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Add and subtract within 20. Fluently add and subtract within 20 using mental strategies.² By end of Grade 2, know from memory all sums of two one-digit numbers.</p>	<p>* Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.</p> <p>* Analyze data from tests of two objects designed to solve the same problem to compare the strengths and weaknesses of how each performs.</p>
<p>6th Grade</p>	<p>* Reading Responding to Literature: Recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, ethically and artistically to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. a. Self-select text based on personal preferences. b. Use established criteria to classify, select, and evaluate texts to make informed judgments about the quality of the pieces.</p> <p>* Informational Text: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>* Writing Responding to Literature: Create and present a text or art work in response to a literary work. a. Develop a perspective or theme supported by relevant details. b. Recognize and illustrate social, historical, and cultural features in the presentation of literary texts. c. Create poetry, stories, plays, and other literary forms (e.g. videos, art work).</p>	<p>* Ratios and Proportional Relationships: • Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems.</p> <p>* The Number System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions. • Compute fluently with multi-digit numbers and find common factors and multiples. • Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers. <p>* Expressions and Equations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions. • Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities. • Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables. <p>* Geometry: • Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume.</p> <p>* Statistics and Probability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop understanding of statistical variability. • Summarize and describe distributions. 	<p>* Define the criteria and constraints of a design problem with sufficient precision to ensure a successful solution, taking into account relevant scientific principles and potential impacts on people and the natural environment that may limit possible solutions.</p> <p>* Develop a model to generate data for iterative testing and modification of a proposed object, tool, or process such that an optimal design can be achieved.</p> <p>* Analyze data from tests to determine similarities and differences among several design solutions to identify the best characteristics of each that can be combined into a new solution to better meet the criteria for success.</p>

F. School Culture and Climate

Philosophy: SICS believes in self-determination through which ALL students can achieve. This belief promotes the internationally-minded leadership of its students. To accomplish the mission, Culture and Climate at SICS is not separate from curriculum and instruction and therefore provides a holistically responsive atmosphere. SICS will create a stable, responsive, nurturing environment that supports students, and their parents, as they prepare for life beyond school and give them a secure platform from which to take risks in their learning and development. The IB framework is the springboard for this secure platform as its **holistic approach** is pervasive throughout the curriculum, behaviors, and interactions of the school community.⁶⁶

School Culture: SICSs School Intervention Team (SIT) will be responsible for supporting strong positive behaviors and engaging students exhibiting chronic negative behaviors. The SIT members will include the school Social Worker, Community Outreach Liaison, one lower grade & one upper grade teacher and the DOTL, who oversees development and maintenance of school culture, including the discipline system (*see Attachment 4*)

As part of the regular school culture, Each unit of study incorporates pre-planned character building components to develop student attitudes and habits of mind in addition to skills. The IB learner profile, as this is termed under the framework, is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century. They are a set of personal attributes and attitudes from which to interact with the world. For example, IB learners work towards being: inquisitive in all they do, balanced with self and others, principled in their decisions, open-minded to unfamiliar encounters, excellent communicators and reflective in addition to other traits. These traits imbue the school as a whole with a standard of behaviours by which each member adheres to. As students work toward achieving these Attributes and Attitudes they will be guided by their teachers, who help them create their individual learning plans, as well as staff mentors who interact during regularly scheduled **Choose-Act-Reflect (CAR)** time. Assessment is holistic and requires students to demonstrate the attribute/attitude through behaviour or critical analysis in their content work. Teachers will include rubrics in units of study and in student learning plans when utilizing 1:1 conferencing to lay the foundation for assessment.

To encourage students to further demonstrate positive traits among one another, staff, including teacher and Leaders will use praise, classroom and hallway charts that track student use of attributes and attitudes, award ceremonies, guest speakers and school community rallies. Beginning with their Summer Institute session, Teachers will receive on-going professional development through the IB Coordinator, ED and DOTL.

The atmosphere of Inquiry on an international level, where students are purposefully engaging in their learning in preparation for a global 21st century, will be clearly evident through a welcoming, respectful, and trusting school environment that enables all stakeholders to work together to best serve students. University, career, and real-life preparation will manifest in all that we do. SICS will (also see III I.):

Engage the senses of students, staff, and visitors with a clear presence of inquiry, critical thinking and collaboration with banners of Universities visited and to be visited, current real life scientific discoveries, displays of student and staff art work, maps of destinations visited, and team projects.
Engage parents - The Family School Association - Community Outreach Liaison will take the lead in working with families, particularly those in crisis, providing services, training, accessing college, community opportunities, and an open atmosphere with access to the DOTL & ED.
Engage students with community mentors and a mentoring program, such as ManUp which focuses on boys of color, that creates an additional source of modeled behaviors and appreciation for positive human interaction.
Engage in emotional learning with a daily Choose-Act-Reflect (CAR) time where student-to-student and teacher-to-student mentoring is presented in a variety of ways including tutoring, group mediation, or random acts of kindness.
Instill pride with the inclusion of student reward trips scheduled throughout the year that also serve to enhance the cultural and international mindedness of students and staff as well as career and university outlook.
Maintain a weekly school rally during community meeting time targeting teachers and students
Ensure applied learning projects, artwork, functional labs, inquiry spaces, and Socratic seminars are some of the many hallmarks of the climate and culture of the school

⁶⁶ Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education

Support Teachers in their efforts to support their students to every extent possible such as Parent engagement: positive phone calls; classroom-based events; class volunteer time; reward trips and more (see <i>Attachment 4</i>)
Maintain Teacher appreciation incentives such as travel awards and gift cards for teachers making the most positive parent contacts.
Ensure that the physical environment, as a factor related to learning positive behaviors and reducing the level of aggressive behaviors, will be examined ⁶⁷ .

Discipline policy: (See *Attachment 4*) Students and parents will receive the school Discipline Policy as part of their enrollment packets with updates as they are made. While taking a holistic approach to discipline will be the standard, SICS will vigorously and proactively attend to student behaviors that disrupts the learning environment. Discipline is based on the philosophy that prevention is better than cure, that the most effective way to manage inappropriate behavior is through its logical consequences rather than the imposition of arbitrary punishments, that conflicts are a natural part of all human relationships, that children learn and need to be taught appropriate behavior, and that self-awareness and self-reflection must be promoted. It is the self-awareness and self-reflection that is the driving expectation within the school environment.

Teachers will be responsible for classroom discipline and setting high expectations as part of their general management techniques. Beginning with their very first home visit each year before the first day of school, and during August’s student Summer Sofari, teachers and staff will set the tone for the coming school year as they assess each student and family needs. They will make appropriate referrals and begin building goals and benchmarks for individual student learning plans. During the school year, if teacher interventions are insufficient to produce reasonable change, the teacher will involve families and the SIT in designing home supports for behavioral change using conferences that may include a social worker or guidance counselor.

If there are incidents of a nature that require a higher level of response, SICS will follow a hierarchy of 4 levels of infractions and appropriate responses and abide by all applicable rules, regulations and laws which govern the school and special incidences. The school discipline responses on the hierarchy will be decided on by the SIT members. *Attachment 4* details the process of response for both general and special education students who may be evaluated for a Functional Behavior Plan by the SIT in collaboration with the Special Education Coordinator as part of their response. *Due process* will be followed for all disciplinary actions. Every mediation, intervention, and support available will be utilized to mitigate, alleviate, and redirect negative behaviors as part of a student behavioral plan. At each step in the hierarchy, parents will be in the role of partners. Parents will be able to appeal SIT decisions to the ED. Matters of student suspension lasting longer than 10 days or expulsion will be the responsibility of the ED with the possibility for parents to appeal the decision of suspension with the ED and of expulsion with the Board of Trustees by attending a formal hearing that will be automatically scheduled (see *Attachment 4*). **SWDs** will receive appropriate consideration and support as required by their IEP or modification thereof. The SIT will meet to collaborate on any student whose behavior is deemed in-crisis. SICS will track student behavior and incidences as a proactive measure to ensure the climate of the environment is maintained. Teachers will maintain anecdotal while administrators maintain incident reports in ManageBac where they will be analyzed for patterns to create adjustments in policies and procedures.

G. *Special Student Populations and Related Services*

Meaningful Access: The SICS key design elements enable multiple entry points to meaningful participation and progress in the general education curriculum/Program of Inquiry. The IB PYP framework of principles and practices is developmentally responsive enabling SICS to meet students’ needs where they are in order to build up their skills where most necessary. The Inquiry-led PYP approach ensures no child is excluded from fully engaging in the curriculum. A SICS student may take in knowledge and express their understandings in ways they are comfortable with, regardless of whether a student has disabilities, is learning English, is working on readiness skills as an at-risk learner, or is exploring content through independent discovery projects as added enrichment.

⁶⁷ Kellam, S., Rebok, G., Ialongo, N. and Mayer I., (1994). The course and malleability of aggressive behavior from early first grade into middle school: Results of a developmental epidemiologically-based prevention trial. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 35(2). 259-281

The Gomez 50/50 content model was specifically chosen to ensure full student engagement within the dual language classroom. The underlying premise for the Gomez program model is that subject-area instruction in only one language is needed for consistency of vocabulary and conceptual development of that subject in the same language. Using one language for each subject area allows teachers to develop conceptual and linguistic connections while responding to varying student needs. SICS’ dual language component also allows cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

Having two teachers in a classroom for both French and English instruction with clearly defined roles that promote reflection and growth strategies, toward attaining personalized goals, ensures a responsive environment. SICS will provide a responsive French language classroom environment by ensuring core content classroom teachers are experienced and either mother tongue in their target language or fully fluent (i.e. attended a K-12 French language school or hold a NYS bilingual endorsement). Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn, will be used to give students full access to the Program of Inquiry (see II.C) by its ability to support a variety of learners. UDL engages teachers in utilizing research based instructional methodologies that help them plan for the variety of students they will face. Additionally, the consistent collaborative nature of a PYP school environment means that SICS will be responsive with in-depth analysis of student needs.

Response to Intervention (RTI): Students who, despite the school-wide strategies described herein, are struggling to achieve learning standards in ELA, Math or French, will receive a multi tiered, assessment driven, instructional and/or behavioral plan that may provide indirect supports and interventions in the classroom, or by directly providing intensive, small group instruction in a separate location. SICS will institute the New York State RTI protocol, which identifies and supports all struggling students including SWD and ELLs.⁶⁸ The New York State Self-Assessment Tool for RTI Readiness and Implementation will be used to ensure SICS has proper processes and procedures in place to adequately deliver RTI. While specific RTI strategies are adjusted to meet student need the tiers are as follows:

Tier 1	Tiers 2*	Tier 3
Classroom based core curriculum with interventions and techniques that involve both classroom and grade level teachers. Interventions are need specific and may include modifications to instructional delivery, resource allocation, differentiated instruction and additional universal assessments.	An adjustment to the frequency of exposure or intensity of intervention, small group instruction, realignment of learning goals to develop readiness skills, introducing specialty teachers e.g. Reading specialist for pushin/pullout services. Reading A-Z Headsprouts literacy support. Collaborating with the SBST on academics and/or the School Intervention Team for strategic behavioral support.	Very small-group or 1:1 instruction targeted directly to student’s areas of deficit. 4-5 intervention sessions per week conducted by trained literacy and/or special education teachers 6-8 weeks in duration and repeated as necessary.
* Tier 2 - If deemed necessary, students will receive supplemental FLE (known in English as <i>content-based FLE/FLES</i> [foreign language in the elementary school]) lessons during the regularly scheduled tutoring times. FLES classes will meet two to three times a week for 30 minutes at a time. This is in addition to regularly scheduled FLE class time.		

For students with disabilities: While all student IEP mandates will be followed, SICS will look to have students with disabilities flourish within the least restrictive environment possible. Options for support are built in to SICS’ model. SICS will utilize flexible programming that incorporates a Transitional Inclusion Plan into their individual learning goals to give students more support with curriculum when needed and more independence in areas where their skills are strong in a class environment that best suits the purpose.

SWD support comes through:

- Appropriately certified special education staff
- Enabling students to have an individual goal plan in their hand as well as an IEP in the draw;
- Assigning a paraprofessional to any student in need;

⁶⁸ <http://www.nysrti.org>

- Reducing barriers to access by contracting with certified or licensed individuals and/or organizations to provide services.
- Having French language instruction delivered by a bilingual Academic Intervention Teacher;
- The inclusion of differentiation strategies such as pre-vocabulary introduction in English and French;
- Ensuring that material is sufficiently comprehensible by **providing relevant background knowledge and content** (such as utilizing the same text different level content books from Reading A to Z in French and or English);
- When needed, teachers will explain ideas or concepts several times using slight variations in terminology and examples;
- The classroom teachers engaging students in conferencing; and
- The dedicated time set aside for classroom teachers and special education specialists to analyze data and plan interventions and strategies.

For English Language Learner students: ESL services will be provided as needed and in the least restrictive environment with a classroom AIT, push-in model, or the use of Sheltered English Immersion strategies for those needing more support. SICS will provide all needed staff and appropriate curricular materials to enable students to achieve proficiency in English. Efforts will be made to give every SICS ELL student access to native language resources (e.g., native language libraries), or to provide parents with materials in their native language and ensure our curriculum and environment are culturally responsive. History and culture will be infused throughout its curriculum (see *II.C.*). NYSED publications, “The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for ESL and A Resource Guide for All Teachers”, will be extensively used in the school’s ESL program. ELLs will also benefit from attending **Intersessions** (see *II.B.*), where classroom instruction is small, supportive, structured and rigorous. ELL students will not be excluded from any day school or after school activities due to language barriers.

ELL support comes through:

- Using visual supports & explicitly modeling with graphic organizers, concrete objects, and gestures;
- Avoiding colloquialisms with early learners and speaking clearly, adjusting teaching materials, adding redundancy and context if needed, and scaffolding information within lessons;
- Teachers explaining ideas & concepts several times using slight variations in terminology & examples;
- When possible, teachers will provide instruction that draws on the experiences of their students;
- Instructional dialogs **focusing primarily on accuracy of content**, not rigid requirements associated with correct language use;
- Creating **cooperative learning and peer tutoring strategies**;
- The use of **dialog journals** or computer journals, with teacher feedback;
- ESL teacher support in a push-in or pull-out model as deem most beneficial;
- FLE / **FLES** lessons through pull-out sheltered instruction (SIOP) as well as through center and project work. Or, during the regularly scheduled tutoring times; and
- Utilizing Reading A-Z, which will allow us to support Anglophone, francophone and ELL students with content picture books, vocabulary books, language skills, and language proficiency alignment.

Students requiring both **Spec. Educ.** services for overall academic achievement or who will require both ESL/FLE services as well as special education support will have a targeted individual learning plan set in the IEP and receive services that support their individual growth needs. See the ELL section below for ELL support at SICS.

For Gifted & Talented students: Instruction through **applied inquiry** serves **advanced or gifted** students by allowing them to get pieces of enrichment based on how far they can independently stretch their critical thinking and project work in addition to what their SICS teacher will facilitate. The most powerful tool for the academically advanced student is the individual learning plan (ILP). Through its use SICS can create points within the curriculum continuum where these students can receive enrichment in their academic, intellectual, social and emotional growth. The ILP, coupled with PYP inquiry-led

applied learning will allow enrichment through engagement in research projects, extended hands-on learning, service learning, and additional action projects.

G & T support comes through:

- Small, focused, differentiated teaching groups;
- Extended Choose-Act-Reflect time
- Multiple means of engagement, lesson presentation and assessment embedded in UDL
- Individual mentorship time and opportunities
- Enrichment tutorials and Intersession classes

For generally At-risk students: SICS students who do not fall under any of the above subgroups but still have risk factors that may limit their engagement in the general classroom will be supported within the school environment through the PYP holistic approach to educating children. **The combination of inquiry led, applied teaching and learning** will provide opportunities for focused instructional support and a continuously consistent way of acquiring knowledge that is natural for ALL students, allowing them to explore and make sense of concepts in different ways.

At-risk support comes through:

- All of the supports listed for the subgroups above;
- *Universal Designs for Learning* as discussed in *II.C*
- **FLE** offered through immersion push-in differentiated grouping, a dedicated scheduled class or tutorial time.
- Spec. Educ. Coordinator to ensure the coordination of services and needs are in place and functioning for each student;
- The School Based Support Team (*See II.D. Assessment Collection & Dissemination*);
- Community Outreach Liaison providing assistance with family based resources; and
- Response To Intervention **Reading A-Z** as part of a curriculum academic intervention and **Reading A-Z Headsprout for extended foundational skills in literacy.**
- Kid friendly rubrics to accompany their goal;
- Targeted small group work;

Specialized Instruction To Each Student In Need Of Special Education Services

SICS will provide SWD students with a FAPE in the least restrictive environment appropriate for their needs. Parents will be informed of how their children are progressing on annual IEP goals and in the general curriculum. SWD will receive the same notices concerning school-sponsored programs, activities, and services as other students. SICS will provide all *Testing Accommodations* and assessment requirements mandated by a student's IEP and conduct necessary diagnostic testing and evaluation to secure appropriate accommodations for both classroom and standardized tests.

Settings: SICS will hire sufficient special education teachers to provide the instruction required by students' IEPs to the extent possible to provide resource room, Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) or self-contained instruction. Teaching staff will be trained by the IB & Spec. Educ. Coordinators to specifically align student needs with specific elements within the IB program of instruction to ensure these students are fully included. Special education programs and services will be provided directly to the student during school hours. In the event a student's disability proves so severe as to preclude transition to an inclusive environment, SICS will work with the family and the CSE to find other ways to meet the mandates of the IEP. *SICS will have a full-time Social Worker in year 1 and a Guidance Counselor beginning in year 3 for those students whose IEP mandates counseling.* SICS will outsource related services such as speech language pathology and audiologist services; psychological services; and physical and occupational therapy. If SICS is unable to provide services in accordance with the student's IEP, it will rely on the school district of the student's residence to provide services.

Qualifications of those Providing the Services: (*See Attachment 8a for teacher qualifications*) SICS has committed to ensuring there are dedicated Spec. Educ. Teachers, Academic Intervention Teachers with specialties that fit student need, a Spec. Educ. Coordinator, a Social Worker, a French as a Foreign/Second Language (FLE) teacher, and an ESL teacher who are qualified and experienced in their teaching area on staff fulltime to support students. This is necessary to meet the demands of a high population of SWDs including those also designated as ELL.

With flexibility in choosing what type of Academic Intervention Teacher can best serve the students in each classroom, SICS is committing to providing qualified teachers in these specialties as well. An example would be a Reading

specialist, Spec. Educ. teacher or a Spec. Educ. Teacher with experience working with students with specific disabilities. Any student in need may also be assigned a paraprofessional. SICS will hire appropriately certified special education staff, and may contract with certified or licensed individuals and/or organizations to provide services. SICS will employ a full-time Spec. Educ. Coordinator in year one and, if deemed needed, adjust its staffing plans according to enrollment needs.

Evaluation of Programs for SWD Population: SICS' Achievement Goals specifically include the success of at-risk populations (*I.A.*). SICS will engage in a consistent process for the evaluation of its programs and services for all students, including those programs and services specifically for its special populations. SICS' SRG system allows the **Data Analysis Team, and teachers including AITs** to pinpoint student performance towards each learning goal, disaggregate the data for specific subgroups, and make adjustments and revisit goals accordingly. In addition, the SBST members will each report their assessment findings to the Special Education Coordinator. For SWDs, SICS will use this information to determine student progress against not only IEP goals, but against SICS' overall accountability goals.

The Spec. Educ. Coordinator will provide a report to the DOTL in 8-week cycles on the progress of each subgroup of at-risk students. SICS will evaluate the progress of SWD protocols and achievement within them through their individual learning goals, success in phasing out of IEP mandated modifications, and portfolio artifacts in addition to: observations, exams, standardized tests, participation in school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other aspects of the school community. If sufficient success is not demonstrated SICS will make modifications to the protocols in place with new research based, needs centered ones. In creating IEPs for ELLs, attention will be given to three primary issues affecting success: identified disability, acquisition of English skills, and cultural background of the child.

Manage IEP Record-keeping: The ED has overall responsibility for ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with their recommended programs and services, and that all referrals are completed appropriately and in compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations. At SICS the Special Education Coordinator, under the direction of the ED and supervision of the DOTL, will be responsible for managing IEP record-keeping, ensuring compliance with all IEP requirements and regulations, managing the review and referral process, ensuring provision of services as mandated on student IEPs, progress monitoring, and submitting annually all required reports. The Spec. Educ. Coordinator will be provided with the time and resources needed to accomplish these duties.

At the beginning of each school year, or as soon thereafter as they are available, SICS will provide all teachers and service providers who teach SWDs with access to that student's IEP through the NYC Special Education Student Information System (SEGIS), and will provide teachers with sufficient time throughout the year to review IEPs while ensuring that privacy controls are strictly enforced. Staff will receive training on the use of SEGIS each year during their Summer Institute session before school opens with collaborative PD and planning support during the year. *Throughout the year teachers will be able to access electronic copies unfettered.* The Spec. Educ. Coordinator may keep paper copies at school for quick referencing, as a backup, and to avoid losing access when an internet connection is not available. Teachers may request to view paper copies of student IEP's. SICS will abide by applicable provisions of IDEIA and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ensuring that IEP Record Keeping and data regarding SWD is retained and kept confidential, including having procedures for keeping files in a secure and locked location with limited access (electronic copies on SEGIS are password-protected).

Identification & Monitoring SWDs: SICS' universal screening begins in the enrollment & admissions phase to identify students who are at-risk or are in need of special support services. SICS will use a Home Language survey and ask for voluntary disclosures and obtain student school records immediately particularly for the "turning 5's". Summer Sofari, the 10 days of class before the regular September start date, will be used to conduct baseline assessments on students to identify those in need of support services whether that be for readiness, enrichment, therapeutic, or IEP's. Staff will use diagnostic tools, observation, home visits and the review of existing IEP, 504 or Behavior plans. Monitoring will take place at several levels by the Spec. Educ. Coordinator under the SBST and a student's Transitional Inclusion Plan (individual plan for educating a student in an environment best suited to their needs for least restrictive or most engaging). Students identified as at-risk will be referred to the Spec. Educ. Coordinator, as lead of the SBST, who will ensure coordination of services, needs are in place and functioning for each student, and coordinates with all stakeholders. There will be opportunities at several other stop points to monitor students through the classroom intervention specialist, Data Analysis Team, Instructional Coaches, the Social Worker and family, and the Response To Intervention (RTI) protocols. Following implementation of the full RTI plan and thorough internal analysis, SICS will initiate a referral for students suspected of having a disability to the CSE Chairperson:

School Initiated Referrals: Informed by assessment and classroom data, the teacher and Spec. Educ. Coordinator will confer with the DOTL and complete a written request for an initial evaluation to the CSE. In order to clearly outline students strengths & weaknesses, describe Tier 1 and 2 interventions and supports provided, and describe the extent of parental involvement prior to the referral request. Upon approval from the Director of Teaching & Learning, the request will be forwarded to the CSE.

Parent Initiated Referrals: SICS will provide support and guidance to parents who wish to independently initiate a referral of their child to CSE. Parents will be given a copy of procedural safeguards and sample letter that outlines necessary information to be contained in a request for referral and initial evaluation.

Compliance with Applicable SWD Laws, Rules and Regulations SICS will comply with its obligations under the Child Find requirements of IDEIA including 34 CFR § 300.125, and will provide notification to parents of referral including notifying them prior to providing a child's name to a CSE for potential evaluation. SICS will not convene its own CSE, make evaluations, create IEPs, reevaluate or revise existing IEPs or conduct due process hearings as these responsibilities belong solely to the CSE of the student's district of residence. The Spec. Educ. Coordinator will also meet with the CSE for the purposes of declassification of SWD students. SICS staff will be made available for any requested meetings, conferences, or hearings that pertain to evaluation or reevaluation of SWDs. SICS will abide by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). SICS will keep accurate and up-to-date information about its special education students on SESIS as well as the ManageBac school-wide data analysis system. In accordance with 34 CFR §300.750, SICS will submit an annual report to the NYSED detailing the number of SWD it serves, the nature of each student's disability, and each student's educational placement and setting. The Spec. Educ. Coordinator will maintain a separate locked cabinet of all administrative reports and documents related to compliance. Regarding reports that are the responsibility of the district of residence, the school will make needed data available to the district in a timely manner. SICS will comply with 8 NYCRR §119.3, as amended, which details requirements for the "Charter School Report Card" and includes information relating to SWD. In compliance with 34 CFR §300.750, the school will submit all mandated annual reports by the required dates. Consistent with applicable law, SICS will work with Local Education Agency (LEA) school districts to ensure that all SWD who qualify under the IDEIA will receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE); are appropriately evaluated; are provided with an IEP; and have access to appropriate procedures and mechanisms, along with their parents, to resolve any disagreements related to the school's or school district's provision of FAPE.

Specialized Instruction Serving ELL Students

Identifying, Assessing and Serving: SICS' *universal screening* begins with a Home Language survey, asking for voluntary disclosures and immediately obtaining student school records. Summer Sofari will be used to conduct baseline assessments on students to identify those who may be ELL or in need of support services. Teachers will also use observation and pre school year home visits to gather a student profile. A child identified or suspected of being and ELL will be immediately referred to the Special Education Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring the coordination of services of at-risk students through the SBST, which includes the ESL specialist. SICS will create school-based forms for this purpose. The SBST will have 5 schools days within which to review the referral, observe or otherwise assess the student and make a determination.

The SBST *target screening* and monitoring will be done through the **NYS Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)** to identify and the NYSESLAT to track progress for children whose first language is not English. A student who scores below the designated proficiency level is eligible for ELL services. Assessment will also come from teacher observations, classroom exams, standardized tests, SRG learning goals, participation in school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other aspects of the school community. The Global Language Project will guide SICS in the assessment process and analysis of SOPA for foreign language competency. In creating IEP goals for ELLs, attention will be given to three primary issues affecting success: identified disability, acquisition of English skills, and cultural background of the child. SICS anticipates enrollment of West African francophone students also speaking Fulani, Wolof, and Arabic or a combination of these languages.

As with students with disabilities the Data Analysis Team, and teachers will work together to pinpoint student performance towards each learning goal, disaggregate the data for specific subgroups, and make adjustments and revisit goals accordingly. This information will be used to determine student progress toward English language acquisition against SICS' overall accountability goals. The ESL Specialist will provide a report to the SBST and DOTL in an 8-week cycle on the progress of ELLs. Data and analysis reports will be disseminated using the ManageBac system. If sufficient success is not

demonstrated in these areas, and if ELL students are not shedding their ELL status, the ED and DOTL will make modifications to the ELL program and staffing as needed.

Settings & Teacher Qualifications: Students identified as ELL and in need of support will not be excluded from any day school or after school activities due to language barriers. ELL services will be provided as needed and in the least restrictive environment either with a push-in model or the use of Sheltered English Immersion strategies for those needing more support. SICS will provide all needed staff and appropriate curricular materials to enable students to achieve proficiency in English. Teachers will be experienced and certified in the field of ESL and may carry a TOEFL or TESOL certification. SICS will hire a full-time, certified ESL Specialist in year 1, and will hire an additional ESL Specialist in Year 4. Staffing of ESL specialists will increase or decrease based on need including for in classroom AITs.

An ELL who is not Francophone will receive the dedicated support of ESL instruction in a dual push in/out model as the need prescribes. STeachers will use, when needed, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to give students access to the core curriculum and ensure instructional materials are matched with student needs. This applies to ESL and FLE instruction. Examples would be color-coded materials/ graphic organizers, **word banks** with picture clues or **hands on** activities and demonstrations.

The **Gomez 50/50 model** already has imbedded within its structure time for reflective vocabulary work in which teachers will give direct instruction through mini-lessons on vocabulary and grammar. These 15 minute lessons will be every day at the end of students' immersion inquiry block. Through **Gomez and IB**, English literacy skills are reinforced by students being able to work on a theme across all the content areas. Content in French class is also represented in their English class allowing vocabulary and concept reinforcement to create a strong web of knowledge for second language acquisition.

Through **Reading A-Z**, SICS will utilize the foreign language same text/multi level books they provide. This allows students, regardless of reading level, to fully participate in lessons and acquire content. For ELL students in the upper grades with no English, Reading A-Z will support instruction with books that target phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and high frequency words to compliment work done through **CKLA**. This support may be used at any curriculum entry point across subjects. Reading A-Z has been proven in case studies to be an effective intervention tool.⁶⁹

Concerted efforts will be made to give every ELL student access to native language resources (e.g., native language libraries), or to provide parents with materials in their native language and ensure our curriculum and environment are culturally responsive. History and culture will be infused throughout the curriculum (see *II.C*). NYSED publications, "The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for ESL and A Resource Guide for All Teachers", will be extensively used in the school's ESL program. Additionally, ELLs will benefit from attending **Intersessions** (see *II.B*), where classroom instruction is small, supportive, structured and rigorous.

Compliance with Applicable ELL Laws, Rules and Regulations: SICS shall serve all ELLs by providing supportive instruction so that they achieve proficiency in English and thrive educationally. SICS shall comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. SICS will ensure ELL students are not excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. For new entrants into the NYS public school system, NYSITELL assessment will be performed prior to the school year, if possible, but no later than December 1 of the school year of entry, or within 15 days of transfer of a pupil into a SICS should the entry take place after December 1 of the school year.

Ancillary And Support Services: SICS' full-time Social Worker will provide mandated counseling as part of student IEPs in addition to at-risk counseling and will be joined by a School Counselor in Year 2. SICS will provide training to teachers in dealing with students with identified health issues and a health paraprofessional when deemed necessary. SICS' COL will support the school and Harlem Community alike by identifying and disseminating family supports including student mental health referrals, job posting boards, affordable housing listings, and access to free business/community services or activities such as The Parks Department free swim camp or food pantry locations. By establishing communal relationships with community based organizations, SICS will provide extended enrichment. This may include support student mentoring from ManUp, structured literacy afterschool through The Reading Team, math enrichment at The Math Clinic (a Singapore Math

⁶⁹ <http://www.headsprout.com/main/ViewPage/name/efficacy-research/>

based enrichment program), and STEM exposure through HYPOTHEkids.

SICS students and families will also have the opportunity to give back to the community through the PYP Action learning component. Activities may include visiting senior citizen homes to read to or otherwise engage with them while parents may be guided through volunteer opportunities that not only give back to the community but provide resume building experiences.

The Family School Association (FSA) will play an integral part in helping our special populations. The bond with parents will be built by helping to solve problems, providing informational and educational workshops that address their needs, provide language classes, and other appropriate activities and events that keep them informed and a part of their child's progress. Special education students and their parents will be involved with the development of decisions regarding their IEP when appropriate. Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive school notices in their native language whenever possible to encourage participation.

PART III: ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

Organizational Structure and Capacity - SICS has developed a skilled core group in its founding team that has a combination of acumen that is well suited to provide the needed oversight for upstart, operations, finance, education and strategic planning and assembled an advisory board of highly skilled professionals in the fields of science, engineering, education, the arts, and school leadership (*see III A & B*). The organizational structure is designed to maximize support for teachers, the implementation of the **IB** program, and maximize the growth and achievement of its students.

A. Applicants(s)/Founding Group Capacity

Name /Employment	Relevant Experience/Qualifications and Role on Founding Group	Proposed Role in School
Dr. Carol Fineberg, Educ. Consultant	Experienced School Board & Educational Administrator, Innovative Programs Director, Curriculum Development, Specialist in Evaluation & Assessment, Founder of several school-based art initiatives	Trustee Board Vice Chair
Nadhege Ptah, Sofara Co-Founder	Teaching Artist Consultant / Drama Therapist – M.S. in Psychology, experience teaching, working and studying in the performing arts. Strong history of community activism. Charter Board experience & SICS planning and development. Harlem parent & resident	Community Outreach Liaison
Janeat Brown, NYC DOE	Educator - 12 years experience managing successful, innovative curriculum for general and Spec. Educ. students. Experienced in IB PYP teaching and learning and curriculum development. CSD 5 parent	Trustee Board Secretary
Rashard Dyess-Lane, Henry Schein Medical, Inc.	Global senior business leader with cross-functional experience, project management, Finance, compliance, strategic sourcing, system implementation and information/data management. CSD5 resident.	Trustee Board Treasurer
Voyka Soto, Sofara Founder	CSD5 resident & parent. Educator: expertise in General and Special education, K-8 curriculum and instruction development. International Educ: new school, program, & accreditation development., IB certification in Teaching & Learning , Masters in International Curriculum & Instruction	Executive Director
Kevin Wells, Esq., Consultant	An attorney with a rare combination of entrepreneurial, legal, managerial, operational and diversity/inclusion acumen. A business and sustainability strategist. CSR expert and SME Mentor. CSD 5 resident and parent	Trustee Board Chair
Kamau Ptah, Educational Consultant	Expertise in program start up, education of boys of color, curriculum design, innovative education and community parent	Trustee
Holley Drakeford, Giscombe Realty Group	Expertise in commercial real estate development, finance, and facilities management. Experienced in risk management, administrative management and contract negotiations. Community Board 11 member.	Trustee
Carol Anelas,	Emergency Management planner – Expertise in planning, facilities, budgeting,	Director of

Sofara International CS

Dept. Homeland Security	operations and compliance. Experience working with governments and educational offices and organizations.	Operations
Bailey Rollins Community Roots CS	Bi-lingual Educator with a solid foundation in progressive PK to 5 instruction. International curriculum and private & charter school experienced. CSD5 resident.	Founding Teacher
Erika Williams The Matisse Foundation	Experience in charter school oversight. Expertise in grant-making and non profit management and emphasizing innovation. Disciplined in implementing strategic initiatives and improving operations.	Trustee
Pascale Bernard NYC Deputy Commissioner of Social Justice	Political and Community engagement, building organizational capacity, diversity enhancement, strategic planning and project oversight, fundraising and developing staff professional trainings. CSD 5 resident and parent.	Trustee

Founder/Executive Director Qualifications: SICS' Founder and Executive Director is uniquely qualified to operate a high performing IB charter school. Voyka Soto is a resident, parent and educator in CSD 5 with more than 17 years experience working with high needs-populations, in general and special education, both domestically and internationally. She is Certified by the International Baccalaureate Organization in the principals and practices of IB, holds an M.A. in International Curriculum and Instruction through the Foreign Affairs Spouses Teacher Training program sponsored by the State Department, has Charter School Board service experience, and co-founded an International elementary school for SWDs overseas making her distinctively skilled to grow a wall-to-wall IB school. Additionally skills include strategic planning for the reorganizing and restructuring of schools through systemic reform for the Federal Magnet grant, and assisting in developing alignment plans for accreditation including the International Baccalaureate Organization, European Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Ms. Soto has self identified an area of need in finance for which the resolution was to contract with CSBM for the startup and first 2 years of operation, provide additional Board support through the Treasurer & Finance Committee, and provide access to training and PD by setting aside appropriate funding.

Founding team qualifications: As shown in the chart above and in *Attachment 5(a)*, Each founding member at SICS, including the Executive Director is qualified to hold their positions, which were derived based on a job description that included the skills and experience needed to successfully fulfill positions in relation to the need for school oversight and management. Job Descriptions were created for Board of Trustee positions as well as for founding staff. Each member went through a vetting process that included interviews, reference checking, and verification of academic achievement and professional experiences. Positions for founding staff were further vetted with a comparison of qualifications of staff in existing, high performing Charter & IB PYP schools and with the mentorship of heads of IB schools and the IBO.

The founding team has over twelve decades of combined experience working in schools. Carol Anelas has over 15 years of solid experience in management of operations and Nadhege Ptah is a teaching artist and Harlem community organizer in the realms of education, children's issues, and social justice. Ms. Brown, brings knowledge and experience in the IB PYP program while Dr. Fineberg has extensive administrative and program design expertise. Mr. Dyess-Lane, brings major finance, compliance and business management expertise. Mr. Kamau lends his talents in innovative educational upstart and engaging students in achievement, Mr. Wells, an attorney, has a unique acumen that offers support in new business start-up as well as fundraising, while Mr. Drakeford brings his extensive knowledge of CSD 5 commercial property, facilities management experience, and political insight as a member of CB 11. Erika Williams brings extensive expertise in charter school start-up, oversight, and leadership management while Pascale Bernard has extensive experience in political and community engagement.

Proposal Development: Sofara International Charter School was initiated by a group of community parents who were dissatisfied with the choices and quality of educational programs in the District. Voyka Soto is the primary author of the proposal through brainstorming and concept development with Nadhege Ptah and other community parents who made school visits, researched educational programs and best practices and participated in meeting several times per week and communicating multiple times daily, by phone and email. Current team members communicate weekly via phone, email and SICS current digital dashboard hosted on www.Basecamp.com. Members attend public meetings, conduct outreach on behalf of the school, and share research and expertise that informed the school design and have attended the National Charter

School Conferences to gain knowledge and insight of best practices. Members reviewed sections of the application relevant to their expertise and provided feedback. The full founding team met as needed before the application was submitted, and continues to convene on a monthly basis.

Industry professionals were sought out for advice, all of whom did so without compensation. They provided charter school insight, sample documents, agency referrals, and guidance on academic programs and support needs. The SICS team worked with the NYC Charter School Center on the revision of the application utilizing their full range of expertise. We have had the benefit of Simeon Stolzberg and CSBM as educational and financial consultants respectively.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

Proposed Board of Trustees

Name	Voting (Y/N)	Position on the Board*	Relevant Experience/Skills and Role on Founding Group	Length of Initial Term
Carol Fineberg	Y	Vice Chair	Education	5 year renewable
Janeat Brown	Y	Secretary	IB Education	2 year renewable
Kamau Ptah	Y	Trustee	Innovative Progrmmig	5 year renewable
Kevin V.G. Wells	Y	Chairman	Legal	3 year renewable
Holley Drakeford	Y	Trustee	Facilities	3 year renewable
Rashard Deys-Lane	Y	Treasurer	Finance	2 year renewable
Erika Williams	Y	Trustee	Charter School Start-up & Oversight	3 year renewable
Pascale Bernard	Y	Trustee	Political & Community Engagement	2 year renewable
Parent Representative	Y	Trustee ex-officio	Reserved	1 year renewable per parent elections

*Trustee terms of service are staggered to allow for stabilization of the Board with renewals in accordance to by-laws.

Advisory Board: In addition to the Board of Trustees, SICS is building an Advisory Board. Its members will not serve as Trustees, but will provide SICS’ leadership and Trustees with expert advice and support with committee task force work.

Advisory Board	Current Position	Expertise
Michael Leshner	International Baccalaureate Organization Outreach and Development Manager	IBO Continuum of programs IB School development
Marva Allen	Owner Hue-Man Books Founding team / Trustee – Neighborhood Charter School	Charter school development, Marketing & Fundraising
Thecla Harris	Artistic Director – Rosie’s Theater Kids PS Broadway	Art programming Non-profit Management
Teofeek Rubiu	AOL	Software Engineering Mechanical Engineering

Per the SICS by-laws in *Attachment 5(B)*, the Board will be composed of a minimum of five and a maximum of fifteen members. The By-Laws provide more detail regarding the information requested by the Regents on the Method of Appointment or Election of Trustees (*Article III, Section 3.8*), the Procedure for Conducting Board Meetings (*Article III, Section 3.9-3.14*), and the Procedure for Providing Public Notice of Monthly Meetings to be held at the Charter School (*Article III, Section 3.10*)

Administrative Relationship between Trustees and the Board of Regents: SICS understands the charter agreement is between SICS’ Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents. All decisions will be guided by the approved charter agreement. Trustees must seek approval prior to making decisions contrary to any provision in the charter. SICS expects to receive in each year of the charter term, and at intervals in subsequent charter terms, inspection visits conducted by NYSED staff and external consultants if contracted. SICS will submit to the Board of Regents an annual report detailing its academic and fiscal performance. This includes but is not limited to: (1) information related to student academic performance; (2) a description of SICS’ progress in achieving its Accountability Plan Goals; (3) a certified financial statement and SICS’ most recent independent audit report; and (4) a demonstration of SICS’ success in meeting enrollment targets of special populations. SICS’ Board and leadership will ensure that all reports and data required by the authorizer will be delivered accurately and in a

timely manner.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Its Officers: The Board of Trustees is the school’s oversight and policy-making body. The Board may delegate responsibilities and duties to the ED, DOTL, or other staff directly related to the school’s daily operation, under the following conditions: (a) that the school staff will operate with oversight from the Board; and (b) that the Board is ultimately responsible and accountable for the actions to whom responsibility has been delegated, and for all obligations, programs and policies of the school. A complete discussion of the organizational structure of the school is provided in *III.C*. Board responsibilities include setting the budget, determining annual priorities, formulating major policy, overseeing SICS’ compliance with relevant laws and regulations, and raising funds to support SICS’ growth.

Specifically, among the Board’s responsibilities are:
• Ensuring that SICS implements its programs in a manner consistent with the mission, goals, terms and conditions of its charter, including all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
• Operating at all times in compliance with SICS’ Code of Ethics and overseeing the implementation of all policies governing the operation of the school.
• Overseeing implementation of the educational program to ensure the charter school operates in an educationally sound manner, including approving and ensuring that SICS progresses toward and fulfills its goals and objectives set forth in the charter and Accountability Plan.
• Hiring the ED and evaluating his or her performance annually.
• Approving SICS’ annual budget, reviewing regular financial updates, and ensuring that the school operates in a fiscally sound manner, including adequate internal financial controls.
• Providing support to the school with additional fundraising, marketing and other services.
• Advocating on behalf of the school by establishing partnerships with institutions of higher learning, government organizations, community-based organizations and corporate entities.
• Hearing and making determinations regarding complaints submitted to the Board in a timely manner pursuant to SICS’ complaints process (see <i>Attachment 5(B)</i>).

The Board will use data to help improve the quality of its decision-making. Student assessment and achievement data will be collected, managed and stored in a secure data warehouse (ManageBac) that provides online access to data and presents it in comprehensive and understandable reports, including creating a monthly dashboard report. The Board will require SICS’ management to prepare reports and/or make Board presentations on a regular basis regarding a variety of data, including ongoing assessment results, state test results, attendance/disciplinary information, financial and budgetary considerations and relevant personnel-related data.

The Officer positions on the Board are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer (*see By-Laws for full position descriptions*). Much of the Board work will be conducted in Committee and by their sub task forces. Initially, the Board will have four standing committees, each consisting of at least three members, except for the Executive Committee, which shall have at least five members. Per the By-Laws, the Board may establish ad hoc committees as needed, i.e. Development and Facilities Committees. The standing committees are: (*see Attachment 5b for full description*)

- **The Executive Committee**, chaired by the Board Chair, will facilitate effective decision-making by the board and is responsible for: a) planning board meeting agendas; b) making delegated decisions on behalf of the full board; and c) serving as a communication link with other board members.
- **The Finance Committee**, chaired by the Treasurer, coordinates the board’s financial oversight responsibilities. The Finance Committee is responsible for developing SICS’ annual budgets in conjunction with the short- and long-term plans. Additional responsibilities include oversight of the school’s auditing, facilities and financial management initiatives. The Finance committee is chaired by the Treasurer with involvement of the ED and contracted accountant.
- **The Education Committee** works to ensure the school is meeting its accountability goals related to student achievement, monitors performance data & progress towards accountability goals, helps ensure the academic quality and credibility of the school as an academic institution and supports the ED in the maintenance, promotion and improvement of the academic standards set forth in the charter. The primary responsibilities of the Education Committee include: a) advising the board on the core values and activities of scholarship that define the School’s core activities of teaching and learning; b) recommending to the board the adoption of academic policies consistent with the School’s vision, mission and strategic plan; c) adopting

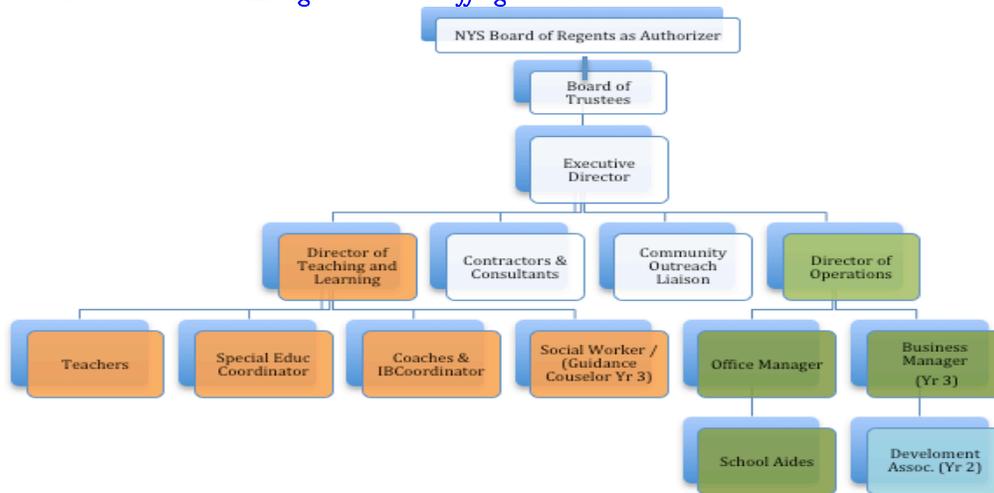
procedures of board-approved academic policies; d) protecting and enhancing the quality of the School’s academic programs at all levels; e) advising the board on the academic aspects of the overall strategic direction of the School; and f) working in conjunction with the ED to monitor and advance the quality of all academic activities.

• **The Compliance Committee** oversees all academic and programmatic audits of the school and assists the Finance committee in their compliance responsibilities. It ensures that SICS is prepared for all audits, and that the school is in ongoing compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, as well as directives from SICS’ authorizer. It supports the ED, the DOTL, and the DOO in ensuring SICS’ compliance as described above. The Compliance Committee investigates any complaints made against the school and recommends appropriate action(s) to the full Board.

Parent and Staff Involvement in School Governance: A seat on the Board will be reserved for a parent ex-officio from Family-School Association (FSA) leadership once SICS is in operation. SICS will facilitate the development of an FSA. At Board meetings there will be a regular item on the agenda for the FSA to report on their work or any school issues. Parents may also participate as members of standing and ad hoc Committees. SICS will encourage at least one teacher volunteer to attend every Board meeting. A regular agenda item at each meeting will be reserved for both Leadership to report on staff issues as well as direct teacher feedback. The ED and the Board will promote staff involvement in school improvement initiatives.

Board Recruitment, Selection and Development: The Board is cognizant of the need to continually recruit new members. The Board will create a Board Development Committee (BDC) to engage in prospecting, contacting, recruiting, orienting, supporting, training, and evaluating Board members. A job description will be written for open Board seats with a section for specific skills needed. The BDC will then take the lead in searching for a match in the CSD 5 community, using their networks, at NY Council of Non-profits, and the organization Volunteer Match. After vetting completion, and voting in by the full Board, potential members application material will be sent to the authorizer for further vetting. Initial Board terms are staggered, therefore, the Board will vote on the re-election of its members wishing to continue service after the expiration of their term on an annual basis. Training will be conducted annually on general governance topics and IB training (for new members) that ensures the Board continues to have a unified focus. SICS will provide each member with a board binder with charter and school policies & procedures therein.

C. *Management and Staffing*



Description of Organizational Structure: (see Attachment 8a – job descriptions) SICS has split the responsibilities of school administration into two levels. The day-to-day operations and management of school priorities is the responsibility of the Executive Director. The day-to-day management of academic programs and teacher support are the responsibility of the Director of Teacher and Learning.

The Executive Director (ED), who is identified as being the author of this proposal (see Attachment 8(B)), reports to the Board and is responsible for the overall realization of the vision and mission, management of the school, implementation and tracking goals set through strategic plans, growth of IB programs, and the Program of Inquiry design. The ED sets in place the structures required to meet the goals and priorities of strategic plans developed by the Board. The

ED is the public face of the school, is responsible for managing all relationships with the community, parents, authorizer, and for all operations, fundraising and development. The ED acts as administrator for the ManageBac data storage and analysis system that includes the school and Board dashboard. The ED manages the Director(s) of Teaching & Learning (DOTL), Director Of Operations (DOO), Community Outreach Liaison (COL) and, with the guidance of the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, in Years 1 and 2, the Contracted Accountant CSBM in day-to-day matters (see III.I). The ED will recruit and replace all staff, subject to strong consideration of DOTL recommendations for recruiting & replacing instructional staff.

The DOTL, who has not been identified, reports to the ED and is the day to day instructional leader of the school ensuring each academic program is fully implemented and students are being serviced. The DOTL supervises and evaluates all instructional and program staff including teachers, counselors, coaches and IB Coordinator, ensures that the educational program is meeting the goals of the charter by coordinating the educational programs, professional development, POI Units of Inquiry design & implementation, staff accountability, and manages the directives of all school-wide instruction related committees. SICS' founding team has begun identifying DOTL candidates and upon authorization will begin interviewing those who have a proven track record of coaching and inspiring teachers to perform at their best. SICS will also search using its network of educators, NY based university department heads, the IBO network, NYC based job fairs and general advertisements in local papers.

The DOO, who has been identified, is responsible for ensuring the effective management of the non-instructional functions of the school. The DOO manages admissions, facilities, student records, food services, the generation of required reports, and other operational and compliance responsibilities including legal compliance with City State and Federal laws and will work with the ED to supervise the contracted accounting firm (CSBM) in years 1 and 2 to ensure budgetary alignment with goals and priorities of the school. The Development Associated in Year 2 and the Business Manager (BM) in Year 3 will be hired under the direction of the DOO, with the BM assuming the responsibilities performed by the contracted accounting firm in Years 1 and 2. The DOO will supervise and evaluate non-instructional, non-program staff, including the Office Manager (OM) who then manages the School Aides.

The COL is integral to the grassroots recruitment and retention of students and the sourcing of community initiatives. The COL is responsible for creating and maintaining family engagement opportunities, supporting the Family School Association, seeking out community resources for students, families, and school programs, supporting the school-wide culture, supporting school marketing and media endeavors for recruitment, and liaising with community based organizations.

IB Coordinators and Instructional Coaches are not in a supervisory role. The IB Coordinator beginning in Year 1, and Instructional Coach in Year 3, will provide coaching and instructional support to teachers as required by the IB Organization. The presence of a dedicated staff member who is in a non-evaluative role will allow teachers to feel comfortable exchanging feedback about their own growth areas⁷⁰. The Instructional Coaches and IB Coordinator will prepare authentic learning opportunities, informally observe teachers, ensure curriculum and IB alignment, aid in the creation of units of study, support lesson planning, demo lessons, model & co-teach, conduct PD, and hold 1:1 teacher conferences. These roles are active, hands-on classroom support roles immersed in instruction.

Staffing Plan: The following table provides the staffing plan over the first charter term. Job descriptions and qualifications for all staff positions and the Hiring & Personnel Policy can be found in *Attachment 8(A)*.

Number FTE in Position					
Grades Served	Year 1 Grades K-2	Year 2 Grades K-3	Year 3 Grades K-4	Year 4 Grades K-5	Year 5 Grades K-6
Enrollment	150	198-200	244-250	288-300	330-350
Executive Director	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Teaching & Learning	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Ops	1	1	1	1	1
Development Assoc.	0	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	0	0	1	1	1

⁷⁰ Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Excellent Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sofara International CS

Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
School Aide	1.5	1.5	2	2	2
Comm. Outreach Liaison	1	1	1	1	1
IB Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Spec. Educ. Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Instructional Coach	0	0	1	2	2
Classroom Bilingual Teachers	3	4	5	6	7
Classroom Monolingual Teachers	3	4	5	6	7
Classroom Academic Intervention Teachers (ESL, Spec. Educ., FLE, Reading Spec. based on student need)	3 bilingual + 3 monolingual	4 bilingual + 4 monolingual	5 bilingual + 5 monolingual	6 bilingual + 6 monolingual	7 bilingual + 7 monolingual
French Foreign Lang. Acquisition Teacher (FLE)	.8	1	1	2	2
ESL Teacher (out of classroom)	1	1	1	2	2
Spec. Educ. Teacher	1	1	2	2	2
P.E. teachers	.8	1	1	1	2
Art	.4	.6	.6	.8	.8
Applied Learning Teacher	1	1	1	2	2
Social Worker	1	1	1	1	1
Guidance Counselor	0	0	1	1	1
Substitute Teacher	1	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.8
Custodian	1.5	1.5	2	2	2
Total Number of FTE	29	34.8	44	51	57.6

Substitutes & Mid Year Staffing: In the case of the occasion one-period absence of a teacher to attend an IEP conference or similar (see *II.G.*), administrators will provide coverage consistent with a pre-developed school wide plan. When there are full day absences, SICS will first pull from a compiled list of local area per diem educators to be paid at the rate of \$163.00 per full day of service. In addition to accepting staff applications year round, SICS will contract with an educational temp. provider (e.g. Educators Ally) or utilize the free *Simply Hired*, for long term staffing needs..

Recruitment of effective teachers: SICS is committed to recruiting high quality teachers and will look to recruit teachers who can actualize our mission and help our students meet their goals. SICS will recruit teachers that are certified in the areas of special education, ESL or TESOL, bilingual French, IB Primary Years, science, who share the SICS philosophy of teaching and learning and have demonstrated strong competency in student achievement. Ideally, teachers would have a combination of these skills or certifications to best meet the needs of the staffing plan with first priority given to **bilingual and IB experienced** candidates.

SICS will recruit through the Executive Director who brings with her an extensive network of international educators that reaches worldwide, The International Baccalaureate Organization’s recruitment network, the **Global Language Project** to identify **bilingual** candidates and **HYPOTHEkids** to identify **inquiry/science** experienced **monolingual** teachers.. Recruitment will also expand to a variety of sources to find teachers who are flexible and excited to work in a high-performing urban school where a premium is put on instruction and the growth of the whole child. SICS will look at Teach for America, the ACTFL list service, listings in local and international newspapers, online teacher career sites

(e.g. *TieOnline.com*), reach out to alumni and graduate programs career services offices, professional associations, and attend teacher recruitment fairs that. We will also utilize the personal networks of SICS staff and Board members.

SICS will also promote diversity in its applicant pool by advertising positions in targeted media, such as ethnic or non-English newspapers, networking with local community organizations that serve culturally diverse populations, and participating in minority recruitment events. SICS will comply with all federal, state and local laws and requirements regarding the hiring of staff, and will not discriminate in hiring, employment, contracting or retention for reasons of race, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other reasons prohibited by local, state or federal law. To ensure that SICS' instructional staff remains highly qualified, SICS will contract with the New York City Charter School Center for teacher certification services.

Retention of effective teachers: (*See III.E*) SICS is committed to retaining successful teachers and keeping them in the classroom where their instructional talents can be maximized. SICS will support its teachers in the same holistic manner in which its students are supported, which includes opportunities for open reflective dialogue for example at designated staff meetings. SICS has built several mechanisms for retention of high-quality teachers into its school design. Some of these mechanisms are echoed by findings of the TeachPlus Working Group on Public Charter Schools, a consortium of teachers from across the country researching the issue of teacher retention.⁷¹ SICS will provide:

Pathways for Career Advancement: SICS is committed to developing leadership from within while still finding ways to keep strong teachers in the classroom. SICS will encourage experienced, proven teachers to serve as department heads, grade leaders, members of the hiring committee, coaches, or curriculum developers. Teachers who take on these roles will receive an extra stipend of \$5,000 (*see Attachment 9 Budget*), and may have their teaching load reduced by one or two classes to fulfill the new responsibilities.

Respect for Teacher Time and Planning: SICS' school day and calendar respect and protect teacher planning and professional time. Teachers have two preparation periods per day of which one is dedicated to planning time, as well as up to two hours per week of PD and co-planning on Wednesday and Friday after students are released. The calendar includes a ten day Summer Institute for staff orientation and planning period before school starts, plus another seven half-days once incoming students begin the Summer Sofari program. The calendar also includes four dedicated PD and three data analysis days at key points in each trimester. Teachers will not be asked to submit to administrative duties.

Coaching: SICS believes that teachers who are coached by a peer or more experienced teacher who does not have an evaluative role are more open to feedback. SICS' staffing plan allows for instructional coaching for every teacher from both peers and an Instructional Coach.

Culture of Mutual Feedback: SICS intends to provide mechanisms for teachers to provide feedback to administration so that they have input. Teachers will be invited to every Board meeting, and a portion of the Board's agenda will be set aside for a report from the teacher(s) attending. SICS also intends to conduct regular anonymous surveys among its teachers, in order to identify areas of satisfaction and areas where teachers would like to see change or improvement.

Fair Compensation: SICS' average starting teacher salary is \$62,000. This is comparable to a fifth year public school teacher with a Master's Degree salary plus an additional 10%⁷². SICS anticipates that this starting salary will allow it to be a competitive candidate for the services of experienced, educated teachers who wish to teach in New York City. SICS may explore the addition of a bonus structure in alignment with budgetary constraints in the future. SICS will offer a standard 3% raise each year for all teachers. Additionally, SICS will match up to 3% of an employee's contribution to their retirement plan for employees who have been with SICS for more than one year. Lastly, SICS will provide \$1,000 stipends for teaching during Intersession.

Bonus Travel Fellowships: Modeled off of successful practices employed by the Young Women's Leadership Network, SICS will also offer two competitive travel fellowships of \$3,500 each to teachers, with the number of fellowships rising to three in Year 2, four in Year 3, and five after Year 4 subject to availability of funding. These Fellowships are only open to teachers, counselors, and junior level staff. Staff will submit an application explaining what the stipend will be used for, which will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees. Fellowships may be used to pay for plane tickets, hotel accommodations, admissions to attractions or other travel costs. SICS will require the use of these travel fellowships for professional growth

⁷¹ http://www.teachplus.org/uploads/Documents/1340224253_WhyAreMyTeachersLeaving062012.pdf.

⁷² <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/2712AB02-A1EF-4CE2-B879-33241B7AFFB5/0/TeacherSCHEDULEMAY12015Corrected.pdf>

purposes, such as a teacher traveling abroad, or a teacher choosing to attend a language immersion program to improve skills. All teachers will be aided with applications to Fund For Teachers, which offers academic travel grants to teachers as well.

Staffing related budget assumptions: SICS has allocated in its budget for the needed personnel to bring the educational plan online with a strong foundation, aligned with the school's mission and contemplates the educational preparedness that most incoming students will have (see *Attachment 9*). These include an ED with IB experience and certification, an IB coordinator to ensure stability and proper growth of IB practices and principals, additional AIT teachers and the specialized support staff who are fairly compensated for the dynamic work they will be expected to perform. Also see *Retention of Effective Teachers* above.

Anticipated enrollment and growth of the school: SICS' staffing structure over 5 years is aligned with the educational and operational model delineated in this charter application. This includes, for example, beginning in Year 1 with two teachers per class where one serves as the intervention specialist to meet the needs of at-risk students, hiring both a certified ESL and a FLE Specialist in Years 1 & 4 to meet the demands of second language acquisition for all students, increasing Spec. Educ. Teachers according to anticipated enrollment, and adding instructional coaches to support teachers. SICS begins Year 1 with a 8:1 student teacher ratio and a 9:1 in year 5 thereby giving our students the consistent support and attention they will require. SICS has identified consistent applied learning, literacy & language, and mathematical skills as three areas of need and has staffed accordingly (see *I.D.*)

Non-certified instructional personnel: If a teacher is uncertified or considered "highly qualified" under NCLB, they must meet one or more of the criteria listed in section 2854(3) (a-1) of Education Law. In addition to a rigorous vetting process, non-certified instructional personnel must have experience in the area for which they are being hired. A teacher applying for a classroom position may have IB training, teaching experience at an overseas American curriculum international school, or may come from a related field. Professional experience will not be the sole determination of ability to deliver sound instruction. In addition to the interview process, such a teacher would need to submit a detailed lesson plan at the level expected of all SICS teachers, either a demo lesson video or conduct a live demo lesson, and speak to the tenets of the lesson during a debriefing in order to determine appropriate experience.

Use of Student Assessment Data to Drive Key Decisions: Assessment data will be used to evaluate programs, determine the effectiveness of them and how SICS' staffing decisions are manifesting in achievement of school wide and student goals. It will also drive key decisions for the type and number of teachers, supporting specialist and coaches needed. Poor student academic achievement will effect all staff's PD, personal growth plans, the type of professional outside courses and trainings that they will be advised of, end year evaluations, compensation, and determining if personnel contracts are renewed. Staffing needs will be ascertained quarterly towards meeting the needs of student achievement. SICS will comply with the reporting requirements of the Teacher-Student Principal Data Linkage (TSDL) system in compliance with section 302.3 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. See more on how student data will drive key decisions related to staff and leadership in *III.D.*

D. Evaluation

Programmatic Audit: SICS will submit to NYSED an Annual Report by August 1 each year, to include the state-mandated School Report Card. The Annual Report will include a Progress Report, which evaluates the school's progress in meeting its approved Accountability Plan goals. SICS expects to undergo programmatic audits related to federal entitlement and competitive public grants it receives, including but not limited to Consolidated Title Funds and CSP grant funds.

Evaluation of the Academic Program: The following data will be collected daily: attendance, varying student assessment data, student discipline data, and student enrollment data. SICS will utilize **ManageBac** to house data. **ManageBac** provides users with the capability to view, analyze and report on an ongoing, real time basis, information regarding the mastery of learning goals of individual students, class sections, and the school as a whole in order to tailor instruction to student needs. SRG incorporates an ongoing process of progress monitoring that occurs throughout the academic year to ensure that SICS is on target to meet its achievement goals (see *II.A.*). Student level formative and summative data will be used to inform instruction; section-wide SRG assessment data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction; disaggregated and aggregate school-wide student assessment data will guide programmatic and resource allocation decisions. SICS will collect formative feedback on the curriculum, student and teacher reflections and PD with teachers. The level of school-wide rigor will be gauged through feedback from external stakeholders, such as the charter authorizer, the IB

authorizer, educators from successful IB and charter schools, and consultants. The Board Education Committee will regularly monitor academic progress and advise changes as necessary. SICS' Board and staff will interpret and analyze summative data on academic programs at the conclusion of each trimester informing adjustments to curriculum & instruction.

Evaluation of the Assessment System: The SICS SRG Portfolio Assessment system will be evaluated for: 1) its consistency in implementation and 2) its impact on student achievement compared with selected CSD 5 control schools that use traditional grading systems (see *II.D.*). Research demonstrates that if SRG is implemented to its fullest integrity, it should require that teachers spend only a marginal amount of additional prep and grading time at the beginning of the year, with time ultimately saved overall⁷³. The DOTL will evaluate the degree of consistency in which SICS teachers utilize SRG by monitoring activity on **ManageBac** and analyzing student data using the tool. Teachers identified as needing additional support with implementing SRG will be provided coaching sessions held by the DOTL or Instructional Coach, coupled with action plans that detail clear steps that must be taken in order to expeditiously implement SRG. Beginning in year 2 with 3rd grade students, comparisons of student performance on exams and TerraNovaCC assessments with other high-performing schools using traditional grading will be a summative indicator of the effectiveness of SRG. In the event that student assessment data demonstrates that SRG is ineffective with closing the achievement gap, the Board will determine corrective actions necessary, which may include, but is not limited to, structural changes to the grading system.

Evaluation of Teaching: SICS will utilize multiple measures of effectiveness to inform teachers of their annual effectiveness and make staffing decisions. While the actual evaluation process tools will be developed during the start-up period, SICS subscribes to a general framework of teacher evaluation, *The Art and Science of Teaching*⁷⁴ (the Framework) and *Effective Supervision: Supporting the Art and Science of Teaching*⁷⁵. SICS will adopt the Framework for teacher evaluation at the school. The Framework is aligned to SICS' mission and is an approved rubric for teacher evaluation designed by Robert Marzano, the leading expert on SRG. Through SICS' instructional coaching model (see *III.E.*), teachers receive frequent, consistent, non-evaluative feedback through weekly informal observations from the IB Coordinator or Instructional Coach and the DOTL. This formative data will be used to guide improvement of teachers' instructional and planning practices leading up to three formal evaluations by the DOTL each school year at the conclusion of each trimester.

Individual student-level and class-level assessment data from internal and external sources will be utilized to evaluate teacher performance. The DOTL will utilize official data to celebrate student performance and encourage sharing of best practices for effective teachers and take swift action to mobilize instructional coaching support for teachers whose data indicates lack of sufficient student growth. In the event that student data indicates regression of learning in an individual teacher's class, despite the above supports, the teacher will be placed on an improvement plan and notified that next steps may include a recommendation for termination. Ultimately, teachers' annual renewal of their position will be based on multiple measures that include performance on formal observations, student growth as measured by school-wide IB summative tasks and student end-of-year exam or F & P mastery level results.

School Leader and Other Instructional Staff Evaluations: The Board will carry out an annual evaluation of the Executive Director (ED) that also uses multiple measures of key instructional benchmarks, progress towards achievement goals, operational benchmarks, staff and parent satisfaction surveys and other criteria that measure the overall health of the school. The ED will create a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), a targeted set of measurable and attainable goals, with the Board Chair to be regularly reviewed. In turn the ED will carry out an annual evaluation of the DOTL. The DOTL will create a PGP with the ED to be regularly reviewed. Should the goals of the DOTL' and/or ED's professional growth plan not be realized, the ED and Board Chair respectively will establish an action plan with the DOTL and/or ED to include mentoring, increased monitoring, leadership consultants, and a timeline for improvement. The Executive Committee of the Board will be apprised of progress or the lack thereof.

The Coordinators & Coaches will create PGPs in collaboration with the DOTL to be regularly reviewed. In addition, the DOTL will evaluate the Instructional Coaches using designated metrics of teachers' progress towards growth goals aligned to the Framework (see *III.E.*). The IB Coordinator will be evaluated using designated metrics of teachers' progress

⁷³ Marzano, R. (2010). *Formative Assessment & Standards-Based Grading*. Bloomington: Marzano Research Library.

⁷⁴ Marzano, R. (2007). *The Art and Science of Teaching*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

⁷⁵ Marzano, R. (2011). *Effective Supervision: Supporting the Art and Science of Teaching*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

towards growth goals aligned to the IB program of instruction. During the school's start-up period, the ED will work with the Board and, if necessary, outside consultants to design evaluation processes and tools that utilize data-driven measures and clear rubrics to assess the performance of all non-instructional staff. Aspects of Bambrick-Santoyo's *Leverage Leadership*⁷⁶ will be employed in the evaluation of staff in leadership positions.

Operational and Fiscal Health: The Board's work to develop a budget will begin each January. The Board is committed to ensuring it holds itself and the administration accountable for the operational and fiscal health and viability of the organization, including sound budgeting practices. The ED and DOO, in collaboration with CSBM (Business Manager beginning Year 3) will prepare annual operating and capital budgets, cash flow projections, and profit and loss statements after working together to identify and prioritize needs. CSBM will provide training when needed to the group to prioritize needs based on how they will support student achievement and fiscal and operational efficiency. The draft budgets will be reviewed and revised by the Board Finance Committee with the Board Treasurer having oversight responsibility. The Finance Committee will present the budget to the full Board of Trustees for approval by May. The adopted budget totals will be overseen by the ED and DOO and will be used to prepare budget information to actual reports. CSBM/the BM will be responsible for preparing monthly budget presentations, including updated annual budget information, monthly budget information, monthly actuals against budget, and projected year end against budgeted year end. The ED and CSBM will review these presentations with the Board Treasurer prior to each Board meeting. All material deviations will be documented and explained by the ED and DOTL. Any expected deviations in a budget category of more than \$5,000 and +/-10% of the budget amount will be considered material. If necessary the Finance Committee will bring the deviation to the Board's attention to consider any impact that deviation may have on the school's cash flow and financial position. Section *III.J*, provides details on the process for independent fiscal audits—an integral part of the process to verify the school's fiscal soundness.

Board Evaluation: It is critical that evaluation of the Board both collectively and individually take place on at least an annual basis. The process will involve each Board member completing three self-evaluation forms: one in which the Board member evaluates the performance of the Board as a whole; the second in which the Board member evaluates his or her own personal board performance and involvement; and the third in which the Board member is asked to evaluate a fellow board member. These tools will ask relevant and clear questions related to the functioning of the board and the charter school, clarity of roles and responsibilities, shared mission and vision, contributions, engagement, openness, personalities, processes, etc. This information will be analyzed annually by the Board Development Committee and ED (see *III.B*) to inform Board development and training, ensuring requisite knowledge and skills of responsible stewards is evident.

Family and Student Satisfaction: SICS will formally gauge parent, teacher, and student satisfaction through the use of the DOE's Learning Environment Survey. All parents will receive the survey during the third trimester of the school year. The results of the survey will be tabulated and made public in the SICS School Report Card which we will make available on our website. Additionally, results of the survey will be published in our Annual Report to NYSED. Since the DOE parent survey does not disaggregate results by individual classroom teachers, SICS will conduct its own surveys of parents through micro-polling that will reflect family satisfaction with teachers and administration. The data will be used to inform changes to the school's operations, if needed. Finally, SICS will also gauge student satisfaction through frequent FSA interaction and targeted events. During informal settings, such as parent breakfasts with the DOTL, Mad-Scientist Nights (see *II.F*), or family events (see *III.I*), SICS staff can gather additional formative data points on family and student satisfaction.

E. Professional Development

SICS believes that teacher quality and effectiveness is the critical lever to high student achievement. As such, SICS has scheduled teacher PD beginning in August before the start of school. Instructional staff will need PD in many areas and have the time imbedded and spread throughout the annual calendar. These areas include the IB inquiry-led applied learning approach, IB Unit & Lesson plan development through UDL, 50/50 content immersion, CKLA, and Singapore Math. The IBO, Global Language Project, CKLA and Singapore Math trainers will provide pre-opening training to teachers (see *III.K*). In addition, training for the faculty will be provided by the DOTL, ED, and the Instructional Coach(es). The Special Education Coordinator will provide training in **UDL** and **RTI models**, including identification of struggling students,

⁷⁶ Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Excellent Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

assessment of struggling students, academic interventions, and progress monitoring. SICS' ESL specialists will provide teachers training in best practices for instructing and meeting needs of ELL students through SDAIE strategies and the SIOP model, which also benefits students learning content through another language and is aligned with the IB methodology.

International Baccalaureate – All SICS staff and Board members will go through an IBO conducted training before the opening of school in August of 2016. The Board will have conceptual training, ED and DOTL have IB administration and the IB Coordinator will receive PD specific to the coordination of programming. General staff will have training in the foundational tenets of the continuum of programs conducted by the Executive Director while teachers will receive additional PD on unit planning and all facets of instructional delivery from specialized IBO trainers. Throughout the year faculty and staff will attend additional **IB** trainings specific to their individual needs.

Summer Institute: SICS' high-quality, comprehensive Summer Institute begins seven days prior to the start of student **Summer Sofari**, and continues throughout Summer Sofari after students leave their half-day classes (see *II.B.* and *Attachment 3B*). In addition to the above, Summer Institute will be used to introduce new and/or returning staff to SICS' mission, personnel and student policies, curriculum, instructional methods, and assessments. The ongoing lesson plan feedback system, coaching model, and the Framework (see *III.D*) will be introduced. Summer Institute will also place a heavy focus on infusing the culture of data into instruction. Teachers will be trained on the vision behind an **SRG portfolio** and how it should be implemented in order to best build student investment and achievement of learning goals. Teachers will be trained on and given ample time during Summer Institute to apply practice to linking formative and summative assessments to SRG. Technology training will also be provided, which includes how to effectively use ManageBac to provide timely feedback, monitor student achievement, and drive instruction. Also imperative to adult culture are team-building exercises that will be incorporated into the Summer Institute. Teachers will explore the community they will serve and together create a culture of support and consistency.

Ongoing Weekly PD: Beyond Summer Institute, there are student early release days built into the school calendar every Friday, from 3:05-4:50pm, for PD/collaborative work. Each weekly PD session will cover one of the following: 1) SRG data best practices and support, 2) Marzano's pedagogical strategies, 3) Lemov's classroom management techniques, 4) differentiation of instruction through UDL, SDAIE, and SIOP, 5) planning and alignment to standards including CCLS & NGSS, 6) interpretation and analysis of assessments, 7) family engagement, and 8) IB standards, principles and practices. Supported by content area expert consultants, the DOTL and IB/ Instructional Coach will share best practices to meet the needs of all teachers, including new to the school, novice, and veterans.

Student growth targets will drive conversations between teachers and leadership about collective and individual teacher PD needs and instructional strategies used to engage students to meet or exceed their learning goals. SICS teachers will receive ongoing support from Specialists. The Spec. Educ. Coordinator will observe in classrooms, model instruction, and provide resources for general education teachers. In addition, the Social Worker will conduct ongoing training about social/emotional issues, including compliance with DASA (see *II.F*).

1) Professional Growth Plans: In addition to the student data-driven conversations described above, the DOTL will meet with each teacher to collaboratively set growth goals based on specific standards and indicators in the Framework, which has proficiency levels of Not Using, Beginning, Developing, Applying, and Innovating. Both the DOTL and IB/Instructional Coach will hone coaching and feedback to target those specific standards during each formal and informal observation. A key component to SICS' PD model is that Coaches provide informal, non-evaluative feedback. To collect formative teacher data leading into the formal evaluations by the DOTL (see *III.D*), both the DOTL and Coordinators/Coach will focus on frequent, short classroom observations, some using real-time feedback and some using debriefing, both of which provide actionable feedback tied to the Framework. These informal observations will not be linked to the teacher's evaluation, but instead used as an opportunity to provide meaningful feedback. Teachers will be observed once a week at minimum. Coaching sessions will also include examining student artifacts and data, modeling of exemplar practices, video coaching, and discussion of case studies. Once a teacher moves into the Applying and/or Innovating levels of their professional growth goals within the Framework through coaching, the DOTL will work with the teacher to select a new goal within the Framework fostering a culture of growth and continuous incremental improvement that provides unique, frequent, individualized support to each teacher.

2) Shared Practice: SICS will implement the use of professional learning communities through **Critical Friends Groups (CFG)** in the second trimester. By creating a safe environment for constructive feedback and critique, group

members in CFGs work collaboratively to improve practice⁷⁷ in one of the above seven areas covered in ongoing weekly PD. Teachers will also have the opportunity to use weekly PD time to plan with grade- and/or department-level teams using SRG data. Other opportunities will be created for teachers to share practices with colleagues in other schools. This will be done through shared PD workshops & trainings as well as through inter-visitations and EDcamps, which is a hallmark of an IB school.

3) Individual Enrichment Opportunities: SICS will arrange enrichment opportunities through courses, trainings, and conferences that will continually reinvigorate their joy and passion for teaching as a craft. Specific examples include IB trainings, courses through Relay Graduate School of Education, trainings and conferences offered by Harvard Graduate School of Education, NYC Charter School Center, Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association, Building Excellent Schools, Uncommon Schools network and the International Baccalaureate certification affiliated Universities. Teachers are provided leadership stipends to build scalable skills, such as curriculum development and providing observation feedback (*see III.C.*) through coaching and mentorship of leadership and administrative staff. SICS will provide coverage for teachers to visit highly successful schools, particularly in the bilingual and IB fields. Teachers also have the opportunity to apply for Travel Fellowships (*see III.C.*) to diversify their curriculum and pedagogy. Following the teacher’s participation in the opportunity they will turn-key with fellow staff. Teachers will also be provided and encouraged to seek out content-specific PD through organizations such as NCTM, the National Science Teachers Association, and Reading Taxonomy trainings by Uncommon Schools. The DOTL and ED will have similar opportunities and access to leadership consultants if needed to ensure efficiency in the school model & streamlined communication channels between stakeholders. The DOTL and ED will be provided guidance & support by the Advisory Board and other professionals in SICS’ network. **Retention of Excellent Teachers:** (*See III.C.*) SICS’ professional environment will motivate and actively retain excellent teachers through a host of individualized opportunities. Leadership will promote positive staff and school culture through staff appreciation initiatives. This may include: weekly breakfasts, gift certificates and discounts to local venues, social gatherings, kudos during a faculty meetings, and notes of recognition from leadership team members. SICS’ goal is an environment in which people enjoy working and feel supported as they strive to improve their craft. If deemed needed and fiscally responsible, SICS will consider implementing a teacher bonus structure.

Evaluation of the Professional Development Program: SICS will systematically use student performance data and teacher data from the Framework to inform school leaders of areas of weakness in planning and instruction. Evaluation of the PD program will aim to improve the quality of the program and to determine its overall effectiveness. Formative evaluation will be used to modify and improve the PD program and will take place continuously throughout the year. Teachers will take surveys after each PD session to provide information on strengths and areas of growth. Through questionnaires, observations, self-assessment instruments and analysis of teacher evaluation records, instructional leaders will analyze how the PD programs have improved teacher *and* student practices. Teacher proficiency levels within the Framework and on professional growth goals will also inform instructional efficacy. Summative evaluations will be used to determine the effect of the PD process on student outcomes. SICS will use Unit and Interim Assessment benchmarks to determine if the PD program is effective in closing the achievement gap. When student assessment results improve notably after focused PD sessions, the program will be considered effective. Ineffective aspects of the PD system will be improved upon or eliminated.

F. Facilities

Facility Needs of Students and Staff: SICS is planning for programming space at approximately 80 square feet per student, all inclusive. This spacing plan will allow SICS to create inquiry-led classroom spaces to accommodate all students and considers additional space requirements for the applied learning Library Labs.

Year	Grade / Student Enrollment	Classrooms	Communal Space	Offices & Storage
2016-17	K-2 - 150	6	Applied learning Library Lab; artist room; gym; auditorium; Teacher lounge	-Main Office
2017-18	K-3 - 200	8		-Service Provider
2018-19	K-4 - 250	10		Room

⁷⁷ <http://www.nsrharmony.org/faq.html>

Sofara International CS

2018-20	K-5 - 300	12	Yr3 – add 1 science lab;	-3 Admin. Offices -IB/coach space -2 Operations offices
2020-21	K-6 - 350	14		
All student facility needs will increase in accordance with any mandates and assessed needs.			Yr4–add 1 Applied learning Library Lab	

Contingent upon the budget surplus each year, SICS plans to make capital improvements to classroom & administrative facilities each year (see III.K). SICS will look for or make needed accommodations to space that has physical handicap access. SICS will further internally assess the school site’s accessibility for students and adults with disabilities to determine and make proper renovations as necessary. The school does not have a residential program, and will therefore not require residential facilities.

SICS will submit a written request for co-location to the NYC DOE as per the Facilities Access Process. The written request will include all required information for consideration in CSD 5. As per the process, NYCDOE will have an opportunity to respond to the request with an offering of co-located space in a public school facility, or space in a privately owned or publicly owned facility at the expense of NYCDOE and at no cost to the charter school. If space is not offered or is unsuitable, SICS has determined, based on area commercial space averages of \$20-\$35 psf., that it can find suitable space at a cost within the funding limits set by NYCDOE. Averages were compiled from our work with local realtors, building owner quotes, SICS Board members with expertise in the field, and discussion with charter school heads.

SICS Board member Holley Drakeford is a long time Harlem based commercial real estate broker who sits on Community Board 11’s Land Use Committee and has substantial access to and knowledge of available viable spaces to lease for SICS’s incubation period. SICS has identified three suitable buildings in the district and has the recommendation from Council member Inez Dickens of an available privately held former school building.

A former adult training center is one option identified to site SICS. Located on the eastern edge of CSD 5 (CB11) bordering CSD 4, this building is already configured and outfitted as a school with offices, approximately 7 classrooms per floor, large common areas that can be used as gym/auditorium space, conference rooms and lounges, and school grade bathrooms and water fountains. Additionally, located in central Harlem, the Al Hambra building is a 45,000 sf six-story building with 5 empty floors and kitchen facilities. A vacated two-story former rehabilitation center on the southern end of CSD 5, sharing a border with CSD 3, would offer approximately 14,000 sf. This would allow SICS to incubate in Year 1 and possibly Year 2. In addition to these buildings there are many new developments and more under construction, which may be suitable.

SICS’ Board will do its due diligence in planning and further identifying space best suited for the growth of the school as we await the NYCDOE decision and move through the full Facilities Access Process. This includes: ascertaining private facility conditions; scope of renovations; construction estimates; lease terms and conditions; and creating a timeline. Oversight will be conducted by the Board through an ad hoc Facilities Committee. SICS anticipates having secured a facility no later than May 2016 and be able to move in no later than July 2016.

In exploring options for upgrades or renovations needed to create a functioning school space that conforms to applicable health, safety, and occupancy requirements, SICS intends to choose an option best suited to the scope of the work. This may include building owner funded renovations of which the additional cost would be added to the price per square foot for amounts under \$250,000 to be spread over an anticipated five-year lease. The added cost to a five-year lease is approximately \$4.50 per square foot. With an average area square footage price of \$30, SICS would pay about \$35 per sq. ft. (see Attachment 9 for other private facility related costs). Additionally, SICS may look to fund any renovations or construction through tax-exempt bonds, foundations, financing organizations such as Charter Schools Development Corporation, real estate developers like Civic Builders, and federal & state initiatives.

G. Insurance

SICS will carry insurance that includes adequate insurance coverage for liability, property loss and personal injury to students. SICS has consulted with the insurance broker Austin & Co., which has provided SICS with a quote for insurance that includes Business Personal Property (\$250K), Business Income (\$750K), General Liability (\$3M), Abuse & Molestation (\$3M) Employee Benefits Liability (\$3M), and Personal Injury of Students (\$1M). The particulars of the proposal are provided in the Austin & Co. estimate, to be made available upon request, and are reflected in the budget. SICS retains sufficient cash

reserves to obtain additional insurance if necessary. SICS will also seek additional quotes during the pre-opening period to obtain the most updated coverage and cost. SICS will hold Directors and Officers coverage for the Board beginning in the pre-opening period. SICS has budgeted \$30,000 for insurance premiums, rising \$5,000 annually through year 5.

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Health Services: SICS will comply with all health services requirements applicable to public schools. Per NY Education Law 912, the NYC Bureau of School Children and Adolescent Health (the “Bureau”) will be responsible for the provision of these health services in a manner that is equivalent to the services provided to students attending regular public schools, including the students enrolled in NYC public schools. SICS will request these services from the Bureau in sufficient time to allow for inclusion of the requested services into the Bureau’s and DOE budgetary and staffing plans. Permanent non-consumable and consumable facilities and supplies shall be provided by the school and the Bureau as provided by applicable law and practice. All faculty and staff will have access to first aid resources. SICS will maintain appropriate access to automated external defibrillators (AED) as required by §917 of the Education Law and ensure that two or more staff members are certified in the operation and use of AED.

Health Records: SICS’ will ensure each student has a certificate of immunization that complies with §2164 of the Public Health Law at the time of registration or within the acceptable time frame after enrollment (subject to exceptions permitted under the law for medical contraindications and religious exemptions). SICS will store health records securely for enrolled students as required by law. Prior to beginning each school year, SICS will secure parental consent to identify students with health risks and provide accommodations to faculty and staff when appropriate.

Food Services: The DOO will apply for and participate in the U.S.D.A. FRLP breakfast, lunch and snack programs for students eligible thereunder. SICS will contract with NYCDOE’s SchoolFood and the Office of School Foods and Nutritional Services to provide food to eligible students. However, SICS reserves the right to contract with another food service provider if such policy is set by its Board. SICS will investigate other vendors who can provide healthy and appetizing menus to the school’s students. SICS will apply, based on enrollment, to the Universal Lunch program that would allow all students to eat for free. If called for, regardless of origin, any and all revenues from the FRLP shall be used exclusively for the provision of services to students eligible thereunder as required by the terms of the program(s). Students not eligible under FRLP shall be responsible for their own meal and snack needs. Students may opt to bring their own lunch and not partake in the school lunch program. Every family will be assisted in completing the School Meals application as part of their enrollment packet.

Transportation Services: The NYCDOE is responsible for providing transportation services to SICS’ students who will receive the same transportation services as other NYC public school students. Eligibility for yellow school busing and half-fare or full-fare Metrocards is determined and provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). The NYCDOE determines the eligibility for transportation based on age, distance from the school, and needs of students with disabilities. SICS will provide eligible service as confirmed by OPT. On days when the regular NYCDOE public schools are not in session, SICS will purchase and provide Metrocards to students. Funds have been allocated to this transportation need in our budget projections and will be an annual budgetary item of the school, taking into account that schools can request Metrocards through OPT that covers the majority of the summer diagnostic sessions. Special education student eligibility will be determined by the student’s IEP. Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws. SICS’ students will receive transportation services for which they are eligible under Education Law § 2853(4)(b) and § 3635. If a student is not eligible for transportation services, it will be the responsibility of parents.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Means of Engagement: SICS will employ numerous means to engage parents. These range from an elected position on the SICS Board to classroom engagement. The ED, **Community Outreach Liaison** (COL) (see *II.C.*), Social Worker and Guidance Counselor will facilitate family engagement through continuous planning and development of appropriate interactions. SICS will engage families and the community in:

School-wide: Parents will minimally receive monthly phone updates from their child’s teacher. In cases where a student is academically at-risk SICS will schedule an individual case conference with parents. SICS will provide positive reinforcement

for parents in the form of events such as recognition breakfasts for parents whose children have perfect attendance and punctuality. Micro-surveys will be conducted at regular intervals based off the DOE Parent Satisfaction Survey, and SICS will ensure that parents have ample opportunity to complete the actual DOE survey. SICS will adjust its strategies for parent engagement in part based on the results of these surveys.

Once the school year begins, SICS will support the creation and ongoing administration of a voluntary Family School Association (see *III.B.*), which will advise and support the school. The FSA will elect the parent representative to the Board of Trustees. SICS will support the FSA with: organizing and coordinating FSA meetings, workshops, and events; making meeting space available for the FSA to conduct its business; and supporting and encouraging communication between the FSA and the school's overall parent body, school community and Harlem community.

Separate from parent workshops, SICS will also hold regular breakfasts, lunches or coffees with the Leadership. These will be informal opportunities for parents to meet the school leaders, ask questions, and provide feedback for purposes of planning, implementation, and program design. SICS will evaluate its effectiveness in incorporating parent feedback through its scores on the DOE parent satisfaction survey, which is part of the school's overall evaluation (see *III.D.*).

Academics: Beginning in April of the pre-opening period and through the end of the first trimester, SICS staff will conduct **individual home visits** with the family of every enrolled student prioritize the visits for SWD and ELLs. In addition to gathering data and clarify expectations for students and parents, SICS staff will build relationships and allow parents to help effect individual classroom dynamics. In addition to Parent-Teacher Conferences each trimester (see *II.B.*), SICS will create parent volunteer opportunities and hold monthly parent workshops or events centered around student learning and will allow for parent interaction. As discussed in *II.F.*, positive reinforcement is a critical part of SICS' culture. Teachers will be required to minimally make three positive parent contacts per week (6per week/24 per month) and encouraged to make more through quick texts.

International-mindedness: Families and community organizations will be brought together to help instill a sense of international-mindedness in SICS' students and environment. Family culture will be used as a tool and invited into the classroom with opportunities such as cooking world dishes, sharing their favorite fable from their country of origin, teaching a folk song or dance, writing a memoir and sharing it. Trips to cultural institutions and exhibits will be a regular part of instruction.

College Preparedness: Starting with SICS staff and then inviting community speakers in, families will be exposed to the college experience. While it may seem early, SICS will reinforce the idea that higher education is important through College Bound readiness workshops. Family members of K-6 students will be invited to participate in workshops designed to inform them about the path and timeline to college admittance and offered assistance with their child's post-secondary plan. SICS' counselor will hold specific workshops on the academic opportunities, important steps in Middle and High School, the University application process, financial aid, and the transition to College. These supports will help mitigate some of the challenges that first-generation college bound students have in applying to and completing college.⁷⁸

Career Readiness: Having SICS' students be career ready means having parents be informed and reinforcing habits of mind at home. Therefore, parent volunteer opportunities will include arranging visits & tours to their jobs, highlighting skills, attitudes and attributes needed for the career, obtaining a job in that field, and advancing within the field. Workshops on such topics would target how families can encourage their children to be ready and be successful in a career.

Community Involvement in Planning, Implementation and Design: Throughout the planning and application phase, SICS has reached out to community parents and specifically requested their input, using that feedback to inform the application. SICS has spoken with parents both formally, at community forums and town halls, as well as informally while handing out flyers or doing grassroots outreach. SICS intends to continually engage organizations through the start-up, opening and operation of the school (see *II.E.*). Parents and the community will be a critical part of SICS' plans to implement its school design. SICS will continue its political engagement and use of the community based organizations involvement in promoting its mission in general and specifically as a holistic model of education.

Evidence that Anticipated Partnerships are Achievable: Several of the parent engagement strategies described above have a history of success. The Executive Director has employed several including the home visit scenario and consistent positive communication in her practice. Others, such as workshops specifically centered around student learning and parent

⁷⁸ <http://faculty.soc.syr.edu/vtinto/Files/Moving%20Beyond%20Access.pdf>.

interaction, derive from research cited in *Beyond the Bake Sale*⁷⁹. In all cases, SICS believes meaningful, targeted, and sincere parent engagement will increase parent involvement in the school.

As a grassroots endeavor, SICS has found warm welcome in CSD5 both from CBOs that represent parents, youth, and families. We have had numerous meetings with organization and community leaders who are interested in and supportive of the school (see *Attachment 2*). Evidence can further be seen in the commitment to help with recruitment efforts and invitations SICS' ED has received to participate in community events. SICS will operate from a strong base of support with its community collaborations and parent involvement. Collaborations have already been developed within the community, which is partially evident by the attached letters of support.

J. Financial Management

The Board Treasurer will be responsible for the oversight and financial management of the budget and will utilize the Board Finance Committee to fulfill this responsibility. On a day-to-day basis, the Executive Director will have oversight responsibilities for the financial management within the parameters of the operation of the school and thus will be responsible for the protection of the school's financial records with direct oversight from the Board Finance Committee. The ED will be supported in implementing all financial matters by the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, the DOO, Operations staff, and CSBM. In Year 3, a Business Manager (BM) will be brought on in place of CSBM. For purposes of clarity, the remainder of this application will reference the BM, since it will become the permanent model in Year 3 and beyond. The BM, with oversight from the ED, will prepare the financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Such financial statements will be prepared for each fiscal year and will include a statement of financial position, a statement of activities, a statement of cash flows, a schedule of functional expenses, and notes to the financial statements. (*see III.E. Operational and Fiscal Health*)

CSBM Services: SICS expects to contract with CSBM for a full range of services in the pre-opening phase and years 1 and 2. These include, but not limited to, ED/DOO/BM training, setting up and running payroll, accounting system set up, coordination of grant reporting, monthly reconciliation, fiscal reporting, audit preparation, and human resources.

Independent Audit: The Board will be responsible for hiring an independent auditor to perform an annual audit of the financial statements prepared by the management and in accordance with the Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS). The Board Finance Committee will have the ultimate responsibility to oversee the audit process and upon completion will meet with the independent auditor to discuss the report and any findings. A corrective action plan will be discussed and implemented by the Finance Committee to correct any findings by the independent auditor. A copy of the audit report and the auditor's Management Letter will be provided to the full Board and NYSED by the determined deadline.

Accounting Procedures and Fiscal Controls: SICS is committed to developing and maintaining fiscal policies and procedures that ensure sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility and accountability in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and adherence to the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) rules and regulations. The following explains the Internal Control System, which will be composed of two basic elements:

1. *The Control Environment:* The control environment reflects the importance SICS places on internal controls as part of its day-to-day activities. Factors that influence the control environment include management and Board philosophy, organizational structure, ways of assigning authority and responsibility, management methods and control, and personnel policies and practices. SICS' Board will review fiscal reports as part of its board meetings and ensure that the organization's structure allows for sufficient checks and balances.

2. *The Control Procedures:* Control procedures will be set up to strengthen SICS' internal control structure and thus safeguard the school's assets. They are divided into the following: a) *Segregation of Duties*; b) *Restricted Access*; c) *Document Control*; d) *Processing Control*; e) *Reconciliation Controls*; f) *Fraud Prevention*; and g) *Cash Handling Controls*.

Fiscal policies and procedures will be ratified by the Board and adopted by the school no later than January 2016 (see *III.L.*).

Student Records: The DOO, with oversight from the ED, will manage student information, be responsible for tracking enrollment and attendance, maintaining school lunch program records, including student eligibility and other data to ensure accurate billing and reimbursements. The DOO will work closely with the ED, who will serve as the School's Title I Coordinator, to ensure all data relevant to Title I services is collected and maintained to ensure accuracy in program reporting

⁷⁹ Henderson, Anne T. et al, *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. The New Press. New York. 2007.

and reimbursement. SICS will have a robust student information system through **ManageBac** that will be utilized by the DOO to store, analyze and produce needed reports on all relevant student data. The DOO will be responsible for the protection of student records under the supervision of the ED. With regard to the special education program and IEPs, the Special Education Coordinator under the supervision of the ED and DOTL will be responsible for maintaining and securing all records, as well as submitting all required reporting on SWD and services provided to the appropriate agencies including necessary reporting for special education reimbursement through the DOE invoicing portal. SICS understands its obligations to comply with FERPA and will follow all appropriate procedures to comply fully with the NYS Freedom of Information law (Article 6 of the NY Public Officers Law).

K. Budget and Cash Flow

SICS has presented a conservative budget based on student enrollment at the rate of projected attrition rather than full enrollment. SICS' start-up budget and cash flow, first-year budget and cash flow plan, and five-year budget and cash flow plan all use assumptions based on company quotes, expected percentage of time that administrators, instructional and non-instructional staff would devote to particular areas, and student and staff growth. Throughout the 5 year chartering period SICS is conservative in revenue assumptions to ensure all operating expenses are covered. Per pupil revenue projections in years 2-5 remain flat while most expenses—including personnel costs increase. The budget is aligned with our charter application and considers our backfill policy. We have incorporated all core costs contemplated by our educational, fiscal and operational program. In the Year 1 budget, all revenues and expenses have been allocated to each of the main categories & subcategories using general assumptions based on the expected student demographic, research and company quotes. In certain instances, SICS assumed that for school operation costs that would benefit all students a certain percentage was allocated to general education and special education students. Delays in disbursement of federal funds were considered. The school has allocated \$25,000 per year for the first three years to maintain a dissolution fund to pay for legal and audit expenses.

Strategic Sourcing: Collectively, the SICS Board, Finance Committee, ED and CSBM will devise a strategic sourcing framework that utilizes a competitive bid process for large dollar expenditures to ensure SICS receives the best possible price from the market. Strict and documented controls will be enforced as laid out in SICS' policies and procedures of the accounting system. CSBM will perform monthly, quarterly and annual financial reporting to the ED and Board in Years 1 and 2 that continues in year 3 and beyond by the Business Manager whom will work closely with CSBM during their transition period. Doing so will ensure that SICS can continue to properly govern and maintain financial oversight of both the day to day operational and long term financial expenditures required for SICS to remain fiscally sound.

Regardless of the projected steady revenue surplus the ED will seek out public grant and private foundation funds as an additional source of revenue for specific programs and initiatives. A look at the Foundation Center⁸⁰ database shows a myriad of grant opportunities in all areas of SICS' educational programming such as applied learning. SICS has also inquired with CSD 5 politicians on the availability of discretionary funding to which we received an invitation to apply after charter authorization. At no point does SICS' fundraising projection exceed 4.2% of its total revenue. In the event of a funding shortfall or need for a funding source, the ED and Finance Committee may utilize facility bonds, host fundraising events, delay staff travel stipends and other monetary incentives, or delay capital expenses such as classroom upgrades. The Finance Committee and ED would also review the school wide budget to ascertain what percentage of each budget line item, if any, may be resourced. SICS will also identify other schools willing to share costs for items such as PD and bulk buying of materials.

Pre Opening

Revenue. SICS anticipates working with a minimum budget in the pre-opening phase. Revenues consider Board fundraising (\$500 per member) and the first year of CSP grant installment of \$206,500 out of \$500,000. SICS will initiate a fundraising plan during this time to increase revenues.

Expenditures. Initial expenditures are those needed for curriculum and program development, fees for training of administrative staff, to market and conduct enrollment and admissions, and set up SICS' financial and operational systems. Staffing options were carefully considered to enable SICS to open its doors in a strong position. SICS' staff includes the ED, DOTL, and COL on shared, prorated salary to enable the three positions to be funded.

⁸⁰ <http://foundationcenter.org/newyork/>.

Cash Flow. The pre-opening cash flow is stable through out this phase. Administrators have agreed to defer receipt of their stipends until CSP funds are in place.

Year 1 Budget

Revenues. In addition to the \$14,027 per pupil revenue for academics, SICS has allocated \$2805 per pupil from Facility Access funding. This is in addition to per pupil funding for general and special education students. The second CSP grant installment was allocated at \$ 225,000. SICS made a realistic projection of an 18% SWD enrollment rate based on analysis of NYS Enrollment Target Calculator, combined NYS data reports for 2012-13⁸¹ and available open data from public schools. In Year 1, eight students receive less than 20% services (no funding), 11 would receive between 20% and 60% services (\$10,390 per pupil) and 8 would receive greater than 60% services (\$19,049 per pupil). Staffing of special education teachers reflects this dynamic. FRLP and ELLs percentages are based on the effective target rates from the NYS Enrollment Targets Calculator. Also, SICS assumes it will receive non-competitive start-up funding from DYCD.

Expenditures. Salaries represent 65% of net income in year 1, which includes an Executive Director, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Operations, and the unique positions of IB Coordinator, Community Outreach Liaison, and flexible Academic Intervention classroom teachers. Salaries for teachers and staff are competitive, and anticipate a standard 3% annual raise. Salaries for the ED, DOTL, and DOO start lower than DOE salaries for similar positions, but grow at a rate of 5% per year, and by Year 5 are competitive with DOE salaries⁸² Under “Contracted Services”, SICS has included \$20,000 in stipends to fund the use of education and foreign language interns from Amity Institute, Columbia University, and New York University. (See II.B and II.C)

The other major expenditure represented is the training and professional development expenses. While SICS will look for partner schools to reduce costs, we anticipate spending more than \$46,000 for professional development at a rate of \$2000 per instructional staff member. Students have been given a generous inquiry based academic allotment for projects, applied learning, and discovery learning that includes anticipated need for books, materials, and equipment. Operational budget lines for student and teaching materials and supplies reflects the unique funding needs of an **inquiry led applied learning curriculum, and second language acquisition materials** derived from a cost analysis.

Cash Flow. Revenue and expenditure timelines take into consideration when funds are expected and when they will need to be paid out. To maintain a balanced cash flow, SICS held set monthly expenditures in place, such as salaries, while giving flexibility to other expenditures such as cleaning supplies. In doing so, SICS has maintained a positive cash balance projection for year one operations.

5 Year Budget

Revenue. SICS has left revenue flat in years 2 – 5 while increasing expenditures between 3% and 10%. Funding has not been added for IDEA funding anticipated in year 2. The third CSP grant installment is expected in the amount of \$68,500. Special education revenue increases commensurate with enrollment in year two at \$266,682 to \$586,320 in year five. With the hiring of a Development Associate, SICS has minimal anticipated revenue from \$30,000 to \$228,000 in years 2-5.

Expenditures. Over the charter term, SICS staff increases in accordance with the educational program design and general needs of the school. Besides the added instructional staff, SICS also takes on a Business manager in year 3, administrative aides, and two full time custodians. For staff SICS has provide medical and dental insurance and assumes 70% of employees will receive individual medical coverage and another 15% of employees will receive spouse or family medical coverage. SICS assumes 85% of employees will receive dental coverage. Employees will bear the cost of adding additional dependents to their dental plans. Medical and dental plan assumptions are based on the plans utilized by other charter schools. In addition, SICS will enroll employees in a 403b retirement plan and will match employee contributions up to 3% of their salary starting in Year 2; SICS assumes 60% of employees will participate.

An additional \$6000 set aside for SWD assisted technology materials and supplies in Year 1 increases in relation to the anticipated demand of SWD enrollment of 59 students in Year 5 being funded at \$38,000. Line items for staff furniture, classroom furniture, technology, SWD specific materials, and applied learning supplies include funding to replace or upgrade items. By year 3, SICS has set aside \$75,000 as a contingency for dissolution of the school.

SICS has included the annual \$10,000 cost of Candidate fees for the International Baccalaureate Organization in

⁸¹ <http://data.nysed.gov/specialed/index.php?instid=800000048663&year=20122013>

⁸² <http://www.csa-nyc.org/sites/default/files/Salary%20Schedule.PDF>.

Sofara International CS

both the pre-opening budget and in each of Years 1 – 5.

L. Pre-Opening Plan

Activity	Start Date End Date	Responsibility	Notes
Oversight			
File for 501(c)(3) status for school and state tax exemptions status	When authorized	ED, Board, Pro-Bono Legal	SICS will utilize existing 501(c)(3) organizations to receive private contributions on SICS' behalf. Prepare Papers Dec 2015
Identify areas of need for Board and recruit members	Ongoing	ED, DOTL, Board	
Elect Board officers, ratify By-Laws, establish committees & membership	First Board Meeting	Board	First Board meeting will take place within one month of authorization.
Officially Vet & Hire DOTL Officially hire ED by Jan. 1	Upon approval through August 2016	Board	Both DOTL & ED will begin part-time on 1/1/2016; ED full-time on 3/1: DOTL & ED officially hired May 1, 2016.
Further develop, refine, and adopt by Board action school's policies	Charter Approval - Aug 2016	Board, ED, DOTL	Fiscal policy in place by end of Jan 2016 (see III.J.) Distribute to stakeholders and school's website
Submit Candidacy application to IBO	Aug 2016	ED / DOTL	To be done in consultation with IBO
Financial Operations			
Research and apply for public & private funding, grants & fundraising	Ongoing	ED, Board	Initial focus: CSP, science, local government i.e. DYCD,
Develop & approve final Year 1 budget.	April -June 2016	ED, Board	Make hiring adjustments, Spec. Educ./ESL
Apply for Consolidated Title I Funds	July-Aug 2016	ED, DOO	
Set up financial/accounting systems	Jan & Jun 2016	ED, DOO, Board, CSBM	
Establish banking	Charter Approval	ED or Board Treasurer	
Develop and finalize employee benefit package	February 2016	Board	
Contract to audit web systems and budget	Jan-March 2016	ED, Board Treasurer	Financial systems audit completed in January
Establish all relevant financial systems,	Jan-March 2016	ED,Treasurer, Contractor	Payroll, billing, other disbursements as per internal controls
General Operations			
Student/ family outreach and marketing	Jan-April 2016	ED, DOTL	
Recruit and hire all administrative, support, and instructional staff for first year of operations	Dec 2015 - June 2016	ED, DOTL	Ensure signed staff hiring letters by 7/1/2016. Completed Background & Fingerprinting confirmed.
Contract for ManageBac Student Information System	March 2016	ED, DOTL	
Procurement - furniture, equipment, & technology for operations	Jan - July 2016	ED, DOTL, DOO	Acceptance of delivery depending on when SICS has access to facility.
Secure Facility, Renovation: Identify needs, secure contractor, create time line	Jan - May 2016	ED, DOTL	Work with DOE to identify a facility and prepare for PEP if needed.
Apply for extended use facility permits if needed	March 2016	ED, DOO	Apply for extended use permits upon securing facility
Conduct lottery,	April 2016	ED, DOTL	Generate acceptance & waitlist
Send out acceptance packages with forms: registration, emergency contact,	April - Aug 2016	ED, DOTL	Start with completion of lottery and continuing through the school year as families decline

Sofara International CS

Home Language Survey, FRLP, test data Release, Media Release, Medical, & other			acceptance or withdraw their child from school.
Request and secure student records from sending schools, including IEPs	April - Sept 2016	ED, DOTL, DOO	This will be ongoing, as students may be accepted off the waitlist.
Arrange utility accounts	June 2016	ED	Phone, internet, electric
Communicate with NYCDOE on transportation and food	July – Aug 2016	DOO	
Arrange for AED/CPR training of staff	July – Aug 2016	DOO	
Create class rosters	Aug 2016	ED, DOTL, DOO	Disseminate to staff and families
Instructional			
Apply for IB staff PD	Mar - April 2016	ED / DOTL	In consultation with IBO
Academic program development of assessment protocol, POI /curriculum	Jan - Aug 2016	DOTL	With Global Language & HYPOTHEkids
Participate in trainings, visit high-performing schools	Jan - June 2016	DOTL	IB, Dwight, Avenues World School
Develop agendas & plans for Summer Institute training & first year PD	March-July 2016	DOTL, ED	IB, Singapore Math, CKLA
Conduct Home Visits	May-Nov 2016	ED, DOTL, teachers	ELLs home visits completed by first day of instruction.
Create/obtain diagnostic assessment materials	June - Aug 2016	DOTL, ED	Include preliminary plan for Summer Sofari Program
Finalize Special Education policies and procedures,	June - Aug 2016	ED, DOTL, SPED Coord.	Include record keeping, pre-referral and referral process

M. Dissolution Plan

In the event of closure or dissolution of SICS, the Board shall delegate to the ED and the DOTL the responsibility to manage the dissolution process in accordance with Education Law §2851(2)(t). This process shall include notification to parents of children enrolled. A list of SICS students will be sent to the local district. SICS shall transfer student records to the student’s school district of residence, and the parents shall be notified of the transfer of records. The remaining assets of Sofara International Charter School, after satisfaction of outstanding debts pursuant to Education § 220, shall be transferred to another charter school within the school district where SICS is located or, if no such charter school exists, directly to the NYCDOE. SICS has ensured in its budget plan that it will segregate a fund of \$75,000 to be used in the event of the dissolution of the charter;. The dissolution process would begin with a meeting of the leadership team that will include at least the Board Chair, the Board Treasurer, ED, and legal counsel in order to solidify the full dissolution plan and timeline. The ED and the Board Chair would meet with representatives from the NYSED Office of Charter Schools or other appropriate staff to review and discuss the dissolution plan and timeline. The outcome of this meeting would be a final dissolution plan and timeline that would be used to manage the dissolution process. SICS ensures compliance with all applicable requirements of §219 and §220 of NYS Education Law. Employees will be notified in a timely manner and encouraged to see Unemployment Insurance benefits. Students and parents will be aided in identifying a new academic setting, if so needed.

Transfer of Assets: The contracted accountant, with support from the ED, will be responsible for developing a plan that will direct the transfer of assets. The contracted accountant will maintain an up-to-date inventory of the assets of the school. The contracted accountant, with the assistance of the Board Finance Committee, will attend to the payment of all of SICS’s outstanding debts. Once all debts are satisfied, a distribution of assets process will be initiated that complies with a prescribed plan that has been developed by the contracted accountant with the cooperation of the NYSED and NYCDOE Offices of Charter Schools. This plan will eventually detail what assets will be dispersed to which school(s), when, how and by whom. Any remaining funds that can be attributed to public funding will be paid over to the school district in an amount that is proportional to the number of students enrolled. This plan will be presented to the Board’s Executive Committee for review and approval prior to its implementation.