

Table of Contents

I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment, and Community	1
A. Mission Statement and Objectives	1
B. Key Design Elements	2
C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention	3
D. Community to be Served.....	6
E. Public Outreach	7
F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact.....	11
II. Educational Plan	11
A. Achievement Goals.....	11
B. School Schedule and Calendar	14
C. Curriculum and Instruction	15
D. Assessment System	24
E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards	28
F. School Culture and Climate	29
G. Special Student Populations and Related Services	32
III. Organizational and Fiscal Plan	36
A. Applicant Group Capacity	36
B. Board of Trustees and Governance	39
C. Management and Staffing	42
C.1 Charter Management Organization	45
D. Evaluation	45
E. Professional Development.....	49
G. Insurance	52
H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services.....	52
I. Family and Community Involvement	54
J. Financial Management	57
K. Budget and Cash Flow	58
L. Pre-Opening Plan	58
M. Dissolution Plan	60
Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures	61
Attachment 2: Evidence of Community Outreach	63
Attachment 3: Sample Schedules: Staff / Student / First Year Calendar	90
Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy	96
Attachment 5: Board Information / By-Laws / Code of Ethics	104
Attachment 8: Hiring and Personnel Policies	246
Attachment 9: Budget	266

I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment, and Community

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

Mission: The mission of Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology (Exploration) is to engage learners, their families, and the community in the processes of scientific inquiry and the use of innovative technology to develop the social, emotional, and academic tools necessary to thrive in school and in today's global world.

Objectives of Exploration: Exploration objectives are listed below and are aligned to the school mission, current and evidence-based educational practices, and the applicable New York State and federal regulations:

- Increase student achievement in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics through an extended and comprehensive academic program with school-family-community partnerships.
- Ensure that students are at (or above) grade level performance upon transitioning to middle school.
- Embed daily innovative science and technology inquiry opportunities for students to actively engage with cross-content learning through research, inquiry/questioning, critical thinking, and problem solving; ensure multiple modes of learning, oral presentation, and writing to illustrate learning.
- Balance explicit and differentiated instruction in classroom and lab-based learning experiences to provide multi-modal opportunities for learning and application of cross-curricular content. Promote a balance of student-directed and teacher-led learning across the school day and year.
- Support whole child development and school-family-community partnerships through classroom/school-based supports and linkages to existing community resources.
- Provide opportunities for students and their families to participate with science and technology experts and leaders in our community to foster 21st century skills.
- Offer comprehensive and innovative professional development (PD) and professional learning (including instructional coaching) for instructional staff, ensuring integration of best practices and current technology into Exploration's pedagogy practices, with the purpose of supporting and enhancing students' learning.

Furthering the Objectives specified in Education Law Section 2502(2): Exploration will materially further the following objectives, specified in Education Law Section 2502(2):

- **Improve student learning and achievement:** We will improve student learning and achievement by:
 - Creating and implementing a rigorous, inquiry-based, common core learning standards (CCLS)-aligned curriculum, as further outlined in the Curriculum and Instruction section;
 - Implementing ongoing assessment (summative, formative, and benchmark) to create a culture of data-driven instruction, as further explained in the Assessment System section;
 - Providing strategic and regular PD to our teachers and staff in order to make sure they are targeting student needs and differentiating instruction so that all students reach their specified learning goals, as discussed in the Professional Development section; and
 - Requiring an extended school day and school year to ensure that our staff has adequate time to attain the goals set forth in the Achievement Goals section.
- **Increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure.**

As outlined in our Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention section and our Admissions Policies and Procedures section, we have implemented targeted strategies to ensure enrollment and retention of English language learner (ELL) students, students who receive free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL), and students with special needs. We hope to expand the learning opportunities for these students by providing a rich academic experience with unique opportunities to approach science and inquiry-based learning, including (but not limited to) our Units of Exploration, extended ELA instruction, and a strong and vibrant

school culture, centered around student achievement. Further, since Exploration would be the only science and technology-based elementary school in the Rochester area, we believe our school will fill a unique need in the community.

- **Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.**

Different and innovative teaching methods include scientific inquiries and lab-based learning opportunities based in the principles of project-based learning that ultimately provide students with the opportunity to participate in unique, cross-curricular units of study. Students will participate in unique, cross-curricular units of study, driven by the CCLS and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). They will receive multiple opportunities throughout the day to collaborate with each other, particularly around problem solving and Units of Exploration, which are further discussed in the Curriculum and Instruction section.

B. Key Design Elements

Our primary reasons for starting Exploration are as follows:

- To improve student learning and achievement;
- To increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure; and
- To encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.

To meet these goals, we will give an enrollment preference for students who reside in the Rochester City School District (RCSD). We believe that this group of students, in particular, is at the greatest risk of academic failure due to the lack of high performing schools in the RCSD, which is facing the lowest graduation rates in the entire state.

As further discussed in the Curriculum and Instruction section, the Exploration applicant group believes that to be successful in college, career, and beyond, our students must demonstrate a keen understanding of the core subject areas, including ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies, and, more importantly, how those core subject areas relate to each other and the world at large. They must also master the 21st century skills required to skillfully navigate the experiences that await them upon graduation. To this end, following are the key design elements for our school that are aligned with our mission and the other sections set forth in this application.

Cross-Curricular, Scientific Inquiry, and Lab-Based Learning Opportunities

Exploration is committed to a school experience for students and families that will foster habits and dispositions known to be important in our global and 21st century world, such as critical thinking, constructing explanations, communicating information, planning, effective execution of tasks and experiments, and obtaining and evaluating information for application. Science inquiry experiences are a vehicle for this deeper learning and development (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008). As discussed in our Curriculum and Instruction section, we believe that the inquiry and lab-based learning, as rooted in project based approaches, will be the most effective way to provide our students with the 21st century skills and dispositions necessary to thrive in college and beyond. This belief is aligned to our mission and has guided our curricular, instructional, and staffing decisions.

Balanced and Differentiated Instruction

Exploration recognizes the need to balance instructional opportunities and differentiate processes, products, and content for students to ensure attainment of rigorous academic standards. Through a balance of explicit instruction with active engagement in science and technology experiences, Exploration staff will foster both foundational skill development and higher-order thinking via teacher- and student-led instruction, inquiry, and exploration (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006; Bloom, 1956). Exploration's academic program will always position students as active learners and emphasize deep learning and understanding through a balanced approach (Taylor, 2000; Burnard, 1999).

Ongoing Professional Development

Exploration will employ teachers, instructors, and intervention specialists who possess the same dispositions we hope to foster in our students. All staff will be expected to be constantly assessing, exploring, examining, and improving their professional practices to ensure fidelity to the Exploration academic program and school design (Nikolic & Cabaj, 2000). As discussed in our PD section, we have included research-based practices, guided by the work of The New Teacher Project (TNTP). PD will focus on improving teacher practices – planning and implementing content effectively, using data and assessment to appropriately drive instruction, and investing students and families in setting and attaining rigorous student achievement goals.

Data-Driven Instruction and Accountability Aligned to Rigorous Academic Standards

Exploration is deeply committed to the academic success of enrolled students, and is, therefore, dedicated to ensuring that all students meet or exceed the expectations set forth by the New York State CCLS. Exploration will implement data-driven instruction and programming; the data we collect will inform class, school, and Board decisions. Exploration’s assessment plan outlines the multiple and repeated measures to track students’ growth trajectories and progress toward rigorous standards and includes diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment tools that are regularly reviewed and reflected upon. Exploration leadership and staff, as well as students and parents/guardians, will regularly engage dynamic data dialogues as a means to individualize and differentiate supports with the purpose of fostering student progress toward rigorous standards (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Love, 2009).

Community Connections and Partnerships

Exploration is committed to a vibrant and safe school community, as well as strong connections to the surrounding community and associated partnerships. Through targeted activities and PD, Exploration aims to create an atmosphere and climate in which everyone values families and the community as co-creators. The Board recognizes that a strong school community (culture and climate) is critical for academic and social successes (Durlak, 2007). Therefore, school-family-community partnerships are identified as a means to strengthen and promote academic, cognitive, and social-emotional development (Christenson & Shreidan, 2011; Epstein, 1986). Positive and two-way partnerships with families and community partners will be fostered through a strengths-based approach and partnership perspective (Cochran & Henderson, 1986).

Serving the Diverse Needs of All Students: Our key design elements summarize our plan for meeting the needs of all students. To illustrate, as indicated by our scientific inquiry and lab-based approach, we expect that all students will master the higher-order thinking skills and competencies necessary to thrive in the 21st century, as indicated by our scientific inquiry and lab-based approach. We recognize that to achieve this goal with all learners, we will need to appropriately select, train, and develop our staff, engage students and their families, and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students who are performing above and below expectations. We hope to do so in a way that holds every level of the organization accountable, which is why we will rely so heavily on data to inform our decisions.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Projected Enrollment and Rationale: Exploration will begin with 175 students: 75 in kindergarten and 100 in first grade, with 25 students per class. We will add an additional 75 kindergarten students each year thereafter until we reach capacity at grade six. Following is our projected enrollment:

Grades	Ages	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
K	4-5	75	75	75	75	75
1 st	5-6	100	75	75	75	75
2 nd	6-7		96	75	75	75
3 rd	7-8			100	75	75

Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term						
4 th	8-9				100	75
5 th	9-10					100
Totals		175	246	325	400	475

The rationale for selecting our enrollment size is as follows:

- Exploration plans to enroll elementary school students from the RCSD. Since many students in the RCSD enter kindergarten already behind their more affluent peers, we firmly believe that starting our school at the elementary level, providing a solid foundation, particularly targeting vocabulary development and literacy skills in the early years, will have the largest impact on students residing in RCSD.
- By opening in year one with kindergarten and first grade, we can invest our students and their families in our mission and school culture from day one. This way, a longer school day and school year, and rigorous scientific inquiry programming, will be a part of their school experience from the very beginning.
- We created our class sizes of 25 students per class, which, when accounting for our science and technology innovation instructors, will allow for a student-to-teacher ratio of 12:1 while providing sufficient funding to build a strong academic team in our founding year – essential for meeting our students’ needs.
- And, finally, we anticipate an annual attrition rate of approximate 10%. Other charter school leaders in the Rochester community have indicated that attrition may be higher, closer to 15%, with the founding classes. By allotting 100 students in our founding first grade class and employing the retention strategies listed below, we have proactively accounted for any attrition that may occur.

Meeting/Exceeding Enrollment and Retention Targets: In order to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets established by the Board of Regents, we are conducting ongoing recruitment and outreach at organizations that serve students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, students with disabilities, and ELL students, including (but not limited to) the Monroe County Social Services, the Carlson Metrocenter, the YMCA, and Hillside Children’s Center. We also plan to have ads in or on local urban and Spanish language media outlets in high visibility areas. We will continue to distribute flyers in areas with the highest poverty and at refugee outreach organizations. Finally, we will reach out to families directly by sending direct mailings to Rochester City residents and going door-to-door to share information about, and an application for, Exploration.

Proposed Application, Admissions, and Enrollment Policies: The proposed application for enrollment at Exploration will require only necessary information to admit new students and is not considered a pre-registration form. The application will reflect the guidelines set forth by the New York State Department of Education. Applications will be available on our website and will be distributed in hard copy to local community organizations, including (but not limited to) The Boys and Girls Club of Rochester, Head Start programs, and Hillside Children’s Center. Families or guardians of students interested in enrolling in the school must submit a completed application by April 1 each year. Applications, once completed, can be hand-delivered, mailed, or e-mailed. The school will provide email or postcard confirmation for all applications received by the April 1 deadline. Applications that are submitted after the April 1 deadline will be added to the waitlist. The waitlist will expire annually at the lottery drawing for the next school year.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of open seats in the school, a random lottery will be held to select the students. Preference will be given to students residing in the RCSD and to students whose siblings are enrolled in the school. Students who are not selected from the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which their name is drawn from the lottery. In the event that vacancies become

available, the waitlist students will be invited to attend the school. However, we will no longer invite students to fill vacancies after the end of first quarter each year. For a more detailed description of the Exploration admissions policies and procedures, see Attachment 1.

Recruitment: Recruitment and retention will be focused toward students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch in the RCSD. In order to reach a broad cross-section of prospective students, we are conducting an extensive outreach campaign throughout the Rochester community. For instance, we have shared information about Exploration in accessible formats and languages with local media outlets, including radio stations, news organizations, and local parent websites. We have also contacted religious groups, community centers and organizations, as well as state and local officials to notify them of our program, the students that we are planning to serve, and means for obtaining further information. In addition to hosting various events throughout the community, we have created a separate email address and phone number, where individuals can reach us with questions or comments about Exploration.

In order to recruit special education students, we will continue to reach out to organizations and agencies serving children with special needs and their families to let them know we will have staff and resources available to meet the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans (504 Plans). For example, one such agency is Hillside Children's Center – a provider of care for youth and families with a wide range of emotional, behavioral, or life-circumstance challenges. Hillside offers mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, special education, safety net, and developmental disabilities services to children and families throughout Central and Western New York. We have collaborated with Hillside to host a community meeting at which we offered materials about our program and addressed any questions or concerns that parents had about Exploration.

To reach families with limited English proficiency, we will translate promotional materials into Nepali, Somali, and Arabic – the most commonly spoken languages by immigrant and refugee families in the area. We will advertise in non-English media outlets, and reach out to organizations and agencies serving ELL families. We have, and will continue to, connect with local refugee organizations, including Catholic Family Center's Refuge, Immigration, and Language Services Department, the Somali Center, and RCSD's Rochester International School (RIA), to recruit refugee and immigrant families to the school and ensure linguistic diversity.

Finally, in order to ensure that we reach students whose families may be less informed about available school options, we will conduct direct outreach efforts, including going to door-to-door in high poverty neighborhoods throughout Rochester to notify parents about our program, and sending out direct mailings with information about Exploration with a copy of the application to families residing in the RCSD.

Retention: According to charter school leaders in the Rochester community, most student withdrawals result from lack of guidance and support around school policies and procedures, particularly involving academic and discipline matters. As a result, our primary retention strategy for all students is a strong academic and social emotional learning (SEL) program that engages students and families by providing expanded learning opportunities and school community supports to promote accelerated progress towards rigorous standards. More specifically, in order to provide sufficient academic support, we plan to maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio and have intervention specialists who will push into classrooms to ensure that students have a resource-rich environment and time and attention to reach mastery. In addition, Exploration will provide targeted PD around the learning styles of students in poverty and provide wraparound services to address student needs, including a full-time nurse. Our social-emotional program support will include a family liaison and a social worker to determine and address student and family concerns. Finally, we will make every effort to select a central location in the City of Rochester with access to public transportation to make it easier for parents and families to travel to the school.

In order to retain special education students, Exploration will hire the necessary teachers and administrators with special education certification and ensure that instruction is provided in accordance with

students' IEPs or 504 plans. Special education programming and related services support (e.g., speech-language) will be provided per a student's IEP and then based on identified need, impacting academic performance and growth. Regular screening, assessment, and progress monitoring is planned to benchmark performance and track growth. Individualized learning/intervention plans will be developed for all students who would benefit from additional support to accelerate academic growth.

In order to retain ELL students, Exploration will engage an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teacher who will work with staff to provide appropriate instruction to students, as well as work one-on-one or in small groups to help students acquire English. Communications with families will be in the home language. We will have translators available for parent conferences and school events, so that ELL students and families can be full participants in the Exploration experience.

Ensuring Adequate Enrollment and Full Accessibility: In order to retain students from our target community, and continuously meet or exceed the enrollment targets set forth by the Board of Regents throughout our charter term, we will continue to conduct outreach and advertise throughout the Rochester community as described above.

D. Community to be Served

The Value of Exploration: The need for additional high quality educational options within the RCSD is increasing. Many schools within the district are low-performing and are not adequately preparing elementary school students for the rigors of middle school, high school, college, and beyond. If approved, Exploration will add tremendous value to the Rochester community. Students in grades K-6 currently have no options to attend a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)-focused school, and there are limited options to attend high-performing elementary schools. Additionally, Exploration has a strong focus on school-family-community partnerships that will provide additional support to our students, as well as the families and parents in the Rochester community (see the Family and Community Involvement section). See below for additional information about the tremendous need in the Rochester community and how Exploration will serve students in the community well.

Anticipated Student Population: Exploration will recruit and serve students from the RCSD, which has the highest poverty rate among the NYS Big 5 districts. Twenty-two percent of schools in the RCSD have a poverty rate of 90% or higher. The current student population in the RCSD¹ is as follows: 60.1% African American/Black, 25.6% Hispanic, 10.2% White, and 4.1% Asian/Native American/East Indian/Other; 84% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; 16.5% with special needs, and 10% with limited English proficiency; and 87 different languages are spoken.

Student Need in the RCSD and How Exploration Will Address These Needs: There are very limited options for students to attend high-performing public schools in the RCSD, and there are no public elementary schools options with a STEM focus. The RCSD has a graduation rate of 43%, and of 54 schools, only nine are in good standing, 29 are focus schools, and 16 are priority schools. Furthermore, the 2013-2014 State tests² indicate that overall proficiency, or students who scored at levels three and four, is 5% in ELA and 7% in mathematics.

In order to address the need for high-performing public school options, Exploration will provide a rigorous cross-curricular program with an emphasis on science and technology. By keeping students in school for a longer day (8 hours) and a longer school year (195 days), Exploration will allow students adequate time to master grade level standards, beginning in kindergarten. Furthermore, by embedding the scientific inquiry method throughout the curriculum, Exploration will foster curiosity, critical thinking, and analysis while giving students a protocol for how to approach problem solving and learning in core subjects. By providing lab time each day, students will be able to dive deeper into the content knowledge that they

¹ <http://www.rcsdk12.org/domain/8>

² <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=800000050065&year=2013&createreport=1&38ELA=1&38MATH=1&48SCI=1>

learned in literacy, math, science, social studies, and the arts. And, given that science and technology are becoming more important to access opportunities in our global economy, and that there are no opportunities that currently exist for Rochester elementary school students to get hands-on scientific and inquiry based learning experiences, we believe that Exploration will add tremendous value to the existing options for students in the RCSD.

Why Rochester and Applicant Group Ability to Serve Community: We chose to open our school in the City of Rochester because we care tremendously about the City. We recognize the challenges that students in the RCSD are facing and are determined to change the educational outcomes that are currently plaguing it. As Rochester community members, business owners, educators, and parents, we value education – specifically, science education – and believe it is the vehicle toward ensuring Rochester's success in the future. We are motivated, committed, and passionate about implementing an innovative, scientific approach to learning, for even the youngest learners.

Finally, the Exploration applicant group maintains strong ties with organizations throughout the Rochester community, including Hillside Children's Center, EnCompass: Resources for Learning, the Community Place of Greater Rochester, and the YMCA, among others. This network, combined with individual Board member expertise, will help ensure that we are delivering each of our students a quality education, bolstered by community support.

Enhancing Educational Options: If approved, Exploration will be the first K-6 STEM school located within RCSD school limits. We believe that providing this option for students will greatly enhance and expand the educational options for students in this community. Our program will introduce students to rigorous scientific inquiry and lab-based learning in all subject areas and will employ the following innovative methods: hands-on, Units of Exploration, allowing for collaboration and implementation of the concepts explored during science and technology blocks; cross-curricular units of study that will provide students with numerous opportunities to read, write, speak, and listen in all core subject areas; and balanced and differentiated instruction to allow all students to access the rigorous, higher-order thinking skills and dispositions, embedded in the scientific method.

Evidence of Demand:

In addition to extensive community outreach endeavors, many of which were directed at parents and families (see Section E), the applicant group shared an overview document that outlined program and timeline details with parents in the community and asked them to sign a petition if they were interested in learning more and/or potentially enrolling their children in the proposed school; 301 signatures were collected; 208 indicated support for our program, and 192 of the 208 reside in the target community. Parents who are both supportive of our program and reside in the target community listed a total of 339 school-aged children. Additionally, the Exploration team attended four school open houses/parent events at Rochester City Schools #19, #33, #34, and #39 between September 18 and October 10, 2014, and spoke to parents of the children currently enrolled there. We gathered a total of 99 parent surveys on science education and school options in Rochester, which indicated that parents supported a school like Exploration because it would engage their children academically in the core learning areas, and socially and emotionally, while providing access to science and technology options that would help them succeed in the future. We are continuing our outreach and recruitment efforts, but the support garnered so far indicates that there is a strong demand and interest for a high performing elementary STEM option in the RCSD.

E. Public Outreach

The Exploration applicant group conducted extensive community outreach in order to understand the needs of the community, gauge support for the school proposal, and elicit feedback to enhance school design. Specifically, Exploration has held meetings at community centers and various organizations in Rochester, conducted outreach efforts at community events (i.e., family meetings) throughout Rochester,

held meetings with leaders of the Rochester community, and spoke with parents to seek their input on the school program and inquire about their support. A detailed list of these meetings is included below with evidence of community outreach and parent support included in Attachment 2. Feedback received at each of these events is bolded; a summary of how we incorporated this feedback into our school design follows.

- **Spring 2014 – January 2015:** Members of the Exploration team met with leaders in the Rochester community, including (but not limited to) the RCSD Superintendent, the RCSD Office of School Innovation, the RCSD Chief of Staff, the County Executive, the Monroe County Commissioner of Social Services and her leadership team, the City of Rochester Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development, the Monroe County Director of Planning and Development, the Children’s Institute, the President of the Rochester Business Alliance, and the Executive Directors at the Wilson Foundation and the Farash Foundation.
- **August 2014:** Members of the Exploration team approached community members with children at public places throughout Rochester (i.e., public market) and provided a brief overview of the Exploration school design. A total of 55 individuals were approached. They were then asked, generally, if they had any input or feedback to help make the school better. Family responses ranged from commenting on their perspectives on science learning to their opinions of charters and public school performance, as well as their identification of areas where all schools need to improve. The following summarizes some key quotes, by theme from the interviews; all of the parents’ feedback (See Attachment 2A) was incorporated into the overall school design:

Role of Science in Learning

- ***“It’s so important to get kids excited about science...especially girls. There is a huge deficit of women in science.”***
- ***“Science is a great way to grab kids’ attention...technology is a necessity in today’s world.”***
- ***“My girls went to a charter school before we moved to Rochester. It was a brilliant school. Everything was technology and it made students and parents feel like they were actually learning something.”***
- ***“They don’t do enough science in RCSD.”***

Need for School Design

- ***“Sounds awesome if it incorporates art and music as well.”***
- ***“You need family support if the child is going to be successful.”***
- ***“Small class sizes are important.”***
- ***“A school needs to be ahead of technology, not playing catch up.”***
- ***“Kids who feel safe will learn better.”***
- ***“Serve the community.”***

Questions and Concerns

- ***“It looks good on paper, but would it really be different than any other school?”***
- ***“My son is a science and math kid but we really didn’t know that ‘til 4th grade, there was no indication in the primary grades.”***
- ***“Are students held to the same standards? What is the student/teacher ratio? Are there after or before school programs? Would there be sports/music/drama?”***
- ***“Technology is a good tool, but not very social.”***
- ***“How will behavior problems be addressed?”***
- ***“Science is great but will it help kids pass tests?”***
- **September – October 2014:** Friends of Exploration collected 99 parent surveys about science education and school options in Rochester that **indicated parents believed schools like Exploration focusing on science education and social-emotional programming with technology skills**

embedded was positive. They also shared additional ways that families can engage and partner with schools (Exploration) indicating that parent meetings, texting, and newsletters would be ideal to foster home-school partnerships. (See Attachment 2B).

- **October 2014:** The Exploration team surveyed parents to gauge interest in science focused charter schools. **Responses indicated that 90% of families were in favor of the charter school option and were looking for school options outside of the city schools.**
- **November 2014:** Held a Science FEAST (Families Engaging in Active Science-inquiry Together), where Rochester City youth and families were invited to attend an inquiry-based science fair; 53 families and 80 youth attended this event. There were 10 stations set up for kids and families to engage in scientific inquiry and exploration. Stations included: elephant toothpaste; exploding sandwich bags; flubber; mixing colors in milk; and many more. Parent resources were provided to expand scientific inquiry at home and surveys were collected as a means to gauge family's input on scientific learning and school design in elementary school. While the families and kids conducted experiments at each science lab, the volunteers hosting the labs talked with them about their experiences and perspectives. **Overwhelmingly, families were in favor of science as a vehicle for learning and referenced the fact that their children always had fun when conducting experiments.** The Science FEAST served as the foundation for the Units of Exploration embedded in the curriculum and instruction section. (See Attachment 2C).
- **December 2014:** Attended Education Community Open Houses at two Rochester locations, Charles Settlement House (431 Jay Street, Rochester, NY 14611) on December 1, 2014, and at Southwest Area Neighborhood Center (275 Dr. Samuel McCree Way, Rochester, NY 14611) on December 3, 2014, where we shared a synopsis of the proposed charter school. Exploration team members were available to answer questions and seek input. **Families indicated that they are interested in high quality option for elementary schools in Rochester that support students socially and emotionally.**
- **January 2015:** The Exploration team created a letter and a detailed flyer explaining the proposed school overview, grade levels served, and scheduled opening, if approved. The letter specified three community events that parents and members of the community could attend to learn more about the proposed school and share their comments and questions. The letter and flyer also included a phone number and an email address that community members could call to share comments or ask questions about the proposed school, in the event that they are unable to attend the events. (See Attachments 2D-2E).
- **January - March 2015:** Information about Exploration was posted on the following websites: (<http://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/exploration-charter-school>), [www.http://explorationrochester.org/](http://explorationrochester.org/), and http://rochester.freeclassifieds.com/classified_ads/Community/Local_News/k_c5Y-3FUvcB26gwWGrLqg%3d%3d (See Attachments 2F)..
- **January 12-13, 2015:** Established an email address (explorationcharter@e2ny.org) and website (<http://www.explorationrochester.com>) for all inquiries and communication.
- **January 13, 2015:** The Exploration team distributed the letter and the detailed flyer to 20 Rochester news outlets, 10 different City and State officials, 29 community organizations, seven local colleges and universities, five faith-based organizations, and 12 existing charter schools, and asked them to share the information with their constituents and solicit feedback. (See Attachment 2G).
- **January 14, 2015 – February 2, 2015:** Sent a second flyer and outreach letter, announcing the Exploration program and soliciting feedback to updated email contacts (bounced emails from initial mailing and emails that were obsolete due to staff changes) via explorationcharter@e2ny.org. (See Attachments 2D-2E).

- **January 27, 2015:** The Exploration team held information sessions, open to the public, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Sully Public Library (530 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609) and at the Carlson Metrocenter YMCA (444 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604) from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Notice of these meetings was provided to the public on January 13, 2015.
- **January 28, 2015:** The Exploration team held an information session, open to the public, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Hillside Children's Center (1337 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14609). Notice of this meeting was provided to the public on January 13, 2015.
- **January 30, 2015 (8:00-9:00 am):** Friends of Exploration engaged with City of Rochester residents to gain feedback and share information about the school. They went to targeted locations in the City of Rochester where groups of residents would be in attendance, and collected signatures to gauge parent support. Collected signatures at Community Circle (133 Hoover Drive, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 3, 2015 (10:30-12:40 p.m.):** Collected signatures at Department of Human Services (111 Westfall Road, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 5, 2015 (11:00-1:00 p.m.):** Collected signatures at Department of Social Services (691 St. Paul Blvd, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 6, 2015 (8:00-9:00 am):** Collected signatures during Discovery Charter School Community Circle (133 Hoover Drive, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 7, 2015 (1:00-3:00 pm):** Collected signatures at Walmart (1490 Hudson Ave, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 13, 2015 (9:00-11:00 am):** Collected signatures at Department of Social Services (691 St. Paul Blvd., Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **February 24, 2015 (10:00-12:00 am):** Collected signatures at Walmart (2150 Chili Ave, Rochester). (See Attachment 2H).
- **March 6, 2015**
 - Created Facebook page for Exploration with link to updated webpage (See Attachment 2I).
 - Requested Eagle Dream to update Exploration webpage with new information and added link to Facebook Page (See Attachment 2E).
 - Created Ad(s) (6 ads – different photos/same text) - set up to target demographic parents of children, ages 0-3 and 4-12 in Rochester, NY to establish interest in the development of Exploration (See Attachment 2J - ran from 3/6 thru 3/13); we anticipate it will reach up to 2,500 individuals in the Rochester community.
 - Posted information directing individuals to a Public Charter Schools of Rochester Sign-Up Fair where they can receive further information on Exploration (See Attachment 2K).
- **March 7, 2015 (9:00 – 3:00 pm):** Attended the Public Charter Schools of Rochester Sign-Up Fair at Ryan Community Center; Friends of Exploration joined the Rochester Charter School Expo (over 300+ attendees) to elicit feedback and gain support for Exploration. We also collected signatures indicating community support. **Community members were in favor of Charter School options in the Rochester community and were interested in understanding how they could enroll their child in Exploration.**
- **March 7, 2015 (10:00 – 1:00 pm):** Attended Community Basketball Games at 133 Hoover Drive; Friends of Exploration set up an information table at community basketball games (with 100+ attendees) to share information (in English and Spanish) and elicit feedback (signatures) from community members. We also collected signatures indicating community support.
- **March 9-11, 2015:** Created event on Exploration's Facebook page advertising focus group scheduled at Rochester Central Public Library (See Attachment 2L).

- **March 10, 2015:** Email blast announcing the upcoming information session on March 12, 2015 (went out to full email list mentioned above) at the Central Public Library.
- **March 12, 2015:** The Exploration team held an information session, open to the public, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at The Central Library (115 South Ave, Rochester, NY). Notice of this meeting was provided to the public on March 10, 2015.
- **March 12, 2015:** Shared 250 surveys with Head Start programs in Rochester. (See Attachment 2M); 45 were returned with questions completed; **36 out of 37 families indicated that the programmatic concepts for Exploration were promising; 38 out of 45 families indicated that the science and technology focus would support their children’s academic, social, and emotional development, and would also support their children’s ability to think critically and problem solve.**
- **Ongoing:** We have received 26 letters of support from individuals and organizations throughout the community, examples of which are included in Attachments 2N-2T.

The feedback listed above is reflected throughout our program design. Specifically, we have: 1) allotted additional time for science learning and lab based experiences (“Units of Exploration”) than a district school; 2) we have maintained a low student-to-teacher ratio; 3) we have ensured explicit social-emotional programming and a clear and effective code of conduct to promote a safe and positive school environment; 4) we have created opportunities for students to engage with technology on a regular basis; 5) we have allotted time for art education throughout the week; and 6) we have established a school-family-community model in order to ensure strong and effective partnerships in and out of the school.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

There are currently 18,000 elementary students in Rochester who may attend one of 39 public schools, 14 public charter schools, or approximately 21 private/parochial schools. Exploration does not anticipate having a negative programmatic impact on other K-6 schools in the Rochester area. Our review of the current school options indicate that the added students at Exploration will not dramatically impact enrollment at either traditional public or other public charter schools in the Rochester city and surrounding areas. Exploration would provide a unique elementary school experience for students and their families in the Rochester area, since no other elementary school in the area has a unique focus on science and technology. We will have 75-100 students per grade level – a very small proportion of the RCSD – even when we are at full capacity. Considering the large number of elementary students in the Rochester area, the unique and innovative school design, community outreach efforts, and the waitlists at other Rochester-area elementary charter schools, Exploration does not anticipate challenges with enrollment (capacity) or retention of students.

The expected fiscal impact of Exploration on the RCSD budget is less than 3/4ths of 1%. The adopted FY 2014-15 RCSD budget is \$788,259,462, premised on a projected enrollment of 28,119. In year one, Exploration expects to enroll 175 students (0.6% of current RCSD enrollment) and receive per pupil revenue of \$2,159,500 (0.3% of current RCSD budget). In year five, Exploration expects to enroll 475 students (1.7% of current RCSD enrollment) and receive per pupil revenue of approximately \$5,861,500 (0.7% of current RCSD budget). The fiscal impact on other public and non-public schools in the area cannot be defensibly calculated, but it is reasonably expected to be equally immaterial.

II. Educational Plan

A. Achievement Goals

Exploration will utilize the renewal benchmarks as the framework for our proposed school goals. We believe that the framework will accurately measure our performance and will be a valuable tool in ensuring student achievement. See our academic achievement goals below.

Goal 1: Exploration students will perform at or above grade level in ELA.
<i>Student Progress Over Time (Growth)</i>

- **Method 1 (Aggregate Growth):** Each year, under the state's growth model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in ELA for all tested students in grades 4-6 will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile (50%).
- **Method 2 (Subgroup Growth):** Each year, under the state's growth model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in ELA, for all tested students with special needs and ELL students in grades 4-8, will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.
- **Method 3 (Performance Index: Aggregate Growth to Proficiency):** Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) as set forth in the NCLB accountability system.
- **Method 4 (Performance Index: Subgroup Growth to Proficiency):** Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI), for students with special needs and ELL students, will meet the AMO as set forth in the NCLB accountability system.

Student Achievement (Attainment)

- **Method 5 (Aggregate Proficiency):** By year three of the charter term, 40% of students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA exam. By year four of the charter term, 50% of students who have been enrolled in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA exam. By year five of the charter term, 60% of students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA assessment.

Since the 2014 current statewide proficiency for ELA is approximately 31% and the Rochester proficiency for ELA is approximately 6%, we believe that the goals above are rigorous and reasonable considering the many variables that we must take into account when planning our students' academic success. As indicated by the goals above, we aim to nearly double the statewide proficiency rate in ELA by the end of our charter term. In the first two years of our charter term, our students will not take the state exams, but we will ensure that they are on track to meeting the aforementioned goals, as described further below.

- **Method 6 (Subgroup Proficiency):** By year three of the charter term, 15% of students with special needs or ELLs, who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA exam. By year four of the charter term, 25% of students with special needs or ELL students who have been enrolled in Exploration for at least two years, will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA exam. By year five of the charter term, 35% of students with special needs or ELL students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years, will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA assessment.

Since the current statewide proficiency for ELA is approximately 31% for all students and the Rochester proficiency for ELA is approximately 6% for all students, we believe that the goals above are rigorous and reasonable, considering the many variables that we must take into account when planning our students' academic success. As indicated by the goals above, we aim to have our students with special needs and ELL populations exceed the current proficiency rate, for all students, by the end of the charter term. In the first years two years of our charter term, our students will not take the state exams, but we will ensure that they are on track to meeting the aforementioned goals, as described further below.

- **Method 7 (Similar Schools Comparison):** Each year, Exploration will exceed its predicted level of performance on the New York State ELA exam with by an effect size of at least 0.3 (performing higher than expected to a small degree), as measured by an annual comparative regression analysis, controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.
- **Method 8 (District Comparison):** Each year, students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will outperform their grade level counterparts in the RCSD by 10 percentage points in proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State ELA assessment.
- **Method 9 (District Comparison, Subgroups):** Each year, students with disabilities and ELL students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will outperform their grade level counterparts in the RCSD by 10 percentage points in proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State ELA assessment.

Charter Specific Growth Measures

- **Method 10: (Growth):** By the end of each year, 95% of students will have achieved their growth target in reading based on mean growth in the latest norming study for students who had a starting RIT score in the same 10 point block, as measured by performance on the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP) assessment.

Goal 2: Exploration students will perform at or above grade level in mathematics.

Student Progress Over Time (Growth)

- **Method 1 (Aggregate Growth):** Each year, under the state's growth model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile

in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-6 will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile (50%).

- **Method 2 (Subgroup Growth):** Each year, under the state's growth model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics, for all tested students with special needs and ELL students in grades 4-6, will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile
- **Method 3 (Performance Index: Aggregate Growth to Proficiency):** Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) as set forth in the NCLB accountability system.
- **Method 4 (Performance Index: Subgroup Growth to Proficiency):** Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI), for students with special needs and ELL students will meet the AMO as set forth in the NCLB accountability system.

Student Achievement (Attainment)

- **Method 5 (Aggregate Proficiency):** By year three of the charter term, 50% of students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State math exam. By year four of the charter term, 60% of students who have been enrolled in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State mathematics exam. By year five of the charter term, 75% of students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State mathematics assessment.

Since the current statewide proficiency for mathematics is approximately 35% and the Rochester proficiency for math is approximately 7%, we believe that the goals above are rigorous, and reasonable, considering the many variables that we must take into account when planning our students' academic success. As indicated by the goals above, we aim to more than double the statewide proficiency rate in mathematics, by the end of our charter term. In the first years two years of our charter term, our students will not take the state exams, but we will ensure that they are on track to meeting the aforementioned goals, as described further below.

- **Method 6 (Subgroup Proficiency):** By year three of the charter term, 15% of students with special needs or ELL students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State mathematics exam. By year four of the charter term, 25% of students with special needs or ELL students who have been enrolled in Exploration for at least two years, will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State mathematics exam. By year five of the charter term, 35% of students with special needs or ELL students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years, will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State mathematics assessment.

Since the current statewide proficiency for mathematics is approximately 35% for all students and the Rochester proficiency for ELA is approximately 7% for all students, we believe that the goals above are rigorous, and reasonable, considering the many variables that we must take into account when planning our students' academic success. As indicated by the goals above, we aim to have our students with special needs and ELL populations meet the current proficiency rate, for all students, by the end of the charter term. In the first years two years of our charter term, our students will not take the state exams, but we will ensure that they are on track to meeting the aforementioned goals, as described further below.

- **Method 7 (Similar Schools Comparison):** Each year, Exploration will exceed its predicted level of performance on the New York State mathematics exam with by an effect size of at least 0.3 (performing higher than expected to a small degree), as measured by an annual comparative regression analysis, controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.
- **Method 8 (District Comparison):** Each year, students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will outperform their grade level counterparts in the RCSD by 10 percentage points in proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State math assessment.
- **Method 9 (District Comparison, Subgroups):** Each year, students with disabilities and ELL students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will outperform their grade level counterparts in the RCSD by 10 percentage points in proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State mathematics assessment.

Charter Specific Growth Measures

- **Method 10: (Growth):** By the end of each year, 95% of students will have achieved their growth target in mathematics based on mean growth in the latest norming study for students who had a starting RIT score in the same 10 point block, as measured by performance on the NWEA-MAP assessment.

Because our students will not sit for the state assessments until third grade, Exploration will implement the NWEA MAP assessment, a nationally normed standardized assessment, to evaluate student performance in all grades and gauge our progress toward meeting the stated goals.

Goal 3: Exploration students will perform at or above grade level in Science.

- **Method 1 (Absolute):** Each year, 85% of students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will attain a level 3 or 4 on the New York State science assessment.

- **Method 2 (Comparative):** Each year, students who have sustained enrollment in Exploration for at least two years will outperform their grade level counterparts in the RCSD by 10 percentage points in proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State science assessment.

While we value social studies education tremendously, we have prioritized science education in order to stay laser focused on the school's mission and key design elements. Students will still receive social studies instruction and will be regularly assessed to ensure that they are mastering grade level social studies standards.

Goal 4: Exploration will achieve an Accountability Status of "In Good Standing" each year, as measured by the NCLB accountability system.

- **Method 1:** Exploration will achieve an Accountability Status of "In Good Standing" each year, as measured by the NCLB accountability system.

B. School Schedule and Calendar

The weekly student and staff schedules and proposed school calendar are in Attachments 3(a) and 3(b) respectively. The table below illustrates the daily and weekly total instructional time in each subject area:

Subject	Total Daily Instructional Time	Total Weekly Instructional Time
ELA	100	500
Math	60	300
Social Studies	50	250
Science	40	200
Physical Education	25	125
Art	25	125
Social Emotional Learning	50 (2x per week)	100
Inquiry and Innovation Labs (Cross – Curricular Learning)	50 (3x per week)	150
Intervention (ELA and/or Math)	50 (2x per week)	100

Length of School day and Year: As indicated on the attached calendar and weekly schedules, the Exploration school day will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The school year will begin on August 22, 2016 and continue through June 30, 2017. Exploration will have 195 instructional days, with seven full school days of the 195 allocated exclusively for PD.

Intervention: Core intervention will be integrated in the regular instructional blocks, by using various whole and small group differentiated learning techniques, as detailed in the Special Students and Populations section. Additionally, all students will receive 100 minutes of intervention time each week during the Walk to Intervention block. The lead teachers and intervention teachers will teach this instructional block. Students who need additional intervention/supplemental instruction to supplement the regular and intervention blocks will receive push-in support from intervention specialists during the regular instruction periods and pull-out intervention services during art or gym class, as needed.

Students will also receive art or gym each day. The art or gym teacher will teach at this time, while other teachers will have shared planning time.

Student Groupings: Students will be grouped heterogeneously in all classes, except intervention. During intervention, students will be grouped homogeneously by skill level, and grade level teachers, intervention teachers, and the curriculum and instruction coordinator will provide targeted reading instruction. Teachers will be grouped as indicated in the attached Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule in Attachment 3(a).

Teacher Workday: As indicated by the proposed school calendar and the Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule, teachers will begin school on August 15, 2016. The last day of school will be June 30, 2017. Students will begin school on August 22nd and will attend school for a half day the first school week. Since we are beginning with kindergarten and first grade students, many of whom may never have been to school before, we felt that it was important to have half days to help them transition properly. Even though

students will have an early dismissal during the first week, teachers will be expected to stay for the full school day (i.e., until 4:00 p.m.), which will allow for additional individual and common planning time.

As noted in the schedule, full-time teachers will teach from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with 50 minutes of planning time (individual), 50 minutes of common grade level planning time and/or PD (discussed further below), and 30 minutes for lunch each day. Part-time teachers (i.e., innovation, gym, and art teachers) will teach in either the morning or afternoon, Monday through Friday.

Teachers will have five consecutive days of PD (Summer Institute) from August 15-20 from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. In addition, teachers will receive ongoing PD throughout the year through monthly PD at staff meetings (60 minutes/month), weekly PD at scheduled grade-level meetings/common planning time (100 minutes/week), and full day PD as indicated in the proposed calendar.

C. Curriculum and Instruction

Mission and Educational Program Design: Exploration’s mission is to engage learners, their families, and the community in the processes of scientific inquiry and the use of innovative technology to develop the social, emotional, and academic tools necessary to thrive in school and in today’s global world. In order to attain this mission, we must begin with what it means to thrive in the global world, as it exists today, and will exist, once our students graduate from high school and college. Global competence, as defined by International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), “means that students in the 21st century need to be able to understand prevailing world conditions, issues, and trends through an interdisciplinary lens ... in order to understand the interconnectedness of the issue and its broad themes as well as subtle nuances.”³

Furthermore, Tony Wagner, author of *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need- and What We Can Do About It*, argues that to succeed in the 21st century, our students must master the following critical competencies⁴: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Initiative and Entrepreneurialism, Curiosity and Imagination, Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence, Effective Oral and Written Communication, Agility and Adaptability, and Accessing and Analyzing Information.

To be successful in college and beyond, we believe our students must demonstrate a keen understanding of the core subject areas, including ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies, and how those core subject areas relate to each other and the world at large. They must also master the critical competencies for the 21st century in order to skillfully navigate the experiences that await them upon graduation.

Curriculum Framework: As we seek to prepare our students to succeed in the 21st century, we welcome the accountability that accompanies charter schools. We recognize that our students must reach proficiency in all subject areas, first and foremost, as measured by the New York State testing program. However, we also know that knowledge alone will not suffice. “Today’s life and work environments require far more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life and career skills.”⁵

As a result, we have developed our curriculum framework as a guide for navigating the complex work environment in the globally competitive information age. More specifically, we have embedded a rigorous **scientific inquiry approach** into our curriculum, with hands-on, **lab-based learning** as part of the daily experience, and have made sure that our units of study are **cross-curricular**, so that our students are able to understand the interconnectedness of today’s world that is essential for their success once they enter it.

In an effort to make sure that we address the individual needs of each child, we will also **balance the**

³ http://bie.org/blog/developing_globally_competent_students_through_pbl

⁴ <http://www.tonywagner.com/7-survival-skills>

⁵ http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/P21_Framework_Definitions.pdf

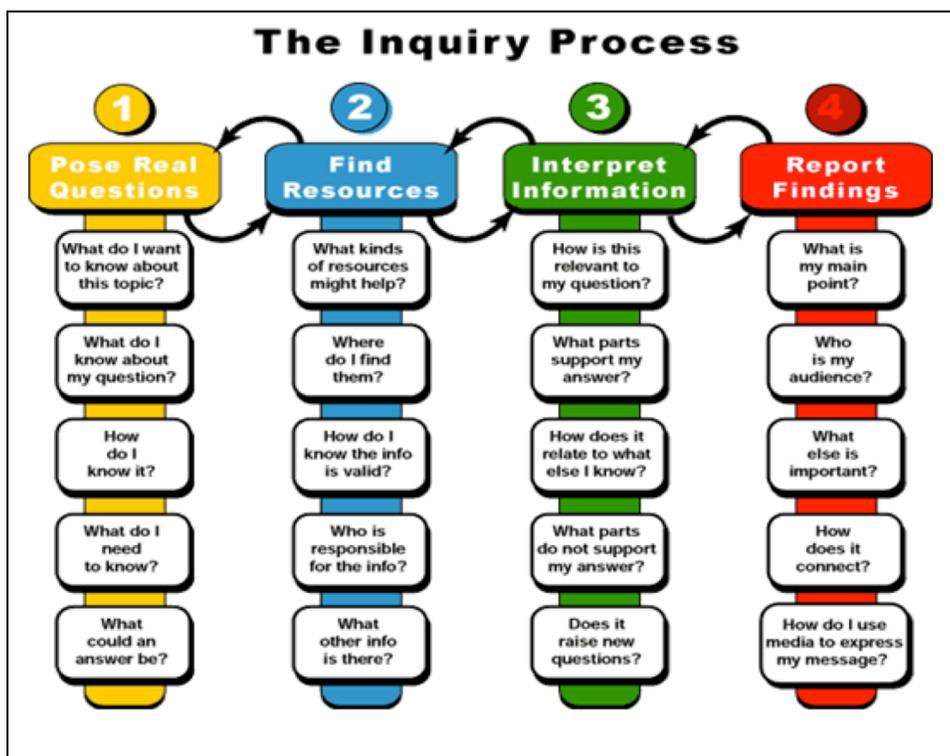
inquiry framework with explicit and direct instruction, as needed. More specifically, we plan to employ a top-down, bottom-up approach when implementing our curriculum, drawing on the various levels of learning objectives, as outlined by Bloom’s Taxonomy.

And, finally, we recognize that students learn best when they are in a safe and secure environment, where they feel successful and supported. As such, we plan to embrace a strengths-based learning approach, while fostering a collaborative and vibrant school culture. The key elements of our curriculum framework are discussed in more detail below.

1. Scientific Inquiry Approach

We believe that scientific inquiry will foster the critical skills of curiosity and imagination in our students. Scientific inquiry provides students with opportunities to directly investigate scientific phenomena, while constructing (co-constructing and re-constructing) meaning (Cervetti, Pearson, Bravo and Barber, 2005). Stable (using current understandings to increase knowledge) and fluid (creating new concepts) scientific inquiry aligned to CCLS will build new knowledge from what students already know and believe, mediate their social interactions and environment, and formulate and modify their current concepts with new evidence.

The scientific method, as summarized in the graphic below, serves as the basis for the scientific inquiry approach. We will expect our students to investigate questions across all content areas, and have



specifically chosen curricular resources that will pose these questions and allow students direct practice with designing methods, implementing strategies, and interpreting data and results, in order to solve them.

In accordance with our mission, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) will drive the concepts for our units of study in the core content areas; the Science and Technology Curriculum Coordinator (STCC), in particular, will support teachers to ensure that this approach is implemented effectively, as

discussed further below. Our students, therefore, will be expected to embrace the scientific method as they engage with new material *in all core subjects*, though they will have extensive practice doing so during their science lessons and their Units of Exploration.

Because our students will have experience with the scientific method beginning in kindergarten, they will become familiar with important skills – asking questions, testing assumptions, implementing and executing hands-on experiences, researching information, and analyzing and interpreting data early in their academic career. We believe that by instilling this approach at a young age, and providing meaningful opportunities for practice, our students will become life-long learners and critical thinkers in whatever area

of study they choose to pursue in the future.

2. Lab-Based Learning

In order to foster the 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, initiative, and collaboration, we plan to include daily science and technology lab-based learning (LBL) opportunities. LBL is based on central tenets of project-based learning, providing an innovative approach to learning that teaches a multitude of strategies critical for success in our global and innovative world. Students and teachers assume ownership and direction of learning within science and technology-based LBL times as they glean new, viable technology skills and other critical 21st century skills that ultimately promote proficiency as communicators, thinkers, innovators, collaborators, and problem solvers today and into tomorrow's world.

3. Cross Curricular Opportunities (especially for reading, speaking, writing, and listening)

In order to instill the skills of effective oral and written communication and accessing and analyzing information, the NGSS, New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS), and the CCLS will guide all units of instruction. The NGSS will serve as the foundation of each unit and as a guide for identifying “cross cutting concepts,” an example of which is presented below.

K.Forces and Interactions: Pushes and Pulls

K.Forces and Interactions: Pushes and Pulls		
Students who demonstrate understanding can:		
<p>K-PS2-1. Plan and conduct an investigation to compare the effects of different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object. [Clarification Statement: Examples of pushes or pulls could include a string attached to an object being pulled, a person pushing an object, a person stopping a rolling ball, and two objects colliding and pushing on each other.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment is limited to different relative strengths or different directions, but not both at the same time. Assessment does not include non-contact pushes or pulls such as those produced by magnets.]</p> <p>K-PS2-2. Analyze data to determine if a design solution works as intended to change the speed or direction of an object with a push or a pull.* [Clarification Statement: Examples of problems requiring a solution could include having a marble or other object move a certain distance, follow a particular path, and knock down other objects. Examples of solutions could include tools such as a ramp to increase the speed of the object and a structure that would cause an object such as a marble or ball to turn.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment does not include friction as a mechanism for change in speed.]</p>		
The performance expectations above were developed using the following elements from the NRC document <i>A Framework for K-12 Science Education</i> .		
<p>Science and Engineering Practices</p> <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations Planning and carrying out investigations to answer questions or test solutions to problems in K-2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to simple investigations, based on fair tests, which provide data to support explanations or design solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With guidance, plan and conduct an investigation in collaboration with peers. (K-PS2-1) <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data Analyzing data in K-2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to collecting, recording, and sharing observations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze data from tests of an object or tool to determine if it works as intended. (K-PS2-2) <p>----- <i>Connections to Nature of Science</i></p> <p>Scientific Investigations Use a Variety of Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientists use different ways to study the world. (K-PS2-1) 	<p>Disciplinary Core Ideas</p> <p>PS2.A: Forces and Motion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pushes and pulls can have different strengths and directions. (K-PS2-1),(K-PS2-2) Pushing or pulling on an object can change the speed or direction of its motion and can start or stop it. (K-PS2-1),(K-PS2-2) <p>PS2.B: Types of Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When objects touch or collide, they push on one another and can change motion. (K-PS2-1) <p>PS3.C: Relationship Between Energy and Forces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bigger push or pull makes things speed up or slow down more quickly. (secondary to K-PS2-1) <p>ETS1.A: Defining Engineering Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A situation that people want to change or create can be approached as a problem to be solved through engineering. Such problems may have many acceptable solutions. (secondary to K-PS2-2) 	<p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <p>Cause and Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple tests can be designed to gather evidence to support or refute student ideas about causes. (K-PS2-1),(K-PS2-2)
Connections to other DCIs in kindergarten: K.ETS1.A (K-PS2-2); K.ETS1.B (K-PS2-2)		
Articulation of DCIs across grade-levels: 2.ETS1.B (K-PS2-2); 3.PS2.A (K-PS2-1),(K-PS2-2); 3.PS2.B (K-PS2-1); 4.PS3.A (K-PS2-1); 4.ETS1.A (K-PS2-2)		
Common Core State Standards Connections:		
ELA/Literacy –		
RI.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (K-PS2-2)	
W.K.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them). (K-PS2-1)	
SL.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood. (K-PS2-2)	
Mathematics –		
MP.2	Reason abstractly and quantitatively. (K-PS2-1)	
K.MD.A.1	Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object. (K-PS2-1)	
K.MD.A.2	Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common, to see which object has “more of/”less of” the attribute, and describe the difference. (K-PS2-1)	

Curriculum coordinators will use the NGSS to map our units of study for all core subject areas, which will ensure that students are learning and mastering all NYSL and CCLS, with science as the guiding principal. The curricular resources that we have selected will further develop these cross cutting concepts are discussed in more depth below.

4. Balanced Instructional Approach

Exploration recognizes the need to balance instructional opportunities and differentiate processes, products, and content for students to ensure attainment of rigorous academic standards. Through a balance of explicit instruction with active engagement in science and technology experiences, Exploration staff will foster both foundational skill development and higher-order thinking via teacher- and student-led instruction, inquiry, and exploration (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006; Bloom, 1956). Exploration’s

academic program will always position students as active learners and emphasize deep learning and understanding through a balanced approach (Taylor, 2000; Burnard, 1999).

The balanced learning approach is guided by evidence-based practices for high-quality instruction, and employs the following strategies:

1. Establishing specific and measurable learning targets and how students will demonstrate progress/mastery of critical concepts,
2. Proximity teaching to ensure positive learning environments, effective and specific student feedback on learning and observation of independent work,
3. Frequent and purposeful writing, research and reflection to foster higher order cognitive processes and critical thinking/connecting, and
4. Recognition and reinforcement of learning through data (observation, diagnostic, formative and summative) (Cain & Laird, 2011).

Exploration staff will use the individual, small group, and whole group classroom and lab-based experiences to balance the contributions of students and teachers to the learning process.

5. Social Emotional Learning Supports

Exploration will commit to embedding SEL instruction into the school day to provide a foundation for academic instruction by teaching skills such as self-management, self-awareness, peer social skills, social problem solving, and decision-making. Durlak (2011) has shown that students who participate in SEL programs have increased academic performance. The SEL programming is not intended to remediate problem behaviors but rather take a more proactive and strengths based approach to teaching skills to foster relationships and interactions at school, home, and community⁶. The intervention staff will facilitate these SEL sessions and will provide carryover information and lessons to the classroom teachers and families to reinforce SEL learning targets.

Teaching Framework

Curriculum Development: As described above, our teaching framework will include a scientific inquiry, lab-based, and cross-cutting (i.e., cross-curricular) curriculum that includes supports for all students. In order to establish this framework, we will develop our own curriculum, drawing upon the CCLS, NGSS, NYSLS, and the curricular resources described below.

The NGSS will drive the units of study for all content areas. The School Director and the Science and Technology Curriculum Coordinator (STCC) will establish the framework for the curriculum during the planning year (2015-2016). During this time, the School Director and the STCC will review the Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCI) set forth in the NGSS for each grade level⁷. The DCIs will serve as the guiding principles for each unit of study, and the cross-cutting concepts (also identified by NGSS) will be studied in ELA and math at that time as well. For example, as shown in the table on the previous page, an identified DCI in kindergarten is Forces and Interactions: Pushes and Pulls. The NGSS has identified Cause and Effect as an ELA cross-cutting concept for this DCI and suggests the following CCLS are aligned with this DCI as well:

ELA/Literacy –

- RI.K.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (K-PS2-2)
- W.K.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them). (K-PS2-1)
- SL.K.3 Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood. (K-PS2-2)

⁶ <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>

⁷ <http://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/ngss/files/NGSS%20Combined%20Topics%2011.8.13.pdf>

Mathematics –

- MP.2 Reason abstractly and quantitatively. (K-PS2-1)
- K.MD.A.1 Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object. (K-PS2-1)
- K.MD.A.2 Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common, to see which object has more of/less of the attribute, and describe the difference. (K-PS2-1)

While the NGSS provides guidance for designing these cross-curricular units of study, the School Director and the STCC will need to evaluate these suggestions and ensure full coverage and alignment across subject areas and with the CCLS and NYSLs, which is why we plan to begin this process during the planning year. Once the school year begins, the School Director will manage the STCC and the Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator (CIC). The STCC will develop, implement, and monitor all science and technology related content, including lesson plans, assessments, and Units of Exploration. The CIC will oversee ELA, math, and social studies content by reviewing teacher lesson plans and assessments, and ensuring alignment to the curriculum, the CCLS, and the NYSLs.

Core Subject Area Curriculum and Curricular Resources. Each core subject area will adhere to the key elements described in the above section and align to the NYSLs and the CCLS. Our approach to instruction in each of the core subject areas is described in more detail below.

Literacy: Exploration will place a heavy emphasis on literacy instruction and will follow the Fountas & Pinnell Balanced Literacy Framework. All students will spend a minimum of 100 minutes per day engaging in reading, writing, phonics, and vocabulary instruction. The first 80 minutes will take place during the literacy block and the final 20 minutes will be spent on research and writing at the end of each day. In addition, students will receive up to 100 additional minutes of literacy interventions each week, as needed, during the Walk to Intervention, where students are grouped by reading level across grade level, to receive targeted reading instruction and support. See Attachment 3(a) for more information about the daily student schedule. Key elements of Exploration literacy instruction are listed below:

- **Interactive Read-alouds:** Teachers model fluent reading, comprehension skills and strategies, and expose students to a variety of texts.
- **Guided Reading:** Teachers read leveled texts in flexible student groups, based on assessed reading levels, and coach students on reading strategies and practices.
- **Independent Reading:** Students select books at their assessed reading level and read independently, in order to practice decoding strategies, develop comprehension skills, and improve reading fluency.
- **Phonics and Word Study:** Teachers share mini lessons and strategies for improving phonemic awareness, spelling, and grammar.
- **Writing and Vocabulary Instruction:** Teachers lead a mini-lesson with a clear objective, and students follow with independent practice utilizing the introduced writing skill. Teachers then conference with students to coach them on their writing development, either individually or in small groups.
- **Computer-based Learning:** Students will engage in skill building exercises and/or use computer library databases to engage in independent or shared reading practices. For example, students will engage with leveled readers using RazKids.com (Reading A-Z resources on-line).
- **Research Skills:** Teachers lead a mini-lesson with a clear research objective, and students practice that research skill in the library and on the computer. Teachers observe and conference with students to coach them on research strategies.

Our teachers will draw on a variety of resources to create rich and exciting literary experiences for our students. Specifically, we have selected leveled readers that are aligned to the CCLS, and tied to the NGSS units of study. As part of our balanced approach to instruction, we will include explicit phonics instruction and targeted guided reading support, as guided by the Fountas & Pinnell Phonics and Word

Study Lessons. Students will have writing instruction each day, guided by the Lucy Calkins Units of Study and Vocabulary for the Common Core; they will also have a writing block after each lab period, where they have the opportunity to debrief their Unit of Exploration in their science notebook. Prompts for this writing block will be created by the STCC and will align to the Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing. Our resources for literacy instruction are discussed in more depth below:

- **The American Reading Company, Leveled Reading Sets:** Leveled, Common Core-aligned and thematic texts for guided and independent reading.
- **Fountas & Pinnell Phonics and Word Study Lessons:** Research-based phonics and word study lessons that guide students along a comprehensive continuum of skills, including early literacy concepts, phonological and phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, letter/sound relationship, word meaning, high-frequency words, spelling patterns, word structure, and word-solving actions.
- **Vocabulary for the Common Core (Robert J. Marzano):** Resources and PD that will help teachers incorporate Common Core vocabulary into teaching and student learning in order to help students access and understand complex texts.
- **Units of Study for Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing⁸ (Lucy Calkins):** Research-based, Common Core-aligned writing curriculum, based on the following principles:
 - There are fundamental qualities of all good writing, and students write well when they learn these qualities as well as the specific qualities of different genres, or types, of writing;
 - Using a writing process to teach the complex task of writing increases student achievement;
 - Students benefit from teaching that offers direct instruction, guided practice, and independent practice;
 - To write well, writers need ample time to write every day, with clear expectations for stamina and volume;
 - A successful curriculum provides differentiated instruction for students of all ability levels and support for English language learners; and
 - Writing and reading are joined processes, and students learn best when writing and reading instruction are coordinated.
- **STC Literacy Series⁹:** Texts and writing prompts aligned to the STC Science Curriculum (see below), CCLS, and NGSS. Provides opportunities for writing to persuade, explain, and convey real or imagined experiences, following a lab-based experience.

Mathematics: Students will have a 60-minute math block each day, half of which will be spent on the TERC Investigations program and the other half of which will be spent on Cognitively-Guided Instruction (CGI). Students will also receive up to 100 additional minutes in math intervention, as needed, as indicated on Attachment 3(b). Exploration will use Investigations as our primary resource for math instruction in grades K-6. We selected Investigations because it is aligned to the CCLS, but also because it aligns well with our mission and curriculum framework. Specifically, each unit is divided into Investigations that focus on a “set of related mathematical ideas, coordinating students’ work in hands-on-activities, written activities, and class discussion over a period of several days.” The Investigations program includes four kinds of primary activities:

- Activities, including manipulatives, math games, and computer-based skill building;
- Whole Class Discussions, during which students compare methods and results and share conclusions;
- Math Workshop – a structure in which students work on a set of related activities; and

⁸ <http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E00871/UoSWResearchBase85x11.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.carolinacurriculum.com/STC/common-core-state-standards.asp>

- Assessments, during which students are assessed through either written activities or observations.¹⁰

The Investigations' focus on exploring math concepts and ideas through hands-on activities and discussion, while meeting cross-curricular goals of speaking, listening, and writing are aligned to our mission and the key elements of our curriculum framework.

We have also included a half-hour block for specific instruction around math problem-solving skills, using CGI, which includes a similar exploratory and collaborative approach. CGI establishes a problem-solving framework in which students are presented with a single word problem and then asked to solve the problem independently. The teacher observes students as they attempt to solve the problem, and selects three students, each of whom have employed a different strategy, to determine the correct answer. The three students present their strategies, starting with the least sophisticated strategy and ending with the most sophisticated. The students listening are invited to ask the student presenters questions about their chosen problem-solving method, and student presenters are required to explain and justify their chosen approach.

Similar to Investigations, CGI presumes that students bring math concepts to the classroom and present opportunities for them to test what they know and build on that foundation in a collaborative, student-centered manner. Both approaches will foster the use of the problem-solving skills embedded in our scientific method framework.

Finally, in an effort to balance our instruction, we will use JumpStart – an online math program for students in grades K-6 who need additional practice with addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. JumpStart will serve as an intervention tool and will be used during class time and Walk to Intervention.

Science: Exploration will use the following overarching principals to build the science curriculum. 1) Align the standards to NYSLS and NGSS; 2) Develop school-based scientific and innovative dispositions as measured by performance based Units of Exploration rubrics; 3) Provide cross-curricular instruction that is differentiated, visual, skills-based, and inquiry-infused; it is also research-informed and writing intensive; 4) Develop Units of Exploration and Assessment for physical science, life science, earth and space, and engineering and technology; and implement instructional strategies that encourage open inquiry and exploration.

As indicated by the above steps, the foundation of the science curriculum will be the NGSS and the NYSLS, but we will also infuse school-based Scientific and Innovative Dispositions that we hope to foster in our students. Such dispositions will include (but will not be limited to) the following:

- Understanding of basic Unit of Exploration concepts
- Understanding and application process and critical thinking skills
- Demonstration of the cycle of learning
- Asking and answering critical and scientific questions
- Defining problems and explaining solutions/answers
- Developing and using models
- Investigating and researching topics
- Planning and carrying out explorations
- Analyzing and interpreting data/information from explorations
- Using mathematical and computational skills in explorations
- Obtaining and evaluating information in explorations

We plan to draw on the STC curriculum in our science lessons and for our Units of Exploration, but we will also use components of the STC literacy curriculum during ELA, when applicable. Each STC unit is based on a four-stage learning cycle that is grounded in educational research and practice:

¹⁰ <http://investigations.terc.edu/components/tour/>

- First, students **focus** on what they already know about a topic.
- Next, students **explore** a scientific phenomenon or concept, following a well-structured sequence of classroom investigations.
- Third, students **reflect** on their observations, record them in journals, draw conclusions, and share their findings with others.
- Finally, students **apply** their learning to real-life situations and to other areas of the curriculum.¹¹

The science curriculum will also include the Units of Exploration – a unique design element that Exploration has included in the schedule each day – that allows for lab-based learning experiences, where students can access the science and technology content directly. For example, if kindergarten students were studying Forces of Interaction: Pushes and Pulls as listed in NGSS table above, the Unit of Exploration would build on the following core idea, K-PS2-1:

Plan and conduct an investigation to compare the effects of different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object. [Clarification Statement: Examples of pushes or pulls could include a string attached to an object being pulled, a person pushing an object, a person stopping a rolling ball, and two objects colliding and pushing on each other.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment is limited to different relative strengths or different directions, but not both at the same time. Assessment does not include non-contact pushes or pulls such as those produced by magnets.]

The STCC, therefore, would provide materials and the opportunity, for students to engage with this concept in a hands-on way. For example, a teacher might pose a question to the group, inquiring, “What happens when you push or pull an object harder?” Students could use the provided materials to set up their experiment, research the answer to this question, and then summarize that answer through whatever data points they collect. In order to ensure that this process is meaningful for all students, teachers will be expected to implement the differentiated, balanced approach to instruction, as designed below. Teachers will also have detailed holistic rubrics aligned to the Units of Exploration, so that they can ensure student mastery of the objective in a concrete way. As discussed further in the PD section, teachers will receive a great deal of training on these rubrics and will engage in several norming exercises to ensure reliable implementation.

As discussed above, students will have a writing block, following each Unit of Exploration, where they will be expected to write about the experience and what they learned. They will be expected to tie in content from other subject areas, and hone the writing strategies that they learned during Writer’s Workshop.

Social Studies: As another means for cross-curricular learning experiences, we have selected myWorld History, a digital resource for Social Studies instruction, that invites students to make personal connections to history. In addition to digital experiences, the myWorld History curriculum provides opportunities for project-based learning and ongoing checks for understanding. This resource is aligned to the NYSLs, though it will not serve as the primary resource for social studies instruction, since we will expect teachers to draw on a variety of primary source texts for social studies instruction.

In order to select primary source texts that are appropriately complex for students at their particular grade level, teachers will utilize, but will not be limited to, the following NYS recommended websites:¹² Library of Congress, National Archives, New York Online Virtual Library, Stanford History Education Group, and World Digital Library.

Social Emotional Learning: Exploration is committed to promoting social-emotional learning as a complement to academic rigor to encourage positive skill development. The master schedule dedicates time for all students to engage in social-emotional programming as facilitated by instructional staff. We will use this time to implement the CASEL core competencies: self-management, self-regulation, peer social

¹¹ <http://www.ssec.si.edu/curriculum/about-our-curriculum>

¹² <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/0FB9273A-474D-4D29-AFD6-D1609FE802A3/0/612SocialStudiesTextGuide.pdf>

skills, problem solving, and peer relationships, and to reinforce the cultural and behavioral expectations at Exploration. In order to teach these skills effectively, we will rely on the PATHS curriculum that is designed for educators' systematic and developmentally appropriate implementation 2-to-3 times/week in large group settings with the purpose of teaching identified CASEL competencies. Learning objectives are identified and parent materials provided. We selected the PATHS program because multiple studies have shown it to be effective with students from our target population,¹³ and we believe it will allow us to implement the CASEL core competencies in a meaningful way. Through explicit teaching and guided practice, students will be acutely aware of the behavioral and social expectations, and will be expected to make ongoing positive contributions to the school community, thereby promoting a greater learning environment for all students.

Planning and Implementation: Teachers will utilize curriculum maps, designed by the School Director and the STCC, and the aforementioned curricular resources, to design lesson plans and assessments, as needed, for each unit of study. In order to do so, teachers will be expected to rely on Understanding by Design concepts of backwards planning.

The backwards design approach asks teachers to begin with the standards and objectives that students are required to master (in this case, as designated by the units of study in the curriculum maps). Teachers will be required to create valid and reliable measures of assessing these objectives in observable and concrete ways. Once assessments are created, teachers will plan lessons aligned to these objectives and assessments. In order to ensure this alignment, teachers will rely on Bloom's Taxonomy when creating lesson objectives and checks for understanding. Furthermore, we will provide ongoing PD on Understanding by Design, Bloom's Taxonomy, and rigorous assessment strategies.

Learning Framework: As indicated above, teachers will employ a balanced learning approach when implementing instruction to deliver targeted, differentiated lessons that will reach all learners. The balanced learning approach is guided by evidence-based practices for high-quality instruction, and employs:

- **Establishing specific and measurable learning targets and how students will demonstrate progress/mastery of critical concepts.**

Teachers will be expected to rely on backwards planning and Bloom's Taxonomy to create strategic, achievable, targeted, and measurable learning objectives. By starting with assessments, we will ensure that our teachers' lessons, and corresponding checks for understanding, are aligned to the objective.

- **Proximity teaching to ensure positive learning environments, effective and specific student feedback on learning and observation of independent work.**

Teachers will begin every lesson with a hook to invite students to engage with the question or content at hand. The teacher will then explain the content or the question for exploration further, using informal checks for understanding (i.e., observation, thumbs-up, thumbs-down) to be sure that students are following along. The teacher will then allow for guided practice that may include group work, teacher-guided instruction, or other supportive strategies (i.e., think-pair-share, Thinking Maps, technology, or text-based research) in order to practice the objective at hand. And, finally, in order to gauge student mastery, teachers will allow for independent practice that may include an independent continuation of the guided practice, additional problems or assignments, or an informal check for understanding, such as an exit ticket. Throughout the lesson, teachers will conference with students as needed, record anecdotal evidence of student gaps or mastery, and provide real-time feedback to students on performance.

- **Frequent and purposeful writing, research and reflection to foster higher order cognitive processes and critical thinking/connecting.**

Exploration students will receive explicit writing instruction each day. However, they will also receive

¹³ <https://casel.squarespace.com/guide/ratings/elementary>

several opportunities for purposeful writing about the subject matter that they are learning. For example, after the Units of Exploration each day, students will receive 20 minutes of purposeful writing and research time, during which they are required to debrief their Unit of Exploration experience. During this time, students will be encouraged to incorporate content from the science, ELA, and math lessons from that day, as applicable. Teachers will circulate and conference with students during this time, and remind them of the writing strategies they can use to improve and develop. Teachers will record anecdotal evidence of student gaps or mastery during this time, as well.

- **Recognition and reinforcement of learning through data (observation, diagnostic, formative and summative) (Cain & Laird, 2011).**

Teachers will rely heavily on student achievement data to inform their practice. As indicated above, teachers will record anecdotal evidence of student performance through conferences and observations. Teachers will also be required to track students' performance quantitatively by using student mastery trackers/spreadsheets and/or the chosen student information system (i.e., PowerSchool). Teachers will reflect on the objectives that were taught each day/week to check for mastery and will be expected to reteach or review as needed. After summative assessments, especially unit tests, the NWEA, etc., teachers will submit action plans to the School Director and/or the curriculum coordinators, indicating their plans for how they will reteach the objectives that were not yet mastered.

Ensuring Alignment with Common Core Learning Standards and the NYS Testing Program

While all of our curricular resources are aligned to the CCLS, we recognize that the New York State Board of Regents has adopted additional standards. As discussed above, our School Director and our curriculum coordinators will work at the outset of each year to make sure that the curricula and all the aforementioned resources are aligned with the New York State specific expectations. That said, we will also expect our teachers to be very familiar with the New York State Learning Standards and the New York State Testing Program. Through the rigorous backwards planning approach, we will ensure alignment and in-depth exposure to all requisite grade level standards.

D. Assessment System

In order to attain the ambitious achievement goals set forth in our charter agreement, Exploration will use a variety of assessments administered throughout the school year to continuously monitor student progress. This will provide important and meaningful data that will allow us to ensure that students are on track for proficiency in each grade level and also ready to meet the challenges of high school and college that await them once they graduate. Further details about the types of assessment, what information we hope to obtain, and how this information will be used are discussed below.

Diagnostic and Benchmark Assessments: Exploration will use the following assessments for both diagnostic and benchmark purposes. The initial assessment will serve as the diagnostic and the following assessments will provide data to allow us to measure student progress and benchmark student growth. Further details about each assessment are included in the table below.

Assessment, Grades, and Dates	Purpose	Ensuring Reliability and Validity	Who Administers	How Results are Collected, Analyzed, and Used by Staff
NWEA MAP, K-6, Fall, Winter, Spring	Understand where students are performing on a national level (norm referenced); ensure that we are on track towards meeting achievement goals.	Computer based assessment; both teachers and students will receive training on how to use the software. Exploration will plan for teacher professional development and hire external partners for support when administering the exam, as needed. Students will take the exam on similar computers and in similar environments.	All teachers	Results are synthesized electronically and immediately after a student completes a section. Results are analyzed to evaluate student growth and ensure progress towards achievement goals.

Assessment, Grades, and Dates	Purpose	Ensuring Reliability and Validity	Who Administers	How Results are Collected, Analyzed, and Used by Staff
Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, K-5, Quarterly	Assess student's reading ability, including fluency, accuracy, and comprehension.	Curriculum coordinators will observe administration to promote quality control amongst teachers; results will be compared to other reading data to ensure reliability.	All teachers	Teachers will grade students and enter results in tracking tool; data is used to track student reading level growth throughout the year and inform instruction.
Reading Inventory (e.g. BRI/QRI-2), K-2, As needed	Assess reading comprehension skills on a deeper level with students who may be in need of intervention.	Intervention staff will receive training on administration and evaluation of this assessment each year.	Intervention Staff	Intervention staff will score the assessment and make related service recommendations, if necessary.
Kindergarten Screening, Grade K, Fall	Assess fine motor, gross motor, basic number and literacy concepts, vocabulary, and hearing.	Kindergarten teachers will receive training on proper administration and evaluation of this assessment during August professional development; the school leader and the curriculum coordinator will observe implementation to make sure that teachers are normed.	All kindergarten teachers	Teachers will score assessments and use to inform instruction and any necessary intervention with kindergarten students.
NYSITELL, K-6, Fall and Spring	Identify ELL students	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	Teachers who have received training in NYSITELL administration	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
Associate/Teacher Child Rating Scale and/or DESSA (mini) Screening, K-6, Fall and Spring, As Needed	Assess students' social/emotional needs and progress	Intervention staff will receive training on administration and evaluation of this assessment each year.	All teachers	Intervention staff will score the assessment and make related service recommendations, if necessary.
Writing Prompt, K-6, Ongoing	Assess students' ability to write; specifically evaluating their ability to brainstorm, structure, add details, and conventions.	Writing prompt responses will be scored by a group of teachers and the curriculum coordinator.	All teachers	Scores are entered into a spreadsheet in order to glean trends, which dictate professional development and further instruction.

Formative Assessments: Teachers will be expected to create clear and measurable objectives for each lesson, with a corresponding check for understanding, to ensure that the lesson objective was met. As a result, teachers will rely heavily on formative assessments to guide their own instruction and to invest students in their individualized learning goals. Teachers will use, but are not limited to, the following formative assessments listed below.

Assessment, Grades, and Dates	Purpose	Ensuring Reliability and Validity	Who Administers	How Results are Collected, Analyzed, and Used by Staff
Formative Classroom Assessments K-6 Ongoing	To assess students' understanding of topics/skills covered on an ongoing basis.	By relying on the backwards design planning method, teachers will ensure that exit tickets, quizzes, and other informal assessments are aligned to the standards and to their lessons. The curriculum coordinators will ask teachers for sample formative assessments throughout the year, so that they can verify this is the case.	All teachers	Teachers collect and grade the assessments and enter them into a student growth tracker; teachers use the data to modify lessons, re-teach, and ensure students are mastering the content and skills taught.
Informal Fountas and Pinnell Testing, K-5, Ongoing (At least monthly)	To assess students' reading fluency, growth, and comprehension and make sure they are progressing towards their reading level targets.	School leader and curriculum coordinators will select a student to read with at random to ensure that his or her stated reading level is accurate. If the principal or curriculum coordinator notices a discrepancy, he or she will observe the teacher during a re-administration of the assessment to make sure the teacher is administering properly.	All teachers	Teachers grade the assessments and enter them into a student growth tracker; data is submitted to the curriculum coordinator each month and reviewed to make sure students are on track to reaching reading level targets.

Holistic Assessments, K-6, Ongoing	Assess mastery of science standards and application at the end of each unit of study	The curriculum coordinator will create rubrics; teachers will undergo norming and professional development exercises to ensure that rubrics are implemented reliably across classrooms.	Innovation Instructors	Teachers enter rubric data into the science standards tracker. Teachers use for reteach and action planning; send results to principal and curriculum coordinator monthly in order to determine trends.
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Summative Assessments: Students will be evaluated on their mastery of the CCLS and NYSLS, as measured by the exams listed below.

Assessment, Grades, and Dates	Purpose	Ensuring Reliability and Validity	Who Administers	How Results are Collected, Analyzed, and Used by Staff
New York State ELA and Math Assessments Grades 3-6, Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the NYS ELA and math standards.	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All teachers, grades 3-6	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
New York State Science Assessment, Grade 4, Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the NYS science standards.	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All fourth grade teachers	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
New York State Alternate Assessment, All Eligible IEP Students, Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the goals set forth in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All special education and intervention staff	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, Grades 3-6, Spring	To assess students' English language acquisition	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	Teachers who have received training in NYSESLAT administration	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.

Using Data to Inform Key Decisions: The assessment system is designed to have multiple units for analysis and application at the class, grade, and school levels. Explicit training and instruction will be provided to teachers during the August PD around data-driven instruction. Specific details on how various stakeholders in the community will utilize academic achievement data to improve student outcomes are listed below.

School Leadership: School leaders and curriculum coordinators will be expected to use assessment data to summarize, and plan for, the following:

- Student mastery by subgroup;
- Areas of concern, due to lack of student growth or proficiency in core subject areas, by classroom and grade level;
- Performance of individual teachers, with a note on how to leverage best practices of the strongest teachers, and support those teachers who are struggling;
- Areas for whole staff PD and individual teacher coaching;
- Efficacy of interventions set forth for students receiving special education, ESL services, and for identifying at risk-students;
- An evaluation of program elements, such as how they are helping students master the curricular goals and whether PD is aligned and meaningful;
- Monitoring and reporting on progress toward meeting achievement goals; and
- Reporting progress to community stakeholders and the board.

For further details on how the Exploration Board will use student achievement data to improve academic outcomes, see the Reporting section below.

Teachers: After administration of an assessment, teachers will meet during their common planning period the following day (or days, if necessary) to conduct an analysis of the results. Teachers will be

expected to use assessment data to summarize, and plan for, the following:

- Topics that students have mastered;
- Topics that students have not mastered, and will need to be re-taught;
- Groups of students who are performing below grade level expectations who may need one on one support or a more explicit review of the content;
- Groups of students who are well on track to proficiency and need additional enrichment;
- Teacher actions that led to student mastery;
- Teacher areas of improvement, as indicated by the content that students have not yet mastered;
- A detailed re-teach plan for students (groups and individual); and
- Next steps for improving teacher actions.

Teachers will submit action plans to school leaders and curriculum coordinators for review and feedback. School leaders and curriculum coordinators will analyze the action plans to ensure that teachers have identified the correct trends, have linked student gaps to an appropriate and meaningful intervention, and that teachers are focused on the most high leverage areas of their own PD. School leaders will provide feedback to teachers who have been identified as needing additional support; the STCC will provide feedback on science action plans, and the curriculum and instruction coordinator will provide feedback on remaining action plans, addressing ELA, math, and/or social studies.

Students: Teachers will share student performance with each student. Students, in turn, will be expected to engage in self-reflection and analysis to identify what actions (both positive and negative) led to the outcomes and what actions they will take to improve. These reflections will take place during written self-reflections and individualized student conferences. Teachers and students will log reflections and refer back to them as a means for monitoring progress and building student investment.

Parents: Teachers will also share student performance with parents, noting an area of strength and where students stand in relation to their growth targets. Teachers will send home an area of improvement in each core subject, and strategies that parents can employ at home to help students obtain mastery, each week. Parents will be expected to:

- Monitor the child's performance, and facilitate practice and remediation at home;
- Identify ways and opportunities in which they can help their child learn; and
- Engage in communication with the school leader and teacher as needed for attaining academic and social goals.

Methods for Obtaining Valid and Reliable Measures of Student Outcomes: We will make great efforts to ensure that our assessment implementation and evaluation is valid and reliable, as indicated in the assessment tables above. For instance, teachers will receive in-depth training on each assessment, and school leaders will observe implementation for quality control. Checks, such as informal school leader assessment of reading level, will be in place to ensure that teachers' evaluation of student performance is reliable; in the event that it is not, additional monitoring and PD will be provided.

Furthermore, we have selected the NWEA MAP because of its validity and reliability and the significant size of the norm group that it draws upon when providing norm-referenced scores. We will rely on the rigorous design of the NWEA to help us validate our internal assessments by correlating student scores to performance on the NWEA. Finally, if necessary, we will also contract with an external partner to help us administer and evaluate assessments, particularly since so many elementary school assessments require one-on-one administration, in order to yield reliable results.

Reporting: Academic data, and other sources of critical data (e.g., enrollment, retention, behavior, social/emotional learning data), will be entered into and reviewed in the Exploration dashboard. The Exploration dashboard will serve as a guiding document for the Board's meetings to ensure application of data and review of key indicators of student, school, staff, and Board success and faithfulness to charter.

The dashboard includes the school's achievement goals, as well as other metrics designed to inform school governance, compliance, and fidelity to mission. Frequent reflection upon the dashboard data will allow school leadership and the Board to apply data in a formative way for decision making and continuous quality improvement purposes. In addition, the school will issue an annual report detailing student performance and other material indicators of organizational health and viability.

We will also use a quarterly report card system to inform parents of their child's academic and behavioral performance. Report cards will be distributed during designated parent-teacher conference days throughout the year, as indicated on the proposed First Year Calendar in Attachment 3b. The report card template will be shared with, and explained to, parents at the outset of each year, so they know the expectations for their child and the learning goals for that year. In addition, parents of students receiving special education services will be kept abreast of student progress toward short- and long-term IEP goals. A performance summary will be distributed quarterly with the student's report card. All parent communication will be in the family's home language; every effort will be made to meet with parents one-on-one to discuss the child's performance.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Promotion Standards and the School's Mission: Our mission is to equip our students with the academic and social skills necessary to thrive in school and in the world. Therefore, to attain this mission, we must hold our students and ourselves accountable to ensuring that the instruction and enrichment we are providing is accurately and adequately setting them up to excel at Exploration and beyond. We will use performance, promotion, and graduation standards as guidance to ensure that this is the case.

Proposed Polices and Standards for Promotion: As stated in our key design elements, Exploration will expect students to master grade level standards in core subject areas of ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. We have set our promotion and graduation standards to reflect this expectation.

Exploration will maintain student academic data for all enrolled students in compliance with New York State regulations. We will include this information in a student information system (SIS), such as PowerSchool. The SIS will include information about academic performance in all core subject areas, as guided by the Assessment System in Section D of the Educational Plan, including (but not limited to):

- Performance on the New York State ELA, mathematics, and science exams;
- Performance on norm-referenced assessments, such as the NWEA MAP;
- Performance on summative assessments, such as unit tests;
- Reading growth made throughout the year, as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark assessment; and
- Performance on homework, projects, and other material assignments, as measured by holistic rubrics, throughout the year.

In addition, teachers will also be expected to track attendance and participation, student behavior, and interventions provided to each student. While the teachers and intervention staff will be intimately involved in any promotion decisions, the principal shall make the final decision on all student promotions, once (s)he has reviewed the above information.

For students in grades kindergarten through two, teachers will review student performance and make recommendations to the school leader about promotion on a case-by-case basis, based on evidence of progress toward meeting the state standards for the student's grade level. In scenarios where a student may be meeting some of the standards, but not yet quite on grade level, the recommendation will be to promote that student and make every effort to support him or her during the summer months. However, in cases in which a first or second grade student is severely behind grade level expectations for literacy, we would likely retain that student; research indicates that third grade students who are not reading at grade

level are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers.¹⁴ Every effort will be made to support these students throughout the summer months and into the following school year to ensure that they ultimately reach grade level proficiency.

For students in grades three through six, we will look at multiple measures of student progress, as collected in the SIS. The Dean of Students will use the SIS to monitor student progress each quarter and flag any students at risk of retention. The Dean will then provide a list of these students to the School Director each quarter. The School Director will meet with each student's teacher after reviewing the quarterly list to discuss concerns and current interventions. The School Director, the Dean, and the teacher will track these conversations, along with the student progress, in the event they are needed at the end of the year.

At the end of the year, the School Director will evaluate the final student retention list and will make all retention decisions on a case-by-case basis, taking the following criteria into account: student progress, with a particular emphasis on ELA and mathematics growth, attendance, behavior, effort, age, and maturity level. All retention concerns will be communicated with families each quarter and at the time of the final decision. Every effort will be made to support students who are retained throughout the summer months and into the following school year to ensure that they ultimately reach grade level proficiency.

The same promotional criteria will apply to students with special needs and ELL students. However, if a student's IEP indicates that (s)he will be held to an alternate standard for promotion, the school leader will incorporate the criteria listed in the IEP when making any retention or promotion decisions. Similarly, student performance on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) will be taken into consideration as well, as applicable.

Sample Promotion Standards: As discussed in the Curriculum and Instruction section, the School Director and the curriculum coordinators will create curriculum maps and units at the outset of the school year that include all CCLS, NYLS, and NGSS standards for each grade level, providing a clear sense of what students will know and be able to do by the end of each school year. Teachers will use these curriculum maps to backwards plan their lessons, ensuring full coverage of all CCLS, NYLS, and NGSS. We have created a table of these standards for grades two and six, based on the standards provided on the NYSED website. We are unable to include the table here due to constraints around space, but we are happy to provide it upon request.¹⁵

F. School Culture and Climate

School Culture: We recognize that in order to attain the rigorous academic goals that we have set for our students, we must first create a school culture in which students feel safe, valued, and supported. We believe that the foundation of the school culture is respect for everyone in the school community, including students, staff, and families. As a result, we are committed to building this foundation with our students, so that they leave Exploration with a strong character and are on track for future success in their school community. The ways in which we hope to establish this foundation are listed below:

- **Explicit Instructional Opportunities Promoting Positive School Behaviors and Social-Emotional Competencies:** To encourage positive skills development, Exploration is committed to promoting social-emotional learning as a complement to academic rigor. The master schedule dedicates time for all students to engage in social-emotional programming as facilitated by instructional staff. We will use this time to implement the following CASEL core competencies: self-management, self-regulation, peer social skills, problem solving, and peer relationships, and to reinforce the cultural and behavioral expectations at Exploration. In order to teach these skills effectively, we will rely on the PATHS

¹⁴ <http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/third-grade-reading.aspx>

¹⁵ See http://emsc32.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/nysp12cclsmath.pdf and http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/p12_common_core_learning_standards_ela.pdf

curriculum, as discussed in the Curriculum and Instruction section. We selected the PATHS program because multiple studies have shown it to be effective with students from our target population,¹⁶ and we believe it will assist in implementing the CASEL core competencies effectively. Through explicit teaching and guided practice, students will be acutely aware of the behavioral and social expectations, and will be expected to make ongoing positive contributions to the school community.

- **Positive Behavioral Supports and Management Systems:** Exploration is committed to recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors and contributions, rather than a punitive system that focuses on negative behaviors. A Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework emphasizing a school-wide system of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting preferred and positive behaviors in the classroom and school will be a foundational element of Exploration’s culture and climate. School leadership will take the lead to ensure that staff are supported in implementing the school-wide system and associated practices and will also lead discussions around supported and data-driven decision making. The PD/learning plan and assessment (e.g., Exploration dashboard) will track the evidence/information used to identify the status of students’ behaviors and indicate the need for changing and evolving interventions.
- **Nurture and Develop All Students’ Talents and Affinities:** Exploration aims for rigorous academic standards but recognizes that students will bring pre-disposed and developed talents and preferences. In order to ensure that all children feel welcome and successful, we will expect our teachers to understand each student’s learning strengths and implement strategies for maximizing those strengths, as outlined in the All Kinds of Minds framework. This framework provides educators with a foundation of expertise about learning, while serving as an effective system for richly describing, organizing, and addressing students’ learning strengths and weaknesses¹⁷. In order to reach and support all learners, our teachers will be expected to understand the affinities and skills that each student brings to the table so that they can effectively leverage those strengths to help students access information and learn best.
- **Clear Behavioral Expectations and Contributions:** Exploration outlines student behavioral expectations using the acronym, EXPLORER, to clearly articulate the preferred behaviors across school contexts including classrooms, bathrooms, hallways, and buses. EXPLORER expectations include: **Excellent, Positive, Leader, On-task, Responsible, Eager to learn, Respectful**. The following is an excerpt of the expectations.

Classrooms & Labs	Excellent	Positive	Leader	On-task	Responsible	Eager to Learn	Respectful
	I do my best and take pride in my work.	I learn from each experience how to be better.	I listen and lead in the classroom.	I complete my work on time.	I take responsibility for my own learning and success.	Each day I am ready to learn, grow and think.	I respect my teachers and my peers.

- **Collaborative and Proactive Problem Solving Solutions for Students’ Challenging Behaviors:** Exploration recognizes that students will present challenging behaviors across the school day and encourages family involvement and communication to support student learning. One of the key design elements of Exploration focuses on community and family connections/partnerships. As a result, Exploration intends to adopt a collaborative and proactive problem-solving framework to address challenging student behaviors. This framework is adapted from Ross Greene’s Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) approach, which assumes that students’ challenging behaviors result from reduced flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem solving; these are best addressed through a

¹⁶ <https://casel.squarespace.com/guide/ratings/elementary>

¹⁷ <http://www.allkindsofminds.org/spark-the-learning-revolution>

collaborative problem solving approach that includes the child, school staff/instructors, and family/adults (Greene, 2015).

- **Engagement with the Family and Community to Promote Out-of-School Alternatives for Supplemental Intervention and Prevention Programs for Students' Challenging Behaviors and Mental Health Needs:** Exploration is committing to a strong school-home-community partnership model that includes elements of the evidence-based family check-up model to link students and their families to existing community resources to ensure that intervention and prevention services are accessed and used to promote positive and productive behaviors in school and community.

Discipline Policy: As noted above, Exploration will implement a PBIS framework that recognizes and reinforces positive behaviors and contributions. We recognize, however, that we must have a discipline policy in place that is clear, developmentally appropriate, and tailored to various student behaviors and infractions. All policies and expectations will be clearly communicated to students and families to ensure they are understood and supported. The School Director and the Student Support Services Coordinator (SSSC) will present these policies to staff at the Summer Institute. All Exploration policies and codes of conduct align with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA, Education Law Article 2) to prevent bullying and recognize progressive discipline. Note: all policies will be adapted if necessary to ensure they are appropriate for students with a disability. See Attachment 4, Student Discipline Policy, for further details on the behavior expectations at Exploration.

Implementation: Establishing a Safe, Orderly, and Positive School Environment: We believe that a strong school culture and climate is created during the first weeks of school. The Exploration staff will invest a great deal of time and energy during the first weeks of school to ensure that students have sufficient time to learn, practice, and fully understand procedural and behavioral expectations. We will also make sure that teachers are “ready to hit the ground running” when it comes to enforcing our student discipline policies; doing so from the first day of school will set the right tone for the remainder of the school year. More details about ensuring that our student discipline policies are implemented properly at all school levels follows.

Administration: The School Director and the SSSC will communicate behavior policies, outlined in the Student Discipline Policy attachment, to staff during their Summer Institute training and will provide all teachers the opportunity to practice implementing and enforcing the behavior policies during this time. For instance, the School Director will provide teachers with challenging student behavior scenarios. Teachers will role-play and/or describe how to respond appropriately, using the protocols set forth in the Exploration Student Discipline Policy. The School Director and other teachers will provide feedback in order to ensure that teachers are comfortable addressing student behavior concerns as soon as students arrive.

Teachers: Teachers will be expected to review behavior expectations explicitly with students each day for the first four-to-six weeks of school. Teachers will teach behavior policies and class routines (e.g., how and when to get up from your seat, to get in a line, sharpen your pencil, pass in your paper), until all students demonstrate mastery. When a new routine or class behavior is introduced, teachers will be expected to provide guided and independent practice, and coach students with positive reinforcements. While this exercise may require an investment of time on the front end, we believe that student ability to smoothly transition throughout the day will save valuable instructional minutes and prevent unnecessary behavior concerns and distractions throughout the year.

Parents: Families will be notified of behavior policies and expectations during a mandatory family orientation in August. The School Director will review the Student Discipline Policy explicitly, and in detail, to ensure that parents fully understand all school expectations for them and students. Following the orientation, parents will be asked to sign and return a form indicating that they have read and fully understand the behavior policies. This form will be kept on record for the entire school year.

Evaluating a Safe and Learning Conducive School Culture and Climate: To ensure that policies and procedures are fair, relevant, and serve as a means to promote a safe and conducive learning environment, the SSSC/School Director will conduct an annual assessment of key stakeholders' (instructional staff, school leadership, Board of Trustees [BOT], students, families) understanding of Exploration's climate/culture, discipline policies and associated approaches, to foster the safe and orderly climate of the school to promote students' achievement.

The SSSC and the School Director will set up a system for tracking and monitoring trends in student behavior by student, class, grade level, and school. The SSSC will evaluate this tracker regularly and share trends with the School Director, in the Exploration dashboard. The School Director will use this information to provide meaningful and strategic coaching and PD to individual teachers or to all teachers, as needed. The SSSC and the School Director will use the student data to ensure that the PD and teacher coaching is effective and to indicate the need for changing and evolving interventions.

Additionally, the SSSC and the School Director will observe teachers on a regular basis to ensure that all teachers are implementing the behavior system in a manner that is fair, consistent, and effective. In the event that the SSSC or the School Director discovers that there are inconsistencies in teacher implementation, the School Director will structure a school-wide PD to help teachers norm on how and when to give rewards, consequences, and so forth. Furthermore, if the School Director notices that a teacher is struggling to implement the behavior policies effectively, (s)he will encourage that teacher to spend time observing a teacher with strong classroom management, in addition to providing ongoing coaching and PD.

G. Special Student Populations and Related Services

Exploration's Plan for a Responsive, General Education Classroom: Exploration will provide all students with a responsive, general education classroom and will ensure that each student has access to the general education curriculum. This will be accomplished through tailored instructional and environmental supports tapping the talents, affinities, and strengths of each student to reach his/her full academic, social, and emotional potential. Detailed below is the process Exploration will employ to provide all students with access to a full and meaningful academic program, including students at-risk of academic failure, students with disabilities, ELL students, and academically advanced or gifted students.

Students At-Risk of Academic Failure: Exploration will implement a three-tiered Response to Intervention (Rtl) model to support all students and help identify students at-risk of academic failure or students in need of specialized services. The SSSC will oversee the Rtl process and ensure that it is aligned to the assessment plan and driven by regular data reviews. Intervention specialists and classroom teachers will take a lead on implementing tiered interventions in content areas and social-emotional learning for students identified in need of additional support.

Students will be identified for tiered services by classroom instructional staff based on observations of performance/growth, as well as diagnostic and formative assessment data (universal screening tools). These data sources will serve as evidence of a student's current level of performance, area for continued growth, and baseline for service delivery. Teachers will originate the referral to the SSSC for review of a student's current level of performance and determine if tiered supports are applicable.

The SSSC, as supported by the school-based intervention team, will review and collaborate around the identified student. Exploration's assessment plan will serve as the baseline data and an action plan (lasting for 6-8 weeks). The Rtl action plan will target one specific and measurable skill and include the following information: focus of intervention service (goal); program/strategy to target identified skills focus; grouping and frequency of services; assessment/metric to measure growth and progress of targeted skills; progress monitoring opportunities; and resources needed for successful intervention. The school-based intervention team, supported by the classroom teacher, will determine the schedule for services. The action plan will be

shared with the classroom team and student’s family.

After the pre-determined amount of time has passed, the school-based intervention team will review the student’s progress on the targeted skill and determine if further tiered support is necessary. The action plan will be discontinued if the services have accelerated the student’s growth at an acceptable rate (evidence from intervention), or the action plan will be modified to identify a new target and intervention. The SSSC will track the progress of all students receiving Rtl services and ensure fidelity of implementation. Annually, the SSSC will evaluate the services, including frequency, type, progress, outcomes and perspectives/input.

In order to implement the Rtl program and serve students in need of intervention well, Exploration has established consistent times for interventions services in the master schedule (Walk to Intervention). This dedicated time serves as an opportunity to deliver differentiated instruction to students in homogenous groups, based on their needs, to drive student growth and performance. Intervention specialists will support the dedicated intervention blocks to ensure that flexible grouping is possible. Students needing additional intervention will receive push-in support during the regular ELA and math blocks.

For those students at risk of academic failure, evidence-based interventions will be identified to support their skill development and growth through the action planning of the school-based intervention team. The following outlines the tiered interventions Exploration has identified to support students referred for Rtl services through the school-based intervention team:

TIER 1 Supports	Group Instruction (Class-based)	Tier 1 supports will be provided to all students in the general education classroom setting. We will expect our teachers to provide targeted and differentiated lesson plans and instruction to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students, particularly those who may not be performing at grade level expectations. We will track student progress and identify any gaps or trends that may be hindering student performance. Through professional development and collaborative support teachers will receive training on intervention strategies in the areas of greatest needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guided reading - Graphic Organizers (thinking maps) - Tier 2-3 Vocabulary
TIER 2 Supports	Supplemental Instruction (Group)	Tier 2 supports will be provided if we find that the intervention strategies listed in Tier 1 are not sufficiently impacting students’ achievement. Tier 2 strategies may take place in the general education classroom or in small group sessions during the “Walk to Intervention” block. The general education teacher or the Intervention Specialist will provide the supports at this level. The general education teacher will continue to use the general education curricular resources, as outlined in the “Curriculum and Instruction” section, and the Tier 1 strategies listed, but he/she will also rely on additional strategies listed, as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writers Workshop - Classroom behavior contracts - JumpStart - Really Great Reading Interventions
TIER 3 Supports	Intensive Instruction (Small Group or Individual)	Tier 3 interventions will be provided in small groups of students (1-2 at a time) and are designed to provide more intensive instruction than the Tier 2 interventions. Similar to the Tier 2 interventions, Tier 3 interventions will consist of general education instruction in addition to specialized supports. Students may receive “push in” support from the Intervention Specialist or individual or small group support during the intervention block. Students requiring Tier 3 support will participate in 30-to-60 minutes of intervention at a minimum of four days per week. If assessment results indicate that students have made necessary growth, they will exit Tier 3 interventions. Tier 3 instruction will be provided by school personnel who are highly skilled or trained in the areas of academic need. We will use the resources listed, amongst others, to teach, and monitor, Tier 3 student progress. In the event the intervention resources do not meet the needs of our students, we will research and implement other intervention resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-Sensory Strategies for writing - Skillstreaming, - Empower writing

English Language Learner Students: Exploration will ensure that all students, including ELL students, have access to the general education curriculum. See below for a complete description.

Gifted and Talented Students: The Exploration academic program is designed to provide enriching and deep inquiries for all students. However, we recognize that classroom-based and inquiry/innovation experiences need to be differentiated for all students, including those who are gifted and talented. Gifted and talented students are defined as those students who are performing at least one grade level ahead of current enrollment in ELA and/or math, and demonstrate a need for additional programming to challenge their intellectual growth and academic performance. Determination for gifted and talented programming will not formally begin until a student has reached the fourth grade. If a student is identified to benefit from enrichment programming, the school-based intervention team will collaborate to define opportunities to stretch the student's academic and cognitive opportunities to foster increased rates of knowledge and skill development. Families will be appropriately and reasonably engaged in the process of identifying enrichment opportunities for students to ensure that all factors relating to child and adolescent development, as well as family and cultural considerations, are weighed in program design.

Providing Specialized Instruction to Students in Need of Special Education Services: The School Director and a dedicated school-based intervention team will assume responsibility for all aspects of special education services at Exploration. Exploration's school-based intervention team will be led by the SSSC and includes the following staff: School Director, intervention specialists, and social worker. Exploration's CIC will oversee referrals and documentation for services while also working with the families, in coordination with the SSSC, to communicate supports at home and school. Through the school-based intervention team's collective efforts and collaboration on individual student's IEP, Exploration will provide specialized instruction to meet the needs of each student identified as requiring special education services; regular review of their plans will ensure compliance. Services will be delivered in the setting mandated on the student's IEP (e.g., classroom, therapy room) by those staff qualified to provide the service. Exploration will prioritize hiring staff members who are dually certified in elementary and special education as a means to provide the specified special education programs.

Working with the District to Ensure that Eligible Students Receive Services: The CIC will communicate with the Committee on Special Education Chair at each district of residence on IEP-related items, service provisions, and other matters of special education; communication will be documented and occur in person, over the phone or via email, as applicable and ethical. Exploration will provide the following services, as mandated on the child's IEP: additional time; a separate location; modified materials or equipment; and additional services, including push-in and pull-out intervention services. Exploration will work directly with the district to accommodate and schedule any additional related services as mandated on a student's IEP.

To ensure fair and adequate funding for related student services, the CIC, School Director, and operations team will maintain ongoing communication with the student registrar, the finance department, and/or the CSE of each district of residence to confirm student enrollment at Exploration, designate what related services Exploration will provide, confirm services that the district will provide, and ensure that all funding has been received for related services. Exploration will maintain a line in the budget to track funding for students with IEPs, and the CIC, School Director, and operations team will meet on a monthly basis to review the funding received from each district, discuss any changes in enrollment and related services, and contact the districts of residence, as necessary.

Evaluating the Special Education Instructional Program: The School Director and SSSC will assume the lead roles for compiling key indicators of services and supports and reporting to the school community and Board of Trustees. Indicators of services and supports will be aligned to Exploration's dashboard and performance benchmarks in the areas of student learning, teaching and learning, and family engagement; reports will be disaggregated based on student populations (e.g., students with disabilities) as a means to inform and enhance services.

Identifying Students Suspected of Having a Disability: The CIC will oversee the Child Find process

with the support of the school-based intervention team. Exploration will comply with all federal Child Find requirements requiring schools to have a clearly articulated process for identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities. Exploration will also comply with all State Education Department regulations by submitting annual reports such as the Charter School Report Card, including information about students with disabilities. The process for identifying and supporting Exploration students in need of additional classroom- and/or school-based supports is outlined below:

- All incoming kindergarten students, and new students at other grade levels, will be screened to determine if additional support services are warranted in the classroom setting, or if a referral to CSE is applicable. Screening tools will include those assessments indicated in Exploration's assessment plan and may be supplemented by speech-language screening tools (e.g., PLS-5, CCC-2, SSIS), behavior rating scales, academic/cognitive rating scales (e.g., Brigance), or classroom observations of performance and behavior. Permission for screening will be collected from parents prior to screening assessments.
- The school-based intervention team will review the results of the screening measure, responsive strategies for support will be identified, and a plan for implementation will be established with key school personnel.
- The school-based intervention team will communicate results and responsive supports to the student's family/caregivers and elicit their feedback and support.
- If the school and/or family determine that a referral to CSE in the student's district of residence is applicable and necessary, the family will be provided with the address and phone number of the CSE of the student's district of residence if the family/guardian chooses to self-refer. The Exploration staff will inform the family they will need to make a formal written request and state the specific reasons for referral.
- If applicable, the school-based intervention team will follow the specified procedures for referral to CSE. The school-based intervention team will gather information and data on responsive supports and associated progress. The CIC will obtain parental permission for CSE referral and subsequently follow the procedures for CSE referral set forth by the student's district of residence. The CIC will communicate verbally and in writing with all Exploration staff on a student's scheduled CSE meeting and associated documentation/information. Exploration will ensure classroom coverage in order for the classroom teacher, and related intervention providers, to attend the CSE meeting(s).

Identifying, Assessing, and Servings ELL Students: Exploration will use the NYSED process for identifying students who are ELL students. Before the school year begins, we will administer the Home Language Questionnaire to all new students. If results from the Home Language Questionnaire indicate the only language spoken in the home is English, screening will cease. However, if results indicate that English is not the home and/or native language, the SSSC will commence an interview in English, and the native language, as applicable. We will use the results of the questionnaire and interview to determine the family's dominant language and will ensure that communication with the family is in the preferred/authorized language, whether English or otherwise. If screening results reveal that a student speaks little English or exclusively a language other than English, the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) assessment will be administered; students scoring below benchmark proficiency levels will be eligible for ESL services.

We will make ESL instruction a priority at Exploration and will strive to have ELL students achieve English proficiency as quickly as possible. Primary classroom instruction and intervention will occur in English with modifications and accommodations, verbally and written, being appropriately and reasonably applied. ELL students will receive ELA programming, as outlined in the Curriculum and Instruction section. Staff will employ ESL strategies and methodologies for language and vocabulary acquisition. All ELL

students will receive the same content instruction as non-ELL peers.

ELL students will annually take the NYSESLAT as a measure of their English proficiency. Scores on the assessment will benchmark a student's proficiency level and determine if a student's performance is high enough to warrant dismissal from ESL support services. In accordance with the NCLB requirements, students who have resided in the United States for one year or longer will take the NYS ELA exams.

The school-based intervention team will monitor ESL programming. ELL progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis, as indicated in our Assessment System section, and may include the following measures used specifically to monitor English language proficiency: classroom assessments (formative), writing samples, vocabulary checklists, performance on task questions, and prompts. If results indicate that an ELL student is not making adequate progress in language and vocabulary acquisition with school-provided supports, modifications will be made to the support program in consultation with the student's family. Outcomes and progress will be reported to the student and the family.

Managing IEP Record-Keeping: The CIC will assume responsibility for maintaining the confidentiality of student records. The most recent copy of the IEP will be given to the instructional staff responsible for fulfilling the services and accommodations on the IEP; all relevant support staff will be verbally updated on accommodations and supports. Any staff that will access the IEP document will sign a Chapter 408 form to be filed and maintained accordingly. All student records will be maintained in a dedicated locked cabinet with restricted access to only school personnel. A sign-out and dissemination log will be kept with student records to track access. Student information with personally identifiable information will not be shared with outside parties without prior parent/guardian written permission. The only exception to this regulation is for school district or county social service requests, when Exploration determines the requesting party has legitimate educational interests/need to know. Parents/guardians will have access to their child's records to inspect accuracy and content without undue delay and within 10 days of the parent/guardian request. Additionally, parents will be updated on their child's progress quarterly as outlined in the school calendar via progress reports accompanying the student's report cards. Exploration staff will receive training on the legal and ethical requirements for accessing and maintaining student records with identifiable personal information, as indicated in the Professional Development section.

Ancillary and Support Services: As indicated in the Family and Community Involvement section, Exploration is committed to integrating a family check-up model, facilitated by the school's social worker. This model allows for school staff and families to learn from, engage with, and collectively plan for services and supports to improve students' academic, social, and emotional development. Exploration is further committed to providing extended learning programs through partnership with community-based organizations. These programs will provide additional time and support for students toward rigorous academic standards.

III. Organizational and Fiscal Plan

A. Applicant Group Capacity

Founding Group: The founding group is organized into two categories: 1) Founding Board members; and 2) Advisory Board. The School Director has not yet been identified by the Board and will be identified through a competitive process ensuring that the highest quality leader is identified to carry out the charter. The following summarizes the experience, skills, and role of each of the Founding and Advisory Board members, illustrating the robustness of the founding group.

- **Kevin Williams, PhD, Board Chair** – Dr. Williams is currently the Department Head, Materials Science Department, at Eastman Kodak Company. Dr. Williams has been involved in the planning stages for approximately the past year. He brings expertise in science research, innovative technologies, and human resources. Dr. Williams has been a practicing scientist or leader of a world-class technology and research organization in the Rochester community for nearly 23 years. He

believes that what separates good practitioners from the outstanding scientists and leaders is a passion rooted from an early cultivation during the elementary phase of learning. Beyond Dr. Williams' alignment of core beliefs with Exploration's mission, positioning him as a superb Board Chair, he has numerous patents, developed strategic plans and PD, managed large budgets, served as a corporate liaison, and implemented communications plans. With Dr. Williams' science and leadership background, he will assist in curriculum development, particularly around the Units of Exploration and all other aspects of Board governance.

- **Carlos Cong, Founding Member** – Mr. Cong is currently the Senior Manager, Network Services, at Paychex. Mr. Cong has been involved in the planning stages for approximately the past year. He brings expertise in innovative technologies. Specifically, Mr. Cong has developed and implemented a wide array of technologies nationwide on both carrier grade and enterprise grade environments, including Data Centers, VoIP networks, IP Networks, infrastructure environments (including computer, storage, web, and application layers), and Unified Communication's (including video and interactive collaboration technologies). He has also, through leading departments of more than 200 people, developed employee retention programs, trained staff in new technologies, and developed career advancement programs. Beyond Mr. Cong's professional expertise, he is also a father of a special needs child; he has used technology and different methods of learning to help her advance in her education. With Mr. Cong's technology background and personal experiences, he will guide Exploration in its mission to explore innovative ways of learning.
- **Michelle Swanger-Gagne PhD, Founding Member** – Dr. Swanger-Gagne currently serves on the faculty at the University of Rochester Medical Center's Institute for the Family. Dr. Swanger-Gagne has been involved in the planning stages for approximately the past year. Dr. Swanger-Gagne brings expertise in working with children and adolescents with academic and behavioral concerns in schools, such as learning disabilities, ADHD, and school anxiety. Dr. Swanger-Gagne has specialized training in pediatric school psychology and family therapy. She will guide Exploration's social-emotional programming efforts, school-community-family partnerships, school culture and climate efforts, and special education services.
- **Robert Franklin, Founding Member** – Mr. Franklin currently serves as the Chief Financial Officer for Monroe County. Mr. Franklin has been involved with the planning stages for approximately three months. He brings a science background, but is employed in the finance/accounting field. Mr. Franklin has more than 25 years of experience with strategic planning, organizational management, fiscal operations, and performance management from his not-for-profit agencies. Mr. Franklin will contribute to the development and governance of Exploration in the areas of budget development, fiscal oversight, operational aspects of school opening, facilities, and grant development.
- **Joseph Saia, Founding Member** – Mr. Saia is currently the School Director at Discovery Charter School. Mr. Saia has been involved in the planning stages for approximately the past year. He brings expertise in urban education, school leadership, and charter school development. Mr. Saia has spent 15 years as an urban educator in the Rochester City School District and four years as the founding School Director for Discovery Charter School. He has overseen all operational and strategic aspects of opening a new charter school, has successfully written grants to support educational programs, has served as the leader on curriculum and PD, and has overseen data-driven school practices.
- **Stephen Pasquarella, Founding Member** – Mr. Pasquarella is the President of Vincent Associates. He has been involved in the planning stages for approximately six months. Vincent Associates is an optical equipment-manufacturing firm. He brings expertise in budgeting, fiscal management and oversight, technology innovation, and business development. Mr. Pasquarella will guide Exploration's efforts in science and technology innovation (curriculum and PD), fiscal management and compliance,

and operational aspects of the school.

- **Lisa Hiley, PhD, Founding Member** – Dr. Hiley currently serves as the Director of Education at EnCompass: Resources for Learning. She has been involved with the planning and design stages for more than a year. In her current role as Director, Dr. Hiley provides academic enrichment and intervention services in school and community settings. She brings expertise in curriculum development, diagnostic assessments and program/school evaluations, PD, and performance management/instructional coaching. Dr. Hiley will advise the Exploration Board on the above-mentioned items, serving on subcommittees tracking dashboard indicators, and collaborating with the school leader.
- **Christopher Potter, Advisory Member** – Mr. Potter currently teaches Special Education in the Webster School District. He has been involved with Exploration planning for approximately nine months. Mr. Potter is a veteran teacher of more than 20 years with special education, STEM, and enrichment experiences. Mr. Potter brings expertise in enrichment programming with STEM and arts integration and special education programming, as well as school leadership experience. Mr. Potter will advise the Exploration Board on the above-mentioned items and serve on subcommittees regarding STEM integration and curriculum development.

In addition to the information included above, the Founding Board and Advisory Members, collectively, have the following skills and competencies: school administration and leadership; curriculum and program development; instructional leadership and PD/learning; teacher recruitment, interviewing, and dismissal; hiring instructional and support staff (human resource management); staff retention and recognition initiatives; instructional observation, coaching, and evaluation; special education and related services delivery and oversight; testing and Title I oversight; student diagnostic and summative assessments; program evaluation; school and not-for-profit budgeting; fundraising and development; community partnerships and collective impact; social-emotional programming and evidence-based practice; school-family-community partnerships; science and technology innovation; IT services and maintenance; policy and procedure development; communications and marketing/messaging; executive and job coaching; facilities management; grant writing and development; food services and health services oversight; project management and special projects development; and children's policy development and advocacy.

In order to determine which Board members were the right fit for the various positions on the Board, we took into account the following factors:

- Knowledge and expertise, as evidenced by current and past work experience;
- Knowledge and expertise, as evidenced by past Board, governance, or management experience;
- Ability to commit and invest time in the founding, planning, and early years of the school;
- Commitment and ties to the Rochester Community;
- Appreciation for science education and education of special student populations; and
- Diversity of experiences, skill sets, and perspectives.

How the Applicant Group Came Together: The founders and advisors of Exploration joined together based on their shared passion and vision for elementary science inquiry as a catalyst for student achievement in ELA and math. The group formed through professional contacts and known passions for elementary, science, and/or social-emotional school-based programming for youth in underserved communities. As the group met, the commitment of the founding members was solidified and a founding group with vast expertise and deep capacity for school design and operation was formed.

Planning and Writing Process: The stated key design elements served as organizing principles for the founding group's subsequent school design. Each of the founding Board and Advisory group members contributed unique, yet complementary, expertise to propose a strong model for an elementary science and technology school in the Rochester community. The applicant group met several times throughout 2014

and 2015 to discuss and agree upon the final vision for Exploration. Once we finalized the mission of the school and the key design elements, we established a comprehensive work plan to guide our work for the letter of intent and the full application. Throughout this process, the applicant group met several times to discuss our progress and reevaluate our plan to ensure short- and long-term success. In addition to whole group meetings, small subsets of the Board met to discuss and review specific sections. The full applicant group reviewed all parts of the application in the development and submission stages.

Primary Author: Lisa Hiley served as the primary author on the application. Education Enterprise of New York Foundation supported with the operational aspects sections of the application. Machael Sherry was a paid consultant on the application, supporting with project management and content review. SchoolWorks was a paid consultant on the application providing content review and guidance, editing, and consultation on school design services.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

Administrative Relationship between Explorations and the Board of Regents: Our Founding Board understands the responsibility of governing a public charter school. The Board will have a performance contract with the Board of Regents that provides the school with the autonomy to design and operate its academic performance, organizational viability, and fiscal soundness.

Proposed Governance Structure: The Board of Trustees will govern the school. A list of our proposed Board of Trustees, whether they will be a voting member, and the length of their initial term is summarized in the following table.

Trustee Name	Voting	Position	Length of Initial Term
Carlos Cong	Y	Member	3
Robert Franklin	Y	Member	3
Michelle Swanger-Gagne	Y	Member	3
Stephen Pasquarella	Y	Member	3
Kevin Williams	Y	Member	3
Joseph Saia	Y	Member	3
Lisa Hiley	Y	Member	3

The Board of Trustees brings a wealth of experience from both the public and the private sector, including knowledge about finance, development, performance management, charter school oversight, academic and social emotional learning supports, special education, and innovative science and technology skills. None of the Board members have served on charter school boards, prior to Exploration, although Joseph Saia is currently the principal at Discovery Charter School in Rochester. For a more detailed summary of the Board qualifications, see the previous section, Applicant Group Capacity.

As indicated in the By-Laws, except for the Initial Board of Trustees, every Trustee shall be approved and elected to the Board of Trustees by the Board of Trustees, and before being seated as a voting member of the Board of Trustees, the new Trustee shall complete and submit a Trustee Questionnaire for approval by the New York State Education Department.

Organizational Structure of the School: Exploration’s organizational plan is designed to support our critical focus on academic achievement. The Board of Trustees will hire the School Director, who will report directly to the Board and be responsible for day-to-day management of the school. The School Director will be the primary instructional leader of the school and will manage instruction with the STCC, the CIC, and the SSSC. These individuals, along with a Dean of Students, will comprise the leadership team at Exploration. The Director, STCC, Operations Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant will be hired during the planning year to establish the foundation for the school’s culture, curriculum, and infrastructure. The staff structure for each year of the charter term is detailed further in the attached table and in the Management and Staffing

section.

We have not yet identified a leader for the school; however, we have initiated a search and expect to have a School Director identified as soon as the charter is approved. Key qualifications include high expectations for learning and behavior, demonstrated success in raising student achievement with low-income urban students, experience with start-up environments, experience and passion for the use of the scientific method and inquiry, and skills managing staff in a complex organization. Responsibilities and qualifications for other key positions are provided in Attachment 8a.

Conducting and Publicizing Monthly Board Meetings: The Board will meet no fewer than 10 times per year; all meetings will be properly noticed as required by the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York. The agenda will be developed by the Chairperson in consultation with the School Director and will include a written or oral report by the School Director, a report of the Finance Committee, other committee reports as appropriate, and opportunity for public comments. Minutes will be taken at all Board and committee meetings, copies of which will be posted on our website and archived in the school office.

Promoting Parental and Staff Involvement in School Governance: The Founding Board is committed to operating a high quality school that is student-centered and believes that parent representation is a critical element in achieving this and other Exploration goals. The Trustees and the School Director will actively encourage parents to attend Board meetings and will recruit an interested parent during the first school year.

The Board will also encourage parent and staff input into the governance of the school. Board meetings will adhere to the Open Meetings Law and include an opportunity for public comment; parent and staff surveys of parents will be used as part of school oversight and the School Director's evaluation. The Board will enact and publicize a complaint policy that contains a clear process for bringing issues to the attention of the Board and for the Board to respond in a timely fashion. Board members will also regularly visit the school and attend school community events.

Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members: As indicated by our By-Laws, our Board will consist of at least five and no more than 11 voting members, ten of whom will be At-Large Trustees, and one of whom will be a Parent Representative Trustee. The At Large Trustees will be community leaders and will be representative of the Rochester community at large. The Parent Representative Trustee will be a parent or guardian of a student(s) enrolled in Exploration. This individual will be identified at the end of the first year of the charter and, after that, there shall be no less than one Parent Representative Trustee. The School Director shall serve as a non-voting ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and shall serve as a liaison with the staff of the school. All Trustees must be at least 18 years of age, strongly committed to improving public school educational opportunities for all children, and fully supportive of the Exploration mission statement, goals, and objectives. Board of Trustee roles and responsibilities include:

- Establishing the school's mission and school design
- Ensuring adequate resources for implementation of the school program
- Approving the school's annual budget
- Recruiting, hiring, and evaluating the School Director
- Approving major policies and regularly reviewing and revising them as necessary
- Preparing for, and attending, Board and committee meetings
- Making informed decisions to support the success of the school
- Monitoring program implementation and compliance with the charter agreement and relevant laws and regulations
- Facilitating long-term strategic planning
- Recruiting and orienting new Board members and assessing Board performance
- Recruiting partner organizations that will actively support the school's mission and academic approach

- Participating as appropriate in the grievance process
- Enhancing the school's public standing

Trustee Qualifications include:

- Belief in, and support of, the mission and design of the school
- The expectation that all children can, and will, achieve academic excellence
- Demonstrated understanding of Board duties
- Willingness to attend Board and committee meetings and volunteer for Board work
- Experience and expertise in a relevant field, such as: education, human services, business, management, finance/accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing/public relations, fundraising, and/or community relations or organizing
- The capacity to examine performance data, financial documents and management reports, and make informed decisions in the best interest of the school
- Be at least 18 years of age

As noted in our By-Laws, the Board will have at least five members and include the following officer positions: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- **Chairperson** – The Chair is the senior volunteer leader of the Charter School who presides at all meetings of the Board and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees of the organization, oversees implementation of Board and school policies, and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained. Among the duties, the Chair works with the school leaders, other Board officers and Trustees, and committee chairs to develop the agendas for Board meetings, and presides at these meetings. In approval from other Board members, the Chair appoints volunteers to key leadership positions, including positions as chair of Board committees, and cultivates leadership succession; and works with the Board of Trustees in accordance with the school's By-Laws and mission, to establish and maintain systems.
- **Vice Chairperson** – The Vice Chair is the secondary volunteer leader of the charter school and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair, including sharing responsibilities as appropriate. The Vice Chair advises and assists the Chair on all matters relevant to the Board.
- **Treasurer** – Provides direction for the financial management of the school and facilitates the Board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. The Treasurer will serve as Chair of the Finance Committee, provide direction for the oversight of the school's record keeping and accounting policies, and ensure the presentation of timely and meaningful financial reports to the Board.
- **Secretary** – Provides direction for the keeping of legal documents, including minutes of all meetings of the Board. The Secretary will certify and keep at the school office the original, or a copy of the By-Laws, keep a book of minutes of all meetings of the Trustees and meetings of committees; and shall record time and place of meeting, whether regular or special, how called, how notice was given, the names of those present or represented at the meeting and the proceedings.

Board Committees: Committees of the Board shall include Executive Committee, Audit and Finance, Academic Accountability, and Human Resources, consisting of a chairperson and at least two (2) other Trustees. The Audit and Finance Committee will be responsible for the fiscal health of the school. The Academic Accountability Committee will oversee student achievement data and monitor progress towards the school's annual achievement goals. The Human Resources Committee will be responsible for all human resources/personnel issues. The Board of Trustees will, by resolution, designate from its members other committees, as it deems necessary.

Recruitment, Selection, and Development of Board Members: As indicated above, Exploration Board members maintain great ties to individuals throughout the City of Rochester. Board members will be

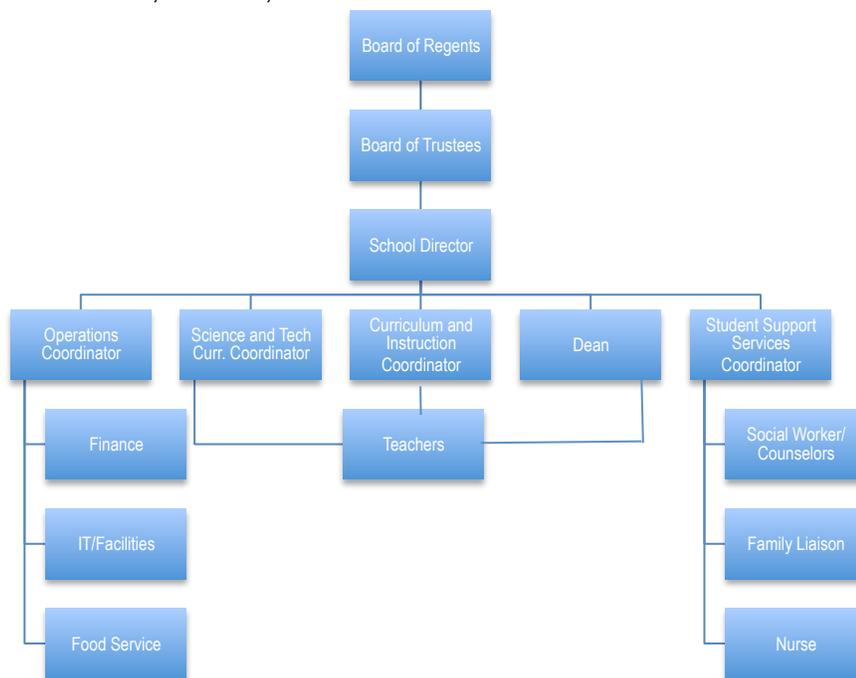
expected to leverage these relationships, as needed, to engage other community members in the Exploration work and to fill Board seats as needed. Board members are currently engaging in this process in order to find an attorney, which we believe is a critical seat that needs to be filled on our Board in the near future.

In addition to the regular Board meetings, the Board will meet annually for a retreat, where they will discuss best practices, as indicated by the New York State charter school authorizers, the Northeast Charter Schools Network, The New York City Charter School Center, and other well-regarded charter and education organizations. During this retreat, the Board will set the strategic plan for the school year, with input from the School Director. The strategic plan will align with the academic and fiscal measures set forth in this application.

Further, when new Board members join the Exploration Board, they will be expected to attend a New Board Member Orientation; we will share the vision and strategic plan for the school. If the new Board member will be joining a specific committee, or serve in a specific role, we will also outline and discuss the ways in which the new member can best contribute, in order to achieve the goals set forth in the strategic plan.

C. Management and Staffing

The Exploration Organizational Chart, indicating our staffing structure and reporting responsibilities for the Board, administration, and staff, follows:



Organizational Structure of the School: As indicated on the above organizational chart, and further described in Attachment 8(a), the Exploration Board of Trustees (Board) will report to the Board of Regents. The Board will be directly responsible for the goals set forth in the charter agreement with the Board of Regents, while the School Director, who is hired and managed by the Board, will have the responsibility of implementation, oversight, and progress toward these goals on a daily basis. As such, the School Director will serve as the primary instructional leader of the school but will also manage the Operations Coordinator, Science and Technology Curriculum Coordinator (STCC), Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator (CIC), Dean, and Student Support Services Coordinator (SSSC). The Operations Coordinator will oversee finance, technology, and food service responsibilities. The STCC, the CIC, and the Dean will be charged with helping the School Director plan and implement the curriculum, as well as manage and develop the teaching staff.

Finally, the SSSC will manage the social workers, counselors, the family liaison, and the nurse.

Management Roles and Responsibilities of Key Administration

Following is a high level summary of the management roles and responsibilities of key administration. For a complete description, refer to Attachment 8(a), Section III.

- **School Director:** The School Director is responsible to the Board of Trustees for accomplishing the school's mission and for implementing policies of the Board. The School Director is responsible for the development and direction of curriculum, hiring, supervision, PD, and evaluation of all faculty and staff; oversight and maintenance of buildings and grounds; promoting the school among its various constituencies; maintaining appropriate liaison with school districts.
- **Operations Coordinator:** The Operations Coordinator will report to the School Director and is responsible for most non-instructional tasks, including finance, IT, facilities, and food service. The Operations Coordinator will also oversee transportation, student records, the annual student lottery, child nutrition requirements, and data reporting, among other responsibilities.
- **Science and Technology Curriculum Coordinator:** This role will develop, implement, and evaluate science and inquiry instructional programs and lab-based learning opportunities. The STCC will provide training and PD on Exploration's innovative and lab-based programs and strategies, as well as ongoing instructional coaching for classroom staff in the application of project-based learning and innovative technologies; apply data for instructional purposes to ensure accelerated student progress in science and inquiry learning opportunities; and work collaboratively with other school leadership to ensure an innovative and evidence-based science and technology programming for Exploration students.
- **Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator:** This role will develop, implement, and evaluate cross-curriculum instructional programs. The CIC will provide training and PD on Exploration's programs and strategies, as well as ongoing instructional coaching for classroom staff and innovation instructors; apply data for instructional purposes to ensure accelerated student progress in science and inquiry; and work collaboratively with other school leadership to ensure an innovative and evidence-based cross-curricular program for Exploration students.
- **Dean of Students:** The Dean of Students is responsible for giving individualized assistance to students with academic or behavioral difficulties. (S)he will be responsible for creating behavior systems, protocols, and practices in conjunction with all other staff. (S)he will develop a strong rapport with students and families in order to promote social and emotional well-being.
- **Student Support Services Coordinator:** Coordinate student supports and services, including those students with IEPs and with ELL status; collaborate with school and district of residence personnel to ensure that students individualized learning needs are adequately addressed and supported; engage with families to support students at home and in school while communicating necessary information; collaborate with School Director on students who present with behaviors that are detrimental to classroom performance; ensure compliance on special education, ELL, and behavioral reporting; and evaluate programming and impacts for students and families.

Staffing Plan: See the following table for Exploration's staffing plan over the proposed charter term.

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	<u>Pre-Ops</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>
Enrollment	--	175	250	325	400	475
Grades	--	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4	K-5
NYS Staff Categories	<u>FTEs</u>					
Deans, Directors, Coordinators						
School Director	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Science & Tech. Curriculum Coordinator	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Curriculum & Instr. Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Student Support Services Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Dean of Students				1.0	2.0	2.0
Subtotal	1.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	6.0	6.0
Administrative Staff						
Operations Coordinator	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
IT Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5
Admin Assistant	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0
Subtotal	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.5	4.5
Teachers - Regular		7.0	10.0	13.0	16.0	19.0
Substitute Teacher		1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0
Teaching Assistants		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Specialty Teachers						
Technology Innovation Instructor		0.5	1.0	1.75	2.0	3.0
Science Innovation Instructor		0.5	1.0	1.75	2.0	3.0
Intervention Specialists		3.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	7.0
Apprentice Teacher		5.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	9.0
Art/Music Teacher		0.5	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.0
PE Teacher		0.5	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.0
Subtotal		10.0	14.0	17.5	22.0	26.0
Therapists / Counselors						
Family Partnership Coordinator (Social Worker)		1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
School Counselor		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Subtotal		2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
Other (Non-Instructional)						
Food Service Worker		1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Subtotal		1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
TOTAL	2.0	28.0	36.5	44	55.0	64.0

By creating this staffing arrangement, we have ensured that there is adequate leadership to set the vision and tone for the school, implement and monitor the curriculum, and support and develop staff. We have also ensured that the school operations will not hinder instruction by including operations in the planning year and during year one. Finally, we have included eight full-time teachers, including a full-time substitute teacher, several part-time teachers, and apprentice teachers to maintain a small student-teacher ratio and provide students with the individualized attention. We will invest in our students and our family partnerships by ensuring access to a school counselor and a family partnership coordinator from day one. As indicated in the above table, as our student enrollment grows, we will add members to each of the teams to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our students in all areas. See Attachment 8(a) for our hiring and personnel policies, including qualifications to be used in hiring employees.

Staffing Needs and Our Educational Program: We expect students will need additional support, so we invested significant financial resources into our staffing plan to ensure students had ample opportunities

to receive support and more individualized instruction. To this end, our staffing plan includes intervention specialists, apprentice teachers, curriculum coordinators, a dean, and a SSSC, all of whom will provide additional support to students above and beyond the classroom teacher. We have also included science and technology innovation instructors to ensure that teachers and students are adequately supported in implementation and access to our science and technology curriculum – essential to our mission. And, finally, we have included adequate operations staff members to ensure that our instructional staff can focus primarily on students and student achievement.

Recruiting and Retaining Teachers: As outlined further in Attachment 8(a), we have several recruitment and retention efforts to ensure that we are finding and retaining the most talented teachers for our students. We plan to develop a Human Resources Committee on the Board that will strategically advertise for open positions and establish partnerships with top teacher graduate programs in the area. In addition to ongoing PD, planned time throughout the day for collaboration, and support staff, we believe that our competitive compensation package will assist in recruiting and retaining our teachers. Teacher salaries will be benchmarked against similar schools in the region and will include the following benefits:

Paid time off	Holidays
Health insurance	Dental insurance
Life insurance	Retirement plan
Section 125 plan	Short-term disability
Long-term disability	

Furthermore, Exploration will recognize staff for their dedication and hard work and will prioritize work life balance, particularly for teachers.

Addressing Human Resource Challenges: Despite our efforts, we recognize we may face human resource challenges down the line. In the event that this challenge occurs, we plan to employ the following strategies:

- **College Partnerships:** We will establish relationships with various graduate and undergraduate programs throughout Rochester in order to reach recent graduates.
- **Flexible scheduling:** As indicated in our PD section, we will prioritize retaining our top talent. If needed, and on a case-by-case basis, we will implement flexible scheduling policies to ensure that our teachers are not forced to resign.
- **Investing in the current team:** During times of shortage, we may be able to leverage the strength of our current team by providing them with different or greater opportunities that will allow them to grow and develop.
- **Recruitment director:** If the budget permits, we may employ a part-time recruitment director to conduct ongoing outreach and recruitment in order to make sure that we have an established talent pipeline.

Using Student Assessment Data to Drive Key Human Resource Decisions: As further outlined in the Evaluation and Professional Development sections, Exploration will use student assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at the recruitment, evaluation, retention, and support of the leaders and the teaching staff. As outlined in Attachment 8(a), we are seeking to recruit and hire high-achieving individuals with a track record of achieving academic success with students from low-income communities. Finally, student achievement data are tied closely with our evaluation plan and will guide ongoing teacher coaching and support.

C.1 Charter Management Organization

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

D. Evaluation

Programmatic Audits: Exploration is committed to evaluation and continuous improvement to ensure student and school success. In order to track measures of growth and performance, the Exploration school

leadership team, including the Board of Trustees, will review the following academic indicators that are aligned to the NYS performance standards, and tracked in the Exploration dashboard: student performance, teaching and learning systems, culture, climate, and family engagement.

The School Director and the Board will use this information to improve educational programming. In order to do so, the School Director will ensure that instruction is implemented with fidelity to the curriculum, and will make note of any observations otherwise. If there are trends or gaps in implementation, the School Director will coach teachers individually, or address these concerns at school-wide PD. Once teachers have normed on implementation, the above indicators will serve as the primary measures for evaluating efficacy. In addition to these measures, the School Director may employ other indicators, such as observation and feedback from other high-performing charter school leaders throughout the country, anecdotal evidence from teacher reflections around implementation, and the school leadership team's observations.

The School Director will disaggregate the student data listed above to note areas of growth, while also accounting for relevant anecdotal evidence. (S)he will use identified trends to create next steps for teacher and student interventions, as well as changes to the academic program or curricular resources. (S)he will share this information with the Board of Trustees for review. The School Director and the leadership team will conduct this reflection and analysis on regular basis to ensure that Exploration is on track to meeting achievement goals.

The Board of Trustees will also use this information to conduct programmatic audits, and to evaluate progress toward the stated achievement goals, and will submit an Annual Report to the New York State Board of Regents in accordance with Education Law 2857(2).

Evaluating the School's Operational Effectiveness and Fiscal Soundness: Exploration will also use its dashboard to review the organizational and fiscal soundness of the organization. The data that will be tracked and used for this purpose are listed below:

- **Financial Condition:** Sound and stable financial condition on key financial indicators (e.g., debt to asset, cash flow).
- **Fiscal Management:** Operating in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgeting and long-range planning (e.g., allocated budget surpluses, fundraising). The Board will engage an independent firm to complete an annual audit to monitor fiscal soundness and accountability.
- **Board Oversight and Governance:** Competent stewardship and oversight of school with maintenance of policies, procedures, and goals faithful to the charter. Annually, the Board will establish goals for operations and performance, and will conduct surveys and explore other sources of data determined through the strategic goal-setting process to ascertain progress and outstanding needs/opportunities.
- **Organizational Capacity:** Well-established organizational structure, clearly-defined roles for staff/management, and successful implementation of academics and operations.

In addition, Exploration will, per regulations, engage the services of an independent auditor with relevant experience to complete an annual financial audit of all financial records applying practices generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and in compliance with the standards established by the U.S. Comptroller General. The auditors will provide audited financial reports pursuant to Education Law 2854 (1)(c). Exploration's first fiscal year will end June 30, 2017. Financial activity associated with school start-up will be included in the first fiscal period. Exploration's Board will ensure separation of financial duties (e.g., authorization, recordkeeping, custody and verification) to ensure that no single person has capacity to complete all financial tasks.

Faithfulness to Charter and Law: Exploration will also use its dashboard to review the charter school's faithfulness to the charter and the law. The data that will be tracked and used for this purpose follow:

- **Mission and Key Design Elements:** Faithfulness to mission and commitment to key design elements

of the charter.

- **Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention:** Annual progress toward enrollment and retention targets including good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain diverse learners.
- **Legal Compliance: Compliance with laws, regulations and provisions of the charter.**

The Board will review the dashboard data at each monthly Board meeting and use it to plan strategically toward remedying any areas of growth or concern. The ongoing reflection, similar to that of the student achievement data, will ensure that the school is on track toward the stated accountability measures.

Teacher Evaluations: To ensure high-quality instruction for its students, Exploration will evaluate teachers regularly throughout the year. An annual performance review will be completed for all full- and part-time staff to promote professional growth, while also highlighting professional achievements, performance, contributions, and opportunities for growth. The Exploration Annual Performance Review is based on the Framework for Teaching proposed by Charlotte Danielson. The framework is grouped into four broad dimensions: 1) planning and preparation; 2) environment; 3) instruction; and 4) professional responsibility. The first three aspects of the framework are directly observable actions and behaviors in a classroom or instructional context. The domains of planning and preparation, environment, and instruction are all included in the instructional observation. A rubric of expectations relating to each domain guides the instructional observation across the domains and can serve as a guide for the educator in targeted areas of professional growth. The fourth domain, professional responsibility, is not directly observable in an instructional observation, but is noted in a summative evaluation.

The Exploration leadership team assumes the responsibility for evaluating instructional staff. The elements of professional evaluation for Exploration staff are listed below:

- **Instructional Observation** – Instructional observation will be completed by a supervisor at an agreed-upon time with the professional staff. This will serve as an opportunity to highlight instructional practices in direct support of a youth as a catalyst for continued professional growth and reflection. The instructional observation will be completed using an observation protocol and rubric. Following the observation, the observing supervisor will schedule a time to discuss the results; signatures will be obtained at the time of the follow-up conversation with an opportunity for staff to respond to the observation and review in writing. Professional staff will sign off on all instructional observations, indicating receipt of the feedback.
- **Professional Practice Review** – The professional practice review will be completed by a supervisor or member of the leadership team during school hours. This will serve as an opportunity to review and observe professional practices and provide collegial coaching on identified competencies for effective practices (e.g., instructional, evidence-based). The professional practice review will note various aspects of practices, identify strengths of the professional practice(s), and provide reflection question(s). The purpose of the professional practice review will be to consider the regular practices of professional staff, associated competencies, and contributions to programming, while supplying feedback and reflection questions promoting ongoing professional growth. The professional practice review will be coupled with instructional coaching offered by Exploration staff to encourage high-quality and evidence-based efforts.
- **Annual Evaluation** – The annual evaluation will be conducted by a supervisor at the end of the program year/term. This will be a summary of formal and informal instructional observations and overall contributions to student growth and program success. The annual evaluation will highlight a professional staff's practice and instruction during the current academic year, evaluate professional performance, and identify areas for continued growth. The annual evaluation will be completed using an annual evaluation format and shared with the professional staff upon completion. Professional staff

will sign off on all annual evaluations indicating receipt of the feedback.

The following are criteria for overall domain and performance ratings:

- **'Exceeds expectations' Rating** - All observational ratings and description performance are Highly Effective within and across domains. Overall, the staff's professional performance is a positive asset to job performance and school/program quality.
- **'Meets Expectations' Rating** – Observational ratings and description of performance are a combination of Effective and Highly Effective within and across domains.
- **'Needs Improvement' Rating** – Observational ratings include two (or more) Developing ratings in a domain or one (or more) Insufficient rating within any domain.

In addition to the methods for evaluation listed above, the school leadership team and the instructional staff will engage in ongoing conversations about student achievement data, which will drive the PD strategies outlined in that section. As discussed further in the PD section, teachers will be expected to set student achievement goals at the beginning of the year that will drive coaching and decision making thereafter. The school leadership team will also review progress toward these student achievement goals and will document progress in the practice review and the annual evaluation.

School Leader Evaluations: The Board of Trustees will be responsible for the evaluation of the School Director. The Board of Trustees and school leader will meet prior to the start of each school year to establish measurable (i.e., SMART) goals and associated data sources for the school year. The co-created goals will serve as the foundation for the School Director's annual summative evaluation. In addition to the review of the SMART goals, the Board will review and rate the school leader's performance on key job tasks and leadership efforts (e.g., PD, retention/recruitment of students) as well as dimensions of leadership quality and compliance (e.g., reporting and documentation, communication). The Board will use the similar rating scale for the school leader as for the instructional staff (i.e., meets expectations, exceeds expectations, needs improvement).

Each January, the Board will review the progress toward the annual school leader's goals to ensure that adequate progress is being made. The Board will then provide a written summative evaluation of the school leader no later than April 30th of each year. The results will be reviewed with the Board and the school leader, with written comment from the school leader permitted, prior to the presentation at the May Board meeting.

Board Member Evaluations: The Board of Trustees assumes the governance responsibility of Exploration. An annual evaluation to ensure Board member engagement, contribution, and effectiveness will be completed by the Board members (as a self-reflection) and by the Board as a whole (strategic goal setting and review). The member surveys/self-assessments will be coordinated with dashboard reporting to establish school goals during the summer Board retreat. The summer retreat will also serve as a time in which Board members are apprised of their roles and responsibilities for the governance of the school with committee metric reviewed by the committee chair (e.g., personnel).

Family and Student Satisfaction: Family/caregiver partnership and engagement is a key design element of Exploration. The school's staffing structure promotes regular, positive, and two-way communication with families throughout the school year; however, an annual survey will be completed to elicit feedback from families/caregivers regarding their satisfaction and suggestions for enhancement in the spring of each school year. If applicable, further focus groups/interviews will be completed with families/caregivers to further develop program and school opportunities. The voice of the families/caregivers will be considered in programmatic and school design, and the Board will review all results from family/caregiver surveys/feedback.

We will publicize family and staff survey results during our Board meeting; we will also send a document home to parents and families that summarizes any trends identified in the survey and our plans

to address those trends moving forward.

E. Professional Development

Effective Teacher Development through Evaluation and Support: The New Teacher Project (TNTP) – an organization that has done immense research to identify proven human capital management tools and resources for school leaders – guides our approach to PD. We will embrace the following strategies for effectively developing our teachers, as listed in the TNTP Teacher Talent Toolbox:¹⁸

- Clearly define exceptional instruction and differentiate teacher development
- Implement systems and processes to support and monitor improvement
- Make PD meaningful and effective for all teachers

Ongoing PD and Training: Exploration will use the above strategies to implement effective PD sessions that are meaningful, differentiated, and targeted for teachers. Additionally, a member of the leadership team will provide observation and feedback to all instructional staff at least three times per year; they will observe teachers identified as needing more support at least once per month. These observations, coupled with student achievement data, will drive individual coaching sessions and the PD opportunities discussed further below. Teachers will have the following set periods during the day/week/month/year to focus exclusively on PD:

1. Summer Instructional Institute (1 week prior to the start of school)

The PD training plan engages multiple school staff and instructional/innovation leaders in an ongoing cycle of learning, beginning with key topics and programs at the annual Summer Institute and continuing throughout the year. These PD and training topics and the person responsible for facilitating each section is listed below:

Content	Facilitator
Organizational Principles for Exploration’s Academic-Social-Global Programming: Exploring and defining the linkages between national and state standards, key concepts of dispositions of Exploration learners, classroom instructional practices, and units of study.	School Leader
Scientific Inquiry and Innovation Labs: Developing skills, process and critical thinking, and creating knowledge through fluid questioning, researching and exploring.	STCC
Content Area Programs and Connections: Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies programs and supplemental materials.	School Leader and Curriculum Coordinators
Research Logs: Enhancing reading and writing skills through critical writing tasks.	Curriculum Coordinators
Fostering 21 st Century Skills: Linking cross-content learning and 21st Century Skill development through science-technology-society.	Curriculum Coordinators
Assessment and Growth: Exploring multiple ways of knowing, representing, expressing and showing students’ growth, development and learning.	School Leader and Curriculum Coordinators
School Expectations: Professional Performance, Staffing Structures, Performance Reviews, Committees, and Professional Learning Commitment.	School Leader
Data Driven Instruction: How to use assessment data to measure, and track, and reflect on student progress; how to use student achievement data to guide teacher actions and instruction.	School Leader
School-Family-Community Partnerships: Recognizing the contexts and environments of Exploration’s learners to enhance academic performance. Reviewing school code of conduct and expectations for students.	SSSC and School Leader
Developing Strategies for Diverse Learners: All Kinds of Minds Introduction and review of school adopted instructional strategies/programs (e.g., Thinking Maps).	CIC
Technology: Innovative uses of technology to foster student learning.	STCC
FERPA and IDEA: Ensuring student support and confidentiality.	SSSC and School Leader
Behavioral Expectations: Policy, Codes, Expectations of Excellence and Positive Behavioral Supports, CASEL, and the PATHS curriculum.	SSSC
Supporting Diverse Learners: School-Based Supports and Strategies.	SSSC

¹⁸ <http://tntp.org/teacher-talent-toolbox>

School-Family-Community Partnerships: Check-Up Model and Proactive Problem Solving.	SSSC
Cognitively Guided Instruction: Overview and introduction; best practices for planning and implementation.	School Leader and Vendor Supported
<i>Vocabulary for the Common Core</i> : Making sure our students understand complex texts	School Leader and CIC
Implementing the “Units of Exploration:” Using rubrics to effectively gauge and support student progress.	STCC

Initial PD will be video-logged and modules for learning will be created so veteran staff can revisit common principles and new staff can be introduced to core elements of Exploration’s school model. School and instructional leaders will ensure that staff have a solid understanding of the above- mentioned concepts and programs through regular reviews of professional practice and the sustained professional learning activities that are subsequently described.

2. Monthly PD at scheduled staffing meetings (all grade levels)

Beyond the Summer Institute, the School Leader will facilitate ongoing PD and learning embedded in the 60-minute monthly staff meetings. This will ensure that all grade levels are engaging in cross-curricular and instructional conversations to foster the academic performance of Exploration’s students. Staff meetings will provide opportunities for addressing operational aspects of the school, reflecting on opportunities for continuous improvement, and providing whole school opportunities for professional learning and growth. Possible topics for ongoing school-wide professional learning and monthly staff meetings may include, but are not limited to:

- Curriculum mapping for school growth
- Opportunities to create and disseminate learning in innovative and authentic ways
- Innovative technologies and opportunities (e.g., resident scientist, materials loan)
- Celebrations of students and successes: recognizing and responding to student growth and affinities

3. Weekly PD/PL at scheduled grade-level meetings and common planning times

The School Director, with the support of the STCC, CIC, SSSC, and Dean, will be responsible for supporting and monitoring teacher and staff improvement on an ongoing basis. We recognize that the key to high quality implementation, and fidelity to the Exploration school model, will be ongoing professional learning and professional practice reviews. As a result, the master schedule builds in 50 minutes of common planning time at each grade level each day to promote embedded professional learning and instructional coaching for the Exploration staff. The leadership staff at Exploration has dedicated time in their schedules to foster the professional dialogue necessary for professional growth during this dedicated grade-level time as well.

The instructional and innovation school leaders will follow a monthly rotation of professional learning as follows; each topic will be covered in a two-day rotation as the master schedule permits on a monthly basis:

- **Data Reviews:** Capturing and applying evidence of student learning across content areas and interventions.
- **Cross-content connections and curriculum mapping:** Planning and implementing to ensure that connections are evident to students and teachers.
- **Instructional Practices:** Review of current instructional practices to ensure alignment and best-practice implementation (e.g., 21st century skills, text types).
- **Environments and Contexts:** Student level reviews to ensure staff know students as learners and support their strengths/affinities in classroom and lab-based instruction.

The leadership team will employ innovative means beyond the common planning/professional learning time to engage with staff in professional practice reviews and professional learning opportunities (e.g., video modeling). Professional learning is not intended to be a static time in a teacher’s schedule but, rather, an ongoing process of learning and development. Sustained dialogue and reflection will be encouraged through the comprehensive professional learning and PD plan. Instructional coaching and reflection on

student achievement data will be the vehicle for refining and enhancing instructional practices of Exploration staff in order to improve student performance. As they coach staff, the leadership will focus on observable and professional practices, using a common language (e.g., Danielson Framework).

4. Full Day PD, as scheduled on the proposed monthly calendars

In addition to the above, the School Director will host whole school PD/learning at the scheduled conference days as indicated on proposed first year calendar in Attachment 3(b).

5. Innovative and Authentic Science and Technology-Based PD/PL

Exploration recognizes the critical need for the staff to not only embrace and demonstrate the 21st century skills the school looks to foster in students through the academic program, but to show a greater awareness of current scientific practices, innovations, and habits. To foster that awareness and application of current advancements, innovation, and research, Exploration will include two unique methods for developing staff: 1) resident scientist program; and 2) job shadowing opportunities. These are further opportunities for Exploration to establish and leverage community partnerships to develop and challenge instructional staff. Resident scientists will be identified by the science and technology innovation instructors to provide demonstrations and supports during lab-based learning times and are aligned to applicable Units of Exploration. For example, a physics professor from a local university would join a Unit of Exploration on solar systems during the science inquiry block. Further, job shadowing opportunities will provide Innovation Instructors and classroom teachers opportunities to embed for one day annually with a member of the community engaging in innovative science and technology. For example, an innovation instructor will join a team of engineers developing cutting-edge radio technologies in our community to observe their processes, products, and applications of 21st century skills. Beyond these specific and innovative means to develop staff, additional conferences and trainings will be sought out to further develop staff. For example, the STC science curriculum offers week-long summer PD at the Smithsonian Institutes as an opportunity for science educators to learn from staff scientists.

Evaluating the PD and Training Plan: Student achievement data will be the most influential measure in evaluating the efficacy of the PD and training program. The main purpose for our ongoing PD and training will be to increase student academic gains. Therefore, if student growth does not follow from PD endeavors, we will first ensure that teachers are implementing instructional tools and techniques effectively, and then determine whether our approaches for developing and training teachers should continue. While academic data will be very influential, we will also solicit feedback from our staff, in an effort to make all PD sessions as meaningful as possible.

Preparing Teachers to Address the Needs of All Students: Our training and PD sessions will include sessions to train teachers on addressing the needs of students identified as at risk of academic failure, students with disabilities, and ELL students. The school-based intervention team will lead these sessions during the Summer Institute and throughout the school year, during monthly staff meetings, and whole school PD days. They will be responsible for monitoring the student achievement data for these subgroups throughout the year as well, and identifying trends around successes and areas of growth. They will use successful trends to glean best practices and share those best practices during school-wide PD. Similarly, they will troubleshoot areas of growth, and take the lead in problem solving strategies for how our staff will improve. These strategies might include observing strong teacher instruction at our school or elsewhere, reviewing the instructional training provided during the Summer Institute, addressing a knowledge gap about a particular area of student need, particularly for students with disabilities and ELL students, and making sure that teachers are using student data effectively to inform reteach and further instruction.

Creating a Professional Climate through Ongoing Teacher Planning and Collaboration: We will establish a professional climate by providing ample opportunities for teachers to work together and collaborate, in order for them to build strong and productive work relationships, and create a team

atmosphere. According to TNTP, “teachers are a school's most valuable resource, and it can take up to 11 hires to find a teacher of comparable quality when a top performer leaves¹⁹.” As a result, we will strive to retain our most irreplaceable teachers.

Since elementary school teachers generally teach all core subject areas, creating differentiated and meaningful cross-curricular lesson plans each day can be extremely demanding on teacher time and energy, particularly for new teachers. As a result, we have created a 50-minute period each day for teachers to engage in common planning by grade level, in order to promote shared resources, lesson planning, and assessment strategies. Additionally, the STCC will plan all lessons and assessments for the science blocks, including the Units of Exploration, so that teachers can spend the majority of their time on planning for ELA and mathematics. Furthermore, the school leadership team will use these shared planning blocks to disseminate best practices and assist with any teacher planning or programming concerns.

F. Facilities

Based on planned enrollment and staffing requirements, Exploration anticipates the following facility requirements in its first charter authorization period:

21 classrooms (3 classrooms for each grade K-6)	10 program and administrative offices
2 computer labs	2 science labs
1 art room	Gym & locker rooms
Kitchen & cafeteria	Faculty break room

Several potential sites to house the school have been investigated in the City of Rochester, including a facility located at 180 Raines Park with a long history of prior use as a non-public and parochial school serving grades in the K-12 range. The 40,000 square foot building has sufficient space and facilities to accommodate Exploration. The building owner is amenable to an initial three-to-five-year lease period, but cannot commit to a lease until such time as the charter is granted to Exploration.

Based on the review of available facilities and pricing, Exploration anticipates that a lease cost including renovations of approximately \$17,000/month in Year 1 is appropriate. This is reflected in the budget.

G. Insurance

Exploration is prepared to secure the insurance coverage, which approximates the following and is consistent with policies obtained by similar charter schools:

General Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$3,000,000 aggregate
Umbrella Liability	\$5,000,000
Property	\$250,000
Business Income with Extra Expense	\$500,000
Directors & Officers Liability	\$1,000,000
Automobile (non-owned)	\$1,000,000
Workers' Compensation & Employers' Liability	\$1,000,000
Student Accident	\$50,000
Catastrophic Student Accident	\$1,000,000

The anticipated annual premium for such coverage is approximately \$40,000 and is provided for in the appropriate sections of the operating budget.

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Health Services: Exploration will make every effort to select a central location in the City of Rochester and the Rochester City School District (RCSD). Accordingly, RCSD will likely be responsible for providing a nurse to treat students who are ill or injured, supervise disbursement of medication, and

¹⁹ <http://tntp.org/teacher-talent-toolbox/explore/retaining-top-talent>

maintain student health records. All such responsibilities will be conducted consistent with the established policies and protocols maintained by RCSD to promote student well-being and the security of confidential information; a summary of key practices to be implemented is provided below.

As part of the annual school registration process, parents/guardians must submit updated student health status information for the upcoming school year, as well as a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and photo release forms. Student health records will be maintained in locked file cabinets accessible by authorized staff only. Secured information will include all records pertaining to student visits to the nurse, medication administration authorizations, and proofs of immunization.

All students will be required to comply with NYS immunization requirements prior to, and during, their period of attendance at the school. Parents/guardians must provide updated documentation of all currently-required immunizations. Consistent with NYS Public Health Law, waiver of such requirements may be provided pursuant to physician certification that such immunization may be detrimental to the student's health, or the parent/guardian holds genuine and sincere beliefs contrary to such immunizations.

Clear and strict policies will be maintained by the school regarding the safe and secure administration of medication. All prescription and non-prescription over-the-counter (OTC) drugs must arrive at the school in original containers with appropriate patient and drug administration labeling, and a written order from a licensed prescriber and authorization from the parent/guardian will be required to administer all such drugs. All medications will be administered by the nurse or licensed practical nurse under the direction of the nurse. Other staff may be designated and trained by the nurse to assist self-directed students to administer their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication. A minimum of two staff members will maintain current certification in CPR and the use of an AED and Epi-pens. The Operations Coordinator will assume those responsibilities of the nurse, which can be delegated at such time as the nurse may not be on site.

Food Services: Exploration recognizes the vital role healthy meals play in academic success, especially given the low-income population from which the school will draw its students (Rochester Central School District has the highest poverty rate among the five largest school districts in New York State).

To that end, we intend to contract with one of several established non-for-profit school meal providers in the area to provide daily breakfast, lunch, and snack. Key selection criteria will include (but not be limited to) the ability to meet all nutritional requirements, menu options, cost, logistics, capability, and experience. Private providers with demonstrated school food services capabilities will not be excluded from the procurement process to ensure the most cost-effective food service solution is achieved.

We will hire staff with Level 1 and 2 Food Service Certifications to serve meals. We intend to participate in the Federal and State Free and Reduced-Price School Meals/Milk Program. It is anticipated that the majority of our students will qualify for this program through the direct certification process administered by NYSED. For those that do not qualify, we will send the application for the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals/Milk Program to the student's parent/guardian for completion to prove eligibility. Families of full-paying or reduced lunch-eligible students will be billed in advance each month based on estimated participation. Adjustments for differences between estimated and actual participation will be accounted for in the following month's billing. Students with recognized dietary restrictions will be served meals at no additional cost. Students will not be required to participate in our food service program, and can elect to bring their own food to school.

Privacy will be strictly maintained relative to students' free and reduced price lunch status. We will complete and submit the Meals Served Report form to the NYS Child Nutrition Program on a monthly basis. It is anticipated that the population of low-income students at the school will warrant participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (universal lunch program), which allows all students to eat free of charge.

Transportation Services: Exploration will make every effort to select a central location in the City of Rochester and accordingly draw the vast majority of its student population from the City of Rochester. As such, the Rochester City School District will be responsible for providing transportation services to students

who provide proof of City residency and meet the busing eligibility criteria established in NYS Education Law Section 3635.

Students who are residents of other municipalities and meet the established busing eligibility criteria will similarly be transported by their respective school district. Students who do not meet the established busing eligibility criteria will be responsible for arranging their own transportation to the school.

Special education students will be provided transportation services consistent with their IEPs. The school will work closely with the Committee on Special Education to ensure that appropriate transportation accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis.

Because Exploration will be operating on an extended school year, student transportation will need to be secured for those periods when the public schools are not in session. This is anticipated to be a period of approximately 14 days annually, for which an appropriate allocation is provided in the school budget based on enrollment projections and current provider rates. A procurement process will be undertaken to select the most qualified vendor from among the several companies located in the area which provide such services. The school's Operations Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating all transportation services. This includes but is not limited to submitting the required eligibility forms to the appropriate school district transportation departments, coordinating communication with students' families concerning bus stop location and estimated pick-up and drop-off times, and promoting bus safety awareness and rules with students.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Exploration aims to create an atmosphere and climate where everyone values and privileges families and the community. The activities listed in the subsequent section are examples of methods to deeply embed the value of positive and two-way partnership informing the school model and include everyone from teachers, to leaders, to school support staff, and embed regular and sustained focus on the importance of including, engaging, and partnering with families and the community at-large.

Vision for Community Involvement

Community Organizations: Exploration's vision for community engagement/partnership centers around three main elements of the school: 1) innovative science and technology programming; 2) social-emotional programming; and 3) academic support and learning. Exploration intends to leverage the expertise of others to fulfill the school's charter and mission of engaging learners, their families, and the community in the process of scientific inquiry to develop the social, emotional, and academic tools necessary for the students to thrive in school and the global world. The following table explains the two-pronged strategy for community partnerships.

Scientific and Innovation Partners	SEL Partnerships	Academic Support Partnerships
<p>Purpose: To engage with innovative organizations/ companies to inform the academic programming and family partnership opportunities at Exploration.</p> <p>Activities: Materials lending/sharing, Resident Scientist Program during Lab-Based Learning, Job Shadowing as PD/PL for staff, curriculum development consultation</p> <p>Possible Partners: Museum and Science Center, Medical Center, Sweet Water, Cisco, Windstream, US Geological Society, Prove Your World, Time Warner Cable</p>	<p>Purpose: To create a vibrant and safe school community with strong connections to the neighborhoods considering intergenerational poverty and rampant crime in Rochester through connections to existing community resources.</p> <p>Activities: Family Check Up Model, recreation program referrals, library program referrals, mental health program referrals, family programming.</p> <p>Possible Partners: Hillside Children's Center, Medical Center, Rochester Public Library, City of Rochester Recreation Department.</p>	<p>Purpose: To identify community-based or community-partnered programming to supplement students' academic program.</p> <p>Activities: Extended learning, tutoring and academic support</p> <p>Possible Partners: Rochester Public Library, City of Rochester Recreation, Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association, Great School for All</p>

Parent and Family Involvement: Exploration's vision for parent-family engagement/partnership includes

a rigorous academic program, as well as robust social-emotional programming and authentic engagement activities to promote high levels of satisfaction and positive attitudes towards school. Exploration believes that providing opportunities to “strengthen relationships and promote the identification and development of actions that are uniquely meaningful and worthwhile to the families and educators” will enhance overall parent-family engagement and boost positive attitudes toward school (Christenson and Shreidan, 2011, p. 75). Family/caregiver involvement and family-educator partnerships are developed through collaborative communication and are considered crucial to impact the students’ academic performance. Overall, Exploration leadership and staff will apply the following structure in working/communicating with families to ensure that positive and two-way relationships are established.

Step 1	Discuss the student’s and family strengths and areas of need/consideration at formal and informal opportunities (e.g., parent conferences) to establish rapport and shared understanding.
Step 2	Prioritize the desires and the needs of the student (and the family) to promote progress toward rigorous academic standards with recognition of the student’s development and context (family, neighborhood, etc.)
Step 3	<i>Define shared</i> goals using language such as “ <i>we, our, us, shared, partner</i> ” to ensure that families and school staff are working collaboratively toward the same successes with recognition of previous supports/efforts to foster success
Step 4	<i>Remain</i> committed to open, positive, and two-way communication with school and family to ensure supports, programs, and services are differentiated and appropriate.

Strategy: Exploration’s strategy for school-family-community partnership embeds programming and various opportunities to integrate and promote positive and two-way communication with families. The school leadership and staff will go beyond traditional ways of family engagement to ensure that the school is an open and supportive space that all families, regardless of their own school experiences or perspectives, feel welcome, comfortable, and contributory. The school leadership and staff are committed to establishing connection with families and schools at the start of each school year and will continue seeking efforts to share successes, areas of progress, and opportunities for continued growth (both student and school-based programming). The following are the ways Exploration will engage with and learn from families:

- **Co-Decision Making Framework** – Exploration staff and leadership will commit to a co-decision making framework as a means to include, engage, and partner with families in school programming and opportunities. Families will be regularly invited to co-create and inform school programming. This disposition towards partnering with families will be integrated into regularly occurring staff meetings.
- **Traditional Methods for Family Engagement** – Exploration will include standard methods for communicating with and engaging with families such as report cards, parent-teacher conferences, and regular correspondence with teachers and school staff.
- **Dedicated Student and Family Support and Engagement Staff**- Full-time employees are dedicated to supporting students’ academics, social-emotional competencies, and behavior in the school setting and connecting with families on influencing factors and community-based opportunities. The dedicated staff will employ the co-decision making and partnership model as well as the steps previously listed.
- **Integration of a Family Check-Up Model** - The family check-up model is an evidence-based program beginning with an initial interview with the family and an ecological assessment. Subsequently, the family engages in a feedback session and is connected to school- or community-based services such as family-centered interventions, parent groups, family therapy, child interventions, school-based interventions, or ecological management. The purpose of the family check-up model is to learn from, engage with, and collectively plan for services and supports that improve a student’s social behavior and emotional adjustment in the school and community settings (Dishion, T. J., Brennan, L. M., Shaw, D. S., McEachern, A. D., Wilson, M. N., & Jo. B.) (2014).
- **Dedicated Family/Caregiver space in the school** - It is important that families recognize Exploration

as a place for their learning but also a resource for families. A dedicated space in the school will serve as a hub for family-school meetings, resource sharing, and school-based programming inclusive of families (e.g., family pot lucks). As the school opens, a family organization will be formed and this space will serve as the center of operations for the family organization.

- **Family/Caregiver Representation on the Board** - The Founding Board members are committed to eliciting parent/caregiver voice in the design and implementation of the school; the Board believes that the family is a shared decision maker at Exploration. After the charter is issued, the Board will identify a parent representative in the first year of operations to serve on the board.
- **School-Family Programming Opportunities** - Exploration leaders will engage with families to co-sponsor/create family events annually to formally invite families to explore their children's learning. For example, Exploration will host two Science Expos annually to display and disseminate the students' learning for families and community members/supporters. Events such as these will provide both time and space for family engagement with the school.
- **Professional Development/Learning in School-Family-Community Partnerships for Exploration Staff** - The school leadership will commit to ongoing professional learning opportunities, as overseen by the above mentioned staff, to ensure instructional and support staff have strong underpinnings in strategies and methods to practice positive and two-way family engagement/partnership. PD/Learning will include culturally and linguistically sensitive training and recognition of the (informal) curriculum of the home as an influence on school learning.

Evidence of Anticipated Partnerships

Exploration does not have an organizational partner or management partner; however, we are developing important program partnerships with organizations that are committed to improving outcomes for Rochester children and families. Exploration's Key Design Elements will be supported by solid and thoughtful partnerships. More specifically, the element, Community Connections and Partnerships is focused on developing and implementing a positive, safe, and healthy school culture – a core component of this is the commitment to engaging the neighborhood, community-based organizations, and scientific and technology communities to support the mission of our school. We are developing partnerships in the following sectors:

Education: Discussions have begun with Geneseo's Ella Cline Shear School of Education, Nazareth College, and the University of Rochester. We expect to build the connections necessary to allow for mentoring and tutoring services via college student volunteers, placement of student teachers at the school, PD programming, and opportunities to translate science and technology innovation from higher education to Exploration students. Additionally, we are advancing conversations with other public schools, including University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men, Young Women's College Prep Charter School of Rochester, and Discovery Charter School to explore opportunities to partner in ways that improve outcomes and efficiencies.

Science & Technology Innovation: We are developing strong connections to the science and technology business communities that we expect will result in having Resident Scientists and Technologists; PD; and access to materials and high-tech equipment. We expect long-term beneficial connections with: FAME (Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturers' Enterprise); New York State Photonics & Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster; COMIDA (County of Monroe Industrial Development Agency); and many independent business, including Optimax Systems, PGM, SophiTec, and others.

Health Sciences: Discussions are underway with the University of Rochester School of Medicine to explore ways that health science can be brought into the curriculum as well as building necessary supports for the whole child.

Community-Based Agencies: Exploration believes that partnerships at the community level will

enhance our efforts to provide high quality extended learning, family literacy, and social and emotional support programming. To this end, we are developing important connections with multiple organizations: Charles Settlement House, Community Place of Greater Rochester, Southwest Area Neighborhood Association, Children's Institute, Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association, and the Greater Rochester Afterschool Alliance.

J. Financial Management

The Exploration Board of Trustees is specifically comprised of several individuals with financial and management credentials necessary to appropriately and effectively structure, guide, and monitor the financial practices and performance of the school. Principal among these Board members are Robert Franklin (Monroe County CFO), Stephen Pasquarella (President of Vincent Associates), and Kevin Williams, PhD, (Department Head, Materials Science, Kodak Research Laboratories).

Guided and overseen by these individuals, Exploration will engage the services of a qualified and experienced management consultant to provide its financial management systems and capacity, including:

- **Establishing and maintaining an accounting system consistent with generally accepted accounting principles**, including but not limited to recommending financial policies and procedures for Board adoption, creating a chart of accounts, and operationalizing the adopted policies and procedures.
- **Establishing accounts payable and accounts receivable processes**, including segregation of duties to ensure funds are safeguarded and properly deposited, establishing controls to ensure that all receipts and expenditures are properly recorded, and identification of payments and receipts in sufficient detail to support preparation of monthly financial reports.
- **Establishing and maintaining a payroll system** using a known and established payroll services provider, including (but not limited to) establishing the payroll schedule and process, posting and reconciling payroll, and all year-end reporting and documentation requirements.
- **Establishing and managing the purchasing process**, including (but not limited to) recommending purchasing policies for Board adoption and conducting procurements which support school needs consistent with adopted policies.
- **Ensuring that grant requirements are fulfilled**, including adherence to grant restrictions and reporting requirements.
- **Conducting routine daily and monthly accounting processes**, including (but not limited to) processing deposits and disbursements, posting revenue and expense, reconciling bank statements, and closing the books.
- **Managing monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting** to all constituents including the Board, school leadership team, and NYSED as required.
- **Supporting conduct of annual independent audit process** in accordance with government auditing standards, including (but not limited to) selection and engagement of an independent CPA firm to conduct the audit, establishment of necessary financial controls, preparation of all requested schedules and analyses, and coordinating with auditors to support successful completion of audit.

The Board will review all audits, including meeting with the auditor without management consultant and school staff present, and monitor all efforts by school leaders to address any found deficiencies. The finance and accounting functions identified above will be conducted by the management consultant in conjunction with and under the oversight of the Board, School Director, and Operations Coordinator(s). It is not anticipated that the school will hire staff to perform these functions.

Tracking and safeguarding of student information including enrollment, attendance, performance, eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, and special education and ELL services will be performed by school staff (School Director and Operations Coordinator) under the oversight of the Board. Established

software packages and other mechanisms known to be currently in use by other schools for such purposes will be employed.

K. Budget and Cash Flow

Proposed Budget & Cash Flows

The Exploration budget is informed by reviewing the budgets of several local charter schools as they relate to the specific requirements of Exploration. The budget components, estimates, and assumptions were reviewed, challenged, and validated by Board members with strong financial and management credentials, including Robert Franklin (Monroe County CFO), Stephen Pasquarella (President of Vincent Associates), and Kevin Williams, PhD, (Department Head, Materials Science, Kodak Research Laboratories).

Conservative estimates were employed throughout the budget development process to ensure the integrity and viability of the projections, as well as to incorporate an appropriate measure of financial resiliency in the event of unforeseen operating challenges. For example, the following conservative approaches were employed in constructing the estimates for the two largest revenue and expense categories:

1. **Per-Pupil Revenue** - No increase in the current (FY 2014-15) Rochester Central School District reimbursement rate is assumed over the five-year period.
2. **Personnel Costs** - Estimates include a 2% salary and wage contingency in addition to a 3% annual inflation assumption. The 2% contingency is available for annual performance incentives or to relieve budget stress as necessary.

At such time as charter status is conferred by NYSED, Exploration will also pursue securing a line of credit as a standby mechanism for addressing potential liquidity issues.

Ongoing Budget Management

Going forward, the School Director and Operations Coordinator of Exploration will be responsible for developing and maintaining the annual budget and the 5-year budget forecast. The management consultant will support this process as needed. Each spring, an annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year and an updated five-year budget forecast will be developed for Board consideration and adoption. These documents will be based on current year-to-date actual data and year-end projections, as well as a careful assessment of anticipated changes in operations and the operating environment which will impact revenues and expenditures in the upcoming budget and forecast period.

The budget construction philosophy will continue to be one of conservatism with respect to revenue and expenditure projections in order to protect the current and long-term financial sustainability of the school. The Finance Committee of the Board will review the budget and five-year budget forecast and recommend a final budget and forecast for Board adoption no later than May, prior to the start of the next fiscal year. The Finance Committee will review and report budget performance to the Board on a monthly basis. The review will include adopted budget vs. actual performance, projected year-end performance, and cash flow and balance statements. Key indicators to be reviewed will include:

- **Near Term Indicators:** current ratio; unrestricted cash on hand; and enrollment variance
- **Sustainability Indicators:** total margin; debt-to-assets (if applicable); cash flow; and debt coverage (if applicable)

Any significant variances from budget or other concerns identified in the review process will be assessed and reported to the Board for action as warranted. Materiality thresholds for budget amendment action will be established in the financial policies and procedures adopted by the Board.

L. Pre-Opening Plan

Domain	Action	Start Date	End Date	Responsibility
Governance	Recruit School Director	April 2015	Aug 2015	BOT
Governance	Ratify bylaws and code of ethics	Jul 2015	Jul 2015	BOT

Domain	Action	Start Date	End Date	Responsibility
Governance	Appoint board officers	Jul 2015	Jul 2015	BOT
Facility	Identify facility for school	Jul 2015	Sep 2015	BOT
Facility	Conduct facility negotiations and execute lease	Jul 2015	Dec 2015	BOT
Operations	Obtain 501c3 status	Jul 2015	Jan 2016	BOT
Facility	Renovation: identify needs, secure contractor, establish timeline, complete punch list	Sep 2015	June 2015	BOT, D
Finance	Approve fiscal policies and procedures	Sep 2015	Oct 2015	BOT
Recruitment	Recruit students: develop and disseminate materials, host open-houses, door-to-door marketing	Nov 2015	Apr 2016	D, BOT
Finance	Contract with provider to establish payroll and other financial systems	Jan 2016	Mar 2016	BOT, D
Operations	Contract with provider for operations support (operations coordination [OC] human resources, IT, other)	Jan 2016	Mar 2016	BOT, D
Staffing	Recruit Science & Technology Curriculum Coordinator	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	D
Staffing	Recruit Student Success Coordinator	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	D
Staffing	Recruit school staff: draft job descriptions, post positions, interview candidates, check references	Feb 2016	Jun 2016	D, STC, SSC, OC
Staffing	Hire school staff: salary negotiations and offer letters	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	D, OC
Academic	Research and secure professional development	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	D
Academic	Research and secure curriculum resources	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	D
Academic	Research and secure standardized assessments	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	PR, STC
Technology	RFP for technology infrastructure	Mar 2016	Jun 2016	OC
Recruitment	Hold lottery: secure system with preferences, conduct lottery, inform parents	Apr 2016	Apr 2016	D, OC, BOT
Operations	Obtain student records: obtain permission from parents, contact previous schools, etc.	Apr 2016	Jul 2016	OC, SSC
Finance	Approve budget for FY16-17	Apr 2016	Apr 2016	BOT
Operations	Secure food services: coordinate vendor evaluation of kitchen capacity, solicit proposals, select vendor	Apr 2016	May 2016	OC
Operations	Secure transportation: contact RCSD and other districts of residence, provide required information, inform parents of options	Apr 2016	Jul 2016	OC
HR	Finalize staff handbook and personnel policies	Apr 2016	Jun 2016	BOT, D, OC
Operations	Develop and distribute student handbook	May 2016	June 2016	D, OC
Technology	Install technology infrastructure	May 2016	July 2016	OC
HR	Complete fingerprinting and background checks	May 2016	Jul 2016	OC
Academic	Prepare school calendar and distribute to families	May 2016	May 2016	D, OC
Facility	Obtain Certificate of Occupancy	Jun 2016	Jun 2016	OC
Recruitment	Conduct open houses for admitted students	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	D, STC, SSC, OC
Academic	Contract with Related Service Providers	Jun 2016	Aug 2016	SSC
Academic	Conduct home visits	Jun 2016	Aug 2016	D, STC, SSC
Operations	Secure insurance policies	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	OC
PD	Prepare Summer Institute materials	Jun 2016	Aug 2016	D, STC, SSC
Finance	Complete Initial Statement of Financial Controls	Jul 2016	Jul 2016	OC
HR	Complete staff fingerprints and background checks	Jul 2016	Jul 2016	OC
Operations	Secure IEPs and student records	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	SSC, OC
Operations	Create a draft SAVE plan and submit it to SED	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	OC
Operations	Purchase AEDs and train staff	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	OC
PD	Conduct Summer Institute	Aug 2016	Aug 2016	D, STC, SSC
PD	Develop staff growth plans	Aug 2016	Aug 2016	D
Academic	Create lesson plans for first weeks of school	Aug 2016	Aug 2016	D

Key: BOT=Board of Trustees; D=Director; OC= Operations Coordinator; SSC=Student Success Coordinator; STC=Science & Technology Curriculum Coordinator

M. Dissolution Plan

The school will work closely with appropriate NYSED representatives to develop and implement a dissolution plan that will ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process, including compliance with the applicable requirements of Education Law §§ 219 and 220 and any Closing Procedures, as specified by NYSED. The dissolution plan will include a process for transferring students and student records, including IEPs, student health and immunization records, attendance records, and report cards. Prior to dissolution, the school will conduct a series of meetings for parents to provide information about the dissolution and to support them in making decisions regarding selection of educational programs for their children, including Rochester City School District schools, charter schools, and nonpublic schools.

The Board will designate one trustee and one school employee to oversee the closing of the school from an operational and financial perspective. After an employee termination date is established, the school will notify all employees of termination of employment and/or contracts, and notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees. Employees will be notified of eligibility for New York State Unemployment Insurance pursuant to any regulations of the New York State Department of Labor. The dissolution plan will provide that all property, which the school has leased, borrowed, or contracted for use will be returned. The return of such property will conform with contractual prearrangement, where applicable, or will be done with reasonable promptness. The school will accumulate a reserve fund of \$75,000 by setting aside \$25,000 each year for three consecutive years, beginning with the pre-operations year, to cover debts in the case of the school's dissolution. In the event of dissolution of assets in excess of those necessary to meet liabilities, all remaining assets of the school shall be transferred to another charter school within the Rochester City School District as designated by the Board.

CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT

Proposed Charter School Name: Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology

Proposed School Location (District): Rochester City School District

Name of Existing Education Corporation (for replication): Not Applicable

I hereby certify that the applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees have all read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. By submitting a charter school application to the Board of Regents, the applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees understands that the Board of Regents is the authorized chartering entity with the authority to approve our application to establish the proposed charter school and enter into a charter agreement setting forth the terms and conditions under which the Board of Trustees will operate the charter school. The applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees also understands that this charter school application serves as the first component of an application for a federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation Grant. We understand that if the charter application is approved and a charter is issued by the Board of Regents, the school is qualified to receive a CSP grant, pending available funding and final approval of additional materials – including budget materials – by NYSED and by the New York State Office of the Comptroller. We agree to complete all required budget information and assurances according to forthcoming instructions and a revised timeframe to be issued by NYSED.

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, race, creed, national origin or ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, age, religion, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the Charter Schools Act allows, to the extent consistent with Federal law, “the establishment of a single-sex charter school or a charter school designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English language learners.”¹

The applicant group also make(s) the following assurances pursuant to Section 5203(b)(3) of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which will be incorporated into, and made a part of, the Charter School’s charter, if granted, and be binding on the Charter School itself:

- An assurance that the charter school will annually provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in this application;²
- An assurance that the charter school will cooperate with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of

¹ N.Y. Education Law § 2854(2)(a)

² ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(J)

Education and the State Education Department in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;³ and

- That the charter school will provide such other information and assurances as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department may require.⁴

Existing Education Corporation (if seeking to replicate): I hereby certify that for the above named model school (upon which the new school will be replicated) meets each of the following eligibility requirements.

- Has been in operation for a minimum of five years and is currently open;
- Has received a full 5 year renewal from its charter entity;
- Has provided a program of instruction for the same grade levels intended to be served in the replicated school;
- Has exceeded district averages in the aggregate on the State ELA and Math assessments for all grades tested;
- Has met or exceeded State averages in the aggregate on the State ELA and Math assessments for all grades tested;
- Has met or exceeded the 4- and 5-year State average graduation rate in the aggregate (if applicable);
- Has met or exceeded the State cohort graduation rate of 80% (if applicable);
- Has achieved a State Accountability Designation of at least a school in “Good Standing” for each year of its charter term; and
- Has been in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and its charter contract.

I, Kevin Williams, hereby certify that the information submitted in this Full Application to establish Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after issuance of the charter.

Signature of Proposed BOT Chair/Existing Education Corporation BOT Chair:

Kevin W. Williams

Date: March 18, 2015

³ ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(K)

⁴ ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(N)

Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures

All students who reside in the state of New York are eligible to attend Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology (Exploration). The school shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the school shall comply with the requirements of Education Law §2854(2) and all other applicable laws. There are no financial or academic requirements for admission to Exploration; admission of students shall not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, ethnicity, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, or for any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school. Prior to the start of its first year of operation (2016-17), Exploration will open admission to children wishing to enroll in kindergarten through first grade.

Exploration will engage in extensive efforts to inform families in the City of Rochester about the new school. Community level awareness efforts will be conducted through door-to-door outreach and recruitment in local retail establishments, apartment complexes, and public housing. We will reach out to local schools, community-based organizations, businesses, and religious organizations to raise awareness in the community. We will conduct open houses and disseminate materials and hold information sessions at day care centers, Head Start programs, after-school programs, and youth and recreation centers. Parental outreach and recruitment activities will be conducted in multiple languages. Our marketing will highlight our services for students with disabilities and English language learners and the ways our school model individualizes education for all students.

Planned Grades and Enrollment:

Operating Year	Academic Year	Grades Served	Total Students
1	2016-2017	K, 1	175
2	2017-2018	K, 1, 2	246
3	2018-2019	K, 1, 2, 3	325
4	2019-2020	K, 1, 2, 3, 4	400
5	2020-2021	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	475

Process:

Exploration will admit each eligible student who submits an application by April 1, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the student's requested grade level. Enrollment for the first year is capped at 175 students.

To apply to Exploration, applications must be submitted by April 1 by families of students interested in attending the school. Applications must be hand-delivered, mailed, or e-mailed, and received no later than the admission period deadline listed on the form. The school will provide via e-mail and/or return postcard confirmation of applications received by the deadline.

The Exploration application seeks only information necessary to admit new students and is not considered a pre-registration form. Our application form will be designed in accordance with the State Education Department guidelines.

Exploration will use the following preferences to enroll new students:

- Students residing within the district of location will receive an absolute preference, i.e., will be drawn before students living outside the district.
- Siblings of students enrolled in the school will have an absolute preference.
- When a student in the lottery with sibling(s) in the lottery is drawn, that student's sibling(s) will be added next to the list.

If the number of applicants exceeds the school's capacity, a random selection lottery process will be conducted on or about April 15, but no earlier than April 1. The lottery will be conducted by the Director, a Board member, and a third adult who has no affiliation with the school. The actual process will be open to the public. After checking the birth dates to make sure that the applicant is the appropriate age for the entering grade, the child's name will be entered into the lottery. The following will also be noted for each child entered into the lottery:

- If there are siblings applying, each child's entry into the lottery will indicate that there is a sibling also applying.
- The place of residence will be noted so that preference can be given to students living in Rochester City School District (RCSD).

The lottery will follow these steps for each grade:

1. Students who reside within RCSD will be drawn
2. Siblings of students already enrolled in the school will be drawn
3. Students who reside outside RCSD will be drawn

Once the number of students equal to the number of available seats has been drawn, the remaining applicants will be drawn and placed on the waitlist in the order in which they are drawn. After all the names have been chosen, the parents will be notified by letter. For those students who are accepted, the letter will include a list of forms that need to be provided – specifically, an original birth certificate, Social Security Card, immunization records and proof of address, and an appointment time to meet with school administrator to turn over the forms. Parents/guardians will be expected to document residence at the time of registration following our lottery; acceptable documentation will include a lease and/or utility bill.

For children not selected, the letter will indicate their number on the waitlist, and will describe the steps that will take place if a space becomes available. That waitlist will be maintained for the entire year. If a student withdraws, the next applicant on the waitlist in that grade will be called and offered the space. Student withdrawal will be permitted upon the written request of the parent or legal guardian and proof of enrollment in another school. Following the written request of the admitting school, student records will be transferred. If a student does not return in September, the school will telephone and send the family a certified letter to determine the child's status. When a space opens, the waitlist will then be activated to admit the next child on the same grade level. For applications received after the April 1 deadline, those students will be added to the waitlist in the order they are submitted. The waitlist will expire annually at the lottery drawing for the next school year.

After the first year, students returning to the school will be considered to be enrolled in each successive year through the completion of 6th grade. Each year, school personnel will meet with the families of all parents and guardians of currently enrolled students to discuss enrollment plans for the following school year. Parents or guardians must then submit to the school a letter of intent confirming their desire to enroll their child(ren) in the school for the following year.

Hawkins/Mortier ³

- It is so important to get kids excited about science... especially girls.
↳ I.E.P students? Needs met?
 - Who funds it? Would other subjects be neglected? What would a typical day look like? How are charters different?
 - What does a science base school entail? How is it different?
 - There have been many new charter schools that were closed? Why?
 - Huge deficit of women in field of science.
 - Science is needed everywhere - environmental, medical, bio-medical, business.
 - Key to getting kids excited is discovery, Let them research what they are passionate about.
 - "Looks good on paper" but in reality would it really be any different than any good RCSD school?
- (Mortier^{II} - teacher @ Wilson during science & math emphasis) → My son is a "science math kid but we didn't realize that till 4th grade." No real indication in primary grades.

Family Feedback on Educational Programs and Opportunities

1. What are the best ways for school and community-based programs to communicate with you? Please check all that you'd prefer:

- Phone
 Newsletter
 Texting
 Email
 Parent Meeting
 Other: _____

2. Do you have suggestions for new ways for parents/families to be engaged and invited to contribute to afterschool and school-based programs?

None

3. Would a science, technology and engineering (STEM) focused elementary school and/or afterschool program ~~was~~ benefit your child in the following ways (please check yes/no for each line)?

- | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Academically (reading and math) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| In their future (life and career skills) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Socially-Emotional Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Technology Skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Critical Thinking and Problem Solving | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

4. Please answer the following questions about Science-based Family Programs (like the FEAST):

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| The format was FUN for myself and child | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| I would like to attend more events like the FEAST | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| I have some science ideas I can use at home | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| We are likely to do an experiment this weekend | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| This is a great way for my family to learn together | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

5. Other Comments:

Science FEAST

Family Feedback on Educational Programs and Opportunities

1. What are the best ways for school and community-based programs to communicate with you? Please check all that you'd prefer:

- Phone
 Newsletter
 Texting
 Email
 Parent Meeting
 Other: _____

2. Do you have suggestions for new ways for parents/families to be engaged and invited to contribute to afterschool and school-based programs?

3. Would a science, technology and engineering (STEM) focused elementary school and/or afterschool program ~~was~~ benefit your child in the following ways (please check yes/no for each line)?

- | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Academically (reading and math) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| In their future (life and career skills) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Socially-Emotional Skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Technology Skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Critical Thinking and Problem Solving | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

4. Please answer the following questions about Science-based Family Programs (like the FEAST):

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
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| I would like to attend more events like the FEAST | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| I have some science ideas I can use at home | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| We are likely to do an experiment this weekend | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| This is a great way for my family to learn together | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

5. Other Comments:

You're Invited to The 'Science FEAST'...

We would like you and your family to come and explore!



EXPLORE



Science Fun and Learning for the Whole Family!!

Make exploding sandwich bags, 'elephant toothpaste,' lava lamps, and more...



Energy Shows at 5:15 and 6:15



Food and Prizes

Family Resources and Ideas for home.

Please Join the Science FEAST

November 25, 2014

5:00-7:00

***Come any time you'd like*

Summers-Sands Campus
133 Hoover Drive
Rochester, NY

PREDICT

HAVE FUN!!

RESEARCH & LEARN

*OBSERVE
Science to
WIN
PRIZES!*



EXPLORATION ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

January 13, 2015

Dear community members of the City of Rochester:

We are excited to announce that we are applying to the New York State Board of Regents to open Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology in the Rochester City School District. We will submit our application on March 20, 2015. If approved, our school will be open for students entering kindergarten, first, and second grade in August of 2016. We will add an additional grade each year until we reach grades kindergarten through six.

The mission of Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology is to engage diverse learners, their families, and the community, through scientific inquiry and innovative technology to accelerate learning, improve academic results, and develop social-emotional resilience so students have the skills and dispositions to succeed in the global economy. Attached you will find more information about our proposed school.

We are seeking input from the Rochester community on the educational and programmatic needs of students in the Rochester City School District and how the proposed school would best meet those needs. Input can be submitted in person at the following town hall meetings:

January 27, 2015
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Sully Public Library
(located in the Thomas P. Ryan
Community Center)
530 Webster Avenue
Rochester, NY 14609

January 27, 2015
4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Carlson Metrocenter YMCA
Association Office
2nd Floor, George Williams Hall
444 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14604

January 28, 2015
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Hillside Children's Center
1337 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609

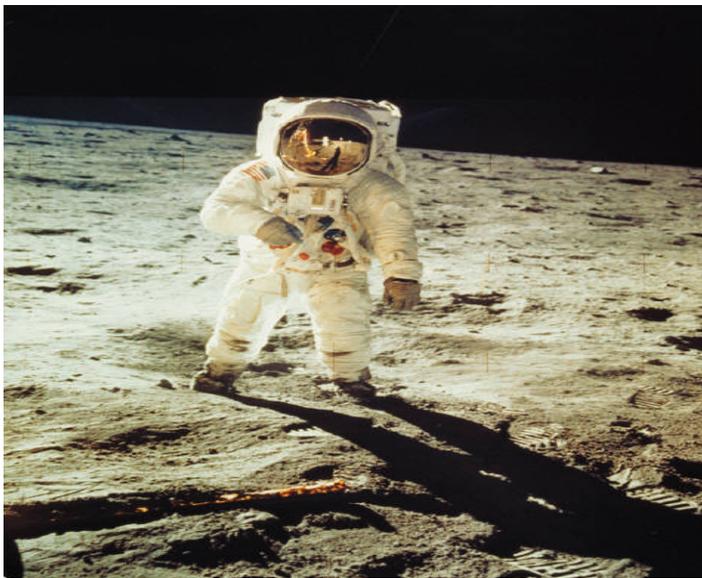
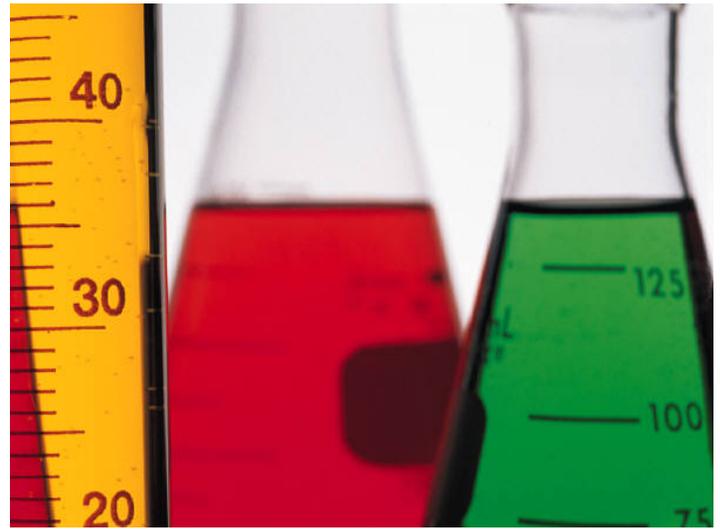
Or, you can submit feedback via email to explorationcharter@e2ny.org, or call us at (585) 210-4661.

Sincerely,

Holley Brown	Steve Pasquarella
Carlos Cong	Christopher Potter
Robert Franklin	Michelle Swanger-Gangne
Lisa Hiley	Kevin Williams
Joe Martino	



Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology



About Us

The mission of Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology is to engage learners, their families, and the community in the processes of scientific inquiry and the use of innovative technology to develop the social, emotional, and academic tools necessary to thrive in school and today's global world.

Exploration plans to open in the Rochester City School District in August of 2016 for students in kindergarten and first grade.



Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology Overview



Our Students

The typical Exploration student will bring unique qualities and skill sets to the table. Even in the early grades, our students will be analytical problem solvers, proficient with innovative technology and using it to build relationships in the global world. Due to ongoing project based work, our students will be effective communicators, and collaborators; they will be comfortable contributing their thoughts, strategies, and strengths to a team. The Exploration student will rise in the face of challenges, because they will be equipped with the twenty first century survival skills to tackle them.



Our Approach

Exploration is committed to a school experience for all students and families that will foster habits and dispositions through scientific inquiry known to be important in our global and twenty first century world. Our rigorous curriculum and standards ensure that all students are well prepared for the academic challenges in middle school, high school, college, and beyond. Exploration will embrace all students and will work to positively and proactively foster their talents and affinities.



Our Community

Exploration is committed to a vibrant and safe school. Our students will contribute to the school and the Rochester community through established partnerships and opportunities, specifically focused around science. We will have scientists from the community visit regularly who will share their experiences with our students and support their learning. Exploration's board, leadership, and staff are strongly committed to Rochester family-school-community partnerships as an opportunity to strengthen and promote academic, and social-emotional development of students.



Your Input

We are seeking input from the Rochester community on the educational and programmatic needs of students in Rochester City School District and how the proposed school would best meet those needs.

To submit feedback, or learn more, please email explorationcharter@e2ny.org, or call us at 585-210-4661.

Attachment 2F

Posted Ad on Kids Out and About

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website <http://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/town-hall-meetings-regarding-new-charter-school-offering>. The page features a blue header with the site logo and navigation links. A prominent advertisement for "Estrofest" is highlighted with a red box, stating "One weekend only! March 13-15, 2015 Estrofest is at Nazareth College March 13-15, 2015". The ad includes the text "Estrofest! March 13 to 15" and "Tix at Wegmans". The main content area displays a search for "Town Hall Meetings regarding New Charter School offering Exploration Charter School" with details for the event on Wednesday, 01/29/2015. The event is held at the YNCA Center for Community Development, 100 East Main Street, Rochester, NY 14620. The page also includes a calendar for events in March and a sidebar with various links and resources for kids.

Close-up of Kids Out and About Ad

Town Hall Meetings regarding New Charter School offering Exploration Charter School

Search by proximity: # of Miles 0 Zipcode: [input]

Town Hall Meetings regarding New Charter School offering Exploration Charter School

in Academic and Research study

The event Wed, 01/28/2015 has already taken a place at this date:

Time: 4:30-5:30 and 1:00-2:00
Ages: Adults, Family

Seeking input from the Roch Community on educational and programmatic needs of students in the RCSD: January 27, 2015 - 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. @ Carlson Metrocenter YMCA January 28, 2015 - 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. @ Hillside Children's Center

We are excited to announce that we are applying to the New York State Board of Regents to open Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology in the Rochester City School District. We will submit our application on March 20, 2015. If approved, our school will be open for students entering kindergarten, first, and second grade in August of 2016. We will add an additional grade each year until we reach grades kindergarten through six.

We are seeking input from the Rochester community on the educational and programmatic needs of students in the Rochester City School District and how the proposed school would best meet those needs.

YMCA Carlson Metrocenter (Downtown Y)
444 East Main Street
Rochester, NY, 14604
United States
See map: [Google Maps](#)
585-210-4661
www.explorationrochester.org
jchristensen@e2ny.org
Janet Christensen

FW: Your ad has been posted! - Message (HTML)

From: Christensen, Janet
To: Joe Martino
Cc:
Subject: FW: Your ad has been posted!

Sent: Thu 2/5/2015 4:16 PM

From: no-reply@freeclassifieds.com [mailto:no-reply@freeclassifieds.com]
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 4:11 PM
To: Christensen, Janet
Subject: Your ad has been posted!

Thank you for posting your ad on FreeClassifieds.com

We've got great news! Your ad, Proposed New Elementary Charter School, has been posted! Here's a link:
http://rochester.freeclassifieds.com/classified_ads/Community/Local_News/k_c5Y-3FUvcB26gw/WGrLq%63d%63d

Help spread the word about FreeClassifieds.com and your ad by telling your family and friends...
http://rochester.freeclassifieds.com/adSendFriend.aspx?adID=k_c5Y-3FUvcB26gw/WGrLq%63d%63d

Check out our latest TV commercial:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywwo-dW7mas>

Thanks,
The FreeClassifieds.com Team

Click on a photo to see social network updates and email messages from this person.

Search cannot return results for this view. [Click here for more information.](#)

Copy of Ad on Rochester Free Classifieds 2-2-15

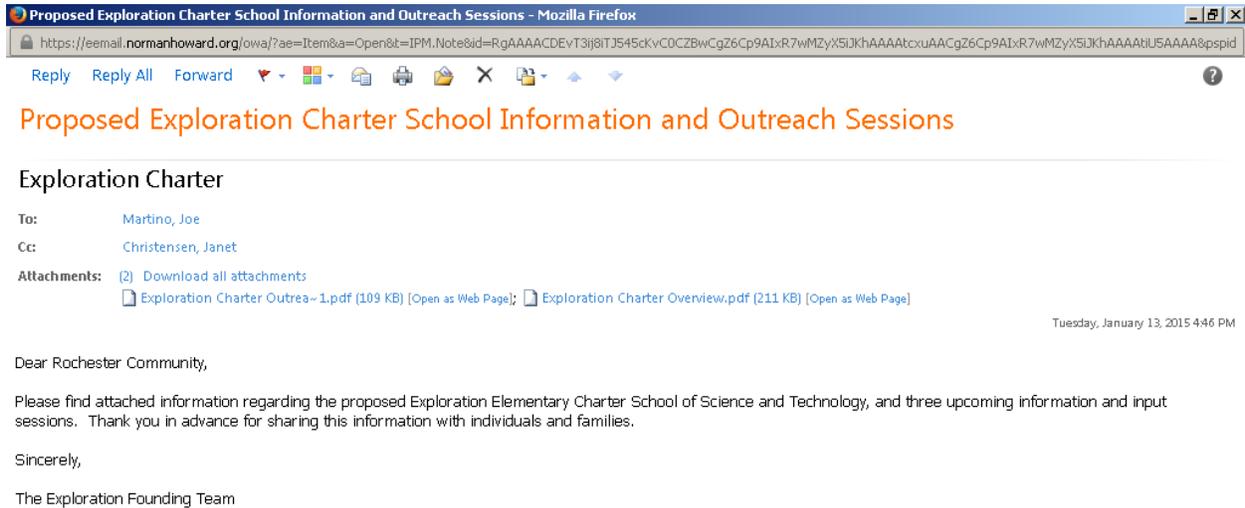
The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website 'Rochester Free Classifieds'. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://rochester.freeclassifieds.com/classified_ads/Community/Local_News/fk_c5Y-3FLjvcB26gwWGrLqg%3c. The website header includes the 'FREE CLASSIFIEDS' logo and the tagline 'Sell anything...and sell it for FREE'. The main content area features a red banner with the text 'Avoid Scams!' and a link to 'Click to view tips'. Below this is the title of the ad: 'Proposed New Elementary Charter School'. The ad's metadata includes 'Date Posted: 2/2/2015 3:10:49 PM' and 'Location: ROCHESTER'. There are social media sharing options for Facebook, Twitter, and Google+, along with a 'Reply to this post' button and a phone number '585-210-4710'. The description of the item reads: 'We are seeking input from the Rochester community on the educational and programmatic needs of students in Rochester City School District and how a proposed school would best meet those needs. The Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology seeks to engage diverse learners from the Rochester City School District, their families, and the community through scientific inquiry and innovative technology. Our goal is to accelerate learning, improve academic results, and develop social emotional resilience, so students have the skills and dispositions to succeed in the global economy. Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology plans to open in the Rochester City School District in August of 2016 for students in kindergarten, first, and second grade. Visit www.explorationcharter.org for further information. To submit feedback, or learn more, please email explorationcharter@e2ny.org, or call us at 585-210-4661.'

Ad for RochesterHomepage.biz

The screenshot shows an email client window with the subject line 'FW: Your Classified Has Been Approved - Message (Plain Text)'. The email header includes: 'From: Christensen, Janet', 'To: Joe Martino', 'Cc:', and 'Subject: FW: Your Classified Has Been Approved'. The main body of the email contains the following text: '-----Original Message-----', 'From: RochesterHomepage.biz Classifieds [<mailto:classifieds@www.rochesterhomepage.biz>]', 'Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 3:45 PM', 'To: Christensen, Janet', and 'Subject: Your Classified Has Been Approved'. The message continues with 'Dear Janet Christensen,', 'Your classified ad was approved and is active.', and 'View Your Ad:'. A long URL is provided for viewing the ad: http://cp.mcafee.com/d/5fHCN8gdeI9FcZCvEVd7dT3Prz3zXwV5cSUMU-UYMOrspsvs78ICT677NRTzhOr4R4UOFFuk-0aZe1rw09LQU5K00Cqk4vtIM_R-1vp07cFZuVtD5C_cfiZDD7emK0p5dmWYr_axVZicHs3iq9J4TvAsm1P0r8TXNKV1056jvQDYitvmQz_11b7XiADpuxi3clcs42lz2FILLgeuhiohdA9CkizC1PWu-gt-LD7mFeGLNFYcHu2ydlWSQ_wErhd7NEVdWuHsih097XiADpuwq80U3h0c_Y3h08bbhGpZ0SOOrT-eQ. The email concludes with 'Thank you,' and 'RochesterHomepage.biz Classifieds'. At the bottom of the email client, there is a search bar and a note: 'Search cannot return results for this view. Click here for more information.'

Attachment 2G

Emails announcing information sessions – sent on 1/13/2015, 1/15/2015 and 2/2/2015



Proposed Exploration Charter School Information and Outreach Sessions

Exploration Charter

To: [Martino, Joe](#)

Cc: [Christensen, Janet](#)

Attachments: (2) [Download all attachments](#)
[Exploration Charter Outrea~1.pdf \(109 KB\)](#) [Open as Web Page]; [Exploration Charter Overview.pdf \(211 KB\)](#) [Open as Web Page]

Tuesday, January 13, 2015 4:46 PM

Dear Rochester Community,

Please find attached information regarding the proposed Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology, and three upcoming information and input sessions. Thank you in advance for sharing this information with individuals and families.

Sincerely,

The Exploration Founding Team



EXPLORATION ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

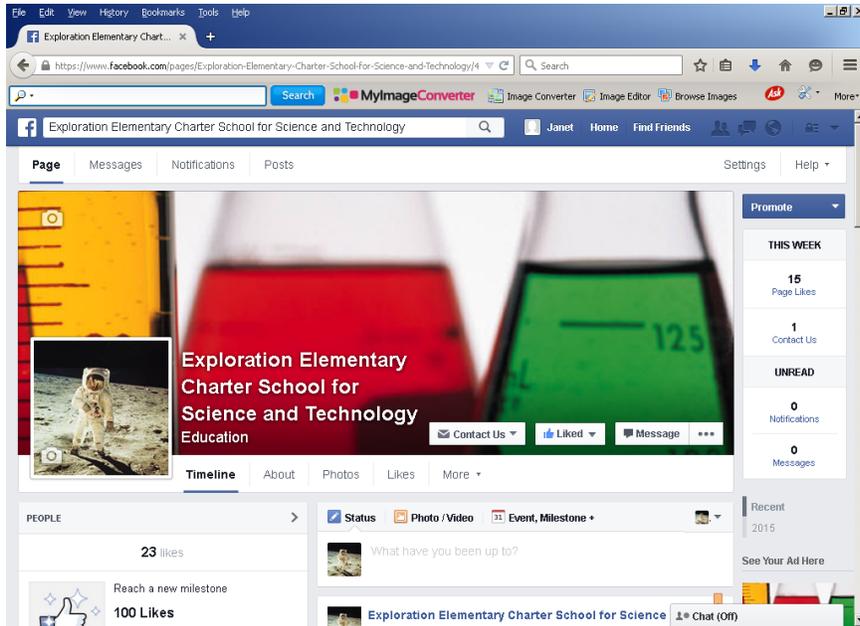
Petition to Establish the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology

The Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology founding team is applying to the New York State Board of Regents to open a new elementary school for students entering kindergarten and first grade in the fall of 2016. The new school will offer a free curriculum to students in the Rochester City School District through the use of scientific inquiry and innovative technology. Please sign below if you support our new school proposal. If you have school aged children, please indicate whether or not you would consider enrolling your child in our new program.

Name	Address	Number of School Aged Children	Interest in Enrollment (if applicable)	Signature

Attachment 21

Exploration Elementary Charter School Facebook page with Link to website



File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Exploration Elementary Chart... Exploration Charter - Outlook... +

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Exploration-Elementary-Charter-School-for-Science-and-Technology/4

Search MyImageConverter Image Converter Image Editor Browse Images Ask More

Find friends

Page Messages Notifications Posts Settings Help

Page Info

PROEIKRPO

Category Companies & Organizations · Education

Name Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology

Facebook Web Address Enter a Facebook web address

Start Info Joined Facebook

Address Enter your address

Hours + Enter hours of operation

Short Description Working to create successful learners who thrive in today's global world through the use of scientific inquiry and innovative technology

Impressum Input Impressum for your Page

Long Description Write a long description for your Page

Mission The mission of Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology is to engage learners, their families, and the community in the processes of scientific inquiry and the use of innovative technology to develop the social, emotional, and academic tools necessary to thrive in school and today's global world.

Founded Kevin Williams
Caitlin Cong
Michelle Swanger-Orange
Joseph Seta
Lisa Riley
Christopher Foster

Price Range + Enter price range

Awards + Enter awards

Products + Enter products

Parking + Enter type of parking available

Phone 585-210-4661

Email explorationcharter@e2ny.org

Website http://www.explorationrochester.com/

118's WALK
16 Page Likes
1 Contact Us
UNSAID
0 Notifications
0 Messages

See Your Ad Here

Exploration Elementary
Working to create successful learners who thrive in today's global world through the use of...

Like Page 23 people like this page

Promote Page

Chat

Attachment 2J

Facebook Demographic Audience and Ads

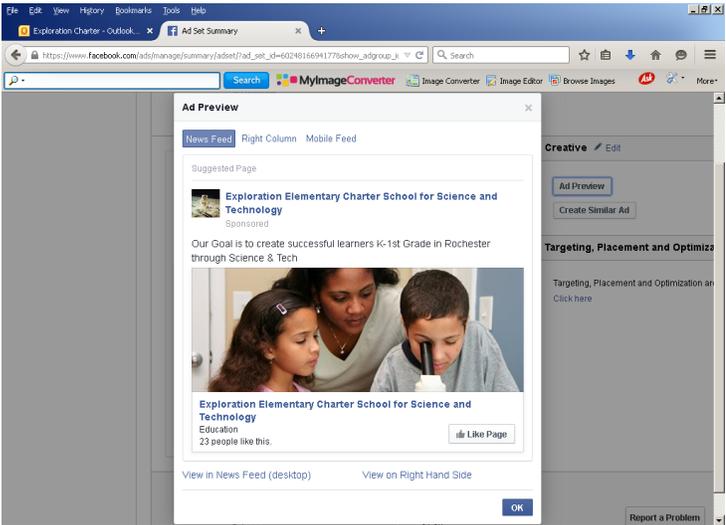
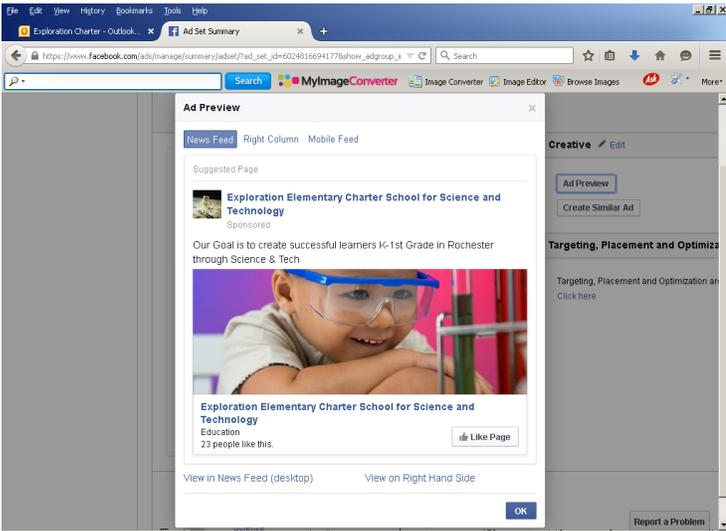
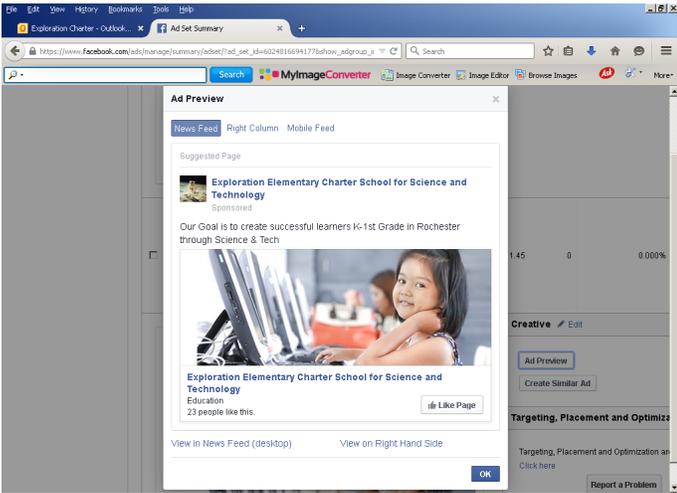
The screenshot shows the Facebook Ad Manager interface. The campaign is titled "Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology" and is targeting "Page Likes" for the "Rochester - 18+" demographic. The budget is \$5.00 daily, and the schedule is from March 6, 2015, to March 13, 2015. The ad is currently inactive, with 1 page like and a cost of \$3.00 per page like. The estimated daily reach is 850-2,200 people. The targeting and placement settings are as follows:

- Location: United States, Rochester (+25 mi) New York
- Parents: Parents (child: 0-3yrs) or Parents (child: 4-12yrs)
- Age: 18 - 65+
- Mobile Placement: News Feed
- Desktop: News Feed or Right Column

Status	Ad?	Delivery?	Results?	Cost?	Reach?	Frequency?	Clicks?	Click-Through Rate?	Relevance Score?
Inactive			1 Page Like	\$3.00 Per Page Like	152	1.17	4	2.247%	--

This screenshot shows the "Ad Preview" window for a desktop view. The ad is displayed in the "News Feed" placement. The suggested page is "Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology". The ad text reads: "Our Goal is to create successful learners K-1st Grade in Rochester through Science & Tech". The image shows a young child looking through a microscope. The ad includes a "Like Page" button and shows that 23 people have liked the page. The preview is shown in the "Right Column" placement.

This screenshot shows the "Ad Preview" window for a desktop view, similar to the previous one. The suggested page is "Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology". The ad text reads: "Our Goal is to create successful learners K-1st Grade in Rochester through Science & Tech". The image shows a young girl looking through a microscope. The ad includes a "Like Page" button and shows that 23 people have liked the page. The preview is shown in the "Right Column" placement.



Attachment 2K

Facebook Post announcing Public Charter Schools of Rochester Sign-Up Fair where more information can be found regarding new Exploration Elementary Charter School



Attachment 2L

Event Post Demographic Audience and Ad

The screenshot shows the Facebook Ad Set Summary interface. The ad set is titled "Post: 'Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science...'" and is currently paused. Key details include:

- Status:** Paused
- Schedule:** Mar 10, 2015 - Mar 12, 2015 (10:05am - 10:05am)
- Budget:** \$20.00 Lifetime
- Location:** United States, Rochester New York
- Age:** 18 - 55
- Mobile Placement:** News Feed
- Desktop:** News Feed
- Estimated Daily Reach:** The estimated daily reach is currently unavailable.

Below the summary, a table shows the ad's performance:

Status	Ad	Delivery	Results	Cost	Reach	Frequency	Clicks	Click-Through Rate	Relevance Score
Not Delivering	Post: /1564293003836801 to your ad's audience	Not Delivering Campaign is Off	1 Post Response	\$20.00 Post Cost	8,112	1.20	25	0.257%	2/10

The screenshot shows the Facebook page for "Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology". The page features a recent event post:

Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology created an event
Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology Information Session
 Yesterday at 10:30am
 Rochester Central Public Library - 115 South Avenue (first floor, large study room)
 3 people went

The event post shows 8,248 people reached and 2 likes. Below the event, there is a post from March 6 at 4:03pm:

Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology
 For more information about the proposed Exploration Elementary Charter School Table at the Public Charter Schools of Rochester Sign-Up Fair...
 Thomas P. Ryan Community Center

Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology

The Exploration seeks to engage diverse learners from the Rochester community, their families, and community through scientific inquiry and innovative technologies. Our goal is to accelerate learning, improve academic results and develop the social-emotional resilience so students have the dispositions to succeed in the global economy.

Exploration plans to open in the City of Rochester (RCSD) in August 2016 for students in kindergarten and 1st grade and over time will serve students in grades K-6.

Dear ABC Family-

Friends of Exploration Charter School for Science and Technology are looking to hear more from community members and possible school families to improve the school for planned opening in August 2016. On the back you will find information about the school's model and foundation. Below we are hopeful you will take a few moments and share your input on the school and your interest.

Thank You for your time!

Friends of Exploration



****Please Detach This Section****

Do you think the concept of Exploration is promising? Yes No

What do you find most appealing about an elementary school focusing on science and technology with a strong social-emotional and community component for young children?

Would science and technology focused programming and academic support benefit your child in the following ways (*circle one per line*):

Academically	Yes	No	Unsure
In their future	Yes	No	Unsure
Social-Emotional Skills	Yes	No	Unsure
Technology Skills	Yes	No	Unsure
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Yes	No	Unsure

What is most important for a school to include promoting student achievement and success?

Other feedback?

Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science & Technology



Our Academic Approach

We seek to prepare all students, even the youngest of students, with the critical thinking, collaborative, social, linguistic and mathematical skills to create the next generation' innovation ad to full participate in future opportunities. When students are free to explore, research, direct and interact with knowledge they approach new information with excitement, a sense of inquiry and confidence that promotes academic achievement and lifelong learning.

Science as the Foundation

We apply scientific inquiry as an essential element to engage students in rigorous, active, interdisciplinary and innovative learning. Scientific inquiry aligned to the Common Core standards will build new knowledge from what students already know and believe, Formulate and modify their current concepts with new evidence, take control of their own learning and apply their knowledge to novel situations.



Our Community

The community and culture of Exploration are of utmost importance. Students will attend school for eight hours per day and 195 days per school year. The social and emotional competencies of each student will be reinforced each day in order to maintain a safe and structured school environment. These additional hours spent will allow for increased opportunities critically thinking, expressing, creating, reading and writing in classroom and lab-based learning.



Your Input

We are seeking input from the Rochester community on the educational and programmatic needs of students in the City of Rochester and how Exploration would best meet those needs. Please feel free to email explorationcharter@e2ny.org or call 585-210-4661



Department of Human Services
Monroe County, New York

Maggie Brooks
County Executive

Kelly A. Reed
Commissioner

March 11, 2015

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

I am writing to express my full and enthusiastic support for the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. I feel quite certain that your mission and plan to implement an engaging and innovative school with a focus on academic rigor, scientific inquiry and hands on learning will result in an important positive new educational choice for Rochester families.

I am pleased to see that your efforts have a primary focus on academic achievement and that you have designed a creative program that will embed daily innovative science and technology inquiry opportunities for students. Active engagement with cross-content learning through research, inquiry/questioning, critical thinking and problem solving, all while ensuring multiple modes of learning as well as writing to illustrate the learning, will offer every student a robust and rich educational experience.

Additionally, your thoughtful approach is to engage the science and technology industry, along with educational and community-based organizations in an effort to enhance and expand opportunities for Exploration students to build 21st century skills is to be commended as a means to support and encourage whole child development.

I look forward to working with you to identify ways in which the Department of Human Services can partner and collaborate with Exploration Charter School. I offer you and all other Exploration founders my sincere gratitude for your efforts to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Rochester's students.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Reed
Commissioner



Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

This letter represents my support for Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. I have reviewed your mission and your plan to implement an engaging and innovative school with a focus on academic rigor, scientific inquiry and hands on learning. I truly believe this will be an important and needed educational choice for Rochester's families.

As you note, it is important to focus on academic achievement and I applaud this. Based on the materials you have prepared and I have reviewed so far, I believe you have designed a creative program that will embed daily innovative science and technology inquiry opportunities for students to actively engage in their learning, which is important to stimulate and develop thinking capable students. As a social scientist, I appreciate your cross-content learning methods which include research, inquiry/questioning, critical thinking and problem solving. Additionally, I applaud your thoughtful approach to engage the science and technology industries and the educational and community-based organizations to enhance and expand opportunities for Exploration students to build 21st century skills. As you know, it is extremely important to link necessary supports to encourage development of the whole child.

I look forward to working with you in the future to identify ways in which Children's Institute can partner and collaborate with Exploration. Thank you for your and the other Exploration founders efforts to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Rochester's students.

Sincerely,

A. Dirk Hightower, Ph.D.
Executive Director

it, Suite D103
Rochester, New York 14607
Phone: (585) 295-1000
Fax: (585) 295-1090
Toll Free: (877) 888-7647

www.childrensinstitute.net

Mr. Joseph Munno
President

Dr. Connie Lucchese
Principal

Mr. Jay Costanza
Director of Instruction



**University Preparatory Charter
School for Young Men**
1290 Lake Avenue
Rochester, NY 14613
www.upreprochester.org
Phone: 585.672.1280
Fax: 585.458.2732

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

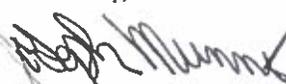
I am writing to demonstrate my support for Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. Your mission and your plan to implement an engaging and innovative school with a focus on academic rigor, scientific inquiry and hands on learning will result in an important positive new educational choice for Rochester families.

I am pleased to see that your efforts are focused on academic achievement first and that you have designed a creative program that will embed daily innovative science and technology inquiry opportunities for students to actively engage with cross-content learning through research, inquiry/questioning, critical thinking and problem solving – ensuring multiple modes of learning and writing to illustrate learning.

Additionally, your thoughtful approach is to engage the science and technology industry, educational and community-based organizations to enhance and expand opportunities for Exploration students to build 21st century skills and to link necessary supports to encourage whole child development.

I look forward to working with you in the future to identify ways in which our organization can partner and collaborate with Exploration. Thank you for you and the other Exploration founders efforts to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Rochester's students.

Sincerely,


Joseph Munno
President



Finger Lakes Advanced
Manufacturers' Enterprise
Building Minds that Make It

March 11, 2015

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

Thank you for your efforts to develop and implement an elementary level school that will build a solid educational foundation in its students through rigor, scientific inquiry and hands-on active learning through science and technology. Lab-based, hands-on learning is critical for the high-tech jobs of the future.

Our membership fully supports this effort, and as local business leaders we believe this effort is critical in helping our region address important issues like continued innovation and availability of qualified skilled employees. Exploration students will leave sixth grade with skills important to be successful in school and in life: critical thinking, self-management, collaboration, communication, creative thinking, self-awareness and reflective learning.

We look forward to your success and would like to explore opportunities for our organization's members to assist you as you integrate hands on science and technology opportunities into your classrooms and labs. FAME has a Pipeline Committee specifically focused on tech efforts in the middle and high schools. We would be happy to extend that to the elementary level, and engage your students in the importance and availability of career opportunities at all levels of advanced manufacturing.

Thank you for your efforts to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Rochester's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike MANDINA". The signature is written in a cursive style with the last name in all caps.

Mike Mandina, Chair
Chair, FAME – Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturers' Enterprise; President, Optimax Systems, Inc.



March 11, 2015

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

Thank you for your efforts to develop and implement an elementary level school that will build a solid educational foundation in its students through rigor, scientific inquiry and hands-on active learning through science and technology. Lab-based, hands-on learning is critical for the high-tech jobs of the future.

Our company fully supports this effort, and as a local business leader I believe this effort is critical in helping our region address important issues like continued innovation and availability of qualified skilled employees. Exploration students will leave sixth grade with skills important to be successful in school and in life: critical thinking, self-management, collaboration, communication, creative thinking, self-awareness and reflective learning.

We look forward to your success and would like to explore opportunities for our employees to assist you as you integrate hands on science and technology opportunities into your classrooms and labs. We would be happy to extend that to the elementary level, and engage your students in the importance and availability of career opportunities at all levels of advanced manufacturing.

Thank you for your efforts to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Rochester's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Plympton", written in a cursive style.

Rick Plympton
CEO, Optimax

6367 Dean Parkway Ontario, NY 14519
P: 585-265-1020 F: 585-265-0793 E: sales@optimaxsi.com
www.optimaxsi.com



March 12, 2015

Dr. Kevin Williams
Exploration Elementary Charter School of
Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, NY 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

I am writing in support of your application for the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. Reading through your document explaining your mission, key objectives and design elements your team has clearly articulated an exemplary plan. The integration of content across all subjects with methods that keep students engaged and making connections across content areas is clearly demonstrating best practices.

Your involvement of students, parents and communities outside of the school building will be challenging but your plan identifies ways to implement this important goal. Clearly tapping into a range of communities and in particular the children's cultural community is an important component of your plan.

Charter schools offer parents a choice in their children's education. Rochester City School District has several struggling schools and a poor graduation rate. The charter school option provides opportunities for children while professionals and politicians sort out how to have all schools foster student success.

We look forward to opportunities for collaboration in the future. The shaping of your school with a clear focus on their goals will be a beneficial learning experience for our teacher candidates, student teachers and faculty.

Sincerely,

Craig M. Hill
Dean of the School of Education



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

JOSEPH D. MORELLE
Majority Leader

March 16, 2015

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

I am writing to express my support for the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology.

Your mission and your plan to implement an engaging and innovative school with a focus on academic rigor, scientific inquiry and hands on learning will result in an important positive new educational choice for Rochester families.

I look forward to working with you in the future. If I can be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warmest personal regards,

Joseph D. Morelle
Majority Leader



Department of Public Health

Monroe County, New York

Maggie Brooks
County Executive

Byron S. Kennedy, M.D., PhD, M.P.H.
Commissioner of Public Health

March 16, 2015

Kevin Williams, Ph.D.
Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology
c/o 2595 St. Paul Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14617

Dear Dr. Williams:

I was pleased to learn that you are working to form a new elementary charter school. Your efforts are admirable and it is always heartening to see the dedication and commitment of people like yourself, who believe that our children are our best investment for the future of our community.

The school, as I understand it, will engage students with a rigorous academic program utilizing active learning through science and technology intervention. I am excited that your plan includes engaging the many organizations and businesses in our community that are extending our understanding of science and developing new technologies to develop products and improve quality of life. Leveraging their experience, knowledge, and resources to enhance the school curriculum will surely have positive results for students.

I fully support and am very interested in following your progress. I know the Exploration team has had several conversations with Kelly Reed, Monroe County Commissioner of Human Services, and I encourage you to continue that dialogue to identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

Once again, thank you for your efforts to enhance educational opportunities in our community.

Sincerely,

Byron S. Kennedy, MD, PhD, MPH
Commissioner of Public Health

Kindergarten Weekly Schedule					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	A Day
8:00–8:10	Morning Meeting				
8:10–8:20					
8:20–8:30					
8:30–8:40					
8:40–8:50	ELA				
8:50–9:00					
9:00–9:10					
9:10–9:20					
9:20–9:30					
9:30–9:40					
9:40–9:50					
9:50–10:00	Science				
10:00–10:10					
10:10–10:20					
10:20–10:30					
10:30–10:40	PE – 25 minutes				
10:40–10:50	Art – 25 minutes				
10:50–11:00					
11:00–11:10					
11:10–11:20					
11:20–11:30					
11:30–11:40	Social Studies				
11:40–11:50					
11:50–12:00					
12:00–12:10	Lunch/Recess				
12:10–12:20					
12:20–12:30					
12:30–12:40					
12:40–12:50					
12:50–1:00	Math				
1:00–1:10					
1:10–1:20					
1:20–1:30					
1:30–1:40	Science Inquiry & Intervention				
1:40–1:50	Walk to Intervention	Walk to Intervention	Science Lab-Based Learning	Science Lab-Based Learning	Walk to Intervention
1:50–2:00					
2:00–2:10					
2:10–2:20					
2:20–2:30	ELA Intervention/Enrichment				
2:30–2:40					
2:40–2:50	Innovation Inquiry and Social Skills				
2:50–3:00	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation	SEL	SEL	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation
3:00–3:10					
3:10–3:20					
3:20–3:30					
3:30–3:40	ELA (writing and research block) –				
3:40–3:50					
3:50–4:00	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

FIRST GRADE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	A Day
8:00–8:10	Morning Meeting				
8:10–8:20					
8:20–8:30					
8:30–8:40		ELA			
8:40–8:50					
8:50–9:00					
9:00–9:10		PE – 25 minutes			
9:10–9:20		Art – 25 minutes			
9:20–9:30					
9:30–9:40					
9:40–9:50					
9:50–10:00		ELA			
10:00–10:10					
10:10–10:20					
10:20–10:30					
10:30–10:40		Science			
10:40–10:50					
10:50–11:00					
11:00–11:10					
11:10–11:20		LUNCH/RECESS			
11:20–11:30					
11:30–11:40					
11:40–11:50					
11:50–12:00					
12:00–12:10		Math			
12:10–12:20					
12:20–12:30					
12:30–12:40					
12:40–12:50	Innovation Inquiry and Social Skills				
12:50–1:00	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation	SEL	SEL	Computer Lab (Digi Library) & Innovation
1:00–1:10					
1:10–1:20					
1:20–1:30					
1:30–1:40	Science Inquiry & Intervention				
1:40–1:50	Science Lab–Based Learning	Science Lab–Based Learning	Walk to Intervention	Walk to Intervention	Science Lab–Based Learning
1:50–2:00					
2:00–2:10					
2:10–2:20					
2:20–2:30	ELA Intervention/Enrichment				
2:30–2:40					
2:40–2:50					
2:50–3:00	Social Studies				
3:00–3:10					
3:10–3:20					
3:20–3:30					
3:30–3:40	ELA (writing and research block)				
3:40–3:50					
3:50–4:00	Dismissal				

Kindergarten Teacher Sample Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time	<i>A Day</i>	<i>B Day</i>	<i>C Day</i>	<i>D Day</i>	<i>A Day</i>
8:00–8:10	Morning Meeting				
8:10–8:20					
8:20–8:30					
8:30–8:40					
8:40–8:50	ELA Block				
8:50–9:00					
9:00–9:10					
9:10–9:20					
9:20–9:30					
9:30–9:40					
9:40–9:50					
9:50–10:00	Science Block				
10:00–10:10					
10:10–10:20					
10:20–10:30					
10:30–10:40					
10:40–10:50	Planning Time				
10:50–11:00					
11:00–11:10					
11:10–11:20					
11:20–11:30					
11:30–11:40	Social Studies Block				
11:40–11:50					
11:50–12:00					
12:00–12:10	Lunch				
12:10–12:20					
12:20–12:30					
12:30–12:40					
12:40–12:50					
12:50–1:00	Math Block				
1:00–1:10					
1:10–1:20					
1:20–1:30					
1:30–1:40	Intervention & Professional Learning				
1:40–1:50	Walk to Intervention	Walk to Intervention	Curricular PL and Data Dialogues	Curricular PL and Data Dialogues	Walk to Intervention
1:50–2:00					
2:00–2:10			(Innovation)	(Innovation)	
2:10–2:20					
2:20–2:30	Intervention/Enrichment				
2:30–2:40					
2:40–2:50	Grade Level Common Planning Time & Dynamic Data Dialogues/Instructional Coaching				
2:50–3:00	with Innovation Instructors				
3:00–3:10	<i>Data Reviews</i>	<i>Planning and Curriculum Support</i>	<i>Common Planning & Coaching</i>	<i>Common Planning & Coaching</i>	<i>Data Reviews</i>
3:10–3:20					
3:20–3:30					
3:30–3:40	ELA (writing and research block)				
3:40–3:50					
3:50–4:00	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

FIRST GRADE STAFF SAMPLE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	A Day
8:00-8:10	Morning Meeting				
8:10-8:20					
8:20-8:30	ELA Block				
8:30-8:40					
8:40-8:50					
8:50-9:00	Planning Time				
9:00-9:10					
9:10-9:20					
9:20-9:30					
9:30-9:40					
9:40-9:50	ELA Block				
9:50-10:00					
10:00-10:10					
10:10-10:20					
10:20-10:30					
10:30-10:40	Science Block				
10:40-10:50					
10:50-11:00					
11:00-11:10					
11:10-11:20	Lunch				
11:20-11:30					
11:30-11:40					
11:40-11:50	Math Block				
11:50-12:00					
12:00-12:10					
12:10-12:20					
12:20-12:30					
12:30-12:40					
12:40-12:50	Grade Level Common Planning Time & Dynamic Data Dialogues/Instructional Coaching				
12:50-1:00	Planning with Innovation Instructors				
1:00-1:10	<i>Data Reviews</i>	<i>Planning and Curriculum Support</i>	<i>Common Planning & Coaching</i>	<i>Common Planning & Coaching</i>	<i>Data Reviews</i>
1:10-1:20					
1:20-1:30					
1:30-1:40	Science Inquiry & Intervention				
1:40-1:50	Curricular PL and Data Dialogues	Curricular PL and Data Dialogues	Walk to Intervention	Walk to Intervention	Curricular PL and Data Dialogues
1:50-2:00					
2:00-2:10	(Innovation)	(Innovation)			(Innovation)
2:10-2:20					
2:20-2:30	Intervention/Enrichment				
2:30-2:40	Intervention/Enrichment				
2:40-2:50					
2:50-3:00	Social Studies Block				
3:00-3:10					
3:10-3:20					
3:20-3:30					
3:30-3:40	ELA (writing and research block)				
3:40-3:50					
3:50-4:00	Dismissal				

Science and Technology Curriculum Coordinator					
Time	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	A Day
8:00-8:10					
8:10-8:20					
8:20-8:30					
8:30-8:40		Curriculum Mapping and PL Planning			
8:40-8:50					
8:50-9:00		Assessment Tracking			
9:00-9:10					
9:10-9:20					
9:20-9:30					
9:30-9:40					
9:40-9:50	K Science Block - Classroom Support				
9:50-10:00	Connection to LBL				
10:00-10:10					
10:10-10:20					
10:20-10:30	1st Science Block - Classroom Support				
10:30-10:40	Connection to LBL				
10:40-10:50					
10:50-11:00					
11:00-11:10	Collaborative Curriculum Development				
11:10-11:20					
11:20-11:30					
11:30-11:40		Lunch			
11:40-11:50					
11:50-12:00					
12:00-12:10					
12:10-12:20	Facilitate PL with Innovation Instructors				
12:20-12:30					
12:30-12:40					
12:40-12:50	1st Computer			1st	1st
12:50-1:00			1st	Curriculum	Computer
1:00-1:10			Innovation	Mapping	
1:10-1:20			PL	(Innovation)	
1:20-1:30					
1:30-1:40					
1:40-1:50	1st Inquiry		K	Inquiry	1st Inquiry
1:50-2:00					
2:00-2:10					
2:10-2:20					
2:20-2:30	Planning			Time	
2:30-2:40	Intervention/Enrichment				
2:40-2:50					
2:50-3:00	K Computer			Kindergarten	K Computer
3:00-3:10			Kindergarte	Curriculum	
3:10-3:20			Innovation	Mapping	
3:20-3:30			PL	(Innovation)	
3:30-3:40					
3:40-3:50		Writing &	Research	Block	
3:50-4:00			(Support)		

2016-2017 Exploration Charter School Calendar

August						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
8/15-19/16 Summer Institute						
8/22/16-- School Start (1/2 days)						
--8/26/16 Half Days						

September						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
9/5/16 Labor Day						

October						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					20
10/10/16 Columbus Day						

November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
11/4/16 Parent Conference						
11/11/16 Staff Conference Day						
11/23/16 1/2 Day Conference						
11/24/16 Thanksgiving Recess						

December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
12/23/16 Conference Day						
12/26/16- Winter Recess						

January						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
-1/2/17 Winter Recess						

February						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				
2/20/17- Winter Break						
-2/24/17 Winter Break						

March						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
4/7/17 Parent Conference						
4/10-14/17 Spring Break						

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
5/29/17 Memorial Day						

June						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
6/30/17 Last Day Celebration						

Report Card Dates	
Quarter 1	11/2/16
Quarter 2	1/18/17
Quarter 3	4/5/17
Quarter 4	6/29/17

Color Key	
Professional Development	
Student Half Day	
No School	
Marking Period End	
Last Day of School	

CODE OF CONDUCT AND STUDENT DISCIPLINARY CODE

Code of Conduct

We believe that the foundation of the school culture is respect for everyone in the school community, including students, staff, and families. As a result, we are committed to building this foundation with our students, so that they leave Exploration with a strong character and are on track for future success in their school community. Because of these beliefs, the Exploration community will adhere to the following expectations and guidelines for conduct for our community:

- We will respect ourselves
- We will respect others
- We will respect property
- We will respect learning

Exploration recognizes that there may be times when these values are not reflected in the behavior of members of its staff or student body. As a result, we have adopted our Student Disciplinary Policy, as listed below.

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Overview

Student disciplinary offenses are those actions or inactions that violate the school's Code of Conduct. A disciplinary offense may occur while the student is: at school and/or on school grounds; participating in a school-sponsored activity; walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event; walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity. School-related disciplinary offenses may also include serious misconduct outside the school where evidence exists that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the school.

The following list of actionable offenses is not exhaustive but provides examples of violations of Exploration's Code of Conduct. The list may be modified from time to time and/or supplemented by teachers on Exploration's rules for classes and other school events.

School staff will be educated about, and trained to implement, the policy during the Summer Institute.

List of Certain Actionable Offenses

1. **DISRUPTING THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 1.1 **Arriving Late to School or Class:** Student tardiness disrupts class, inconveniences others, and often results in academic difficulties. Students may not be late to school or class. (Note that while students may not be suspended out of school or expelled for tardiness, they may not be promoted to the next grade if too much class time is missed.)
 - 1.2 **Misbehaving on School-provided Transportation:** Students may not misbehave while walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation, including the school bus. Note that students are subject to temporary or permanent denial of school-provided transportation (in which case, students and parents are responsible for travel to and from school), suspension, expulsion, and/or other consequences. Misbehavior includes, but is not limited to, using inappropriate language, making excessive noise, touching other students inappropriately, being disrespectful of others, or failing to follow the bus driver's instructions.

- 1.3 **Blocking Access to any Part of the School Building:** Students are not permitted to block access to any room or part of the school building. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.4 **Violating the Dress Code:** Students are expected to adhere to the stated dress code. After repeated dress code infractions, parents must pick up children who are not properly dressed for school or bring the missing dress code items to the school, as students may be suspended or not be permitted to attend class. Violations of the dress code also may result in additional disciplinary consequences.
- 1.5 **Gum, Food, and Beverages:** Students may not chew gum or eat or drink at unauthorized times or places.
- 1.6 **Disrupting Class and Preventing Teaching:** Exploration can fulfill its mission only if classrooms are safe and teaching is uninterrupted. Students may not disrupt class. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.7 **Failing to Complete Homework:** Completing homework is essential to the success of individual students and the classroom community. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time.
- 1.8 **Cheating, Plagiarism, and Copying Other's Work:** Cheating or copying the work of others (or allowing other students to copy work) is unacceptable. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.9 **Failing to Submit a Required Signature:** When requested, students are required to secure the signature of a parent/guardian on homework assignments or school forms.
- 1.10 **Forgery:** Students may not forge a signature.
- 1.11 **Lying to a Staff Member:** Honesty is an essential element of personal character and is needed to build a community based on trust and respect. Students are not permitted to lie or attempt to conceal the truth.
- 1.12 **Being Disrespectful toward a Staff Member:** A school cannot function properly if students are permitted to be disrespectful toward adults. For that reason, students may not be disrespectful toward a staff member or any other adult associated with the school. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.13 **Being Disrespectful toward a Student:** If students do not feel physically and emotionally safe in school, teaching and learning are made more difficult. Therefore, students may not be disrespectful toward other students. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.14 **Possession of Inappropriate Property:** Students cannot possess iPods, cell-phones, electronic equipment, games, printed text, or lyrics that are vulgar, profane, or sexually explicit, or any other items inappropriate for school. Such items will be confiscated. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
- 1.15 **Gambling:** Gambling or betting is not tolerated.
- 1.16 **Misbehaving inside or outside of Class:** Misbehavior that violates this Student Disciplinary Policy inside or outside of class (at school and/or on school grounds; participating in a school-sponsored activity; walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event; walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity) is not permitted. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.

2. **ASSAULT, BATTERY, BODILY HARM, INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHING, AND/OR THREATS (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 2.1 **Causing Bodily Harm:** Students may not cause physical injury to a student, school employee, or another person. Students are not permitted to harm or attempt to harm a student, school employee, or another person, including with a weapon or dangerous object.
 - 2.2 **Committing Assault or Assault and Battery:** Students may not commit assault, including sexual assault, or assault and battery on a student, school employee, or another person. Assault is an attempt or threat to physically harm another person; assault does not require physical contact. Battery is any unlawful touching of another person.
 - 2.3 **Fighting or Unwanted Physical Contact:** Exploration students may not fight with other students – from Exploration or any other school. Harassing, pushing, touching, or any form of unwanted physical contact is not tolerated.
 - 2.4 **Play Fighting and Threatening:** Play fighting and/or the use of threats influence the safety of the community. Students may not play fight and/or threaten others.
 - 2.5 **Setting off a False Alarm or Making a Threat:** Students may not intentionally set off a false alarm or make a destructive threat.
 - 2.6 **Engaging in Sexual Activity or Inappropriate Touching:** A student may not engage in sexual activity of any kind or touch himself/herself or others inappropriately.
3. **POSSESSION OR USE OF FIREARMS, WEAPONS, AND/OR DANGEROUS OBJECTS (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 3.1 **Possession or Use of a Firearm:** Students may not possess or use a firearm. In compliance with Gun Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. §7151, the school will expel from school for a period of not less than one year a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to a school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the School Director of Exploration may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis if such modification is in writing.
 - 3.2 **Possession or Use of a Mock Firearm:** Students may not possess or use a mock firearm.
 - 3.3 **Using or Possessing a Weapon or Dangerous Object:** Students are not allowed to bring a weapon of any sort to school, use any object in a dangerous or threatening manner, or have a weapon on him/her or in his/her property.
 - 3.4 **Arson:** Students may not set a fire.
4. **POSSESSION, USE, OR DISTRIBUTION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 4.1 **Using or Possessing Drugs or Alcohol:** Students may not use or possess any non-prescribed controlled substance, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Prescribed and over-the-counter drugs must be delivered to the designated Exploration staff person by a parent or guardian with a doctor-signed medication authorization form. Students may not be in possession of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs.

- 4.2 **SELLING OR TRANSFERRING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL:** Students may not sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell or distribute a prescribed or non-prescribed controlled substance. Nor should they carry paraphernalia related to drugs or alcohol (ex: pill bottles, etc.)
- 4.3 **Using or Possessing Tobacco Products:** The use of tobacco is banned. Students may not use or possess cigarettes, chewing-tobacco, or other tobacco products.
- 4.4 **Selling or Transferring Tobacco Products:** Students may not sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell or distribute cigarettes, chewing-tobacco, or other tobacco products.
5. **HARASSMENT AND VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL RIGHTS (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 5.1 **Violating the Civil Rights of Others:** Students may not violate the civil rights of others.
 - 5.2 **Harassment:** Students may not make unwanted sexual advances toward, or commit sexual harassment of, any members of the school community. Harassment or intimidation of any members of the school community on the basis of their racial or ethnic background, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability is not permitted.
 - 5.3 **Abusive or Profane Language or Treatment:** Students may not use abusive, threatening, vulgar, coarse, or degrading language (including racial epithets or sexist or homophobic remarks).
6. **THEFT OR VANDALISM (IN ADDITION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES, THESE OFFENSES MAY RESULT IN LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION.)**
 - 6.1 **Theft, Loss, or Destruction of Personal or School Property:** Students may not steal, lose, or damage someone else's property or school property. In addition to facing other consequences for violation of this rule, students are expected to return property to its rightful owner in its original condition or to reimburse the owner and/or the school for lost, damaged, or stolen property.
 - 6.2 **Mistreatment or Inappropriate Use of Technology or School Property:** Students must treat computers, printers, and other technology with care. Exploration does not tolerate attempts to access the school's files or other inappropriate uses of technology or the Internet. Students do not have the right to use school computers to access chat rooms or email or to access websites or files that contain profanity, sexually explicit language or pictures, excessively violent themes, and/or other material inappropriate for minors. Students must not mistreat other school property.
7. **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SCHOOL-IMPOSED CONSEQUENCES:** Students must comply with school-imposed consequences. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, this offense may result in long-term suspension and/or expulsion.
8. **REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT:** Progressively more serious disciplinary consequences shall be imposed upon any student who repeatedly commits one or more disciplinary offenses.

Student Disciplinary Actions

DEFINITIONS: For purposes of this Code:

- *Short-term suspension* shall refer to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of ten or fewer days;
- *Long-term suspension* shall refer to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than ten days; and
- *Expulsion* shall refer to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons.

IN-SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY MEASURES: In-school disciplinary actions may be imposed by the School Director or any teacher; provided in-school suspension and suspension of transportation may only be imposed by the School Director or the Board. The following process will be followed with regard to discipline:

- The staff member addresses the conduct (including describing the infraction(s) and hearing the student’s version of events) and assigns an appropriate consequence or refers to school leader. The following table describes teacher and leader managed behaviors:

Teacher-Managed Behaviors	Administrator-Managed Behaviors
Electronic Devices, Negativity, Rudeness, Impulsivity, Disengagement, Swearing, Unsafe Play, Loudness, Promptness, Preparation/Effort	Dress Code, Fighting, Bullying/Harassment, Weapons, Theft, Vandalism, Drugs, Repeated Teacher Managed Behaviors (with referral)

- If necessary, the student is removed from class.
- Students/parents are responsible for transportation home when they are assigned to detention of in-school suspension.
- The school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian in order to discuss the infractions and may reduce the penalty based upon mutual understanding reached at the meeting.
- In-school disciplinary actions may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:
 - Behavioral Contract
 - Detention
 - Loss of School Privileges
 - Suspension from School Transportation

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: The Board or the School Director may impose short-term suspension. If a student commits an offense that calls for short-term suspension (10 days or less), s/he is subject to the following:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The student is informed of the charges against him or her.
- The student is entitled to respond to the charges against him or her.
- The parent/guardian is notified of the imposition of short-term suspension by Exploration in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery to the last known address(es) of the parents or guardians. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents or guardian of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the School Director. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language of the mode of communication used by the parents or guardian if known by Exploration to be other than English.
- The school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian in order to discuss the infractions and may reduce the penalty based upon mutual understanding resulting from the meeting.

The school shall follow due process procedures consistent with *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975).

The School Director’s decision to impose a short-term suspension may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the charter school’s complaint process, pursuant to Education Law §2855(4).

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND EXPLUSION: The School Director or the Board may impose a long-term suspension.

If a student commits an offense that calls for long-term suspension (more than 10 days) or expulsion, the following steps are taken:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The student is informed of the charges against him or her.
- Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the School Director shall verbally inform the student that s/he is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions.
- Exploration will then notify the parent/guardian in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery to the student's last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents that resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s) if it is known to be other than English. The notice will state that at the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, present and question witnesses, and present evidence.
- The school sets a hearing date. The student and/or his/her parent/guardian are notified in writing of the:
 - charges and a statement of the evidence,
 - date, time and place of a hearing, and
 - notice of the right at the hearing to:
 - be represented by legal counsel (at the student's/parent's own expense), and
 - present evidence and question witnesses.
- After the School Director, the Board or a hearing officer designated by either of them hears the case, the School Director or the Board issues a written decision to be sent to the student, the parent/guardian, the school's Board of Trustees, and the student's permanent record.

Federal law requires the expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the School Director may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended). "Firearm," as used in this law means a firearm, as defined by 18 USC§921, and includes firearms and explosives. The School Director shall refer a student under the age of 16 who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to a presentment agency for a juvenile delinquency proceeding consistent with Article 3 of the Family Court Act except a student 14 or 15 years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law §1.20(42). The School Director shall refer any pupil 16 years of age or older or a student 14 or 15 years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law §1.20(42), who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

The decision to impose a long-term suspension/expulsion upon a student may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the charter school's complaint process, pursuant to Education Law §2855(4).

PROVISION OF SERVICES DURING REMOVAL

The charter school will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a child who has been suspended. For a student who has been suspended or expelled, alternative instruction will be provided to the extent required by law.

Exploration will provide alternative instruction to students who are suspended. The school will provide alternative instruction to students as soon as practicable: in general, no later than the day after the suspension is effective. Such instruction will be at a reasonable location and time of the school's choosing.

Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. Except for the brief time it would take for a student to re-enter another public school, Exploration does not have to, but may, provide alternative instruction for expelled students.

Other: In addition to disciplinary actions provided for elsewhere in this Policy, any breaches of state or federal law may be handled in cooperation with the Rochester Police Department or other authorities. Where appropriate, school officials also will contact law enforcement agencies.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

General Information

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge – in accordance with 34 CFR 300.534 – that a disability exists, may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. Exploration shall comply with sections 300.530-300.536 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

The school shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability, including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight days, such student will immediately be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than 10 days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the 11th day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

1. The commission of an infraction by a student with a disability who has previously been suspended for the maximum allowable number of days.
2. The commission of any infraction resulting from the student's disability.
3. The commission of any infraction by a disabled student, regardless of whether the student has previously been suspended during the School year if, had such infraction been committed by a non-disabled student, the School Director would seek to impose a suspension in excess of ten days.

Provision of Services during Removal

Those students removed for a period of fewer than 10 days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of his or her suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The school also shall provide additional alternative instruction within the 10 days and by appropriate means to assist the student, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master curriculum, including additional instructions, phone assistance, computer instruction, and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals equals 10 or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any removal for drug or weapon offenses pursuant to 34 CFR §300.530(g), services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The school will place students in interim alternative educational settings as appropriate per 34 CFR §300.520(g).

During any subsequent removal that constitutes a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

Due Process

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with an IEP, the following steps shall be taken: (1) not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents of the student with a disability shall be notified by the school of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and (2) the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action (subject to CSE's availability).

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and School agree otherwise.

TABLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION

***Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees**

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ROLE ON APPLICANT GROUP (Key Words)	PROPOSED ROLE (if any) (Trustee, Employee, Consultant, or No Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Kevin Williams, PhD	kwillia2@rochester.rr.com	Department Head, Materials Science Department, Eastman Kodak Company	Relevant Experience/Skills: management, operations, budget procurement and management, performance evaluation, career mentoring, strategy, STEM background; Role on Applicant Group: Organizational and Fiscal Plan Committee, Educational Plan Committee (STEM Focus)	Trustee	Board Chair	3	Yes
Robert Franklin	rpf1201@rochester.rr.com	Director of Finance & Chief Financial Officer, County of Monroe	Relevant experience/skills: fiscal operations, including finance and accounting experience; organizational management, public sector and non-profit; strategic planning; performance management; Role on Applicant Group: Organizational and Fiscal Plan Committee	Trustee	Chair, Finance Committee	3	Yes
Michelle Swanger-Gange, PhD, NCSP	Michelle_Swanger-gagne@urmc.rochester.edu	Therapist, Strong Behavioral Health, Strong Family Therapy and University of Rochester Medical Faculty Group	Relevant skills/experiences: extensive experience providing behavioral and collaboration consultation to schools and families; specializes in working with children with academic and behavioral concerns in school, such as learning disabilities, ADHD, and school anxiety; teaching and supervising trainees in family therapy, psychology, and medicine; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee (SEL Focus)	Trustee		3	Yes
Carlos Cong	ccong123@gmail.com	Senior Manager, Network Services, Paychex	Relevant experience/skills: capital and operational management; application of and access to innovative technology; strategic partnerships; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee (STEM Focus)	Trustee		3	Yes
Joseph Saia	jsaia@rochesterdiscovery.com	School Director, Discovery Charter School	Relevant experiences/skills: experienced educator; proven ability build a school culture that embraces continuous improvement for teachers and students; able to engage parents and community members as partners; management and continuous staff development; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee	Trustee		3	Yes
Stephen Pasquarella	spasq@uniblitz.com	President, Vincent Associates	Relevant experiences/skills: sales and marketing; project management; software and programming proficiency; engineering experience; Role on Applicant Group: Education Plan Committee (STEM Focus)	Trustee		3	Yes

TABLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION

***Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees**

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ROLE ON APPLICANT GROUP (Key Words)	PROPOSED ROLE (if any) (Trustee, Employee, Consultant, or No Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Lisa Hiley, PhD	lhiley@encompassresources.org	Director of Education, EnCompass: Resources for Learning	Relevant experience/skills: planning and implementation of research and evaluation of educational programs; researches, implements and designs coordinated special education efforts; manages diverse funding sources; performance evaluation; strategic planning; grant writing; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee	Trustee		3	Yes
Christopher Potter	christopherjohnpotter@gmail.com	Special Education Teacher, Webster Central School District	Relevant experiences/skills: special education; art education; differentiated instruction; implementation of alternative assessments; creation and implementation of STEM program; teacher training and professional development; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee	Advisor		N/A	No

Attachment 5b: ByLaws

EXPLORATION ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: APPLICABLE LAW

Section 1.1. Public Charter School.

Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology School (the “Corporation” or the “School”) is a charter school as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act (Article 56) of the Education Law of the State of New York. Except as otherwise provided by the Education Law of the State of New York, the Corporation is an independent and autonomous education corporation and is public school.

Section 1.2. Not-for-Profit Corporation Status.

Pursuant to the Education Law of the State of New York, and except as otherwise provided by said law, the Corporation is a “charitable corporation” as defined in the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law of the State of New York.

Section 1.3. Non-Membership Corporation.

The Corporation is a non-membership corporation.

ARTICLE II: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 2.1. Management of Corporate Affairs.

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Education Law of the State of New York, the charter as approved by the Board of Regents (the “Charter”), the Provisional Charter issued to the Corporation by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York (“Charter”) and/or these bylaws, the activities, property and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Trustees.

Section 2.2. Number and Qualifications.

The Board of Trustees (or the “Board”) shall consist of at least five (5) and no more than eleven (11) voting members, ten (10) of whom shall be classified as “At-Large Trustees”, one (1) of whom shall be classified as “Parent Representative Trustee”. At-Large Trustees shall be community leaders who are representative of the community at large. The Parent Representative Trustee shall be a parent/guardian of a child(ren) enrolled in Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. All Trustees shall be strongly committed to improving public school educational opportunities for all children and fully supportive of Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology’s mission statement, goals and objectives. The Trustees may increase or decrease the number of Trustees of the Corporation by vote of the majority of the entire Board, but the number of Trustees constituting the entire Board shall at no time be less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11). The Parent Representative Trustee will be identified before the end of the first year of the charter and at no time after that time shall there be any less than one (1) Parent Representative Trustee.

No decrease in the number of Trustees shall shorten the term of any incumbent Trustee. All of the Trustees shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

Except for the Initial Board of Trustees (as defined below at Section 2.4.), every Trustee shall be approved and elected to the Board of Trustees by the Board of Trustees, and before being seated as a voting member of the Board of Trustees shall complete and submit a Trustee Questionnaire for approval by the New York State Education Department. The School Director shall serve as a non-voting ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and shall serve as a liaison with the staff of the school.

Section 2.3. Responsibilities of Board Members:

All members of the Board of Trustees shall be familiar with the Charter and its provisions as well as all policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. All Initial and new Trustees shall undergo required training in the roles and responsibilities of Trustees. In their actions as Trustees, Board members shall abide by the Charter and Board of Trustees policies, shall oversee the financial management of the corporation and the Director, shall monitor academic progress and shall serve on committees as needed or dictated below. Trustees shall at all times behave in an ethical and effective manner and take necessary and appropriate action to ensure the success of the school.

Section 2.4. Initial Board of Trustees and Initial Terms of Office.

Until the Parent Representative Trustee(s) is seated, the activities, property and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by the Initial Board of Trustees. The Initial Board of Trustees shall consist of the following members, who are At Large Trustees, and whose initial terms of office are 3 year terms as follows:

Carlos Cong	At-Large
Robert Franklin	At-Large
Stephen Pasquarella	At-Large
Joseph Saia	At-Large
Michelle Swanger-Gangne	At-Large
Kevin Williams	At-Large
Lisa Hiley	At-Large

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 2.2. of these bylaws, the minimum number of Trustees constituting the entire Board shall be no less than five (5) during the period in which the activities, property and affairs of the Corporation are being managed by the Initial Board of Trustees.

Section 2.5. Term of Office.

Subsequent to the initial term of office as indicated above, each At-Large Trustee term of office shall be for a period of three (3) years. The Parent Representative Trustee term of office shall be the shorter of either a period of three (3) years or until the Parent Representative Trustee no longer has any child(ren) attending Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology.

Section 2.6. Election of Trustees.

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Education Law of the State of New York, the Charter or these bylaws, election of At-Large Trustees to fill expired terms shall take place at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees (see Article III, Section 3.3.). The first Parent Representative Trustee shall be designated to be a member of the Board of Trustees by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees at Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology, from among those who have indicated a willingness to so serve, as soon as said parents/guardians can reasonably be informed of the duties and responsibilities of the Parent Representative Trustee. Thereafter, the Parent Representative Trustee shall be designated to be a member of the Board of Trustees by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees whenever the Parent Representative Trustee term expires or vacancy occurs. Any parent/guardian designated to be the Parent Representative Trustee shall be seated as a voting member of the Board of Trustees upon approval and election by the Board of Trustees and upon approval by the New York State Education Department.

Section 2.7. Vacancies.

At-Large Trustee vacancies occurring in the Board of Trustees for any reason may be filled by vote of a majority of the Trustees then in office. A Trustee elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office until the expiration of the term he or she was elected to complete.

Section 2.8. Resignation.

Any member of the Board of Trustees may resign at any time by giving notice of his or her resignation to the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Secretary. A Trustee's resignation will take effect at the time designated by the resigning Trustee. Unless otherwise specified in a notice of resignation from the resigning Trustee, Board of Trustee acceptance of resignation shall not be necessary to make the resignation effective.

Section 2.9. Removal.

Any Trustee may be removed for cause by the affirmative vote of the majority of the entire Board of Trustees in accordance with Education Law 226(8), provided that at least one week's previous notice of the proposed action shall have been given to the accused and to each trustee. Unexcused absence from two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Board or four (4) regular meetings of the Board in any 12-month period shall, without limitation, be considered cause for removal.

Section 2.10. Contracts with the Corporation.

No member of the Board shall be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract relating to the operations of the Corporation, nor in any contract for furnishing supplies thereto, unless authorized by the concurring vote of a majority of the entire Board not including the vote(s) of the interested Trustee(s). In the event that any Director, Trustee, officer, employee and/or agent of a for-profit or not-for-profit entity having a business relationship with Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology also serves as a member of the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology Board of Trustees, said Trustee shall recuse him or herself from voting with respect to any matter concerning Discovery Charter School's business relationship with that Trustee's for-profit or not-for-profit entity.

Section 2.11. Compensation.

No Trustee shall receive, directly or indirectly, salary, compensation or emolument from the Corporation for acting as a Trustee, except reimbursement of expenses necessarily incurred in effecting one or more of the corporate purposes of the Corporation.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS OF TRUSTEES

Section 3.1. Regular Meetings.

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation are the official convening of a public body for the purpose of conducting public business and shall include the use of videoconferencing for attendance and participation by the members of the public body. Regular meetings for the transaction of such business as may be set forth in the notice of the meeting shall be held at such time and place as shall be determined by the Board of Trustees and the notice of meeting shall specify.

The Board of Trustees will hold no fewer than ten (10) Regular meetings each year between July 1 and June 30.

Section 3.2. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called at any time by the Chairperson, or in his or her absence or disability, the Vice-Chairperson, and must be called by such officer on written request by three (3) Trustees. Such request shall state the purpose or purposes for which the Special meeting is to be called. Each Special meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held at such time and place as the person calling the meeting shall determine and the notice of the meetings shall specify.

Section 3.3. Annual Meeting.

The Annual meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be the Regular meeting held in July of each year, or such other Regular meeting as the Board of Trustees shall designate.

Section 3.4. Notice of Meetings.

Notice of each Regular, Annual or Special meeting of the Board of Trustees stating the time and place thereof shall be given by the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson or the Secretary to each member of the Board not less than seven (7) days before the meeting by mailing the notice, postage prepaid, addressed to each member of the Board at his or her residence or usual place of business, or not less than five (5) days before the meeting, by delivering the notice to each member of the Board personally, or by telephone.

Section 3.5. Quorum and Action of the Board of Trustees.

At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, except as otherwise provided by law, the Education Law of the State of New York, the Charter or these bylaws, a quorum shall be required for the transaction of business, which quorum shall consist of a simple majority of Trustees not including vacancies, and the vote of a majority of the Trustees present in person or by videoconference shall decide any question that may come before the meeting. Meetings at which videoconferencing will be used to conduct the meetings shall be permissible provided that all Board members in attendance and any members of the public wishing to attend any such meeting are able to attend, listen, observe and participate from and at any site at which any member of the Board may be located.

Trustees who participate in Board meetings by telephone will be counted for the purposes of meeting a quorum and shall be permitted to vote.

Section 3.6. Procedure.

The order of business and all other matters of procedure at every meeting of the Board may be determined by the person presiding at the meeting.

Section 3.7. Public Notice.

In addition to the notice requirements set forth above, public notice of any and all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and of any committee or subcommittee shall be given as required by the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York

ARTICLE IV: COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 4.1. Executive Committee.

There shall be an Executive Committee that shall consist of the officers of the Corporation, the chair of the Human Resources/Personnel Committee if not an officer and, at the discretion of the Chairperson one or more other Board members selected by the Chairperson of the Board. In no event shall the Executive Committee consist of fewer than five (5) members. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Education Law of the State of New York, the Charter or these bylaws, all acts done and power and authority conferred by the Executive Committee from time to time within the scope of its authority shall be, and may be deemed to be, and may be specified as being, an act under the authority of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4.2. Audit and Finance Committee.

The Board of Trustees, by resolution or resolutions adopted by a majority of the entire Board, shall designate from among its members an Audit and Finance Committee that shall consist of a chairperson and at least two (2) other Trustees. The Audit and Finance Committee shall be responsible for the fiscal health of the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology. This committee will monitor finances, review budgets and financial statements and make financial recommendations to the Board of Trustees as necessary. The Treasurer shall chair this committee.

Section 4.3. Human Resources/Personnel Committee.

The Board of Trustees, by resolution or resolutions adopted by a majority of the entire Board, shall designate from among its members a Human Resources/Personnel Committee that shall consist of a chairperson and at least two (2) other Trustees. The Human Resources/Personnel Committee shall be responsible for all human resource issues including, but not limited to: (1) recommendations to the Board as

to personnel hiring and termination, in consultation with the school Director; (2) recommendations to the Board as to compensation and benefits; (3) recommendations to the Board as to personnel policies and (4) recommendations to the Board as to work place safety. The Chairperson shall designate the chair of the Human Resources/Personnel Committee.

Section 4.4. Academic Accountability Committee.

The Board of Trustees, by resolution or resolutions adopted by a majority of the entire Board, shall designate from among its members an Academic Accountability Committee that shall consist of a chairperson and at least two (2) other Trustees. The Academic Accountability Committee shall be responsible for all academic oversight including, but not limited to: (1) monitoring student academic progress toward stated annual achievement goals as reported by NWEA MAP and state assessment data; (2) recommendations to the Board and School Director regarding academic leadership; and (3) recommendations to the Board regarding best educational practices and strategies. The Chairperson shall designate the chair of the Academic Accountability Committee.

Section 4.5. Other Committees.

The Board of Trustees, by resolution or resolutions adopted by a majority of the entire Board, shall designate from time to time from among its members such other committees (ad hoc and standing) as the Board of Trustees deems necessary. Any such other committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least two (2) other Trustees. The Chairperson shall designate the chair of any such other committees.

Section 4.6. Acts and Proceedings.

Every committee shall, at the discretion of the committee chair, be able to appoint such subcommittee(s) as may be necessary. Each committee and subcommittee shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings and report its actions to the Board of Trustees when required.

Section 4.7. Meetings of Committees and Subcommittees.

Committees and subcommittees of Trustees shall meet at such times and places as the chair of each committee shall determine and the notice of the meeting shall specify. Meetings of committees and subcommittees of Trustees shall be governed by the provisions of Sections 5, 6 & 7 of Article II of these bylaws, which govern meetings of the entire Board of Directors.

Section 4.8. Notice and Public Notice of Meetings of Committees and Subcommittees.

Reasonable notice of meetings of committees and subcommittees shall be provided by the chair of each such committee or subcommittee. In addition, public notice of any and all meetings of any committee or subcommittee shall be given as required by the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York. To the extent of any conflict between any provision of these bylaws and the Open Meetings Law, the Open Meetings Law shall prevail and control.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Section 5.1. Officers.

The Board of Trustees shall, at its Annual meeting, appoint or elect from among its members a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The Board of Trustees may from time to time elect or appoint such additional officers as it deems necessary. Such additional officers shall have such authority and perform such duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time prescribe. The responsibilities of the officers shall be as follows:

Chairperson: The Chairperson shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation, shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and shall, in general, perform such other duties incident to the office of the Chairperson and shall do and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

Vice Chairperson: In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform all of the duties pertaining to the office of the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall have such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Trustees. In case of a vacancy in the office of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the office of the Chairperson.

Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and, unless otherwise directed, the minutes of all meetings of committees of the Board of Trustees; shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of members of the Board and all other notices required by law or by these bylaws; shall have custody of the Corporate books and records; shall affix the Corporate Seal to all instruments requiring it when authorized by the Board or the Chairman.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall have care and custody of all monies of the Corporation and deposit same in the name of the Corporation in the depository or depositories selected by the Board of Trustees from time to time; shall disburse said funds as ordered or authorized by the Board of Trustees; shall keep accurate records of receipts and disbursements, submit his or her books and records to the Chairperson and give an itemized statement of his or her accounts at each Annual meeting of the Board; and shall, in general, perform all other duties incident to the office of Treasurer and shall do and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall have oversight of all financial systems of the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology, and shall be responsible for reviewing the work of the accounting firm and auditing firm engaged by Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology.

Section 5.2. Term of Office.

Unless otherwise determined by the Board of Trustees, the officers shall hold office until the next Annual meeting of the Board and until their successors have been elected or appointed and qualified. Each additional officer appointed or elected by the Board of Trustees shall hold office for such term as shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees and until his or her successor has been elected or appointed and qualified. Any officer, however, may be removed or have his or her authority suspended by the majority of the entire Board in accordance with Education Law 226(8) consistent with principles of due process. If the office of any officer becomes vacant for any reason, the Board of Trustees shall have the power to fill such vacancy.

Section 5.3. Resignation.

Any officer may resign at any time by notifying the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or the Secretary of the Corporation in writing. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein and unless otherwise specified in such resignation, the acceptance thereof shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 5.4. Duties of Officers May Be Delegated.

In case of the absence or disability of an officer of the Corporation, or for any other reason that the Board may deem sufficient, the Board may delegate the powers or duties of any officer to any other officer or to any member of the Board, except as otherwise provided by law, the Education Law of the State of New York, the Charter or these bylaws.

Section 5.5. Compensation.

No officer of the Corporation shall receive, directly or indirectly, salary, compensation or emolument from the Corporation for acting as an officer, except reimbursement of expenses necessarily incurred in effecting one or more of the corporate purposes of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VI: INDEMNIFICATION OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS

Section 6.1. Right of Indemnification.

Each Trustee and officer of the Corporation, whether or not then in office, and any person whose testator or intestate was such a Trustee or officer, shall be indemnified by the Corporation for the defense of, or in

connection with, any threatened, pending or completed actions or proceedings and appeals therein, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, in accordance with and to the fullest extent permitted by New York State law or other applicable law, as such law now exists or may hereafter be adopted or amended; provided, however, that the Corporation shall provide indemnification in connection with an action or proceeding (or part thereof) initiated by such a Trustee or officer only if such action or proceeding (or part thereof) was authorized by the Board of Trustees.

Section 6.2. Advancement of Expenses.

Expenses incurred by a Trustee or officer in connection with any action or proceeding as to which indemnification may be given under Section 1 of this Article VI may be paid by the Corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action or proceeding upon (a) the receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of such Trustee or officer to repay such advancement in case such Trustee or officer is ultimately found not to be entitled to indemnification as authorized by this Article VI, and (b) approval by the Board of Trustees acting by a quorum consisting of Trustees who are not parties to such action or proceeding or, if such a quorum is not obtainable, then by a vote of a majority of the entire Board of Trustees. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Board of Trustees shall not be required to find that the Trustee or officer has met the applicable standard of conduct provided by law for indemnification in connection with such action or proceeding before the Corporation makes any advance payment of expenses hereunder.

Section 6.3. Availability and Interpretation.

To the extent permitted under applicable law, the rights of indemnification and to the advancement of expenses provided in this Article VI (a) shall be available with respect to events occurring prior to the adoption of this Article VI, (b) shall continue to exist after any rescission or restrictive amendment of this Article VI with respect to events occurring prior to such rescission or amendment, (c) shall be interpreted on the basis of applicable law in effect at the time of the occurrence of the event or events giving rise to the action or proceeding or, at the sole discretion of the Trustee or officer or, if applicable, at the sole discretion of the testator or intestate of such Trustee or officer seeking such rights, on the basis of applicable law in effect at the time such rights are claimed, and (d) shall be in the nature of contract rights that may be enforced in any court of competent jurisdiction as if the Corporation and the Trustee or officer for whom such rights are sought were parties to a separate written agreement.

Section 6.4. Other Rights.

The rights of indemnification and to the advancement of expenses provided in this Article VI shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which any Trustee or officer of the Corporation or other person may now or hereafter be otherwise entitled, whether contained in these bylaws, a resolution of the Board of Trustees or an agreement providing for such indemnification, the creation of such other rights being hereby expressly authorized. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the rights of indemnification and to the advancement of expenses provided in this Article VI shall not be deemed exclusive of any rights, pursuant to statute or otherwise, of any Trustee or officer of the Corporation or other person in any action or proceeding to have assessed or allowed in his or her favor, against the Corporation or otherwise, his or her costs and expenses incurred therein or in connection therewith or any part thereof.

Section 6.5. Severability.

If this Article VI or any part hereof shall be held unenforceable in any respect by a court of competent jurisdiction, it shall be deemed modified to the minimum extent necessary to make it enforceable, and the remainder of this Article VI shall remain fully enforceable. Any payments made pursuant to this Article VI shall be made only out of funds legally available therefore.

ARTICLE VII: CORPORATE FINANCE

Section 7.1. Corporate Funds.

The funds of the Corporation shall be deposited in its name with such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate. All checks, notes, drafts and other negotiable instruments of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, employee or employees as the Board of Trustees from time to time may designate. No officers, agents or employees of the Corporation, alone or with others, shall have the power to make any checks, notes, drafts or other negotiable instruments in the name of the Corporation or to bind the Corporation thereby, except as provided by this section.

Section 7.2. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30.

Section 7.3. Loans to Trustees and Officers.

No loans shall be made by the Corporation.

Section 7.4. Gifts.

Except as otherwise provided by law or the Charter, the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee or any authorized officer, employee or agent of the Corporation may accept, on behalf of the Corporation, any lawful contribution, gift, bequest or devise for any general or special purpose or purposes of the Corporation.

Section 7.5. Income from Corporate Activities.

All income from activities of the Corporation shall be applied to the maintenance, expansion or operation of the lawful activities of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VIII: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CODE OF ETHICS

Pursuant to requirements of Article 56 of the Education Law of the State of New York, the School shall be subject to the provisions of sections eight hundred, eight hundred one, eight hundred two, eight hundred three, eight hundred four, eight hundred four-a, eight hundred five, eight hundred five-a, eight hundred five-b and eight hundred six of the General Municipal Law of the State of New York to the same extent such sections apply to school districts. In the event that the School adopts any conflict of interest and/or code of ethics policy or policies that are inconsistent with said provisions of law, then, and to the extent of any such inconsistencies, the provisions of applicable New York law shall prevail.

ARTICLE IX: COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any individual shall be able to bring complaints to the Director by submitting a letter addressed to the Director. If he or she is not satisfied with the Director's response, then the individual will be able to bring the complaint to the Board of Trustees by submitting a letter addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Complaints made to the Board of Trustees shall be addressed by the first Board meeting following the meeting at which such complaint was made known.

Any individual not satisfied with any response from the Board of Trustees to a complaint will be able to appeal that decision to the New York State Board of Regents. Notwithstanding any statute, rule, regulation or ordinance to the contrary, all of the requirements, provisions and procedures contained in New York Education Law §3813 governing the presentation of claims against the governing body of any school district or certain state supported schools shall be fully applicable to and shall govern the presentation of claims against the Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology.

ARTICLE X: CLOSURE OR DISSOLUTION

In the event of closure or dissolution of the Corporation for any reason, transfer of students and student records, and disposition of the Corporation's assets shall occur as required under New York State Charter Schools Act (Article 56) of the Education Law of the State of New York.

In the event of closure or dissolution of the Corporation for any reason, the Board and staff of Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology shall take the following steps:

- Engage legal counsel, auditors and any other needed professionals to prepare the Corporation for closure.
 - Responsible Party: Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
 - Time: Immediately following Board action to close the school.
- Send written notification to families that shall include key dates and an invitation to a meeting to learn about transfer options and enrollment in new schools.
 - Responsible Party: Director.
 - Time: Within two weeks of Board action to close the school.
- Send written notification to the school district(s) of residence and local private and charter schools that invites representatives to meet with parents to inform and recruit students.
 - Responsible Party: Director.
 - Time: Within two weeks of Board action to close the school.
- Transfer student records to either the student's new school (if enrolled), or to the district of location.
 - Responsibility: Business Manager.
 - Time: Within 30 days of the last school day.
- Send written notification to school employees including key dates and an invitation to a meeting to learn about closure procedures, benefits and employment opportunities at local schools.
 - Responsible Party: Director.
 - Time: Within two weeks of Board action to close the school.
- Send written notification to the school district(s) of residence and local private and charter schools that invites representatives to meet with employees to recruit teachers and other staff.
 - Responsible Party: Director.
 - Time: Within two weeks of Board action to close the school.
- Submit final reports to SED.
 - Responsible Party: Director.
 - Time: Within 60 days of the last day of school.
- Settle debts and close out accounts, including a final audit.
 - Responsible Party: Business Manager, Treasurer.
 - Time: Within 120 days of the end of the final fiscal year.
- Transfer any remaining assets to the closest charter school to Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology in the district of location.
 - Responsible Party: Treasurer.
 - Time: Following the approval of the final audit.

ARTICLE XI: BYLAW AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be adopted, amended or repealed at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Board of Trustees. Notice of a meeting to vote on adoption, amendment or repeal of any bylaw(s) shall include details and specification of the proposed action.

Attachment 5c: Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology Code of Ethics

1. The Board of Trustees shall conduct or direct the affairs of the school and exercise its powers, subject to the limitations of the Education Law, not-for-profit Corporation Law, the school's charter, and its bylaws. The Board may delegate aspects of the management of the activities of the school to others, so long as the affairs of the school are managed, and its powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction. The Corporation has no members.

2. Not more than 40 percent of the people serving on the Board of Trustees of the school may be composed of:

- a) People currently being compensated by the school for services rendered to it within the previous 12 months, whether as a full-time or part-time employee, independent contractor, or otherwise, or,
- b) Any sister, brother, ancestor, descendant, spouse, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, mother-in-law, or father-in-law of any such person or,
- c) Trustees, officers, or employees of any external organization.

3. Every Trustee has the right to participate in the discussion and vote on all issues before the Board or any Board Committee, except that any Trustee shall be excused from the discussion and vote on any matter involving such Trustee relating to:

- a) A "self-dealing transaction" (see below),
- b) A conflict of interest,
- c) Indemnification of the Trustee uniquely, or
- d) Any other matter at the discretion of a majority of the Trustees.

4. The Board of Trustees and the school shall not engage in any self-dealing transactions, except as approved by the Board. "Self-dealing transaction" means a transaction to which the school is a party and in which one or more of the Trustees has a material financial interest. Notwithstanding this definition, the following transaction is not a self-dealing transaction, and is subject to the Board's general standard of care: A transaction that is part of a public or charitable program of the Corporation, if the transaction:

- a) Is approved or authorized by the Board in good faith and without unjustified favoritism; and
- b) Results in a benefit to one or more Trustees or their families because they are in a class of persons intended to be benefited by the program.

5. A Trustee, an officer, or any employee having an interest in a contract, other transaction, or program presented to, or discussed by, the Board of Trustees for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt, full and frank disclosure of his or her interest to the Board prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include all relevant and material facts known to such person about the contract or transaction, which might reasonable be construed to be adverse to the Board's interest. A person shall be deemed to have an interest in a contract or other transaction if he or she is the party (or one of the parties) contracting or dealing with the school, or is the Director, a Trustee or Officer of, or has a significant financial or influential interest in, the entity contracting or dealing with the Charter School.

6. Trustees representing any entities proposing to do business with the Charter School shall disclose the nature and extent of such business propositions.

7. Trustees will disclose when they have a financial, organizational, or personal interest in a matter before the Board.

8. Trustees will abstain from voting on matters in which they may have a financial, organizational, or personal interest.

9. No Trustee, Officer, or employee of a for-profit corporation having a business relationship with the Charter School shall serve as a voting member of the Board of Trustees for the duration of such business relationship, provided, however, that this provision shall not apply to the following:

- a) Individuals associated with a partnership, limited liability corporation, or professional corporation, including (but not limited to) doctors, accountants and attorneys;
- b) Individuals associated with an educational entity or educationally focused not-for-profit corporation, including (but not limited to) schools of education;
- c) Individuals associated with a bank, insurance, mutual fund, investment bank, stock brokerage, financial planning, or other financial services organization; or
- d) Members of the faculty of the Charter School.

10. In no instance shall a Trustee, Officer, or employee of a for-profit educational management organization having a business relationship with the Charter School serve as a voting member of the Board of Trustees for the duration of such business relationship.

11. Trustees, Officers, or employees of any entity or organization shall hold no more than 40 percent of total seats comprising the Board of Trustees.

12. Trustees shall avoid at all times engaging in activities that would appear to be unduly influenced by other persons who have a special interest in matters under consideration by the Board. If this occurs, a Trustee shall write a letter disclosing all known facts prior to participating in a Board discussion of these matters, and the Trustee's interest in the matter will be reflected in the Board minutes.

13. Trustees shall make all appropriate financial disclosures whenever a claim of conflict of interest is lodged against them.

14. A Trustee shall not use his or her position with the Charter School to acquire any gift of privilege worth \$50 or more that is not available to a similarly situated person, unless that gift is for the use of the Charter School.

15. Charter School Trustees, Officers, or employees never may ask a subordinate, a student, or a parent of a student to work on or give to any political campaign.

Attachment 8A: Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology

I. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

II. Recruitment and Retention of Effective Faculty

III. Responsibilities and Qualifications of Key Staff

IV. Employment Policies and Procedures

I. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity will continue to be a fundamental principle at Exploration Elementary Charter School of Science and Technology (Exploration), where employment is based on personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, creed, genetic predisposition, carrier status, or any other protected characteristic as established by law.

This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, termination and all other terms and conditions of employment. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee willfully violating this policy.

II. RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE STAFF

During the inception of Exploration, the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees and the School Director will coordinate the recruitment, selection, and hiring of personnel. Once the school is established, the Human Resources Committee shall be responsible to:

- Monitor human resource policies and procedures as they relate to the goals and objectives of the organization and good management practices;
- Monitor the school's material policies and procedures that relate to compliance with pertinent human resources laws and regulations, and the ethical conduct of business as it relates to human resources matters;
- Monitor procedures and internal controls that relate to personnel administration, performance management, pay practices, and benefits administration; and
- Produce, with such assistance from management as it determines is appropriate, the compensation committee report on executive and or other compensation in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

RECRUITMENT: Exploration will create a comprehensive recruitment plan that will ensure advertising vacant positions in an expansive way. In addition to advertising online, the school will send postings to the Minority Reporter, industry organizations, placement offices in the colleges and universities with strong teacher preparation programs, and participate in regional job fairs. Any openings will be advertised for a minimum of two weeks.

Determination of the necessary personnel will be the responsibility of the Human Resources/Personnel Committee. Exploration will not knowingly employ an individual who has with respect to child welfare or safety, resigned from a school in lieu of disciplinary action, or who has been dismissed for just cause by any school. Exploration will seek to hire the most effective teachers, administrators, and staff to maximize student outcomes. To this end, hiring policies will be stringent and fair. The school will be an equal opportunity employer and will seek to find the best-qualified employees with no discrimination in its hiring policies. The policy of the school to recruit such personnel will include:

- An effective recruitment program to conduct searches;
- Prompt action when vacancies or new positions are created; and
- A set of consistent hiring practices.

In accordance with State Education Law, all teachers will be certified in accordance with the requirements applicable to other public schools; provided, however, that the school may employ as teachers, with the exception of special education staff, uncertified teachers with at least three years of elementary, middle, or

secondary classroom teaching experience; tenured or tenure track college faculty; individuals with two years of satisfactory experience through the Teach for America program; and individuals who possess exceptional business, professional, science/technology, artistic, and athletic experience. Furthermore, all classroom teachers, teaching assistants, and paraprofessionals will be Highly Qualified as defined by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB Act of 2001 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). All special education teachers will be State-certified in special education and will be Highly Qualified as defined by NCLB and IDEA. The specific hiring process will include the following five phases:

Screening: All applicants will complete an employment application that will request information related to prior work experience, special skills, and educational background, and will also provide consent to a background and reference check. The school will require candidates to attach a résumé to the application. Applications and résumés will be reviewed and candidates selected for interviews based on a telephone interview to determine whether (s)he has the knowledge and experience required, salary expectations are reasonable, and whether (s)he agrees with the instructional philosophies of the school.

Interviewing: The interview process is designed to help the School Director determine whether a candidate possesses the necessary skills to be a productive member of the staff and whether (s)he will fit into the School's culture and environment. The Director or designee, will develop an interview protocol, including (but not limited to) a sample lesson or video, a sample data analysis, a process for checking references, a list of interview questions, and a rubric containing objective criteria. The Director will solicit staff, Board, parents, and outside consultants with expertise to serve on the interview team.

Reference Checking: To ensure the safety and security of the entire Exploration community, as well as to assure that high quality instruction is being delivered, the school will implement a rigorous reference-checking policy. The school will call references provided by the applicant and contact former employers. It will also check credentials, certifications, and backgrounds of all applicants.

Offer of Employment: A recommendation to hire a teacher, administrator, or staff member will not be made until a personal interview with the candidate has been conducted and all references have been contacted. The School Director will verify that individuals nominated for employment meet all necessary qualifications for the position being sought. The school will offer employment through a job offer letter and a telephone call. The job offer is contingent on a background check. The school will send rejection letters to those who were not selected.

Fingerprinting and Background Check: Before employees can begin working at the school, they must clear the fingerprint screening and criminal background check as part of the hiring process.

INSURING AND DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE STAFF: Once hired, the performance and efficacy of faculty and staff will systematically be monitored and measured to support the achievement of desired educational outcomes for our students. Each year, every staff member will undergo a thorough summative performance review with his/her supervisor. The performance review will consist of a written review and assessment of job performance, followed by an in-depth discussion. At this time, the employee will receive formal feedback on his/her performance. The performance evaluation will consider evidence gathered throughout the school year, including formal and informal observations of planning and instruction, parent survey results and feedback, student performance data, and attendance and punctuality. The evaluations will be used to determine retention, placement, and performance bonuses.

Continuous improvement is a hallmark of Exploration academic programs. To ensure that instructional staff continue to grow professionally while also highlighting achievements, professional performance, professional contributions, and opportunities for growth, Exploration completes two observations and an annual evaluation on all teachers.

Observation: The instructional observations and professional practice reviews are opportunities to highlight a teacher's instructional practices as a catalyst for continued professional growth and reflection. The instructional observation is completed by using a Teacher Observation protocol and rubric. Following the

observation, the observer will discuss the results with the teacher; and the teacher will be given the opportunity to respond. If the teacher is rated as having four (or more) Developing ratings on the observation rubric, or one (or more) Insufficient ratings on the observation rubric, an additional observation will be scheduled to promote professional growth and quality instruction. Instructional observations are supplemented by professional practice reviews. These are observations of various aspects of a teacher's professional practice (e.g., use of data to drive instruction, professional competencies, question types) that can drive reflective conversations to improve instructional practices.

Annual Evaluation: The annual evaluation is completed by an Exploration supervisor at the end of the academic year. This is a summary of formal and informal instructional observations and overall contributions to student growth and program success. The annual evaluation highlights a teacher's work and instruction during the current academic year, evaluates professional performance, and identifies areas for continued growth. The annual evaluation is completed using the annual evaluation format and shared with the teacher upon completion.

Both the instructional observation and annual performance review is based on the Framework for Teaching proposed by Charlotte Danielson. The framework is grouped into four broad dimensions including: (1) Planning and Preparation (2) Environment (3) Instruction (4) Professional Responsibility

The first three aspects of the framework are directly observable actions and behaviors in a classroom or instructional context. The domains of planning and preparation, environment, and instruction are all included in the annual observation completed by an Exploration supervisor. A rubric of expectations relating to each of the domains guides the supervisor's observation across the domains and can guide the coach in targeted areas of professional growth. The fourth domain, professional responsibility, is commented on in both the performance reviewed completed in conjunction with the instructional observation, as well as in the final annual performance evaluations.

The following are criteria for overall domain and performance ratings:

- Exceeds expectations: Overall, the staff's professional performance is a positive asset to job performance and program quality.
- Meets Expectations: Overall, the staff's professional performance meets expectations. Areas for continued growth are identified, but no areas that negatively impact job performance or program quality.
- Needs Improvement: Overall, the staff's performance is not meeting expectations. Areas for concern and consideration are identified and described as negatively impacting job performance and/or program quality.

Corrective Action and Performance Improvement Plan: All employees are expected to meet Exploration's standards of work performance. Work performance is defined by many factors, including attendance, punctuality, personal conduct, job proficiency, and general compliance with Exploration's policies and procedures. If an employee does not meet these standards, Exploration may, under appropriate circumstances, take corrective action, other than immediate dismissal.

The intent of corrective action and performance improvement plans is to formally document problems while providing the employee with a reasonable time within which to improve performance. The process is designed to encourage development by providing employees with guidance in areas that need improvement, such as poor work performance, attendance problems, personal conduct, general compliance with Exploration's policies and procedures, and/or other disciplinary problems.

Within this process, the Supervisor will discuss the problem and present a written warning to the employee, which should clearly identify the problem and outline a course of corrective action within a specific timeframe. The written warning should clearly state any consequences (i.e., termination) if the problem is not corrected or reoccurs. A record of the discussion and the employee's comments will be placed in the employee's Personnel File.

Employees who have had formal written warnings requiring corrective action or performance improvement are not eligible for salary increases, bonus awards, promotions, or transfers during the warning period.

RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE STAFF: In order to secure and retain an effective workforce, Exploration will offer compensation packages that are attractive and competitive while demonstrating fiscal responsibility. Salaries will be based on benchmarking among similar schools in the region, and budgetary considerations. Likewise, eligible employees at Exploration will be provided with a wide range of valuable benefits programs.

The following benefits are projected to be available to eligible employees:

- Paid Time Off
- Holidays
- Health Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Retirement Plan
- Section 125 Plan
- Short-term Disability
- Long-term Disability

In addition to these economic elements, Exploration will invest in its staff and the attainment of its mission by funding training and growth opportunities, recognizing faculty and staff achievement, as well as fostering a work environment founded on collaboration and teamwork.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF KEY STAFF

DIRECTOR: The Director is responsible to the Board of Trustees for accomplishing the school's mission and for implementing policies of the Board. The Director is responsible for the development and direction of curriculum, hiring, supervision, professional development, and evaluation of all faculty and staff; oversight and maintenance of buildings and grounds; promoting the school among its various constituencies; and maintaining appropriate liaison with school districts.

Job Responsibilities

1. Participate in the development of a strategic plan and long range goals to assure the school's ability to carry out its mission. Implement the plan and monitor and report its outcomes to the Board of Trustees.
2. Attract, develop, and manage the performance of, and retain, high caliber faculty and staff.
3. Develop and implement an infrastructure that is designed to deliver a high quality education program to students and their parents/guardians and supporting school systems.
4. Continually improve a curriculum designed to prepare students for transition to secondary school options and post-graduation.
5. Develop and implement programs designed to increase enrollment and funding streams, and that are consistent with the mission of the School.
6. Collaborate with the Finance department to create and monitor an annual budget and tuition support program.
7. Oversee the development and implementation of individualized education plans (IEPs). Ensure compliance with CSE requirements.
8. Develop and report on program operations and student outcomes.
9. Develop and facilitate professional development including the Summer Institute.
10. Complete performance reviews on Exploration staff.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Demonstrated ability to build constituencies and to communicate successfully with them
2. Demonstrated knowledge of educational policy and theory

3. Strong organizational and administrative skills
4. Ability to work collaboratively and to delegate
5. Demonstrated problem solving skills
6. Demonstrated ability to build a successful team
7. Articulate speaker and presenter; effective writer
8. Strong interpersonal and communication skills
9. Demonstrated listening, counseling, problem solving skills. Ability to be empathetic and non-judgmental.
10. Strong organizational, time management, and administrative supervisory skills
11. Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team and to delegate and manage

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's degree in Education or equivalent certification and experience
2. Active New York State certification in school administration
3. Five-to-ten years of administrative management experience in education, with a proven track record of achieving ambitious student achievement goals with students from low-income communities
4. Prior classroom teaching experience preferred

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CURRICULUM COORDINATOR: Develop, implement, and evaluate science and inquiry instructional programs and lab-based learning opportunities. Provide training and professional development on Exploration's innovative and lab-based programs and strategies, as well as ongoing instructional coaching for classroom staff in the application of project-based learning and innovative technologies. Apply data for instructional purposes to ensure accelerated student progress in science and inquiry learning opportunities. Work collaborative with other school leadership to ensure an innovative and evidence-based science and technology programming for Exploration students.

Job Duties

1. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to develop and implement cross-curricular instructional programs.
2. Develop lab-based learning opportunities/curriculum aligned to science standards, oversee implementation and evaluate effectiveness/fidelity.
3. Oversee Innovation Instructors implementation of lab-based learning.
4. Maintain and grow innovation partners and identify off-site professional development/job shadowing opportunities for instructional staff.
5. Maintain and grow resident scientist and materials lend programs.
6. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to schedule, create, and present ongoing professional development/learning for Exploration staff.
7. Provide timely, constructive feedback and strategies to improve instructional practice. Monitor student academic progress and assist with strategies to reach goals when necessary.
8. Collaborate with School Director and classroom staff to analyze outcome data to identify areas for improvement in curriculum development, program delivery, and professional development.
9. Prepare and submit timely and thorough activity reports as requested by the School Director.
10. Actively participate in staff meetings.
11. Perform other duties as requested.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Demonstrated knowledge of strengths based and student centered learning models and ability to enhance knowledge/implement the models within three months of hire
2. Demonstrated knowledge of current research in learning development, educational practice, and learning differences
3. Ability to provide constructive feedback and strategy coaching to professional staff

4. Ability to collaborate with other professionals to create innovative and lab-based learning opportunities for elementary students
5. Ability to exercise a high degree of creativity in developing and delivering training and professional development
6. Excellent team player with a collaborative approach to improving practice
7. Ability to effectively and independently manage time and materials
8. Outstanding oral and written communication skills

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's Degree in Elementary Education or Educational Technologies. Current NYS teacher permanent certification preferred
2. Fingerprint clearance from the NYS Department of Education
3. Minimum of seven years teaching experience within certification area in settings with low-income and/or minority students
4. Prior experience in developing and delivering training programs and sessions that support teachers' professional development, with science/technology content preferred
5. Prior experience in developing, implementing, and evaluating curriculum and instructional programming
6. Experience in quality improvement through guided observations. Prior teacher mentoring/supervisory experience
7. Computer skills: Basic Microsoft Office Word and Excel; ability to enter and monitor assessment data into databases
8. Able to work longer school day and year

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COORDINATOR: Develop, implement, and evaluate cross-curriculum instructional programs. Provide training and professional development on Exploration's programs and strategies, as well as ongoing instructional coaching for classroom staff and innovation instructors. Apply data for instructional purposes to ensure accelerated student progress in science and inquiry. Work collaboratively with other school leadership to ensure an innovative and evidence-based cross-curricular program for Exploration students.

Job Duties

1. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to develop and implement cross-curricular instructional programs.
2. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to schedule, create, and present ongoing professional development/learning for Exploration staff focusing on innovative and lab-based learning opportunities.
3. Provide timely, constructive feedback and strategies to improve innovative instructional practice. Monitor student academic progress and assist with strategies to reach goals when necessary.
4. Collaborate with School Director and classroom staff to analyze outcome data to identify areas for improvement in curriculum development, program delivery, and professional development.
5. Prepare and submit timely and thorough activity reports as requested by the School Director.
6. Actively participate in staff meetings.
7. Perform other duties as requested by supervisor.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Demonstrated knowledge of strengths based and student centered learning models and ability to enhance knowledge/implement the models within three months of hire
2. Demonstrated knowledge of current research in learning development, educational practice, and learning differences
3. Demonstrate advanced knowledge and experience in curriculum development for cross-content instruction and intervention

4. Ability to provide constructive feedback and strategy coaching to professional staff
5. Ability to exercise a high degree of innovation and creativity in developing and delivering training and professional development
6. Excellent team player with a collaborative approach to improving practice
7. Ability to effectively and independently manage time and materials
8. Outstanding oral and written communication skills

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's Degree in Elementary Education or Special/Disabilities Education or Reading/Literacies. Current NYS teacher permanent certification preferred
2. Fingerprint clearance from the NYS Department of Education
3. Minimum of seven years teaching experience within certification area in settings with low-income and/or minority students
4. Prior experience in developing and delivering training programs and sessions that support teachers' professional development
5. Prior experience in developing, implementing and evaluating curriculum and instructional programming; with specific focus on science/technology content
6. Experience in quality improvement through guided observations. Prior teacher mentoring/supervisory experience
7. Computer skills: Basic Microsoft Office Word and Excel; ability to enter and monitor assessment data into databases
8. Able to work longer school day and year

DEAN OF STUDENTS: Responsible for giving individualized assistance to students with academic or behavioral difficulties. (S)he will be responsible for creating behavior systems, protocols, and practices in conjunction with all other staff. (S)he will develop a strong rapport with students and families in order to promote social and emotional well-being.

Job Duties

1. Develop and maintain a behavior system that supports students who have been temporarily removed from class due to poor behavior (e.g. bringing student to a quiet room or space and monitoring student as (s)he works; calling the parent; documenting the behavior; escorting student back to class and assisting with re-entry).
2. Confer with students, families, and staff where individual student academic and behavioral problems are involved.
3. Act as a resource for teachers and other staff members regarding student achievement, behavior, and other problems.
4. Provide administrative support at critical times of the day, such as breakfast, lunch, and dismissal.
5. Collaborate with colleagues to ensure a rigorous, joyful, and safe environment.
6. Periodic support of classroom program to promote social-emotional growth.
7. Perform other duties, as deemed appropriate by the Director.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Excellent judgment: position requires quick decision-making and good judgment
2. Time-management prowess: no two days are alike, need to be able to deal with multiple issues simultaneously
3. Effective communication skills: need to be able to lead direct, but supportive conversations with students and families
4. Natural ability with students: need to have a knack in calming elementary students down and ensuring they understand and follow the Code of Conduct
5. Persistence: job is difficult and multiple solutions are frequently required

6. Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-my-sleeve” attitude
7. Knowledge of basic computer skills: email, Word, and Internet

Minimum Qualification

1. Master’s Degree in Education or Social Work related field (School Administrator certification preferred)
2. Three years’ experience in a similar role or setting (e.g. with high need urban students)
3. Able to work long school day and year

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATOR: Coordinate student supports and services, including those students with IEPs and with ELL status. Collaborate with school and district of residence personnel to ensure that students’ individualized learning needs are adequately addressed and supported. Engage with families to support students at home and in school, while communicating necessary information. Collaborate with School Director on students who present with behaviors that are detrimental to classroom performance. Ensure compliance on special education, ELL, and behavioral reporting; evaluate programming and impacts for students and families.

Job Duties

1. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to develop and implement support (behavioral and academic) programs for youth struggling to meet grade-level and classroom expectations.
2. Oversee IEP, ELL, and related services for special student populations; ensure compliance and documentation of services.
3. Oversee referral process for students suspected of needing additional support services.
4. Partner with families to support students outside of the school day in a positive and proactive manner.
5. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to schedule, create and present ongoing professional development/learning for Exploration staff.
6. Provide timely, constructive feedback and strategies to improve instructional practice. Monitor student academic progress and assist with strategies to reach goals when necessary.
7. Collaborate with School Director and classroom staff to analyze outcome data to identify areas for improvement in curriculum development, program delivery, and professional development.
8. Prepare and submit timely and thorough activity reports as requested by the School Director; evaluate program aspects related to support services.
9. Actively participate in staff meetings.
10. Oversee Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) policies in the school.
11. Perform other duties as requested.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Demonstrated ability to build constituencies and to communicate successfully with them
2. Demonstrated knowledge of educational policy and theory as well as special education law and policies
3. Strong organizational and administrative skills
4. Ability to work collaboratively and to delegate
5. Demonstrated problem solving skills
6. Demonstrated ability to build a successful team
7. Strong interpersonal and communication skills
8. Demonstrated listening, counseling, problem solving skills. Ability to be empathetic and non-judgmental.
9. Strong organizational, time management, and administrative supervisory skills
10. Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team and to delegate and manage

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master’s degree in Education or equivalent certification and experience
2. Five-to-ten years of special education experience in education
3. Supervisory experience
4. Prior classroom teaching experience preferred

5. Able to work longer school day and year

Operations Coordinator: Responsible for administering many of the daily non-academic tasks associated with managing the school.

Job Duties: Financial

- Bill school districts 6 times a year
- Accounts Receivable Collection
- Accounts Payable Processing
- Bank Deposits
- Bank Reconciliations

Payroll

- Process bi-weekly payroll through third party processor
- Track hourly employees time
- Track employees time off

Manage Annual Student Lottery

- Track, organize, and file all applications for lottery in binder and excel spreadsheet
- Organize and create student tickets based on preference
- Notify applicants of results of the lottery

Oversee Student Records Management

- Collect enrollment packets for new and continuing students; oversee administrative assistant entering into database and file
- Routinely update student, class, schedule and staff information in SchoolTool
- Routinely track and report to districts Entrance/Exit students and update Enrollment Report

Manage Transportation Set up and Changes

- Submit transportation forms and associated materials for students to each district's respective transportation department based on school district
- Track and update database class lists

NYS MAARS Student Data System Records

- Submit monthly NYS data reports from database to BOCES

Compliance with NYS Child Nutrition Reporting

- Submit meals-served data to NYS for monthly reimbursement

General Administration

- Coordinate substitute teachers as needed.
- Answer telephone and front door during breaks, lunches, and absences

Minimum Qualifications

1. Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources or Business and 3-5 years' experience working in an office setting, preferably in Academia
2. Experience with use of computers, copiers, and office telephones
3. Experience with QuickBooks preferable.

CLASSROOM TEACHER: Orchestrate an effective classroom program while displaying: 1) A passion for raising student achievement; 2) A belief in every student's capacity for learning, leadership, and critical thinking; and 3) The ability to form strong relationships with students, their families and other staff members. Classroom teachers will demonstrate innovation and inquiry in their lessons and interactions with students and families.

Job Responsibilities

1. Plan and deliver effective lessons.

2. Differentiate instruction.
3. Teach reading, writing, mathematics, and science across the disciplines while integrating social studies, technology and the arts.
4. Use student-engaged assessments and data to inform instruction, to create a culture of engagement and achievement.
5. Build a community of learning school-wide.
6. Foster character, social-emotional competency and physical development.
7. Engage families and the community in the life of the school.
8. Promote adventure while supporting the school's mission and vision.
9. Perform other instructional duties, as deemed appropriate by the Director.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Excellent oral and written communication skills
2. Ability to work with diverse children, including those with exceptional needs
3. Ability to work well with parents
4. Ability to work effectively as a team member
5. Willingness to be held accountable for student progress

Minimum Qualifications

1. Current valid New York State Teaching Certificate at the elementary level (Dual certification preferred)
2. Master's Degree in education related field
3. Prior experience with high need students in an urban setting prioritized
4. Prior experience with project/inquiry based instruction preferred

APPRENTICE TEACHER: Function as an integral teaching member of the grade level instructional team.

Job Duties

1. Teach lessons in all subject areas, for both individuals and groups as overseen by the classroom teacher.
2. Plan and teach lessons both independently and as a co-teacher.
3. Foster and maintain appropriate student behavior.
4. Collect and analyze data on students to accelerate their progress.
5. Supervise classroom activities (e.g., expedition culminating products).
6. Work constructively and collaboratively with colleagues and others for the purpose of increasing academic success.
7. Participate in school activities and events, as requested.
8. Provide meal service support (e.g., periodically monitor lunchroom and/or eat with small groups of students).
9. Supervise students during bathroom breaks and recess.
10. Support students as they attend special subjects and lab-based learning.
11. Perform other duties, as deemed appropriate by the Director.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Maintain professional competence and skills through in-service education, consultation with administration and colleagues, independent study and self-selected professional growth activities
2. Maintain a high level of professional integrity
3. Communication and problem solving skills needed to handle classroom situations
4. Excellent verbal and written communication skills
5. Ability to maintain professional confidentiality concerning individual student data and achievement

Minimum Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree in Education with up to date NYS certification at the elementary level (Master's degree preferred)

2. Experience with high need students prioritized
3. Able to work long school day and year

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION INSTRUCTORS: Deliver science and inquiry instructional programs and lab-based learning opportunities. Contribute to training and professional development on Exploration's innovative and lab-based programs and strategies, as well as ongoing instructional coaching for classroom staff in the application of project-based learning and innovative technologies. Apply data for instructional purposes to ensure accelerated student progress in science and inquiry learning opportunities.

Job Duties

1. Delivery science and technology inquiry instructional programs and lab-based learning opportunities.
2. Identify intervention programs for struggling students and monitor student progress.
3. Collaborate with School Director and other school leaders to schedule, create and present ongoing professional development/learning for Exploration staff.
4. Provide timely, constructive feedback and strategies to improve instructional practice. Monitor student academic progress and assist with strategies to reach goals when necessary.
5. Collaborate with School Director and classroom staff to analyze outcome data to identify areas for improvement in curriculum development, program delivery, and professional development.
6. Prepare and submit timely and thorough activity reports as requested by the School Director.
7. Actively participate in staff meetings.
8. Perform other duties as requested by supervisor.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Demonstrated knowledge of strengths based and student centered learning models and ability to enhance knowledge/implement the models within three months of hire
2. Demonstrated knowledge of current research in learning development, educational practice, and learning differences
3. Ability to provide constructive feedback and strategy coaching to professional staff
4. Ability to collaborate with other professionals to create innovative learning opportunities
5. Ability to exercise a high degree of creativity in developing and delivering training and professional development
6. Excellent team player with a collaborative approach to improving practice
7. Ability to effectively and independently manage time and materials
8. Outstanding oral and written communication skills

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's Degree in Education (elementary or secondary) or Educational Technologies. Current NYS teacher permanent certification preferred
2. Fingerprint clearance from the NYS Department of Education
3. Minimum of seven years teaching experience within certification area in settings with low-income and/or minority students
4. Prior experience instructing in science and technology content preferred
5. Computer skills: Basic Microsoft Office Word and Excel; ability to enter and monitor assessment data into databases
6. Able to work longer school day and year

INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS: Develop and provide evidence-based and data-driven academic intervention services for youth enrolled at Exploration. Collect ongoing performance and progress data to inform instruction. Collaborate with instructors to differentiate learning opportunities for Exploration students.

Job Duties

1. Work school leaders and classroom teachers to develop differentiated and individualized academic interventions for identified students.

2. Assess students' strengths, challenges, gaps in skills and knowledge, learning style, and performance levels using a variety of methods, tools, and data sources. Interpret findings and develop learning plans based upon information gathered.
3. Provide intensive, small group tutoring using evidence-based practices and strategies to build skills in specified academic areas; implement any intervention programs identified by school leadership with fidelity.
4. Record and/or input student information, assessment data, and other data as required into database systems in timely and accurate manner.
5. Engage parents/guardians/family members involved with the, as appropriate.
6. Participate in team meetings to discuss the progress and needs of individual students and to share instructional strategies and tools that foster achievement by students with different learning styles.
7. Participate in professional development, parent education, and other educational programs offered.
8. Perform other duties assigned by the supervisor.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Outstanding oral and written communication skills
2. Ability to develop and sustain relationships with children and families from different cultures and backgrounds
3. Excellent team player with a collaborative approach to service delivery and conflict resolution
4. High standards of professionalism in all aspects of performance
5. High degree of flexibility and creativity in developing and delivering services and programs
6. Familiarity with current research in learning development, educational practice, and learning differences
7. Ability to effectively manage time and materials
8. Ability to teach using a strengths-based, learner-focused model and strategies to support students who struggle to learn
9. Computer skills: Basic Microsoft Office and Word. Must be able to learn/successfully enter student and assessment data into database.

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's degree in Elementary or Special Education or Reading with teaching certification; minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary or Special Education with certification in area of placement
2. Able to work longer school year
3. Fingerprint clearance from NYS Department of Education
4. Prior experience working with elementary school students with learning differences in urban settings

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP COODINATOR/SOCIAL WORKER: Provide comprehensive services to students and families. Mentor and advise parents about community-based opportunities to support children and families using a positive, proactive, and collaborative model. Collaborate with parents, teachers, school administrators, and other community resources to ensure students' unique learning needs are being met while ensuring compliance with regulations and State and Federal guidelines are followed. Facilitate ongoing educational trainings staff and parents.

Job Duties

1. Collect and review all relevant information pertaining to a child's developmental history, school history, and family history; following a family check-up model.
2. Review and interpret educational, psycho-educational, and therapy based (speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy) reports to ensure that proposed classifications and programs are commensurate with the outcomes of school, agency, and private practitioner assessments.
3. When appropriate, provide information and referrals to other community-based services.
4. Attend various meetings including the Committee on Special Education Meetings, Superintendent Hearings, and Impartial Hearings, negotiation sessions, and review boards, etc.

5. Maintain up-to-date and accurate documentation/ file for each family engagement consultation: Complete routine session logs for meetings and calls with families. Obtain feedback from family at end of engagement.
6. Teach and monitor parents understanding about the education system, including the special education process and diagnostic reports, and ensure that State and Federal guidelines are followed and a student's educational and civil rights are protected.
7. Provide training programs (specific courses or workshops) for parents and teachers.
8. Complete other duties as assigned by supervisor

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Knowledge of New York State education laws and regulations that oversee education for all children and an in-depth knowledge of State and Federal laws and regulations that govern special education
2. Knowledge of classification systems for New York State Special Education
3. Knowledge of placement options and the least restrictive environment, for example, resource rooms and consulting teacher models, specific therapies, self-contained classrooms, blended classrooms, special schools, personal aides, and vocational-occupational programs
4. Knowledge of community based resources
5. Knowledge of how IEP goals and objectives are prepared
6. Knowledge of instructional accommodations and instructional or curriculum modifications
7. Knowledge of Special Education legal terminology
8. Knowledge of New York State's disciplinary procedures followed by school administrators
9. High standards of professionalism in all aspects of performance

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's Degree in Social Work (school) or related field and one year experience providing educational services, to students who struggle to learn and their families preferred. Bachelor's Degree considered with two years of required services
2. Working knowledge of special education law and community resources for students who struggle to learn
3. Formal training and/or experience working with students with learning differences preferred.
4. Commitment to teaching within a strengths-based, learner-focused model to support students who struggle to learn
5. Able to work longer school day and year, with some night and weekend programming

SCHOOL COUNSELOR: Provide services to students that strengthen home/school/community partnerships, alleviate barriers to learning, and help them to develop the skills they need to succeed academically. Advance the understanding of the emotional and social development of students, and the influences of family, community, cultural differences and learning needs on student success by implementing effective intervention strategies.

Job Duties

1. Effectively and appropriately assess and address the needs and interactions of students. Use assessment and evaluation results to develop appropriate long and short-term interventions for students. Use a variety of appropriate formal and informal tools and techniques to evaluate the progress and performance of students.
2. Provide direct services to students, to include crisis intervention, conflict resolution, individual and group counseling, consultation, program development and coordination of school and community services.
3. Advocate for appropriate school system and community-based services and interventions for students and their families.
4. Regularly collaborate and consult with the education team in the development of academic goals, behavior management plans and psychosocial goals. Consult on such issues as attendance, ethnicity

and diversity, mental health, behavior management, discipline, crisis intervention and child abuse/neglect.

5. Advocate, facilitate and contribute to outcomes aligned with local, state and federal policies, guidelines and statutes and in adherence with professional development and practices and national standards.
6. Work with families, community agencies, outside providers and home school districts to provide comprehensive plans to meet the psychosocial needs of students.
7. Work as part of an interdisciplinary team to provide appropriate intervention for students exhibiting behavioral concerns during the school day.
8. Provide recommendations and referrals to mental health professionals in the community when situations warrant.
9. Maintain accurate and up-to-date case records and documentation, including that required by student IEPs.
10. Assist in the evaluation of effective departmental, school-based, system and community-wide program.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Ability to maintain professional confidentiality concerning individual student data and achievement
2. Maintain a high level of professional integrity
3. Demonstrate good interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and crisis intervention skills needed to handle behavioral situations and to work effectively with colleagues/parents/guardians on student issues
4. Organizational and time management, and planning skills
5. Knowledge of learning disabilities and accommodations in educational settings
6. Demonstrate good written communication skills
7. Ability to be flexible in interpreting and addressing student needs
8. Knowledge of community resources

Minimum Qualifications

1. Master's degree in Social Work or Counseling and NYS certification
2. Three years prior counseling/social work experience at high school level

BUILDING SUBSTITUTE: Support the various classroom programs while displaying: 1) A passion for raising student achievement; 2) A belief in every student's capacity for learning, leadership, and critical thinking; and 3) The ability to form strong relationships with students, their families, and other staff members.

Job Duties

1. Implement the classroom instructional and management plan while the teacher is absent (including special subjects).
2. Plan and deliver effective lessons as classroom support (when no staff are absent).
3. Build a community of learning school-wide.
4. Foster character, social-emotional competency, and physical development.
5. Engage families and the community in the life of the school.
6. Promote adventure while supporting the school's mission and vision.
7. Perform other instructional duties, as deemed appropriate by supervisor.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Flexibility and "whatever it takes" attitude
2. Excellent oral and written communication skills
3. Ability to work with diverse children, including those with exceptional needs
4. Ability to work effectively as a team member
5. Willingness to be held accountable for student progress

Minimum Qualifications

1. Current valid New York State Teaching Certificate at the elementary level (Dual certification preferred)

2. Master's Degree in education related field preferred, Bachelors accepted
3. Prior experience with high need students in an urban setting preferred
4. Able to work longer school day and year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER: To develop in each pupil an understanding of the relationship of good body function and exercise; to motivate each pupil to cultivate physical fitness, hygienic habits, and good social and emotional adjustment; to discover and develop talents of pupils in physical achievement; to develop strength, skill, agility, poise, and coordination in individual, dual, and team physical activities and sports, in accordance with each pupil's ability.

Job Duties

1. Teaches knowledge and skills in physical fitness, health education, rhythms and dance, and individual, dual, or team sports, utilizing course of study adopted by the Board of Education and other appropriate learning activities.
2. Instructs pupils in citizenship and basic subject matter specified in state law and administrative regulations and procedures of the school district.
3. Works cooperatively with other physical education teachers in planning a balanced physical education program.
4. Analyzes, demonstrates, and explains basic skills, knowledge's, and strategies of formal sports, games rhythms, and fundamentals of body movement.
5. Provides individualized and small group instruction in order to adapt the curriculum to the needs of each pupil, to the extent feasible.
6. May teach physical education classes for handicapped pupils, interscholastic athletics, or drill team to senior high pupils.
7. Provides appropriate safety instruction and makes safety checks on equipment and field areas to ensure the over-all safety of pupils.
8. Maintains control of storage and use of school-owned property.
9. Establishes and maintains standards of pupil behavior needed to provide an orderly, productive environment in the physical education areas.
10. Evaluates each pupil's growth in physical skills, knowledge, and contribution in team sports.
11. Communicates with parents and school counselors on pupil progress.
12. Identifies pupil needs and cooperates with other professional staff members in helping pupils solve health, attitude, and learning problems.
13. Supervises pupils in out-of-classroom activities during the assigned work day.
14. Participates in curriculum and other developmental programs.
15. Participates in faculty committees and the sponsorship of student activities.
16. Performs other duties as many, from time to time be assigned by the supervisor.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Excellent oral and written communication skills
2. Ability to work with diverse children, including those with exceptional needs
3. Ability to work well with parents
4. Ability to work effectively as a team member
5. Willingness to be held accountable for student progress

Minimum Qualifications

1. Current valid New York State Teaching Certificate in physical education
2. Master's Degree in education related field
3. Prior experience with high need students in an urban setting prioritized
4. Prior experience with project/inquiry based instruction preferred

ARTS TEACHER: Responsible for developing in each student an interest in and the ability for creative expression in visual terms, using skills and techniques of artistic expression consistent with school guidelines; to develop aesthetic understandings and appreciations; to discover and develop talents of students in the field of art.

Job Duties

1. Teach knowledge and skills in art, including drawing, painting, lettering, and art history.
2. Provide instruction by which students develop aesthetic concepts and appreciations and the ability to make qualitative judgments about art.
3. Demonstrate techniques in activities such as drawing and painting.
4. Understand the versatility of acrylic paints: dry brushing, staining, layering, underpainting, monoprinting.
5. Understand a variety of "masters" techniques.
6. Knows and can apply elements of design and modern principles of art.
7. Knows the fundamentals and different approaches to drawing media technique.
8. Provide individual and small-group instruction to adapt the curriculum to the needs of students with varying intellectual and artistic abilities, and to accommodate a variety of instructional activities.
9. Instruct students in proper care and use of tools and equipment.
10. Organize storage areas and control use of materials, equipment and tools to prevent loss or abuse, and to minimize time required for distribution and collection.
11. Evaluate each student's performance and growth in knowledge and aesthetic understandings, and prepare progress reports.
12. Select and requisition books, instructional materials, tools, instructional aids, and maintain required inventory records.
13. Plan and present art displays and exhibitions designed to exhibit students' work for the school and the community.
14. May sponsor exhibits from outside the school.
15. Maintain professional competence through in-service education activities provided by the school and/or in self-selected professional growth activities.
16. Communicate with parents and school counselors on pupil progress.
17. Participate in curriculum and other developmental programs, such as after school art club.
18. Perform any other duties as may be assigned by the School Director.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Excellent oral and written communication skills
2. Ability to work with diverse children, including those with exceptional needs
3. Ability to work well with parents
4. Ability to work effectively as a team member
5. Willingness to be held accountable for student progress

Minimum Qualifications

1. Current valid New York State Teaching Certificate in arts education
2. Master's Degree in education related field
3. Prior experience with high need students in an urban setting prioritized
4. Prior experience with project/inquiry based instruction preferred

IT Coordinator: Manages the information technology and telecommunications functions and resources at Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science and Technology.

Job Duties:

1. Provide technical support to all Exploration staff. Be on call for system issues 24/7.
2. Periodically conduct organizational IT/telecom needs assessments. Develop and implement IT/telecom long range plan.

3. Develop user-based IT policies and procedures to ensure appropriate use of IT systems and resources.
4. Create and maintain user accounts, as needed.
5. Hire, train, and supervise a PC Network Technician, and other IT staff if necessary.
6. Support databases.
7. Maintain and support LAN/WAN, multiple servers, work stations and networked/stand-alone printers in multiple locations.
8. Manage network security, desktop security, anti-virus solutions, and email filtering solutions.
9. Configure, administer and support MS Exchange Server, VM Ware Server, Internet Information Server, Blackbaud Servers, Finance Server, file and print servers, and firewall.
10. Perform daily back-up of all servers, as well as perform data recovery, when necessary. Keep backup data in secure, offsite location.
11. Evaluate and procure all computer hardware. Interact with vendors regarding the purchase, repair and preventive maintenance of network equipment.
12. Evaluate and procure all telecommunications systems and equipment used. Interact with vendors regarding the purchase and repair of network equipment.
13. Maintain detailed inventory of all computer and telecom equipment owned by and/or purchased for Exploration.
14. Provide Blackbaud support, to include the creation of reports, troubleshooting problems, on-demand user training, entering/updating schedules, facilitation of grade submissions, year-end processing, and school year set-up.
15. Coordinate with maintenance staff on computer/printer locations and set-up.
16. Coordinate with outside vendors for necessary technical support and/or new services such as Internet, Smartboards, etc.
17. Provide auditorium technical support, to include testing and set up of audio system, projector, and computer presentations.
18. Perform other network or related duties, as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Strong customer service and problem solving skills
2. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
3. Ability to effectively analyze, prioritize and deliver timely issue resolution
4. Project management skills
5. Knowledge and expertise in all Windows servers and operating systems, MS Exchange Server, MacIntosh OS X and IOS

Minimum Qualifications:

1. Bachelors degree in IT or related field preferred; college degree plus five years' experience in IT in an academic setting will be considered
2. Four years' experience working in a network administrator capacity, preferably in a school setting Windows & Networking experience required. MacIntosh OS X & IOS experience a definite plus
3. Two years prior supervisory experience
4. Expert level Microsoft Office software proficiency
5. Previous experience in training a broad spectrum of users.
6. Able to work on call 24/7 and to work occasional flexible hours, including early evening, to accommodate the needs of the business
7. Reliable transportation for local travel

FOOD SERVICE ASSISTANT: Responsible for coordinating food serving and cleanup. The position reports to the Operations Coordinator.

Job Duties

Food Serving

1. Move food from vendor delivery drop-off to the food staging area.
2. Record incoming food temperatures.
3. Place cold food needing refrigeration in cooler and get food in warmers.
4. Move food from staging area to serving areas according to schedules.
5. Record food temperatures immediately prior to serving.
6. Pre-wipe eating surfaces.
7. Assist teachers while food is being served.

Cleanup

1. Double wipe eating surfaces
2. Place waste in garbage bags
3. Place garbage bags in garbage containers
4. Put garbage bags in dumpster after each meal
5. Ensure that garbage containers are emptied twice daily
6. Keep garbage containers clean
7. Ensure that empty containers and used utensils are properly returned to food vendor

Other Duties

1. Keep an inventory of necessary supplies
2. Keep food staging area, including equipment, clean, orderly and in proper working condition
3. Assist with other maintenance tasks as needed

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Excellent judgment- position requires quick decision-making and good judgment
2. Time-management prowess- no two days are alike, need to be able to deal with multiple issues simultaneously
3. Effective communication skills- need to be able to lead direct, but supportive conversations with students and families
4. Natural ability with students; need to have a knack in calming elementary students down and ensuring they understand and follow the Code of Character
5. Persistence- job is difficult and multiple solutions are frequently required
6. Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and "roll-up-my-sleeve" attitude
7. Knowledge of basic computer skills: email, Word and Internet

Minimum Qualification

1. High School Diploma or equivalent
2. Prior experience with food services
3. Prior experience working with diverse student populations

IV. DRAFT EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies and procedures below provide an outline of those that will be promulgated to inform faculty, staff, employees, and other stakeholders of expectations for being a member of the Exploration community. The policies and procedures will be subject to change by action of the Board of Trustees. Any changes to this or other policies shall be forwarded to the charter authorizer.

General Employment: Employment by Exploration is a public trust and involves great responsibility. In all activities, Exploration staff must act with integrity and in accordance with professional ethical principles, as well as with the highest standards of objectivity.

Interpersonal Relationships and Professionalism: Workers must always be dedicated to the high standards of their profession, but they must also remain mindful that they are employees as well. While they must strive for professional excellence, they must remember they are part of a team effort and must work cooperatively with their colleagues.

Open Door Policy / Communications: Exploration promotes an atmosphere in which employees can talk freely with members of the management faculty. Employees are encouraged to openly discuss any problems with their supervisor so appropriate action may be taken. We expect and anticipate that all communications will be delivered in a professional manner. Professionalism is demonstrated by courtesy, respect, and self-control.

Confidential Nature of Work: In the course of your work, you will have access to confidential information regarding students and their families. It is one of your primary responsibilities to be sure that you in no way reveal or divulge any such information and that you use it only in the performance of your duties.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy: Exploration is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Exploration expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be professional and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

Any employee who has experienced a possible incident of sexual harassment or other unlawful harassment or discrimination should promptly report the matter to his/her supervisor or the Director of Human Resources.

When a complaint is registered, Exploration will investigate the complaint and take proper action on behalf of the employee. Employees who raise concerns and make reports in good faith can do so without fear of reprisal.

Student Sexual Abuse and Molestation Prevention: Exploration does not permit or allow sexual abuse or molestation to occur in the workplace or at any activity sponsored by or related to it. In order to implement this zero-tolerance policy, all employees and staff members who learn of sexual abuse or molestation must immediately report it to a school administrator, school counselor, or social worker. Exploration takes allegations of sexual abuse seriously. Once the allegation is reported, the administrators and counseling staff will promptly, thoroughly, and impartially initiate an investigation and take any and all appropriate action.

Safety and Security: The security of the school campus and buildings are of the utmost importance. All visitors (e.g., parents, substitute teachers, student teachers, vendors, contractors, delivery persons) must sign in and out at the Main Office. Visitors should only have access to the areas or offices within the building needed to conduct business. Items that are expressly prohibited from being brought onto campus include firearms, weapons, explosives, narcotics, or other items similar in effect or purpose to any of these.

Workplace Violence Prevention: Exploration is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. All employees should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee or non-employee at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated.

Discipline: To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Exploration expects employees to conduct themselves in a manner that will protect the interests and safety of all employees, non-employees, and the school. In the event of unsatisfactory conduct and/or poor performance, this policy states Exploration's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline. The school community's own best interests lie in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Disciplinary action may call for any of four measures -- counseling, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment -- depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences.

Conflict of Interest: Exploration expects our employees to conduct business according to the highest ethical standards of conduct. Employees are expected to devote their best efforts to the interests of Exploration. A potential or actual conflict of interest occurs whenever an employee is in a position to influence

a decision that may result in a personal gain for the employee or an immediate family member (i.e., spouse or significant other, children, parents, siblings) as a result of the Exploration's business dealings

Outside Employment: In general, outside work activities are not allowed when they:

- Prevent the employee from fully performing work for which (s)he is employed at Exploration, including evening functions related to Exploration business;
- Involve organizations that are doing or seek to do business with Exploration, including actual or potential vendors or customers; or
- Violate provisions of law or the Exploration's policies or rules.

Occasionally, full-time Exploration employees may be required to work beyond their normally scheduled hours. Employees must perform this work when requested. In cases of conflict with any outside activity, the employee's obligations to Exploration must be given priority. Employees are hired and continue in Exploration's employ with the understanding that Exploration is their primary employer and that other employment or commercial involvement which is in conflict with the business interests of Exploration is strictly prohibited.

No Smoking: In keeping with Exploration's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking while working is prohibited throughout the workplace. This prohibition includes the school building, school grounds, while on fieldwork with students and in any school vehicles.

Drug and Alcohol Use: To provide a healthful and safe workplace, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner. While on Exploration premises and while conducting business-related activities off Exploration premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

New York State Education Department

Request for Proposals to Establish Charter Schools

Authorized by the Board of Regents

New Application Budget(s) & Cash Flow(s) Templates

Please enter school name

Contact Name:	Kevin Williams
Contact Email:	[REDACTED]
Contact Phone:	[REDACTED]
District of Location	Rochester City School District
Pre-Opening Period	January 1, 2016 - June 30, 2016
Operational Year ONE	July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
Kevin Williams, PhD	[REDACTED]	Department Head, Materials Science Department, Eastman Kodak Company
Robert Franklin	[REDACTED]	Director of Finance & Chief Financial Officer, County of Monroe
Michelle Swanger-Gange, PhD, NCSP	[REDACTED]	Therapist, Strong Behavioral Health, Strong Family Therapy and University of Rochester Medical Faculty Group
Carlos Cong	[REDACTED]	Senior Manager, Network Services, Paychex
Joseph Saia	[REDACTED]	School Director, Discovery Charter School

BLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION

Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ROLE ON APPLICANT GROUP (Key Words)	PROPOSED ROLE (if any) (Trustee, Employee, Consultant, or No Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)
<p>Relevant Experience/Skills: management, operations, budget procurement and management, performance evaluation, career mentoring, strategy, STEM background; Role on Applicant Group: Organizational and Fiscal Plan Committee, Educational Plan Committee (STEM Focus)</p>	Trustee	Board Chair
<p>Relevant experience/skills: fiscal operations, including finance and accounting experience; organizational management, public sector and non-profit; strategic planning; performance management; Role on Applicant Group: Organizational and Fiscal Plan Committee</p>	Trustee	Chair, Finance Committee
<p>Relevant skills/experiences: extensive experience providing behavioral and collaboration consultation to schools and families; specializes in working with children with academic and behavioral concerns in school, such as learning disabilities, ADHD, and school anxiety; teaching and supervising trainees in family therapy, psychology, and medicine; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee (SEL Focus)</p>	Trustee	
<p>Relevant experience/skills: capital and operational management; application of and access to innovative technology; strategic partnerships; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee (STEM Focus)</p>	Trustee	
<p>Relevant experiences/skills: experienced educator; proven ability build a school culture that embraces continuous improvement for teachers and students; able to engage parents and community members as partners; management and continuous staff development; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee</p>	Trustee	

<p>Relevant experiences/skills: sales and marketing; project management; software and programming proficiency; engineering experience; Role on Applicant Group: Education Plan Committee (STEM Focus)</p>	<p>Trustee</p>	
<p>Relevant experience/skills: planning and implementation of research and evaluation of educational programs; researches, implements and designs coordinated special education efforts; manages diverse funding sources; performance evaluation; strategic planning; grant writing; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee</p>	<p>Advisor</p>	
<p>Relevant experiences/skills: special education; art education; differentiated instruction; implementation of alternative assessments; creation and implementation of STEM program; teacher training and professional development; Role on Applicant Group: Educational Plan Committee</p>	<p>Advisor</p>	

LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
3	Yes

