

## APPLICATION SUMMARY

Charter School Name	Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill
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District of Location	Peekskill
Opening Date	August 2015
Proposed Charter Term	SY2015-16 to SY2019-20
Proposed Management Company or Partners	Not applicable
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	K-5 300 students
Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	K-8 450 students
Mission Statement	The <i>Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill</i> will empower a diverse group of scholars to reach their full potential academically and socially through the development of intellectual and character strengths within a rigorous, flexible and community-centered learning environment. All scholars will graduate proficient in core subjects as well as develop the character traits necessary not only for success in school but for success in life.

*Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (GACSP)* will be a new public school with a unique academic program and culture to meet the needs of the diverse young learners in our community. Our school will deliver a rigorous curriculum with high expectations and targeted supports to help all scholars succeed. We believe that character education also helps drive academic achievement by creating a school culture and climate where both achievement and good behavior are encouraged and valued.

GACSP will be developed upon a solid foundation of:

- High Expectations:** We believe that with a rigorous curriculum and tailored supports all scholars can learn at high levels. We will establish high expectations for both academics and behavior and hold every staff member accountable for helping scholars to attain them. We will instill in our scholars the belief that dedicated effort and practice will enable them to follow the academic, career and personal paths of their choice. This

academic climate will foster a love and joy of learning, self-discipline, analytical thinking, and creativity in our scholars.

- **Rigorous Content and a Focus on Literacy:** We believe that not only is a deep knowledge base essential for individual success, a common knowledge base is also critical to a democratic society. Our curriculum will teach scholars the vocabulary, literature, facts, theories, works of art, and history they need to develop their skills in reading, writing, critical analysis and speaking. A robust and structured English language arts program using a combination of explicit phonics and the Readers and Writers Project methods we will build a strong literacy foundation that supports student learning in all other subjects. The curriculum will provide scholars with the knowledge they need to pursue higher education and careers as well as participate constructively in their community.
- **Co-Teaching to Provide Flexible Supports:** Our co-teaching design which provides for two General Education teachers, a Special Education teacher and an English Language Learner Teacher per grade level allows for large and small group and one-on-one instruction and allows *GACSP* to quickly and innovatively respond to scholar need.
- **Character Development:** Academic skills and acquiring knowledge are not enough; scholars must also develop the character traits necessary to succeed in and contribute to a complex and diverse world. *GACSP* will integrate a character education program emphasizing the following values **Hard-work, Engagement, Accountability, Respectfulness, and Thoughtfulness (HEART)** into its curriculum and culture to help scholars reflect on their choices and actions and establish a community of mutual respect, interdependence, and perseverance.
- **Community:** *GACSP* will succeed as a result of school staff, families, local community members and organizations all working together to meet our scholars' needs. Frequent communication, academic and social events, an inclusive board, opportunities to volunteer and community partnerships will all contribute to a school deeply rooted in and responsive to the needs of our community.
- **Inclusion and Integration:** Over twenty years of research shows that inclusive and integrated classrooms benefit all scholars. Our educators will build an inclusive learning community in which all scholars will be instructed in reading, writing, speaking and listening across all content areas.
- **Data Driven Decision Making:** We will foster a culture of purposeful data -driven decision making in which diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data are frequently collected, analyzed and used to drive instruction, assist in the planning and implementation of professional development, help educators respond to student need in a timely and intentional manner and maintain a respectful school culture. We will use the data for continual scholar and school evaluation and improvement.

**PROPOSAL FOR**



**The Guardian Academy**  
**Charter School of Peekskill**

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*The heart of excellence...*

***SUBMITTED BY: AUDREY CUMMINGS WARN***

***TO THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT***

***AUGUST 18, 2014***

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

### A. Mission Statement and Objectives

*The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

#### **Mission Statement:**

The *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (GACSP)* will empower a diverse group of scholars to reach their full potential academically and socially through the development of intellectual and character strengths within a rigorous, flexible and community-centered learning environment. All scholars will graduate proficient in core subjects as well as develop the character traits necessary not only for success in school but for success in life.

#### **Objective:**

Our school's objective is to provide a rigorous and flexible academic curriculum supported by our integrated character education program to ensure the academic and personal success of each scholar.

#### **Furthering the Purpose of Education Law:**

*GACSP* will implement the objectives of the New York State Charter School Law in the following ways:

- **Raising scholar achievement.** In order to raise scholar achievement, we must have a deep and enduring knowledge of what makes great instruction. *GACSP* leaders will provide the support, coaching, feedback, momentum and direction needed for teachers to consistently improve their practices toward great instruction.
- **Expanding educational opportunities for all scholars but especially those at-risk.** As the only alternative to district-run schools in Peekskill, *GACSP* will expand educational choice for all while preparing to respond to the most vulnerable scholars, especially those at-risk of academic failure, students with disabilities and English language learners.
- **Innovative teaching.** Collaborative planning and co-teaching will provide unparalleled opportunities for flexibility in the academic program. It will also provide teachers and staff support as well as new professional development opportunities for growth.
- **Accountability.** The founders of *GACSP* believe that in exchange for the high degree of autonomy given its program design and implementation, they should be held exceedingly accountable for measurable student achievement. Recognizing the unique opportunity to provide a public educational option to the community, they must also be held to the highest operational, managerial and fiscal standards.

## **B. Key Design Elements**

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**Excellence through Co-Teaching:** Purposeful co-teaching in inclusive classrooms benefits scholars and teachers alike. Our co-teaching design includes two General Education teachers, a Special Education teacher and an English Language Learner (ELL) teacher per grade level—a design that reflects both our anticipated scholar need and community feedback. This inclusive and supportive model of instruction and learning allows us to hold high expectations for all scholars, even those most at risk. This level of instructional support—teachers purposefully combining and working together in various configurations, allowing for large and small group and one-on-one instruction and ranges of ability levels—provides immediate response to scholar need and maximum flexibility while keeping expectations high.

**Excellence through Inclusion and Integration:** Our educators will build an inclusive learning community in which all scholars will be instructed in reading, writing, speaking and listening across all content areas. Over twenty years of research shows that inclusive and integrated classrooms benefit all scholars. Students with disabilities show academic gains in a number of areas, including improved performance on standardized tests, mastery of IEP goals, grades, on task behavior and motivations to learn<sup>1</sup>while benefits for ELL scholars include a faster acquisition of conversational English and overall academic skills by providing a more relevant and understandable context.<sup>2</sup> Further research has shown that inclusion does not compromise general education scholars' outcomes; in fact, it enhances them and leads to new learning opportunities.<sup>3</sup> Inclusive practices can be supported by our co-teaching design and are perfectly aligned with the school climate and culture we plan to build.

**Excellence through Character Education:** Research has found a profound link between academic success and character education<sup>4</sup>. By integrating character education, we will help scholars become young men and women with strength of character who are not only achieving at their optimal academic level, but who will grow to become ethical leaders able to make substantial contributions to their communities. The shared values that will be taught across the curriculum will foster a supportive school climate and culture that values hard-work, enthusiasm, accountability, respectfulness and thoughtfulness (HEART).

**Excellence through Community Engagement:** Peekskill is a vibrant, diverse community. Community partnerships and collaborations enhance the overall learning experience and, help scholars understand the world beyond the classroom walls and their place in it. We are exploring collaborations with the following organizations: Hudson Valley Fencing Academy, Orange Splot Art Spot, Peekskill Museum, Hudson Valley Center for the Contemporary Arts, and

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<sup>1</sup>National Center for Education, Restructuring and Inclusion, 1995

<sup>2</sup> Anna Sax Mabbot, Judith Strohl; *Pull-In Programs—A New Trend in ESL Education*, MinneTESOL Journal, vol. 10, 1992

<sup>3</sup> Waldron, N., Cole, C., & Majd, M. (2001). *The academic progress of students across inclusive and traditional settings: A two year study Indiana inclusion study*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana Institute on Disability & Community.

<sup>4</sup> Phi Delta Kappan February 2006 vol. 87, no.6 pp. 448-459, *Character and Education: What Good Schools Do*, Jacques S. Benninga, Marvin W. Berkowitz, Phyllis Kuehn, Karen Smith

Be First Boxing; we are continuing to pursue collaborations throughout the community, including the Center for the Digital Arts of Westchester Community College, that complement our mission and offer relevant knowledge and experiences which contribute to scholar success.

**Excellence through Data Driven Decision Making:** As a school community we will foster a culture of purposeful data-driven decision making in which diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data are frequently collected, analyzed and used to drive instruction, assist in the planning and implementation of professional development, help educators respond to student need in a timely and intentional manner and maintain a respectful school culture. Performance assessments will require the integration of content knowledge and skills and critical and creative thinking. We will use the data for continual scholar and school evaluation and improvement.

**C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention**

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GACSP will open in fall 2015 with grades K-1 (100 students total) and add one grade per year until it is ultimately a K-8 (550 students) school.

Projected Enrollment Over the Charter Term						
Grades	Ages	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
K	4-5	50	50	50	50	50
1 <sup>st</sup>	5-6	50	50	50	50	50
2 <sup>nd</sup>	6-7	0	50	50	50	50
3 <sup>rd</sup>	7-8			50	50	50
4 <sup>th</sup>	8-9				50	50
5 <sup>th</sup>	9-10					50
<b>Totals</b>		100	150	200	250	300

**Growth Plan Rationale:** GACSP will open with Kindergarten and First Grade. Limiting its opening to these two primary grades recognizes both the challenges inherent in opening a new school as well as the real need to start early in building the solid foundation critical for scholar success. Two classes of 25 scholars will make up a grade level team comprised of two General Education teachers, one Special Education teacher and one ELL teacher. Our low teacher/student ratio, made possible by this co-teaching design, allows us to keep class, grade and overall school size at a level that encourages a close-knit community where all scholars are known and supported by adults, but also affords us the resources necessary to employ a robust instructional team right from the start.

**Demand:** There exists only one educational option in Peekskill—the traditional public school. Every day 205 K-8 students out of the approximately 2000 K-8 students in the Peekskill School district leave the district to attend Catholic schools outside of Peekskill. Presumably, many more students leave the district daily for other out-of-district options. We have survey data that indicates an overwhelming interest in GACSP. Parents of school-age children with whom founders have met throughout the outreach process have expressed a desire for more choice.

We expect only limited challenges to enrollment. Our co-teaching design reflects both the direct community feedback we received and the scholar population we intend to serve. There are two charter schools in Westchester County—Amani Public Charter School in the Mt. Vernon School District and the Charter School of Educational Excellence in the Yonkers School district. Both these school districts have similar student population demographics to the Peekskill School District, in fact, far similar than that of districts that surround Peekskill.<sup>5</sup> This year Amani maintained a waiting list of 74, while the Charter School of Educational Excellence had 304 on their waiting list. Thus, in Westchester County, there is strong evidence to show that in low-performing districts with similar student demographics, there is a high demand for charter schools—their seats are filled, their students succeed and their parents are satisfied.

**Recruitment and Enrollment Process:** *GACSP* will engage in a broad, grassroots recruitment plan to attract a diverse student body, demonstrate our commitment to serving targeted populations, and ensure all families are informed about the new school. On-going education will continue along with active recruiting efforts to WESTCOP Headstart programs, local pre-schools such as Creative Preschool and Lil Sprouts Early Learning Center, Child World and family-based day-care centers, social service, faith-based and non-profit organizations such as the Salvation Army, Church of the Assumption, Spanish Tabernacle, Iglesia Cristiana Amor Y Paz, Peekskill Area Pastor’s Association, Field Library, Youth Bureau/Kiley Center and Be-First Boxing and especially those that deal more predominantly with underserved children. Founders have obtained a city-wide mailing list of households with children eligible to use our school. We will employ targeted mailings, information sessions and door-to-door distribution of materials and, will contact organizations, agencies and housing areas that generally work with families whose children are eligible for free and reduced lunch such as WESTCOP Rapid Food Distribution program and Caring for the Homeless (CHOPS) Inc. Founders will continue to conduct community information sessions and mailings and will continue to explain our school’s program, school culture and, services for all scholars. Interest surveys are continually distributed throughout the community. We will be available at festivals such as the Irish Festival and St. Patrick’s Day Parade, the El Cisne Festival and community riverfront gatherings as well as at bus stops, bodegas and ball parks. We take full advantage of a variety of media options including, local radio, television, print and Internet outlets, such as the *Peekskill-Cortlandt Patch*, *The Peekskill Daily Voice*, *The Journal News LoHud*, *The Examiner News* and *WHUD/WLNA* radio. The lead applicant has appeared on a public access television interview program that is on a rotating viewing cycle. We maintain a Facebook page, an e-mail address and post-office box and have plans for a website.

Our marketing materials clearly indicate (in English and Spanish) that this is a free, secular public school and open to any students including those with disabilities and English language learners.

As a school of choice, parents must submit an application to enroll their child in *GACSP*. The application will be simple, accessible and available in English and Spanish (at a minimum) via walk-in, e-mail, FAX, post, and website. If there are more applicants than seats, we will conduct a random lottery to select scholars for each class. Preference will be given to those who live in

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<sup>5</sup> [www.datanysed.gov](http://www.datanysed.gov); [www.reportcardnysed.gov](http://www.reportcardnysed.gov)

the Peekskill district and those who have siblings enrolled in *GACSP*. Students not chosen via lottery will be waitlisted in the order in which they were drawn and offered a seat should one become available. (See Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures)

**Enrollment and Retention Targets:** Our mission speaks for itself; *GACSP* not only welcomes diversity but, considers it a strength. We are committed to appropriately serving all scholars. Our responsive, differentiated and supportive education program will serve as an attractive alternative to District schools while our grade level co-teaching team design addresses the needs of diverse learners and is a direct response to community feedback and intended enrollment statistics. Our deliberate outreach to English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities and Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch will lead to enrollment and retention of all types of scholars.

We will specifically attract students with disabilities by making our unique program known through our active recruitment efforts. By clearly stating our use of co-teaching, assigning one certified Special Education teacher per grade team and, our low teacher/student ratio, we are assured that enrolling and retaining students with disabilities will not be a challenge and, that we will reach or exceed our enrollment targets.

Our planning team has deep roots in the Latino community. We will use those connections as well as a broad and targeted outreach process to identify, recruit and retain ELL families. Also, once our program of co-teaching with an ELL teacher per grade level team and our commitment to immersion and integration is clearly stated, families will naturally be attracted to *GACSP*. Materials will be disseminated in both English and Spanish and, other languages if necessary.

76% of children in Peekskill's schools are eligible for free and reduced lunch in. A clear statement of our commitment to welcome all scholars alongside our collaboration with community organizations that serve target populations and, our energetic outreach will go far to enroll and retain a diverse student population.

We believe a strong education program that results in demonstrable academic progress will inspire parents of all scholars, including those with diverse needs, to keep their children enrolled at *GACSP*. We will have special programs and services to meet the needs of all types of scholars and through partnering with parents, will understand early if there are issues we need to address.

We are confident that because of our responsive program, a commitment to integration and inclusion, co-teaching design, and low teacher/student ratio we will achieve both the reenrollment and retention targets in full compliance with Charter School Law of 1998 and its 2010 amendments. We will monitor our enrollment data carefully and be ready to make changes to our admissions policy if necessary.

#### **D. Community to be Served**

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Our goal is to embrace Peekskill's diverse and multicultural community with full knowledge of the benefits of doing so.

**Community Description:** Peekskill is a city of approximately 23,000 people located in Westchester County along the Hudson River 50 miles north of New York City. According to 2010 Census Data, 35.8% of the population identifies as White, 23.6% identifies as Black/African American and, 36.9% identifies as Latino 23.6%. The Latino population has increased 77% since 2000 with numbers continuing to rise.

New York State Education Department defines Peekskill as a high-need/resource urban district.<sup>6</sup> In comparison to surrounding public school districts in Westchester, Peekskill serves a more diverse student population along with a disproportionate number of at-risk students. Over 70% of students are eligible for FRL, and because of its growing young adult and immigrant population, almost 20% of the student population is English Language Learners.

**2011-2012 Student Demographics (Local school district comparison)**

Characteristic	Peekskill %	Hendrick Hudson %	Lakeland %
Free and Reduced Lunch	76	17	14
Limited English Proficiency	16	2	1
Students with Disabilities	14	9	7
Black or African American	33	5	6
Hispanic or Latino	53	18	15
Asian or Native American	2	5	4
White	12	69	74
Multi-Racial	1	1	1

According to *Westchester Magazine* (Oct. 2010), Peekskill ranked 19 out of 40 *Best Places to Live in Westchester*, yet while it has one of the highest growing young adult populations and prides itself on its affordability, and cultural opportunities, its low-performing school district, was cited as its downside.

**Percent Proficient (Scores of 3 and 4) on 2013 NYS Assessments**

**English Language Arts**

**Mathematics**

Grade	All Students	LEP	SWD	Economically Disadvantaged	All Students	LEP	SWD	Economically Disadvantaged
3	17%	7%	3%	14%	16%	6%	6%	16%
4	15%	3%	3%	12%	15%	5%	3%	12%
5	8%	0%	0%	7%	8%	0%	0%	7%
6	14%	0%	0%	10%	22%	0%	0%	21%

<sup>6</sup> [www.datanysed.gov](http://www.datanysed.gov)

7	9%	0%	3%	5%	14%	0%	3%	13%
8	12%	0%	3%	11%	20%	0%	0%	20%

Results from the 2013 NYS assessments indicate that overall elementary and middle school performance in the Peekskill School District is poor. There is an even greater achievement gap among at-risk students with scores well below the state average. This supports our contention that new, high quality schools are needed. *GACSP* has been specifically designed with these achievement gaps in mind. Our co-teach configuration allows for intense ELL and Special Education support in each classroom while also keeping the teacher/student ratio low to accommodate individualized, small group and integrated instruction. Analyzing data and speaking to parents of children with a wide range of learning needs, drove our educational design, especially with respect to our co-teaching configuration. Given the lack of educational options and the achievement gaps, *GACSP* would be a valued educational choice in Peekskill.

**E. Public Outreach**

The founding team has engaged in extensive outreach efforts since January 2013. We have spoken with community leaders to include mayors under two administrations, council members, and county legislator; pastors of 7 churches, the local Headstart director and nursery school directors, the former Youth Bureau Director and staff, members of Peekskill Agencies Together (P.A.T)--agencies that deal directly with children, two Field Library Directors, Chief of Police and DARE Officers. We’ve made presentations to Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber members and participated in Gateway Experience. We have established potential collaborations with four organizations to enhance the overall curriculum and have three meetings scheduled to discuss other collaborations. We intend to schedule more throughout the application process. We speak to community members and parents monthly at the WESTCOP Rapid Food Distribution program. We have held four public information sessions with an average of 35 at each, the last being held on June 12. We made a presentation to parents of Riverbend neighborhood and have made use of all local media outlets to educate the community about charter schools in general and *GACSP* in particular including two appearances on a public access, community based interview program which airs often. We have conducted mailings, held e-mail “conversations,” maintained a Facebook page and have plans to launch a website. We have actively sought feedback from parents and educators at all venues. Promotional materials are in English and Spanish. The team will continue to conduct a grass-roots outreach campaign throughout the application process at bus stops, bodegas, churches and local festivals/events including El Cisne Riverfront Festival and the Irish Riverfront Festival.

Based on conversations with families and community leaders and, initial interest surveys (383 collected since October 2013), there has been increased and enthusiastic interest in the school. Many have spoken of the need for a high-quality alternative educational option with flexibility to respond to scholar need. Some have spoken of their concern that so many children leave Peekskill to attend school. Founders have made adjustments to academic design based on community feedback. Some of the input that has informed the development of this proposal includes the need for:

- Strong, multifaceted school leader with an entrepreneurial spirit
- Strong instructional teachers who are highly accountable

- A co-teaching design that includes both Special Education and ELL certified teachers
- Starting small and growing purposefully and consistently
- Strong academic content and high expectations for all children with quick and creative responses to intervention
- Strong and integrated character education program that drives both academic achievement and success in life
- Collaborations with local organizations that provide opportunities for enrichment
- Teaching the whole child

**Outreach to Leaders and Organizations**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peekskill Youth Bureau</li> <li>• Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce (Lead Applicant is a Member) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kiley Youth Center</li> <li>• Head Start Daycare Centers of Peekskill</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Comite Latino, Hudson River Health Care</li> <li>• Park and Recreation Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Preschool</li> </ul> </li> <li>• WESTCOP Community Services</li> <li>• Orange Splot Art Spot</li> <li>• Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art</li> <li>• Peekskill Fencing Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave the Light on Foundation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be First Boxing Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor George Pataki</li> <li>• Mayor of Peekskill, Frank Catalina, Esquire</li> <li>• State Senator Gregory Ball</li> <li>• Assemblywoman Sandra Galef <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Executive Rick Astorino</li> </ul> </li> <li>• County Legislator John Testa (former Peekskill mayor)</li> <li>• Peekskill Common Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BOSCES Peekskill Site Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DARE Officers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Westchester Community College Center for the Digital Arts, Sherry Mayo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peekskill Community Action Program (WESTCOP) Director Mary Rainey</li> <li>• Field Library Director, Laura Wolven; Children’s Room Director, Liz Anastasi</li> <li>• Assumption Church and Religious Education Program</li> <li>• Spanish Tabernacle Church</li> <li>• Iglesia Corozon de Jesus</li> <li>• Mt. Olivet Baptist Church <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• Various Pastors</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Various members of the Elks, Knights of Columbus, Rotary and Ancient Order of Hibernians Clubs</li> </ul>
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**F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact**

**Programmatic Impact:** When *GACSP* opens it will be the only alternative, public or private, to the Peekskill City School District. *GACSP* will have a significantly negative programmatic impact on other schools. The Peekskill City School District currently serves 2,929 students. *GACSP* will enroll 100 students in 2015, which would account for less than 3% of estimated district enrollment. Founders are aware of many students who leave the district daily to attend public

and non-public schools in surrounding areas. With the opening of *GACSP*, families are given an alternative that allows their children to stay in their home district.

Based on the needs in our community, we are confident that approving this application would have a significant educational benefit to the scholars expected to attend the proposed charter school. *GACSP* will provide a unique program—different from traditional public schools in the Peekskill area. Specifically, it will offer a continuous Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade college preparatory curriculum in a rigorous yet supportive environment. We commit to serving and ensuring all learners which will provide a model to the local school district. We also hope we can contribute to the local education community by modeling innovative programs, disseminating effective practices and collaborating on professional development and extra-curricular activities.

**Fiscal Impact:** With its small scholar population, *GACSP*'s fiscal impact will be negligible as shown below. In its 5<sup>th</sup> year with, 300 scholars *GACSP* will account for 6% of district budget.

Calendar Year	Charter Year	CS Estimated Budget	Peekskill School District Annual Budget	Percent Impact
2015-2016	1	\$1,668,000.00	\$78,443,666.00	2%
2016-2017	2	\$2,502,000.00	\$78,443,666.00	3%
2017-2018	3	\$3,336,000.00	\$78,443,666.00	4%
2018-2019	4	\$4,170,000.00	\$78,443,666.00	5%
2019-2020	5	\$5,004,000.00	\$78,443,666.00	6%

**II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN**

**A. Achievement Goals**

In keeping with our mission to prepare all students to graduate proficient in core subjects and reach their full potential, we have set rigorous student achievement goals and will evaluate academic performance against New York State Standards.

**Goal 1: Guardian Academy scholars will demonstrate proficiency in English Language Arts.**

**K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

**Absolute Metric:** A minimum of 75% of scholars who have attended *GACSP* for at least one year will meet or achieve their minimum grade level reading standard as measured by TerraNova assessment tests.

**Growth:** Each grade-level cohort will improve its percentage of students meeting or exceeding grade level reading standards as measured by the TerraNova ELA assessments by a minimum of 5% each year.

**Comparative Performance :** *GACSP* will create a comparative metric as soon as there is K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade data available for Peekskill School District.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Absolute Metric:** 75% of scholars who have attended GACSP for at least two full school years, will achieve a Level 3 or Level 4 on the New York State ELA exam.

**Growth Metric:** Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the gap between the percent on the previous year's New York State ELA Exam. If no gap exists, the cohort will demonstrate an increase in the percentage of proficient scholars.

**Comparative Performance:** Each year the percent of all tested scholars who are enrolled for at least two years and performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA exam will outperform the students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

### **Goal 2: Guardian Academy scholars will demonstrate proficiency in Math.**

#### K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

**Absolute Metric:** A minimum of 75% of scholars who have attended GACSP for at least one year will meet or achieve their minimum grade level reading standard as measured by TerraNova Math Assessments.

**Growth:** Each grade-level cohort will improve its percentage of students meeting or exceeding grade level math standards as measured by the TerraNova Math Assessments by a minimum of 5% each year.

**Comparative Performance :** GACSP will create a comparative metric as soon as there is K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade data available for Peekskill School District.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Absolute Metric:** 75% of scholars who have attended GACSP for at least two full school years, will achieve a Level 3 or Level 4 on the New York State Math Assessment.

**Growth Metric:** Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the gap between the percent on the previous year's New York State Math Exam. If no gap exists, the cohort will demonstrate an increase in the percentage of proficient scholars.

**Comparative Performance:** GACSP scholars who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State Math exam will outperform the students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

### **Goal 3: Guardian Academy scholars will demonstrate proficiency in Science**

**Absolute Performance :** 75% of 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade scholars who have been enrolled at the GACSP for at least two full years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS Science Exam.

**Growth Metric:** Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the gap between the percent on the previous year's New York State Science Exam. If no gap exists, the cohort will demonstrate an increase in the percentage of proficient scholars.

**Comparative Performance :** GACSP scholars who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science exam will outperform the students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

### **Goal 4: The Guardian Academy Charter School will achieve Adequate Yearly Progress**

**Absolute:** *GACSP* will be deemed “In Good Standing” on the NYS Report Card.

**B. School Schedule and Calendar**

The school schedule and calendar reflect the mission and values of the *GACSP*.

- *GACSP* emphasizes both quality and quantity of instruction—extended instruction does not always mean improved achievement; only when instruction is meaningful, rigorous and engaging will it drive achievement. Our schedule balances a longer day with the supports and flexibility necessary for both teachers and scholars.
- Co-teaching requires substantial, daily, teacher preparation and collaboration. *GACSP* teachers have 90 minutes spread throughout the day to prepare, collaborate, to discuss scholars, data, content, pedagogy and effective teaching strategies.
- Extended time for literacy—interactive read-alouds, guided reading and centers, phonics, and writing workshops especially beneficial for the scholar population we intend to serve.
- Daily blocks of differentiated instruction. 90 minutes each day will be used for differentiated instruction tailored to scholar need.
- Daily community meetings to share information and recognize students and staff who have demonstrated character strengths as well as achievement and progress.

A typical day may look like this:

7:30 am	Breakfast
8:00 am	Community Meeting/Character Ed/HEART
8:30 am	ELA: Read Aloud, Guided Reading & Centers
10:00 am	Math
11:15 am	Lunch/Recess
12:15 pm	Science/Social Studies
1:00 pm	Arts
1:45 pm	Differentiated Learning Math
2:25 pm	Differentiated Learning ELA
3:10 pm	Closing Meeting/Reflection/HEART
3:30 pm	Dismissal

**Instructional Minutes of Core Subjects Per Week \***

Subject	K-5	6-8
English Language Arts	675	275
Math	575	275
Science	135	275
Social Studies	90	275

\* Students may actually have more minutes of instruction in these subject because of integrated curriculum and instruction

**Sample Weekly Schedules**

Attachment 3a is a sample of weekly schedules for scholars and teachers.

**Annual Calendar**

The proposed calendar for 2015-2016 is provided below. Our school year includes 10 extra professional development days for staff. The teachers work day is from 7:30- 4:15 for 190 days.

They are required each year to participate in our two week summer orientation/professional development.

In order to maximize student time in school, we will only recognize major federal holidays and extended breaks that align with those of our public school district. For grading purposes, the calendar is divided into trimesters.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>August</b></p> <p>17<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup>: Staff Summer Orientation/PD 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>: Staff Summer Orientation/PD</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>September</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup>: Family Orientation/Meet and Greet Day 7<sup>th</sup>: Labor day- school closed 9<sup>th</sup>: First day of school 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Rosh Hashanah- school closed 23<sup>rd</sup>: Yom Kippur- school closed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>October</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup>: Columbus Day- school closed 23<sup>rd</sup>: Professional development day- school closed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>November</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup>: Veterans’ Day- school closed 26<sup>th</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving- school closed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>December</b></p> <p>24<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Holiday recess- school closed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>January</b></p> <p>18<sup>th</sup>: MLK, Jr. Day- school closed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Re-enrollment begins</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>February</b></p> <p>5<sup>th</sup>: Professional development day- school closed 15<sup>th</sup>: Presidents Day- school closed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>March</b></p> <p>25<sup>th</sup>: Good Friday- school closed 28<sup>th</sup>: Easter Monday- school closed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>April</b></p> <p>25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup>: Spring Recess- school closed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>May</b></p> <p>27<sup>th</sup>: Professional Development day-school closed 30<sup>th</sup>: Memorial Day- school closed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>June</b></p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup>: Professional Development day- school closed 24<sup>th</sup>: Last day of school/report cards</p>	

**C. Curriculum and Instruction**

**Educational Philosophy:**

The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill’s academic program includes a curriculum based on the New York State Common Core Learning Standards, New York State Science and Social Studies Standards, the expanded opportunities available to a unique co-teaching design of four-person grade level teams and a pedagogical philosophy informed by three ideas epitomized by Core Knowledge, Understanding by Design, and the Coalition of Essential Schools:

- **Content is Key:** Founded by E.D. Hirsch, the Core Knowledge Foundation holds that schools “need to teach a coherent, cumulative, and content-specific core curriculum.” We believe depth of content knowledge is critical to developing both basic and critical thinking skills, particularly for many low-income and limited English proficient students who lack the background knowledge necessary to support and accelerate learning. Our school will be explicit about the core content students need, paying particular attention to common knowledge that facilitates communication and understanding.
- **Standards-Based Backwards Design:** Understanding by Design employs the backwards design approach pioneered and refined over time by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Backwards design reverses the traditional approach to instructional planning by starting with learning objectives (what students should know and be able to do), then developing strategies for assessing whether students achieved the objectives, and only then creating the lesson activities and selecting materials and resources. This aligns with our focus on key content as our framework for teaching and learning.
- **Essential Questions:** We also believe that instruction should be driven by essential questions based on the work of the Coalition of Essential Schools, which holds that “[c]urriculum and courses should be organized not around answers but around big ideas—questions and problems to which content represents answers.” Again, content is critical, but this approach forces teachers to help students acquire knowledge and skills in a deeper and more enduring manner. By challenging them to ask and answer essential questions, students must analyze and synthesize information, rather than just memorize and regurgitate it, which increases motivation and confidence and teaches them to become independent learners and critical thinkers.

### **English Language Arts:**

The key to our success will be our robust early childhood integrated literacy program that uses variations of co-teaching instruction to enhance English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Through regular benchmarking of reading levels and the NYSESLAT exam we will monitor and evaluate scholar progress and language proficiency. School administration and the Board will specifically track the retention rates of our ELL population and work to implement improvement plans if retention issues develop.

Our teachers will use the balanced literacy approach because of its alignment with our education philosophy, availability of resources, professional development opportunities, and research base. Balanced literacy provides opportunities to address basic phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and critical thinking. “Effective balanced instruction requires a very comprehensive, integrated approach, demanding that teachers know a great deal about literacy research related to emergent literacy, assessment-based instruction, phonological and phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, phonics and word study, selecting appropriate leveled readers, reader response, writing process, and constructivist learning. In the balanced reading classroom, all of these essentials must be

addressed, and the teacher also must meet the demands of a multicultural society that requires him or her to be knowledgeable about teaching English language learners to read.”<sup>7</sup>

This approach has been demonstrated to work well with our student population and will allow us to achieve our mission and meet our accountability goals. Key components of our literacy program include:

- **Readers and Writers Workshop:** The workshop model supported by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project employs choice, authentic tasks, and extended time for students to read and write in order to tap students’ motivation and improve skills. “Workshopping” allows teachers to use a variety of strategies including whole-class, small group and independent activities. Workshops typically include: a mini-lesson where the teacher models a specific strategy, scaffolded practice activities, opportunities for more broad application and demonstrations of student learning ending with a summary discussion.
- **Interactive Read-Alouds:** Teachers engage students in variety of genres by modeling how to use mentor texts to deepen thinking, build vocabularies, strengthen comprehension strategies, and discuss literary elements. Read-alouds will be used in all subjects to build literacy skills while simultaneously deepening content knowledge, which aligns with the Common Core focus on informational texts. This modeling is particularly valuable for emergent readers. Read-alouds are made interactive through questioning and discussion and opportunities for peer interaction, such as “turn and talks” and “pair shares.”
- **Guided Reading:** Teachers guide small group instruction of 4-6 scholars using books that they can all read at about a 90% accuracy level to cement their understanding of a strategy. Pre-reading activities include prediction making, vocabulary introduction, or discussing background knowledge required for understanding the text. Teachers coach individuals by providing prompts, asking questions, and scaffolding. Scholars will be assessed regularly to ensure appropriate grouping, allowing them to develop at their own pace, including allowing more advanced scholars to tackle more challenging texts.
- **Literacy Centers:** While their peers are involved in guided reading groups with teachers, other scholars will work independently by themselves or in small groups on tasks in literacy centers. These may address the objectives of the day’s mini-lesson or reinforce knowledge and skills students have already learned. Literacy centers are an important aspect of providing students with choice, empowering them to become independent learners. Center activities may also promote cooperative learning, such as buddy reading for younger students and literature circles and peer editing for older students.
- **Phonics:** Time will be allocated for explicit phonics instruction, but it will also be integrated and reinforced during workshop activities. Research findings show that a phonics program must contain two elements in order for instruction to lead to real reading results: systematic instruction and practice (National Reading Panel, 2000). During the planning year instructional leaders will select a program and resources that are research-based, align with our overall literacy program and Common Core standards, and provide

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<sup>7</sup> John Edwin Cowan, *A Balanced Approach to Beginning Reading Instruction: A Synthesis of Six Major U.S. Research Studies*, 2003

- effective guidance and support to teachers. Examples of possible programs and resources include Wilson Foundations, Words Our Way, and Orton-Gillingham.
- **Vocabulary:** Teachers will be expected to use, model and teach appropriate and subject-specific vocabulary in all classes. Key vocabulary will be identified in each unit and consistently spiraled through lessons. Teachers will hold scholars accountable for using this vocabulary in their speaking and writing. Scholars will also be taught to use etymology in order to figure out new or related words. In addition, teachers will use word walls and labeling throughout the classroom and school building to visually reinforce vocabulary development for English language learners.
  - **Intervention Programs:** We anticipate that many of our scholars may enroll as emergent readers without basic pre-literacy skills. We will supplement our general literacy program with the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program—designed to quickly accelerate low-performing students so they can benefit most from grade level instruction. These programs will be administered during literacy instruction or the enrichment block.
  - **Independent Reading:** Our students will have access to a rich assortment of engaging texts. Students will be taught to use any down time to pull out a book and read and will be expected to read at home for increasingly longer periods of time as they grow older.

Teachers will rely primarily on authentic literature and informational text as the instructional resources for our literacy program, though they may also adopt anthologies and/or textbooks that meet our selection criteria. In keeping with our emphasis on the importance of content, resources will be selected that deepen our students’ understanding of the world, enhance their vocabulary, develop a common knowledge base, and promote character and values. As scholars progress into middle school, they will be encouraged to engage with original versions of great literature and primary sources. We believe a rich, character-infused curriculum is the best way to develop both the academic and socio/emotional skills our students need. Engage NY, Core Knowledge and Junior Great Books resources will be consulted to help identify high quality materials, including stories, plays, speeches, poems, myths and biographies.

### **Mathematics:**

As with literacy, our math program uses multiple strategies to develop both procedural skills and conceptual understanding in keeping with the focus on Common Core Learning Standards. Scholars will explore math not only in formal math classes, but also through morning meeting activities in elementary grades where scholars discuss calendars and time as well as integrated into science, social studies, art and other lessons. In the elementary grades, scholars will engage in inquiry-based activities that develop number sense and use practice activities to develop automaticity with basic facts that serves as the foundation for higher level mathematical thinking. Beginning in Kindergarten students will focus on the number line and move on to developing skills in estimation and using mental math.

Key components of our Mathematics program include: whole class mini-lessons, small group instruction, rotating centers and independent work. Elementary grades will have a daily morning meeting that addresses “real-world” math. Materials and tasks will be differentiated and, targeted instruction will be scaffolded to individualize teaching. We will utilize *Go Math*

K-8 which is aligned with Common Core Learning Standards, provides teachers with rich set of print and digital resources and, shows efficacy in all student populations.

**Science:** We will provide science instruction in every grade in order to develop a deep understanding of the scientific method as well as the content knowledge our students will need for high school and college. Science topics will be aligned Common Core Learning Standards will support the STEM concept—an integrated approach to the teaching and learning of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics across the curriculum. Students will not only learn *about* science but will *practice* science through an inquiry-based, hands-on approach that engages students in scientific work; they will hypothesize, explore, experiment, analyze and draw conclusions. Science will not be a text-book driven subject at GACSP; teachers will employ a range of resources, including exploration of the natural environment in the school and in our community.

**Social Studies:** Instruction in Social Studies will be closely aligned with literacy as scholars practice using their reading and writing skills to learn about historical events and people, explore geography and cultures. We will place a heavy emphasis on non-fiction in accordance with the Common Core Learning Standards and expect our teachers to expose students to primary sources as much as possible. Curriculum content will be based on the Common Core Learning Standards for each grade; we will also look to the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence to identify key topics for study. As with other subjects, teachers will be able to create or select resources that meet their instructional needs. We will utilize an existing potential collaboration with the Peekskill Museum as well as other identified community resources such as the Lincoln Society and Lincoln Depot Project and Underground Railroad tours to enhance our Social Studies curriculum.

#### **Arts and Physical Education:**

- **Arts:** The study of the arts is essential to well-rounded learning because they provide access to so many other subjects and cultures and engage students in the act of creation. The focus of our arts program will largely be a function of the expertise and creativity of the faculty we hire; we will likely open with visual arts and/or music and may expand to dance or theater as the school grows to full size. In addition to opportunities to create art, our curriculum will also address art history, criticism, and aesthetics. Our art teachers will participate in grade team meetings and coordinate their lessons with the topics being studied in other subjects, particularly the integrated themes. Peekskill is a community that supports the arts and, as such, our school will have access to a wide range and variety of resources. Established potential collaborations will include working with Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Arts, Orange Splot Art Lab and Westchester Community College's Center for the Digital Arts.
- **Physical and Health Education:** Scholars will participate in structured weekly physical education lessons that develop mind and body. We will teach scholars the importance of being healthy and, how to build and maintain their own health. The curriculum will focus on sports instruction, team building, sportsmanship, mental wellness, physical development and fitness and, in later years, adolescent development/maturity. Once again we will utilize

potential community collaborations with Be-First Boxing and Peekskill Fencing Academy and others to enhance our physical education program.

**Curriculum Design:** *GACSP* leadership and teaching teams will work together to collaboratively design curricula using the resources identified. The School Leader, with input from teacher teams will design process, frameworks and templates to use during the planning process to ensure cohesiveness. *GACSP* will use the following standards for curriculum design:

- **Standards- Based:** Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics and New York State Standards for Science and Social Studies will form the foundation of *GACSP* curriculum. [www.engageny.com](http://www.engageny.com) will be a valued resource in design.
- **Pacing Calendars:** Will reflect units of study and timeframe for each discipline.
- **Curriculum Maps:** Will be generated for each unit. Each map will include the following components: clear learning objective, higher order thinking questions, Common Core Learning Standards, Resources/Materials, Assessment (formative, summative, informal) and Follow up/Homework.
- **Unit Plans:** Will be generated for each unit of study to be taught across content areas. Unit plans will include mini lessons for each learning objective.

**Instructional Resources:** *GACSP* will not be a textbook driven school in the sense that teachers will not blindly follow a table of contents to organize and pace their instruction. That said, we have identified several resources that will begin to form the foundation of instruction:

- **Reading and Writing Workshop:** Leveled classroom libraries; books for literature study; poetry anthologies, picture books, reference books; short stories; and non-fiction materials such as journals and newspapers.
- **Fountas and Pinell Guided Reading:** Teachers Resource Books; Guided Reading Grade Level Text Sets
- **Fountas and Pinell Leveled Literacy Intervention:** Orange, Green, Blue, Red, Gold and Purple System Kits for grades K-5
- **Go Math!:** Curriculum Training Suite for grades K-6; Initial Program Overview 6-8

Along with the resources identified above, teachers will have adequate funds to create and/or select materials and resources that support their learning objectives, which may also include textbooks, workbooks, manipulatives, lab kits, authentic literature and informational texts. We will empower our School Leader and teachers to make decisions based on their own experience and research. They will establish and adhere to clear selection criteria based on our mission, education philosophy, and Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, they will be expected to select additional instructional materials that are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities and English language learners.

**Instructional Strategies and Planning:** At the heart of *GACSP's* instructional model is its co-teaching design. It allows for a low teacher/student ratios and balance between exploratory learning and standards-based instruction. Within its unique structure—two General Education

teachers, one Special Education teacher and one ELL teacher per grade level team—is the key to the flexibility and high-level supports for differentiated learning to meet the needs of all our scholars and their diverse learning styles. Teachers have freedom to move throughout classrooms, utilize small or large group instruction methods, and utilize their personal strengths in both content areas and instruction strategies all to the benefit of the scholar and drive achievement.

To deliver the curriculum, educators should use the pedagogical approach that best meets the needs of their students; that said, there are certain components we expect to see in all instruction. Scholars must know what they are learning and why it is important, thus teachers must articulate to scholars each lesson’s objective and any connections to past lessons or spiraled objectives. Teachers will use formative assessment as both a learning tool to help scholars reflect and as a way to check for understanding during lessons. Each lesson must be closed with a summary of objectives to determine mastery and next instructional steps.

#### **D. Assessment Programs**

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*GACSP* knows results count. A charter is a contract—a performance agreement—not only between *GACSP* and New York State but also between *GACSP* and the families of our scholars. We take the responsibility for the education of their children seriously and are strongly committed to ensuring that our scholars reach the high achievement goals we have set. We are forward-thinking and will rely on a robust assessment system that will provide us with timely data to keep track of progress and allow us to respond with immediacy and purpose. Assessment is crucial, connecting curriculum, instruction, professional development and accountability. Research also indicates that participation in assessment actually contributes to learning in and of itself, and we believe a variety of assessment types is most useful for all stakeholders. Professor Royce Sadler wrote:

For students to be able to improve, they must develop the capacity to monitor the quality of their own work during actual production. This in turn requires that students possess an appreciation of what high-quality work is, that they have the evaluative skills necessary for them to compare with some objectivity the quality of what they are producing in relation to the higher standard, and that they develop a store of tactics or moves which can be drawn upon to modify their own work. (1998)

Thus we believe in the concept of assessment *as* learning, and that students should be assessed frequently to help teachers plan and students learn.

**Diagnostic Assessments:** We will use diagnostic assessments to determine our incoming scholars’ knowledge, skill levels and interests and to identify signs of special needs. We will use benchmark assessments for returning scholars to provide a baseline for measuring current year progress. Some of the diagnostic assessments will include:

- **Entrance Assessment:** Each summer *GACSP* staff will meet the families of newly enrolled scholars, interviewing and learning about the scholar, conducting informal diagnostic assessments that will evaluate such concepts as letter and phoneme recognition, and numerating skills, fine and gross motor skills and auditory and visual discrimination. We will

ask parents to complete Home Language Survey as an initial means of identifying English Language Learners.

- **Reading Inventory:** Teachers will administer standardized reading assessment such as Fountas and Pinell to all scholars to determine basic literacy skills and levels. Teachers and scholars will set ambitious internal goals for scholar progress throughout the year.
- **Computer Adaptive Assessment:** In order to gather further data on foundational skills in mathematics and literacy the NWEA MAP will be administered at the beginning of each year to establish a baseline against which to measure yearly progress.
- **Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R):** Scholars who score at the beginning, intermediate or advanced levels are deemed limited English proficient.

**Formative Assessments:** Numerous studies across subjects and ages indicate that the practice of formative assessment produces significant and often substantial learning gains<sup>8</sup>. Teachers will be expected to conduct frequent and deliberate formative assessments in their lesson plans and conduct regular checks for understanding throughout instruction. Scholars will also be taught how to use formative feedback to maximize their own learning. Formative Assessments will include:

- **Questioning:** Teachers will be trained to use appropriately rigorous levels of questioning based on *Bloom's Taxonomy* and *Webb's Depth of Knowledge* to ascertain scholars' content knowledge and conceptual understanding.
- **Observation:** Teachers will be expected to document anecdotal evidence of scholar learning, especially through interactions and small-group instruction and one-on-one interaction and "Do-Now's" and "Exit Tickets."
- **Rubrics:** Teachers will develop grade-wide rubrics with guidance from instructional leaders.
- **Computer Based Assessments:** GACSP will select computer based content providers that have built in assessments to offer immediate feedback allowing both scholars and teachers to pace instruction and determine mastery. Parents can also monitor learning and administrators can evaluate programs and teachers.

**Benchmark Assessments:** Teachers will administer benchmark assessments to measure progress toward goals.

- **Reading Inventory:** Reading Inventory such as Fountas and Pinell will be administered three more times after initial baseline to track student growth in reading.
- **Writing Prompts:** Teachers will develop grade-wide writing prompts and use rubrics to evaluate mastery. Scholars will be taught to engage in self and peer review.
- **Benchmark Tests:** Teachers will create benchmark assessments to evaluate mastery of content in each subject including knowledge of social studies and science concepts.

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<sup>8</sup> Black & Wiliam, 1998

**Summative Assessments:** Scholars will be regularly evaluated on their mastery of skills and knowledge as defined by NYS standards and Common Core Learning Standards. Some summative assessments will include:

- **New York State Testing:** Beginning in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade all eligible *GACSP* scholars will take the NYS English Language Arts and Math exams annually as well as the NYS Science exam in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade.
- **New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT):** All limited English proficient scholars will take this exam annually to determine academic progress and eligibility for services.
- **New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA):** Scholars specified by their Individualized Education program (IEP) will take an annual data folio assessment that measures their progress in achieving learning standards through alternate grade-level indicators. Eligibility is determined by the Committee on Special Education (CSE).
- **Common Core Aligned Performance Assessments:** Teachers will administer these on-demand literacy assessments after reading/writing units. These performance assessments are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and are designed to assess mastery of unit content.
- **TerraNova Exams:** All Kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> grade scholars will be administered the standardized tests annually in May. TerraNova assesses student achievement in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science. It measures basic and applied skills as well as higher order thinking skills.
- **Math Unit Tests:** Teachers will develop or use assessments provided with curriculum programs to determine mastery of unit goals. These performance based assessments require scholars to demonstrate mastery of skills and content knowledge.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** The School Leader and the Data Assessment Coordinator (Year 2) will be responsible for coordinating the administration of assessments with implementation and instruction provided by the teacher teams and learning support teachers. Training will be provided as needed to teachers on how to properly administer assessments, collect data, analyze results and develop action plans based on data collected. Along with on-going analysis and evaluation of data during team teacher meetings, educational leadership team meetings and individual preparation periods, four Data Days are planned during the school year to develop concrete action and intervention plans to ensure all scholars are provided with the instruction necessary to be successful. Our Data Assessment Coordinator will be an integral part of the planning, development and implementation process and provide coaching to teachers in order to ensure they have the tools necessary to empower each scholar.

External assessments will be chosen based on their reliability. One such assessment we will use is the Fountas and Pinell Benchmark Assessment System. This system has a proven efficacy and reliability with the latest research conducted by Heinemann in May 2010. After two and a half years of field testing, editorial development and independent data analysis, research shows

that the System's texts were both reliable and valid measures for assessing student reading levels.

We have also chosen to use the TerraNova standardized assessment. TerraNova Assessments have been proven to produce good test score precision; its latest edition is an authentic measure of the Common Core Learning Standards. Because Common Core Learning Standards require that students produce their work, and receive partial credit, their assessment must offer new, innovative items such as constructed-response, extended constructed-response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks. TerraNova Assessment offer all of these item types in the same test, on the same scale, helping to gain early insight and make critical instructional plans.

**Use of Results:** Our mission promises a rigorous and flexible curriculum. Assessment data helps us achieve that mission and, must be linked to appropriate intervention and instruction. Data will be used throughout the community for a variety of purposes:

**Teachers:**

- Identify scholars' learning challenges early by determining mastery of specific standards and objectives.
- Develop lesson plans designed to address gaps.
- Organize and rearrange flexible small group instruction to meet scholar need.
- Stimulate collaboration and facilitate effective communication among co-teachers and Grade-level teams to advance scholar performance.
- Stimulate collaboration and facilitate effective planning among co-teachers and grade-level teams to advance scholar performance.
- Facilitate communication among teachers, scholars and families.
- Monitor progress of struggling scholars in RTI process and revise intervention plans.

**School Leaders:**

- Evaluate and hold accountable teachers and staff.
- Evaluate and improve programs, instruction, curriculum and assessments.
- Facilitate communication among teachers, administrators and families.
- Monitor RTI process and ensure students are placed in appropriate interventions.
- Enable Co-teachers and grade-level teams to identify scholars for referral to CSE for evaluation, change of IEP or decertification.
- Monitor efficacy of services and interventions across all subgroups.
- Identify school and teacher needs and design appropriate and purposeful staff development program.
- Monitor and report on progress towards meeting accountability goals.

**Board of Trustees:**

- Evaluate the performance of the school leader.

- Monitor and report on progress toward meeting accountability goals.
- Monitor effective implementation of key design elements.
- Review and approve budget to determine optimum allocation of resources.
- Evaluate school policies and procedures and revise to ensure achievement of mission and accountability goals.
- Facilitate communication with School Leader and authorizer.

### **Parents**

- Monitor scholar's performance using progress reports that are at least given during each trimester if not monthly or weekly, standards-based report cards, conferences and scholar portfolios.
- Access grades and progress on-line to monitor scholar's achievement.
- Identify ways in which they can help their scholar learn.

### **Scholars:**

- Use teacher feedback and, in some cases, peer reviews to identify strengths and weaknesses and collaborate with teacher to make plans for improvement.
- Identify and seek appropriate levels of challenge.
- Demonstrate growth over time.

**Reporting:** *GACSP's* long term goal is to provide families with online access to their scholars' assessment data and performance. Data would also be available to other stakeholders including administrators, Board of Trustees, and teachers. This online system will provide data collection, analysis and reporting and will have the capability to aggregate data. It will allow scholars to track their own progress as a means of "ownership." We plan to make this operational during our third year of operation.

Standards based report cards will inform families of their scholars' achievement levels across a variety of learning domains including knowledge of subject area content and skills. Additionally, a school designed report card will inform families of their scholar's proficiency in integrating *GACSP's* HEART core values. Report card templates will be explained to families in the beginning of the year so there is clear understanding of *GACSP's* expectations for their scholars, can evaluate growth and attainment. Report card and IEP conferences will be held three times a year and will be analyzed with the teacher. Both report cards and IEPs will be available in a scholars' home language. Families of Special Education scholars will be informed in writing and in their home language of their scholar's progress in meeting long-term IEP goals and short-term objectives. IEP progress reports will be distributed to families with school report cards. *GACSP* will issue an annual report to Board of Trustees and its authorizer as well as other stakeholders.

### **E. Performance, Promotion and Graduation Standards**

High expectations coupled with tailored-supports drive the mission of *GACSP*. Scholars must demonstrate proficiency in core subjects as outlined by New York State Common Core Learning

Standards. They must demonstrate and mastery of skills and knowledge across content subject areas. Proficiency will be determined by state and teacher assessments and the Core Knowledge sequence in conjunction with other diagnostic tools.

**Promotion Policy:** GACSP will use standards-based grading to identify levels of mastery of prescribed content and skills. At the end of the year, scholars will be expected to have mastered at least 80% of the content and skills in each core subject to move to the next grade. Scholars whose performance during the year suggests that they are not on track to meeting this expectation will be identified for intervention and a “promotion in doubt” conference will be held at each grading period to identify areas for growth, plans for meeting the scholar’s needs at school and strategies families and scholars themselves can employ at home. In the spring, grade level teams will consider the evidence of student mastery in all subjects as well as information such as attendance, discipline, maturity and character to make a recommendation for promotion or retention. The School Leader will make the final decision. The ultimate standard for retention is that it benefits the scholar rather than diminishes motivation or impedes progress. In some cases, scholars may be promoted but take individual classes in other grades. Below is a proposed general timeline that reflects urgency in meeting the academic needs of students and frequent partnering and communicating with families. It is aligned to the 2015-16 proposed calendar and can be adjusted in subsequent years.

Late November	Students will be identified as promotion-in doubt Teachers are expected to have documented communications with parents/guardians regarding concerns prior to this date.
December 3	End of Trimester I
Early December	Progress and planning conferences for students who are promotion-in-doubt (scheduled prior to all other progress conferences). These meeting will be extended, involving a deeper dive into data and evidence and the construction of a home/school action plan.
Mid-December	Progress conferences for all other students
Late February	Progress and planning conferences for students who are promotion-in-doubt These meeting will be extended, involving a deeper dive into data and evidence and the revision or construction of a home/school action plan.
March 4	End of Trimester II
Early March	Progress conferences for all other students
April/May	Additional progress and planning conferences for students who are promotion-in-doubt, as needed
Late May	Promotion determinations, and required or recommended summer intervention plans, provided to parents and caregivers in writing, meeting as needed NYS assessments results will be shared with parents/guardians once received by the school in written format, provided in person or via mail. Results will be taken under consideration for final of promotion/retention determinations.

Exit Standards: Below are sample exit standards based on Common Core Learning Standards:

### Sample Exit Standards

Subject	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
ELA	Use specific evidence from a text to compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama.	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
ELA	Write a well-structured essay that expresses an opinion, supporting a point of view with specific reasons and information.	Write a narrative that engages and orients the reader by establishing context and point of view through a narrator and/or Characters.
Math	Add, subtract, multiply, and divide decimals to the hundredths place using concrete models or drawings and strategies based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.	Solve linear equations with rational number coefficients, including equations whose solutions require expanding expressions using the distributive property and collecting like terms.
Math	Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem. Use benchmark fractions and number sense of fractions to estimate mentally and assess the reasonableness of answers.	Use rational approximations of irrational numbers to compare the size of irrational numbers, locate them approximately on a number line diagram, and estimate the value of expressions.
Social Studies	Understand the basic ideals of American democracy as explained in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and other important documents.	Compare the ideals of American democracy in foundational documents to the reality of contemporary practices in government and society.
Social Studies	Identify and compare the physical, human, and cultural characteristics of different regions and people.	Understand the characteristics, functions, and applications of maps, globes, aerial and other photographs, satellite-produced images, and models.
Science	Generate "why" questions to seek greater understanding concerning objects and events they have observed and heard about and design strategies to answer their questions.	Construct explanations independently for natural phenomena, especially by proposing preliminary visual models of phenomena.

Subject	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Science	Describe objects, imaginary or real, that might be modeled or made differently and suggest ways in which the objects can be changed, fixed, or improved.	Explain how different aspects of natural and designed systems change at different rates with changes in scale.

## **F. School Culture and Climate**

Explicit in *GACSP's Mission and Objectives Statement*, is its commitment to building a culture of success—success in school and success in life. Expectations will be high for all—scholars, teachers, staff, parents and Board members—and the atmosphere will be supportive, ensuring that all can succeed. Bringing our best selves to school each day is integral to the mission. It is the School Culture and Climate that both foster and encourage this “attitude of success”.

Our HEART Core Values of **H**ard-work, **E**ngagement, **A**ccountability, **R**espectfulness and **T**houghtfulness will provide the framework for our school culture, climate and discipline procedures and policy. Our number one priority is to create a safe and supportive environment where all scholars can grow, learn and achieve both academically and socially to their fullest potential.

**Character Education Program:** “Intelligence plus character—that should be the goal of true education.” Martin Luther King provided the vision and researchers today have supported it. In fact, recent findings show that effective character education not only promotes safety but also enhances the academic goals of schools. Good character education is good education. Recognizing that education is best when it takes into account the whole-child and, assessing the most current research regarding the link to academic success and character education<sup>9</sup> *GACSP's* character education program will utilize the latest research from top scholars in the field. It will be informed, but not limited to, the work of Dr. Thomas Lickona and his *Center for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Rs (Respect and Responsibility)*, State University of New York (SUNY) Cortlandt which will provide an overall framework for the *Guardian Academy's* character curriculum and will draw heavily from the work of the Character Education Partnership (CEP) which The school climate will be built around and assessed against the *Center's* twelve point approach: caring beyond the classroom; school, parents and community as partners; creating a culture of excellence and ethics; an ethical learning community; character based discipline; a democratic classroom environment; teaching character through the curriculum; cooperative learning; conscience of craft; ethical reflection; teaching conflict resolution; the teacher as caregiver, model mentor. The Center provides both implementation plans and assessment tools that may be adapted to individual school needs. However, since character education will be the pillar upon which the school climate and culture stands, behind any program or plan will be a real understanding that *character counts all the time* and must be integrated into everything we do.

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<sup>9</sup> Merle Schwartz, Ed.D, Alexandra Beatty & Eileen Dachnowicz, 2005

An effective character education program that drives curriculum recognizes both *performance character* and *moral character*—doing the best work and doing the right thing.<sup>10</sup> Research shows that the two work hand in hand to drive achievement in the classroom and beyond.<sup>11</sup> “Striving for excellence (performance character) and striving for ethical behavior (moral character) helps all educators see character education as central to their daily work.”<sup>12</sup>

We will use this definition of character to inspire yearly themes incorporating both performance character strength and a moral character strength. Having a yearly theme will inform the curriculum and provide a variety of academic opportunities for integration across the curriculum. Sample themes may include: *Be Curious, Be Kind; Try Hard, Help Others; Stay-focused, Be Honest.*

Themes are clear and concise and both teachers and staff will be expected to implement them throughout the classroom and the school; themes will be posted, referenced and assessed throughout the year and a variety of school-wide assemblies and community assemblies will help ensure that the theme is integrated into the culture and climate of the school.

To give scholars and staff an impactful reminder of our core values in addition to the yearly themes, the Guardian Academy will be a community with HEART (**H**ard-working; **E**ngaged; **A**ccountable; **R**espectful; **T**houghtful) and, those traits will be reflected in everything we do—driving both the school culture and the academic plan.

Our HEART model will also help to keep all on track (*How’s your HEART, today?; Have you checked your HEART rate?; You’ve got to have HEART! etc.*) reminding all of the mission and helping all to self-monitor.

**Staffing and Training:** Demonstrating our commitment to the importance of character education in building a culture of success, one of our key staffing positions will be our Character Education and School Culture Coordinator. This position will be filled in Year 1. This staff member will be responsible for fostering, maintaining and assessing the GACSP’s unique school culture as well as arranging and implementing a Staff Development Plan to ensure teachers and staff have the tools they need make character education effective and the building of school culture top priorities.

**Community Building:** Building community from within the school walls and outside will be vital to the success of our scholars. Cultural, ethnic and language diversity will be celebrated for the strengths they contribute to the GACSP community, while there will also be a real sense that despite our differences, we are stronger when we all contribute to the common goal. Uniforms help create a sense of identity and belonging while taking the focus off exterior concerns. Daily school-wide morning meetings complete with chants, songs, oaths, team-building exercises, that most importantly focus on yearly themes and our HEART model will remind all of the expectations and the joy of learning together. Achievements will be celebrated and family and

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas Lickona and Matthew Davidson, 2005

<sup>11</sup> Benninga, Berkowitz, Khuen & Smith, *The Relationship of Character Education, Implementation and Academic Achievement in Elementary Schools*, 2003

<sup>12</sup> Lickona and Davidson, *Smart and Good: Integrating Performance Character and Moral Character in Schools*, 2005

Peekskill community members will be encouraged to attend and support our scholars. Frequent family and community events such as meal-sharing, guest speaker nights, and performances will engage and inform.

**Discipline:** We will establish clear expectations for behavior based on our HEART model. Our discipline policy will focus on developing the moral character of students. Students will be asked to refer back to their HEART (are they working hard, engaged, being accountable, being respectful, being thoughtful) Using this model we can implement an effective discipline system, the purpose of which is to ensure that students are productive learners and develop habits to ensure future success. Consequences will be clear and consistent. Behaviors that disrupt learning will not be tolerated. Students will have the opportunity for self reflection. Students will reflect on their behavior based on the HEART model and school character theme for the year. Students will be required to reflect age appropriately (verbally or in writing) about what happened and what HEART or school year theme elements were not implemented. They will also reflect on alternative actions they should have taken. Students will be required to take responsibility for their actions. Amends will be based on the infraction and may include an apology or similar action to repair any harm done.

Not only must the consequence be clear and consistent, there must be meaningful follow-through. A code of conduct (see Attachment 4) will be disseminated to all families as part of the Family Handbook; it will be printed in multiple languages and parents will be expected to sign for it to demonstrate that they have received and read it. The code will spell out consequences for infractions based on their severity and frequency. Behaviors that disrupt learning, harm physical and emotional well-being, and diminish the common good will not be tolerated. Our guiding policy is to be fair, firm and consistent in the application of discipline for inappropriate behavior. We recognize the vast emotional and moral development of students between Kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Consequences will be developmentally appropriate. Teachers will be trained in the discipline system at the beginning of the year and, based on regular observation, receive critical feedback and suggestions to ensure adherence to this policy. Consequences for minor infractions such as inappropriate language or failure to follow directions may include:

- verbal warnings
- removal from group activities
- silent meals
- detention
- communication with parents/guardians

Consequences for more serious infractions such as intentional physical harm or threats, sustained disruptions or disrespect, or destruction of property may include:

- removal from class
- parent/guardian conferences
- suspension
- expulsion

Regardless of the type of infractions, all consequences will include opportunities for reflection and reconciliation to maintain connections with learning and the school community. The school will create time and tools to support and document reflection, e.g., verbal reflection protocols for younger students or incident reflection forms that require older students to write what happened, what rules and virtues were violated, and what alternative actions could have been taken. Reconciliation will include apologies and/or action related to the harm done.

Students who are suspended will be provided with alternative instruction.

**Due Process:** *GACSP* Code of Conduct describes in detail the steps that will be taken to discipline scholars as well as scholars' and parents' rights in this process. Students will be told of all charges against them and asked for their side of the story. The School Leader or other school official shall consider this explanation prior to taking disciplinary action. For some minor infractions parents may be merely notified and/or a conference requested to assist in resolving the situation. For more serious issues that involve removal of scholar from participation in the school, parents will always be notified and have opportunities to discuss and appeal the disciplinary action. In cases where the scholar has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified.

**Short-Term Suspension:** The School Leader may suspend any scholar for up to ten school days for serious cause. The school staff involved shall make reasonable efforts to verify facts and statements prior to recommending suspension. The School Leader will present the student and his or her parents/guardians with the reasons and evidence for suspension and provide an informal opportunity to respond to the charges prior to the suspension.

The School Leader may then, at his or her discretion, decide to impose lesser consequences than suspension.

**Long-Term Suspension:** The School Leader may suspend a scholar for over ten days for serious cause after the student has been found guilty at a formal hearing. The School Leader or a delegate will preside over the hearing and all members of the staff who were involved in witnessing the alleged discipline violation are required to participate. The student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses and present evidence. A decision by the School Leader will stand as the final decision regarding the scholar's long-term suspension status, though the scholar's family has the right to appeal to the Board of Trustees.

**Expulsion:** If the School Leader decides that an infraction warrants expulsion, a hearing as described above will be held. Based on that hearing, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which will make the final decision. That decision may be appealed to the Board. We will comply with all Federal and State laws regarding long term suspensions and expulsions of students.

**Students with Disabilities:** *GACSP* disciplinary policy (see Attachment 4) for students with disabilities is in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and school staff will work closely with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) to ensure all scholars are treated justly. Any time the behavior of a student with a disability requires a disciplinary action, an assessment will be made to ensure the discipline does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement, and that the scholar is not suspended or removed for behaviors related to the disability. If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability. A scholar whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP does not appear to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the scholar or others, the matter will be immediately referred to the CSE for consideration of a change in the guidelines. Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination and the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of

the hearing. While students with disabilities are suspended, the school will provide alternative instruction, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum.

**Evaluating School Culture and Climate:** With an emphasis on data-collection, *GACSP* will be able to collect, monitor and assess practices and procedures in order to make continuous improvements in the program. Staff will make use of surveys and will dialogue regularly with parents and the community at large to gauge perceptions about school climate and culture. Data collected from various recognition activities, student conduct, class conduct will also help to assess the efficacy of the character education program. *The Center for the Fourth and Fifth R's* provides assessment materials that will inform the creation of a *GACSP* character report card which will help scholars and parents monitor individual progress as well as clearly reflect the priority the school will place upon the development of a character that leads to success.

### **G. Special Student Populations and Related Services**

Inherent in *GACSP's* mission is the celebration of diversity as strength. We acknowledge and celebrate that scholars have a range of abilities and talents. In order to meet diverse scholar need, every grade level has a team of four teachers. Each team will include one ELL teacher and one Special Education teacher. We will also have an ELL Coordinator and a Student Support Coordinator on staff. With inclusion and integration as our goal, scholar IEP needs, including speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, will be met by specialists who will push in to the classroom whenever allowable under a student's IEP, though we recognize that some services (e.g., counseling, most speech therapy) may require pull-out.

This grouping of professional talent is classroom-based and serves all student-populations well including the general education, ELL, and Special Education scholars. Four person teaching teams working with grade-levels of fifty students are afforded the opportunity for maximum levels of differentiation. These differentiated groupings allow scholars who are academically advanced to proceed at their fastest pace with students of similar ability, while at-risk scholars can be given the attention and support they need to achieve.

We believe the most direct student contact with knowledgeable professionals provides a proactive approach that helps prevent academic failure by embedding intervention practices daily. Since teacher teams have an ELL and Special Education teacher, early identification and intervention occurs swiftly. Because teams meet often and are responsible for all scholars, they become intervention problem solvers.

The Special Education teacher is the lead teacher responsible for tracking students with disabilities and the ELL teacher is responsible for ELL students.

A range of interventions at *GACSP* will include:

- **Small group instruction:** While all scholars at *GACSP* will participate in small group instruction, at-risk students may be placed in specialized groups smaller than that of their peers
- **One to one instruction:** Thanks to *GACSP's* four-person teaching teams, one-to-one instruction more manageable than in other classrooms.

- **Student Action Plan:** Teaching teams will analyze scholar profiles with multi-dimensional formal assessments to identify the scholar strengths and weaknesses to inform instruction and create an action plan.

- **After school and summer instructional opportunities:** *GACSP* will work with families to find affordable and convenient support and, as a short-term goal will explore putting in-house *GACSP* related programs and opportunities in place as we grow.

**Response to Intervention:** We will use a Response to Intervention (RTI) model to identify and monitor scholars at risk of not attaining grade level standards. Multiple strategies will be attempted by classroom teachers and specialists before any scholar is referred for evaluation for special education. Once a scholar is determined to have a disability by the district’s CSE, the school will commit to implementing each scholar’s IEP with fidelity. Goals and strategies will be shared with classroom teachers and our certified Special Education teacher will provide additional support in and outside the classroom. We will provide any necessary related services for the scholars who require them.

RTI will be used as a guiding procedural framework because it embraces both general and special education. Essential components of RTI at *GACSP* may include:

- Standards/Evidence-Based Core Curriculum and Instruction
- Ongoing Assessment
- Collaborative Team Teaching
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Fidelity of Implementation: Three Tiered Instruction
- Ongoing Training and Professional Development
- Community and Family Involvement

We will employ a RTI model based on iterative cycles of intervention and analysis using a standard three tier approach.

- **Tier 1 - High-Quality Classroom Instruction:** Teachers use differentiated instructional strategies, learning activities and curriculum materials to address the needs of all students. Our co-teaching approach provides frequent opportunities for targeted support to individuals or small groups within the classroom. Unit preview meetings allow grade level teams to adjust lessons in anticipation of students’ pre-existing skills and knowledge and ongoing formative assessment inform adjustments to pacing, materials, activities and assessment.
- **Tier 2 - Targeted Interventions:** During the daily differentiated periods teachers will group scholars according to their specific needs. This provides scholars with alternative instructional methods, materials and pacing. Differentiation provides opportunities for both struggling scholars and advanced students who would benefit from extension activities to augment what they are learning in their regular classes. Once again, our uniquely designed co-teaching model provides for maximum support and flexibility. In addition, Student Support Teachers with Special Education and/or ELL experience will provide both push-in and pull-out support in one-on-one and small group settings. They will coordinate their work with classroom teachers to ensure we maintain a single level of expectation for all scholars. We will also seek volunteers to tutor scholars during and after school.

- **Tier 3 - Intensive Interventions:** The goal of Tier 3 is remediation of severe problems that require intensive and sustained intervention. For example, we anticipate in our first years of operation most Tier 3 students may require intensive one-on-one reading programs, such as Wilson Reading or the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program.

Scholars may experience multiple cycles within a given tier before a decision is made to move to the next tier. The RTI processes will be managed by the Student Support Coordinator. Grade level teams will hold weekly RTI meetings with Special Education and ELL teachers to identify struggling students, select an appropriate tier and intervention(s), and establish measurable goals to gauge impact. In subsequent meetings, they will review changes in student performance and decide whether to continue the intervention or try alternative strategies. Quality data collection and analysis is critical to the success of RTI; teachers will use all of the assessment tools at their disposal to create and refine accurate understanding of students' strengths and areas for growth.

Our RTI process is directly linked to our services for both students with disabilities and English language learners. Our approach to RTI will be informed by the practices described in *A Cultural, Linguistic and Ecological Framework for Response to Intervention with English Language Learners*, which requires

- a systematic process for examining the background variables or ecologies that impact academic achievement;
- appropriate classroom instruction and culture based on knowledge of individual student factors
- informal and formal assessments and nondiscriminatory interpretation of assessment data (Esparza-Brown and Doolittle, 2008).

Below we discuss our specific supports and services for students with disabilities and English language learners.

**Special Education:** Since teacher teams have an ELL and Special Education teacher, early identification and intervention occurs systematically using the above-described process. We believe using this three-tier structure, will avoid many scholars from being labeled as needing special education services. However, if the teacher teams, having executed student action plans and teaching strategies in the three tier process, are not successful in promoting scholar achievement, a scholar will be considered for special education evaluation. The scholar's teacher team along with the Student Support Coordinator, will share all pertinent data, actions and interventions with administration, parents, and other involved school staff. It must be ruled out that the scholar's struggle is due to inadequacies in instruction or in the curriculum. At the above meeting, a decision will be made whether to recommend the scholar to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or try a different approach/intervention.

If a determination is made that a scholar should be referred for special education evaluation, the Student Support Coordinator will meet with the CSE and share all data and information to support its evaluation and/or Individual Education Program (IEP) development processes. We

recognize that the school itself cannot make a determination, and will work closely with the CSE to provide all necessary information to support its evaluation and IEP development processes. The Student Support Coordinator will be the scholar's advocate and act as a liaison between the CSE, GACSP and parents to ensure open two-way communication is established. In this way, we hope to establish a trusting relationship with parents so we can share understandings around initial evaluation and subsequent provisional services that may help them to decide to sign off on these services or not. We understand they may be reticent and apprehensive while wanting what is best for their child. We will assure parents that the Student Support Coordinator will make sure that all documents are securely locked and that all discussions are confidential. The Student Support Coordinator will share all information and recommendations with the team teachers, service providers and appropriate staff members and monitor subsequent student growth and actions that were decided upon in regular IEP reviews. If GACSP cannot provide a service for a student, it will work with CSE and CBOs to contract service providers, including but not limited to providers for: speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling.

Student Support Coordinator and Special Education teachers will provide professional development to their teams by suggesting appropriate interventions/strategies during the vetting of lessons. If that is insufficient to educate teachers, the Students Support Coordinator and Special Education teacher will suggest professional development topics to the School Leader for more formal learning opportunities, such as workshops, study groups or webinars.

Finally, all Special Education teachers and the Student Support Coordinator will meet at least once a month to coordinate communication with the CSE, compare notes, and share strategies.

### **Special Education Program Evaluation:**

A team of school leaders comprised of the School Leader, Student Support Coordinator, and all Special Education teachers and the Data Coordinator will use assessments to disaggregate data in order to assess the efficacy of the special needs program and monitor progress towards achievement of IEP goals. Data will be viewed at a minimum of two times a year by this team and individual results shared with parents and aggregate results with the Board of Trustees. Data sources used are multidimensional as listed above in the Assessment and RTI sections. In addition, authentic, diagnostic and formative assessments are regularly analyzed in teacher teams.

**English Language Learners:** Given the growing immigrant population in Peekskill, many from Latin America, we anticipate that a large number of students may come from Spanish speaking homes. These parents are generally very supportive of their child learning English and we intend to use multiple approaches that match different entering levels of proficiency. For example, some students may have recently arrived in this country having been schooled in their home language but have no English language knowledge or skills whereas others may have no formal education experience but speak rudimentary English without any writing skills. As noted in the prior Assessment section, we will use the diagnostic LAB-R test to determine which

students are English language learners as well as their entering proficiency level: Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced.

We intend to use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model, a research-based approach demonstrated to work with ELL students.<sup>13</sup> SIOP was developed in a national research project sponsored by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) and funded by the U.S. Department of Education; it has been refined over several years of field testing. SIOP identifies the elements of sheltered instruction under eight broad categories:

- a. **Preparation:** As described in the Curriculum and Instruction section, teachers develop specific content and language objectives for content and language that are aligned with standards and unit goals. Teachers incorporate supplemental materials to assist ELLs in the lesson.
- b. **Building Background:** Through direct questioning, conversation, and shared activities teachers learn about student background, emphasize key content vocabulary, and help students make explicit connections to personalize new word learning.
- c. **Comprehensible Input:** Linguistic input – both teacher speech and text – is adjusted to maximize student comprehension, without lessening content or expectations for achievement. Teachers first simplify their language to make content accessible and then gradually make their language more complex, building student understanding and use of subject specific vocabulary and concepts.
- d. **Strategies:** Teaching explicit learning strategies improves reading and learning and helps ELLs acquire the tools they need to approach learning tasks and solve problems with assistance, as part of a team or independently. Our use of the workshop model allows for the use of multiple strategies.
- e. **Interaction:** Sheltered lessons provide frequent opportunities for students to interact with different groups of peers and others. An aspect of character education is a focus on helping others, which supports peer learning.
- f. **Practice/Application:** Lessons provide opportunities to practice and apply both language skills and content knowledge. Teachers create activities that call upon students to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- g. **Lesson Delivery:** Teachers refer to and reinforce content and language objectives explicitly throughout the lesson and engage students by keeping the pace of the lesson challenging, but do-able, for all students.
- h. **Review and Assessment:** Teachers use multiple methods to evaluate learning, including the use of rubrics aligned with both content and language objectives.

The efficacy of this approach depends on our teachers' capacity to learn about and incorporate the prior knowledge of ELLs into instruction and use spiraling and scaffolding techniques within purposeful lessons with clear objectives. Teachers also need to learn about scholars' cultures

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<sup>13</sup> Echevarria, Short & Vogt, 1999, 2004

and community and how these contexts affect their ways of learning. Our ELL Coordinator will be responsible for training teachers in this approach during the Summer Staff Institute and continuing support through professional development during the year. Each grade level team will have one ELL specialist to provide scaffolded support to ELL students and help the other teachers on the team implement SIOP strategies.

Students who arrive with little to no English language proficiency will participate in intensive supplemental intervention programs, such as Wilson Reading or Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). The ELL teachers, along with the ELL Coordinator, will work with small groups for daily doses of instruction either during the enrichment period and/or during other subjects. This will allow students to build basic skills quickly so they can benefit more fully from the SIOP methods used in their regular classroom. Students may also be identified for refresher interventions as needed.

**ELL Program Evaluation:** A team comprised of the School Leader, the ELL Coordinator, all ELL teachers, and the Data Assessment Coordinator, will use assessments to disaggregate data in order to assess the efficacy of the ELL program. Data will be viewed at a minimum of three times a year by this team and results shared with parents and Board of Directors. Data sources used are multidimensional as listed in the above Assessment and RTI sections. In addition authentic diagnostic and formative assessments are regularly analyzed in teacher teams and led by the ELL Teacher.

**III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN**

**A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity**

<b>Applicant(s)/Founding Group</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Current employment</b>	<b>Relevant experience/skills and role on founding group</b>	<b>Proposed role(s) if any</b>
Audrey Warn	Advancement Director and Special Projects Coordinator, Assumption Church	Institutional Advancement/Fundraising, communications, school marketing and recruiting Facilitator and leadership coordinator. Board development and volunteer leadership coordination. Administrative experience.	Board Member
Stefania Raschella	Archdiocese of NY; Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent of Schools/ Director of Strategic Planning	PreK- 6 Grade Certified teacher; Elementary Education and School Building Leadership; Business: Sales Analyst; Account Coordinator; Account Executive. Administrative experience.	Board Member

Natalie DiPaulo	Yonkers Public School District; Science Teacher	Certified Science Teacher Grades 7-12; Will obtain her Ed.S degree in Leadership for Social Change in Education.	Board Member
Carlos Martinez	Retired NYC Law Enforcement	Law Enforcement; Community Organizing; Peekskill Youth Bureau Board Member; Leadership skills	Board Member
Jamie Sanchez	Student; Intern;	Finance and Accounting; Community organizing and Leadership skills	Board Member
Jose Rodrigues, J.D.	Retired NYS Senior Court Officer; NYS Supreme Court Officer	Compliance; Legal expertise; Volunteer organization and Leadership	Board Member
Phil Whalen	Principal/Owner Key Real Estate Associates	Organizational management and leadership; fundraising; real estate management; extensive non-profit board member experience	Board Member
Ellen Bennett	Retired Senior Manager, Compliance Investigations, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals	Certification in Healthcare Compliance;. Experience as a Paralegal and Operations Manager	Advisor/Committee Member
Larry DeNoia	Founder/Owner,ITI Strategies;	Certified Financial Planner Extensive community leadership experience. .	Advisor/Committee Member
Timothy Kennon	President/Owner, McVicker & Higginbotham	Direct marketing specializing in non-profit fundraising. Extensive community leadership and Board service experience.	Advisor/Committee Member
Kathleen Shea Kennon	Assistant Dean, Fordham University School of Business	Academic Dean; writer; extensive volunteer Board leadership experience.	Advisor/Committee Member
Vivek Chandrasekhar	Associate, Roberts & Holland LLP	Fomer Teach for America high school mathematics teacher; Lawyer	Advisor/Committee Member

We are a group of concerned individuals drawn from different fields, faiths and backgrounds, working together to increase quality educational options for underserved families of Peekskill. We have been meeting and discussing ways to improve schools for the diverse children of Peekskill for 17 months and this has culminated in this proposal to open a charter school to

serve them. Audrey Warn submitted an RFP as Lead Applicant to the NYSED Charter School Office during Round I of the 2013. Unfortunately, the proposed Board was not asked to capacity interviews and, decided to withdraw the application. After analyzing the NYSED feedback, a strategically expanded founding group, including some of the same members, came together to continue to explore ways to bring educational choice to the families of Peekskill. The new group has met at least monthly since June 2013 adding members and advisors. The current proposed Board has worked diligently to respond to the NYSED feedback and learn all they can about quality charter schools and the chartering process. The Lead Applicant attended the *Northeast Charter Schools Network Conference* in October, and along with various Board members has visited a wide variety of charter schools including Amani Charter School, Newburgh Preparatory Charter High School, Success Academy, and the Harlem Link Charter School. We met with school leaders and other key administrative staff, were given ample time to ask questions and foster relationships. Audrey Warn also acted as the independent observer for the Amani Charter School Lottery. We have sought the counsel of a local charter expert, availed ourselves of a variety of on-line resources and worked with the New York Charter School Incubator to develop this RFP. All along, we have continued to speak to families and leaders in the community about their educational needs and desires. This document truly represents the collaborative effort of the proposed board while reflecting the assessed needs of the community.

**B. Board of Trustees and Governance**

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**Proposed Founding Board of Trustees**

Trustee Name	Voting Y/N	Proposed Position on the board (e.g., officer or constituent representative)	Proposed Length of initial term
Audrey Warn	Y	Chairman	3 yrs
Stefania Raschella	Y	Vice Chairman	3 yrs
Jamie Sanchez	Y	Treasurer	3 yrs
Natalie DiPaolo	Y	TBD	3 yrs
Carlos Martinez	Y	Secretary	2 yrs
Jose Rodrigues, J.D.	Y	TBD	2 yrs
Phil Whalen	Y	TBD	2 yrs
John T. Greenan	Y	TBD	2 yrs

**Qualifications:** Our proposed board has expertise in the areas of education, law, accounting, business, fundraising, non-profit and school management and governance, labor relations, housing, law enforcement, youth development and community organizing.

- **Audrey C. Warn:** has worked for the past 7 years in community building and social justice. She has a background in institutional advancement and communications and school marketing and recruitment. She has developed fundraising boards and has skills as a facilitator and leadership coordinator. As a mother of three who has served children in a

variety of ways, she knows first-hand of the great potential that exists in every child regardless of background or circumstance, and she knows full-well the challenges many face when they do not receive the support they need to be successful. Having grown up in Peekskill, she has extensive ties to the community and has served on the Historical Preservation Advisory Committee, as a political party district leader and as past president of Assumption School's Parent Association. She currently works at Assumption Church but intends to resign from that position to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest.

- **Carlos Martinez:** had a 21-year career in law enforcement culminating as the Commanding Officer, 42nd Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York. He is an associate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy and a member of the Sergeant Benevolent Association. A 36-year resident of Peekskill, he serves on the Peekskill Youth Bureau Board. He is a veteran of the United States Army Signal Corps serving from 1963 to 1966 and achieving the rank of Sergeant.
- **Jamie J. Sanchez:** is the bilingual son of Ecuadorian immigrants and a product of the Peekskill Public Schools. He is a model of the type of student Guardian Academy hopes to produce. He is currently pursuing his goal of becoming a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), he is in the Bachelor of Business Administration—Public Accounting Program with a minor in Finance at Pace University, where he holds offices in the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) and the Robert S. Pace Accounting Society. He has held an internship at Deloitte and Touche LLP through the Stamford Mentor Program—a highly selective program offered to students who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and strong academic performance. He will be graduating in January 2015.
- **Stefania Raschella:** has over 12 years experience in education and leadership. Served as Assistant Principal at Holy Rosary School in Bronx, NY for 7 years. She holds two Masters Degrees in Elementary Education and School Building Leadership and Permanent Certification in Pre K through 6th Grade; NYS Professional Certification in School Building Leadership. Prior to her education career, was as Sales Analyst, Account Coordinator and, Account Executive. Currently, she is the Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York and the Director of Strategic Planning. She served as the moderator of her church's youth group for 12 years.
- **Natalie DiPaolo:** has twelve years of teaching experience in middle school, high school, and adult settings. Currently a science teacher in the Yonkers Public School District, she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the College of Mt. St. Vincent and obtained her Masters of Science in Education from the University of Bridgeport. She began her teaching career in a small satellite school in New York City and has experience teaching General Science and Biology/Living Environment to grades 7-12. Prior to her education career, she was a surgical appliance technician who taught diabetic patients in the New York City hospitals to monitor their blood glucose levels. Natalie will obtain her Ed.S degree in Leadership for Social Change in Education. Her focus is on teacher education and meeting the needs of all students in a multicultural science classroom.

- **Phil Whalen:** is a principal of Key Real Estate Associates, LLC, a Real Estate and Brokerage firm, for the last 10 years. He purchased the firm after having been its Chief Operating Officer. Phil began his career in real estate while working for the then Bowery Savings Bank in NYC. He graduated cum laude from Fordham University with a B.A. degree in Math and Science. Phil sits on several charitable and not-for-profit boards, primarily in New York State and will be a key member of the facilities task force charged with assisting in our facility search and leasing and will be key member of the facilities task force charged with assisting in our facility search and leasing.
- **John C. Greenan:** is Executive Director of the Dutchess County Association of REALTORS®. He founded “Fuel”, the association’s first professional networking group. He serves a number of charitable and community organizations ranging from Big Brothers, Big Sisters, to The Hub—a young professionals association, to the Firemen’s Association. Named *Top 40 under 40* by Dutchess County Chamber of Commerce for professional and community accomplishments. His roots are in Peekskill and he maintains extensive ties to the city. Like Phil he will be essential in assisting in our facility search and identifying which facility option is the best value for our students. Like Phil he will be essential in assisting in our facility search and identifying which facility option is the best value for our students.

#### **Proposed Advisory Board/Committee Members**

- **Ellen Bennett:** Almost 20 years of experience working in the pharmaceutical industry with 14-year focus on corporate compliance programs and investigation of allegations of misconduct. Developed training programs to promote ethical behavior in the work place; holds certification in Healthcare Compliance. Experience as a Paralegal and Operations Manager.
- **Larry DeNoia:** Founder of ITI Strategies, Inc (Investment, Tax, Insurance Strategies) and Certified Financial Planner for over 25 years. Held leadership positions in community to include: Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce, Paramount Center for the Arts, Lincoln Society and Rotary Club.
- **Kate Shea Kennon:** Assistant Dean, Fordham University School of Business. Contributing Writer to the *Cape Cod Times*. Board Member of Origins Theatre Company, Westchester Swim Conference, Fordham University Association.
- **Timothy Kennon:** President/Owner of McVicker & Higginbotham, Inc.—direct marketing company specializing in fundraising print and mail for the arts and cultural, education and healthcare markets. Pres. Association of Marketing Services Providers, NY Chapter; VP Direct Marketing Fundraisers Association; advisor to Board of Directors, Marketing Club of New York.
- **Vivek Chandrasekhar:** Upon graduation from Indiana University, following which he worked as a high school mathematics teacher in North Carolina for two years through Teach for America. After attending law school at NYU, he now works as an associate at Roberts & Holland LLP.

**Responsibilities:** Guardian Academy Charter Board Members and are aware and committed to the following duties of governance:

- **Duty of Care:** Board members act in good faith and exercise the degree of diligence, care, and skill that an ordinary prudent individual would use.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** Board members further the institution's goals and not the member's personal or business interests; self-dealing breaches fiduciary responsibility.
- **Duty of Obedience:** Board members insure that the institution's resources are dedicated to the fulfillment of its mission. The members also have a duty to ensure that the institution complies with all applicable laws and does not engage in any unauthorized activities.

The specific roles and responsibilities of our board members include:

- Oversight of the financial, organizational, and academic programs of the school
- Attendance at board meetings to fulfill quorum requirements
- Review of board materials and preparation for board meetings
- Active involvement in board deliberations and votes
- Participation in at least one board committee
- Hiring and evaluation of the Principal
- Advising school management
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and adhering to the code of ethics
- Confidentiality related to staff and student issues
- Meaningful contributions to the school
- Advocacy for the school
- Access to personal networks

**Governance Practice and Procedures:** In order to limit simultaneous turnover over of Board members, the terms of the Founding Trustees will be staggered ; thereafter, all Board members will serve for three year terms. Sitting board members may elect new board members; qualities they will seek in new board members include: passion for the mission, commitment to attend meetings and conduct the work of the Board, respect for confidentiality and transparency where appropriate, inter-personal skills, and a willingness to roll up their sleeves and help the school succeed. The Board will have four officers—Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary—who will comprise the Executive Committee, alongside another appointed member, alongside another appointed member. The Board will also have the following standing committees: Finance Committee to monitor and oversee and oversee the schools budget and finances, Academic Accountability Committee to focus on implementation of the education plan and achievement of accountability goals, and Governance Committee to focus on the effectiveness of the Board and recruitment and nomination of additional Board members. The Board may create additional committees as needed, such as a Fundraising or Facility Committee.

The Governance Committee will monitor the composition of the Board to ensure its diversity and its members possess the skills and experience needed to govern the school. No outside organization or group will be allowed a majority role on the board.

Our board members are and will be selected based on the following qualifications:

- Commitment to the mission and design of the school.
- Ability to attend board and committee meetings and volunteer for board work outside those meetings.
- Experience and expertise in a relevant field, such as: education, business, management, finance/accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing/public relations, fundraising, and/or community relations or organizing.
- Experience with data-driven decision making and accountability.
- Interpersonal skills and comfort with a consensus process.
- At least 18 years of age.

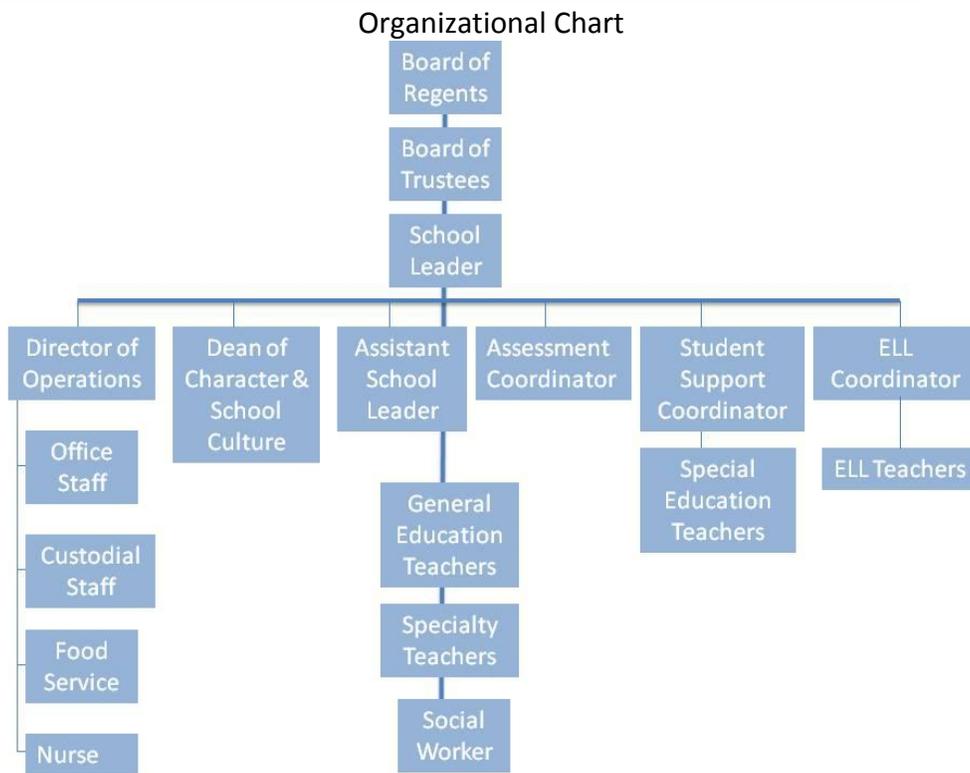
Once the school is operational the board will meet monthly. The Board will adhere to the Open Meetings Law: meeting dates and agendas will be publicized in advance, Board meetings will be open to the public, and Board members will go into private executive session only for appropriate reasons authorized by statute or Open Meetings Law authorized by statute or the Open Meetings Law. The School Leader will present a “state of the school” report at each meeting and the Board will receive regular data related to the academic, organizational and financial performance of the school. It will monitor enrollment and attendance as a gauge of parent satisfaction and to ensure sufficient revenue to support the school program. The board will also survey parents at least annually to learn their feelings about school policies and practices and the strength of the community. The Board’s Finance Committee will regularly scrutinize financial reports to make sure it is within the parameters of the Board-approved budget and adequate funds are available to maintain cash flow.

**Board Development:** We are committed to developing and maintaining effective governance practices and procedures. Each new Board member will be provided with information about the school, including a copy of the approved charter, by-laws, code of conduct and board policies. It will be the Board’s Executive Committee that will be responsible for orienting new members their role and the operations of the Board. The officers of the Board will discuss the primary responsibilities and expectations of individual Board members with the new Board members and new Board members will be assigned to one or more of the standing committees and made aware of their responsibilities. The Board will also undertake regular training that takes into consideration the needs of individual Board members, as well as the needs of the Board as a whole, we intend to undergo early trainings in charter school roles and responsibilities, charter law and ethics, the Open Meetings Law, academic and financial oversight, evaluating the school leader, school dashboard development, and the board’s role in fundraising, among others we intend to undergo early trainings in charter school roles and responsibilities, charter law ethics, the Open Meeting Law, academic and financial oversight, evaluating the school leader, school dashboard development, and the Board’s role in fundraising, among others. Given our proximity to New York City and the many successful charter schools there, we will explore opportunities to connect with other boards, participate in governance workshops and conferences, and access resources such as the New York Charter Schools Incubator, New York City Charter Schools Center and the Northeast Charter Schools Association.

**Parent and Staff Involvement:** The Board will encourage parent and staff input into the governance of the school. Board meetings will adhere to the Open Meeting Law and include an opportunity for public comment, and surveys of parents and staff will be used as part of school oversight and the School Leader’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.

**Recruitment, Orientation and Training:** Once the charter is approved, the Board will not have any representative or ex-officio positions that need to be filled. As needed the Board will recruit and vote on the appointment of new members who demonstrate adequate qualifications and commitment. All new trustees will receive orientation materials, including a copy of the charter, board member job description and committee descriptions, previous board meeting minutes and dashboards, and major polices. The Board members will undertake ongoing governance training to ensure all members have a common vision of their roles, responsibilities and best practices.

C. Management and Staffing



The GACSP Board of Trustees holds the charter contract with the Board of Regents; the Board hires the School Leader who is responsible for day-to-day management of the school and reports directly to the Board. The School Leader hires all other school staff. In the first year of operation, the School Leader will directly supervise the Director of Operations, Dean of School

Culture, Student Support Coordinator, ELL Coordinator and Assessment Coordinator classroom teachers. The Director of Operations supervises the nursing, office, custodial and food services personnel. The Student Support Coordinator supervises Special Education teachers and the Social Worker. In Year 3 the school will add an Assistant School Leader who will share responsibility for instructional leadership and faculty supervision with the School Leader, taking responsibility for either the elementary or middle school grades. An additional office clerk will be added in Year 4. The school intends to outsource some roles and responsibilities, including bookkeeping and accounting, payroll, auditing, and potentially some specific potentially some specific special education services such as speech or occupational therapy.

Below is our staffing plan for the first five years of operation:

### Staffing Plan

Position	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4	K-5
School Leader	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal			1	1	1
Dean of Character & School Culture	1	1	1	1	1
Assessment Coordinator		1	1	1	1
Student Support Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
ESL Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Operations	1	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Office Clerk				1	1
Social Worker		1	1	1	1
Nurse	1	1	1	1	1
Cafeteria	2	2	2	2	2
Custodial	1	1	2	2	2
General Ed. Teachers	4	6	8	10	12
Special Education Teachers	2	3	4	5	6
ELL Teachers	2	3	4	5	6
Specialty Teachers	2	2	2	3	3

We intend to hire a robust administrative team in Year 1 to put the school on a solid footing:

- The **School Leader** hires all staff and evaluates all other management positions. Our School Leader will be an instructional leader responsible for supervision of curriculum development and implementation as well as the organizational leader broadly responsible for financial and organizational strength. The School Leader, reports to the Board of Trustees and is the primary face of the school when interfacing with the public.
- The **Dean of Character and School Culture** assumes the lead role in instilling social/emotional learning and is responsible for establishing the school culture, training

teachers in the school's code of conduct and discipline policies and procedures, providing teachers with support and feedback regarding classroom management, and handling most discipline cases. He/she will be a primary contact for parents beyond their child's teacher. Along with the School Leader he/she will interface with community as well as coordinate marketing and recruiting efforts.

- The **Student Support Coordinator** is certified in special education and manages the special education program, including the RTI process, special education services, and communication with the CSE and parents. The Student Support Coordinator will supervise the Special Education teachers and will work as a team to manage the administration of Special Education services.
- The **ELL Coordinator** will train and support our ELL teachers and implement intensive intervention programs.
- The **Director of Operations** will manage all non-academic affairs of the school, including business functions, HR, transportation, and food services. He/she will supervise the front office staff, including the nurse and the custodial and cafeteria staff. The DOO will also coordinate the work of contracted services, such as bookkeeping, food services, and auditing.
- The **Assessment Coordinator** will provide leadership, ongoing development, improvement and evaluation of curriculum instruction and student data management. He/she will help schedule/coordinate/administer standardized assessments, evaluate data and coach teachers in instructional delivery systems, provide input for staff and curricula development; manage scholar data systems; assist school leader in the development of school created assessments; serve as liaison to parents with regard to assessments; assist in making formal reports.
- The **Assistant School Leader** will join in Year 3 to begin preparing for implementation of the middle school grades. As another instruction leader, the ASL adheres to and enforces board policy, school guidelines, and administrative directives; support overall school improvement process including teacher observation, modeling best practices and analyzing student data; supports and assists in monitoring implementation of RTI; assists in development, communication and implementation of discipline, conduct and attendance; performs other duties as defined by the School leader.
- The **General Education Teachers** will be responsible for the daily instruction and assessment of the scholars and will partner with ELL or Special Education certified co-teachers and work as part of a grade level team comprised of two general education teachers, an ELL teacher and a Special Education teacher.
- The **ELL Certified Teachers** will partner with General Education teachers to provide daily instruction and assessment of scholars with particular attention to the needs of the English Language Learners. They will join the General Education teachers and Special Education teacher to comprise the grade level team described above.

- **The Special Education Certified Teachers** will partner with a General Education teacher to provide daily instruction and assessment of scholars with particular attention to the needs of Special Education and at-risk scholars. They will work closely with both the General Education teachers and ELL teacher that will comprise the grade level team described above. They will work closely with the Special Education Coordinator.
- **The Specialty Teachers** will include physical education, arts teachers and a media specialist to assist teachers with technology integration. They will have a deep knowledge of their subject area and an ability to deliver instruction to all scholar populations; they will work closely with classroom teachers to integrate instruction whenever possible.

The School Leader, Assistant School Leader, Student Support Coordinator and ELL Coordinator will comprise the instructional leadership team and together plan and implement the professional development program, supervise and support teachers, and conduct faculty evaluations.

The Assessment Coordinator will join the leadership team in Year 2 and along with his/her responsibilities in planning scholar assessments and teacher coaching, will also provide input regarding the planning of professional development program and faculty evaluations.

The school will open with a PE and an Art (likely visual arts) teacher, adding another Art (likely music) teacher Year 4.

**Recruitment and Retention:** Talented leaders and teachers are critical to the success of high-quality charter schools. GACSP will conduct local and national searches for the best qualified faculty and staff utilizing job boards such as the ones hosted by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, National Charter School Resource Center and Chalkbeat New York, as well as advertising in local media outlets. We will also network with other high performing public, private and charter schools, most notably Westchester and Dutchess charter schools including Amani Public Charter School, Charter School for Educational Excellence and Newburgh Preparatory Charter High School.

Teacher retention will also be a top priority. Effective school leadership dedicated to retaining highly effective teachers increases teacher longevity and scholar success. In its *Irreplaceables Report*, the New Teacher Project recommends five strategies to retain “Irreplaceable” teachers.<sup>14</sup> GACSP will employ these strategies to retain our Irreplaceables

1. **Start the School Year with Great Expectations:** The best teachers want clarity; we will use start-of-year meeting time to rally teachers around a set of clear goals and expectations for excellent teaching. Teachers can expect to be observed frequently, expect honest assessments, and expect that ineffective teaching is not an option.
2. **Recognize Excellence Publically and Frequently:** We will set time in regular meetings to publicly celebrate teachers who have done exceptional work in the classroom or achieved a notable milestone with their scholars tying what they are doing to the school’s goals and

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<sup>14</sup> The New Teacher Project, [www.tntp.org](http://www.tntp.org)

vision of great teaching. We will reserve praise for excellence; nothing demoralizes Irreplaceables more than false praise for mediocre or poor performance.

3. **Treat Our Irreplaceables Like They are Irreplaceable:** We will make it hard to leave our school. We will note teachers who are most critical to your school's academic success and spend time with them. We will get to know their interests and development needs help them access resources, and give them opportunities to grow their careers and increase their impact. Invest them in the school by involving them in decision-making.
4. **Start Having "Stay" Conversations by Thanksgiving:** Many teachers use the winter holidays to think about what's next. We will Block off time after Thanksgiving to talk to our Irreplaceables and rising-star teachers about continuing to teach at GACSP. We will tell them how much you want them to return, ask them about their concerns, and if they are considering other options, ask what you can do to convince them to stay.
5. **Hold the Line on Good Teaching:** Schools that refuse to tolerate poor teaching keep more of their top teachers. Some teachers will struggle, despite good intentions and hard work. We will be honest about weaknesses, give regular feedback and support, set reasonable limits on how long they have to show significant improvement (months, not years) and make sure they don't get mixed messages from other school administrators or coaches. We will not allow unsuccessful teachers to linger.

GACSP will determine the appropriate experience, training and skills of non-certified instructional personnel by keenly screening resumes, checking references and acutely monitoring performance especially during probationary phases.

GACSP will recruit, evaluate and ultimately retain teachers based on its results oriented, rigorous curriculum. Our Assessment Coordinator will provide the necessary data on scholar-performance while coaching teachers individually and in teams on how to respond and deliver instruction most effectively. School leadership as a whole will ensure that teachers have the necessary staff development and training to be highly effective.

**School Leader:** The founding group has not yet identified a School Leader though they have had substantive conversations with educational professionals who would be qualified for this position. Once the application is approved, we will begin a search in earnest. The Board will form a search committee. The process will include resume screening, invitation to submit a written application, phone interviews; finalists will be required to participate in in-person interviews.

These are some of the qualifications we will be seeking in our founding School Leader:

- Deep commitment to the mission and vision of the school.
- Experience working with a student population similar to ours
- Demonstrated experience leading a team of adults to achieve excellence
- Instructional leadership experience, including teacher support and supervision
- Demonstrated ability to connect with families and children and form a strong school community
- Excellent communication skills and ability to identify critical information

- Ability to provide leadership and direction to all staff, supervise and observe all instructional practices in the school, including coaching and mentoring directly or through other staff and/or professional development programs
- Experience with recruitment, evaluation and termination as well as other human resource matters
- Experience with scheduling, enrollment and curriculum development
- Extensive knowledge of Common Core Learning Standards and ability to develop and implement rigorous instruction in alignment with CCLS
- Ability to work/communicate effectively with Board of Trustees, including ability to provide formal and informal reports to the Board and charter entity
- Ensure proper budgeting, accounting, auditing, and financial planning
- Experience with start-up situations and managing finances and operations for a large organization
- Experience in managing finances and operations for a relatively large organization
- Ability to use data to support continuous improvement and guide teachers to develop and implement clearly articulated instructional action plans
- Fluency in Spanish (preferred)

### **C.1. Charter Management Organization**

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

### **C.2. Partner Organization**

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Not Applicable

### **D. Evaluation**

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**Program Evaluation:** *GACSP* will conduct an annual programmatic audit, as per N.Y. Education Law §2851(2)(f). The audit will include evaluations of teachers, administrators, the Board of Trustees, overall operational effectiveness and fiscal soundness, and family and student satisfaction with the program. *GACSP* will submit an Annual Report to its authorizer detailing its performance and progress toward accountability goals.

Our Director of Operations will collect data regularly to evaluate the school’s operational effectiveness and fiscal soundness. To ensure operational effectiveness, staff may examine maximization of instructional time by measuring time for transitions, school flow and time to task in classrooms; alignment of school procedures to addressing teacher needs; and, alignment of school procedures to compliance. To ensure fiscal soundness, staff will examine monthly bank reconciliations, budget to actual reports, and cash balance statements. This information will be shared with and analyzed by the Board Finance Committee, which will report on the financial health of the school at each Board meeting. In addition, the Board will undergo an annual audit by an independent accounting firm. A compliance calendar will also be

maintained that provides timely information about the due dates for all reporting requirements and whether they have been met in a timely fashion.

The school will survey parents at least annually to find out how they feel about the school's academic program and the education their child is receiving. Survey data will be used by the Board in its evaluation of the School Leader and by the School Leader in his/her evaluation of the teachers as well as the systems, procedures and policies of the school.

Finally, the school will also describe and disseminate its overall performance to families and the community. Guardian Academy will produce an annual report that examines overall academic performance as well as operational and fiscal viability. This report will be presented to the State Education Department and posted on our school website.

### **Teacher Evaluation:**

GACSP's Board will create an Annual Professional Performance Review system for our teachers and School Leader that is compliant with N.Y. Law §3012-c. per the New York State Education Department's guidance on APPRs for charter schools (<http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/APPR-Field-Guidance.pdf>), our evaluation system is consistent with the following elements of Education Law §3012-c: (1) is based on multiple measures of effectiveness, including 40% student achievement measures, which would result in a single composite effectiveness score for every teacher and principal; (2) differentiates effectiveness for teachers and principals using the following four rating categories: Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, and Ineffective; and use such annual evaluations as a significant factor for employment decisions including promotion, retention, supplemental compensation, and professional development; and (3) provides for the development and implementation of improvement plans for teachers or principals rated Developing or Ineffective.

Sixty percent (60%) of a teacher's rating shall be based on:

- Professional observations and evaluations of teaching and teacher performance by the School Leader using *Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching*
- Forty percent (40%) of a teacher's rating shall be based on student achievement measures:
- Student growth and absolute proficiency on state assessments (in testing grades) or on CTB/McGraw-Hill's TerraNova exam, a state-approved third party assessment (in non-testing grades)
- Authentic artifacts in student learning, graded using rubrics developed by GACSP.

### **School Leader Evaluation:**

As with our teacher evaluation system, School Leader evaluation will be §3012-c compliant, and GACSP's School Leader will be rated on a rubric by the Board of Trustees into one of the following four rating categories: "Highly Effective," "Effective," "Developing," and "Ineffective."

Sixty percent (60%) of the School Leader's rating shall be based on:

- Organizational and financial stability of the school

- Measurable goals set at the start of the school year in consultation with the Board based on data sources, including but not limited to audit results, teacher evaluation results, scholar and teacher attendance rates, family and student satisfaction surveys, and grievance records.

Forty percent (40%) of the School Leader’s rating shall be based on student achievement measures:

- Student growth on state assessments or on CTB/McGraw-Hill’s TerraNova exam, a state-approved third party assessment
- Authentic artifacts in student learning, graded on a rubric to be developed by GACSP

**Board of Trustees Evaluation:** The Board will conduct an annual survey of its members. The survey will be aligned with the best practices of charter school governance and will each to reflect on their participation in the work of the Board over the course of the year. The Chair will appoint a committee to review the board survey data along with Board attendance data, parent survey results, the progress of the school in meeting internal and external accountability goals, and feedback from school leadership about the efficacy of Board practices and policies. The review will also consider the demographics and diversity of the Board as well as the skill sets represented by its members. The appointed committee will report its findings to the Board and make recommendations for improving Board functioning through ongoing development activities or recruitment efforts.

### **E. Professional Development**

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We believe in forming a professional community that models the practices we wish our students to embody: self-reflection, goal-setting and continuous improvement. While we will seek staff with experience in using our instructional methods and working with our student population, we also anticipate hiring teachers at various points in their career and with different levels of expertise. Our professional development program will be designed to instill in staff a common understanding of our education philosophy, instructional practices and our school culture. At the same time, it will be tailored to meet each staff member’s individual needs.

During the planning year and our Summer Staff Institute, school leaders and teachers will create curriculum maps for each subject and grade that establishes the specific content and skills students will be taught in our school. They will use Common Core Learning Standards to first identify the key topics, ideas, skills, concepts, theories, and vocabulary that a student in each grade should know or be able to do by the end of the year. They will prioritize content and skills that prepare our students both to attend college and to achieve at high levels on state exams. Next, they will organize content and skills into a logical sequence, providing teachers with guidance on what to teach and when to teach it during the school year, making sure to spiral those areas that require repetition to build depth and stamina. The scope and sequences for each subject area will not be created in isolation; rather they will be built in parallel fashion to identify points for integration and coordination. As we believe in reading and writing across the curriculum, our English Language Arts curriculum will be our north star, guiding the development of all other subjects.

The next step is the creation of unit plans that build on the standards by identifying essential questions, learning objectives, materials and resources, and assessments. In many schools, each teacher creates his or her own curriculum and it departs with them when they leave the school, often leaving new teachers to start the process from scratch. Guardian Academy will use a common unit planning template to facilitate collaboration among faculty and create an online archive of useful resources that will remain the property of the school. This will allow new faculty to quickly understand what students should have learned in previous grades and what they need to teach in their class to prepare students for future grades. Unit plans will also identify integrated themes and character traits and values that teachers will address across subjects.

Finally, grade level teams will collaboratively develop weekly lesson plans well in advance in order to provide time for instructional leaders to review them and provide feedback. In the elementary grades, each grade team will have four teachers, who will have the flexibility to divide subjects among themselves based on their own skills and experiences. In the middle school, subject area teachers will develop lesson plans for their individual classes and will be expected to work as a department to ensure lessons are age appropriate and vertically aligned from grade to grade. In addition to content-specific objectives, our lesson plans will also include language development objectives for English language learners. All lesson plans will be archived in an online system and after each lesson is taught, teachers will be expected to annotate the plan with information about what worked well and what should be improved or jettisoned the next time the lesson is used.

Teachers will use “preview” and “review” meetings to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and meets the needs of all of our students. At the beginning of each unit, grade level teams will meet to preview the content, objectives and activities of the unit. Based on existing knowledge of their students’ current level of performance and interests, lessons may be modified or additional materials secured or developed so students can effectively access the curriculum and achieve the learning objectives. At the end of each unit, teams will meet to review unit implementation and student performance, noting the strengths of the unit and areas for improvement. This will be annotated and archived for the next teachers who use the unit. At the end of the school year the entire faculty will review our Common Core Learning Standards-aligned scope and sequences, and revise them to improve vertical alignment across grades and eliminate content and skill gaps based on assessment of student achievement.

**Summer Institute:** In our first year, there will be a tremendous amount of work, including: curriculum and assessment to develop, instruction to plan, schedules to build, policies to adopt, etc. For this reason, we intend to schedule a three week Summer Institute in August for teachers to train and plan for school’s first year. In subsequent years, the Summer Institute will only be two weeks, though additional time may be added for orientation of new staff. During the planning year, the School Leader will begin collecting curriculum resources and sketching out curriculum maps and scope and sequences. In Summer Institute, the School Leader will then facilitate the faculty in refining these foundational resources to establish integrated theme unit topics. They will then develop unit plans for the year with feedback and support from instructional leaders. Teachers will also participate in training to familiarize them with the school’s instructional approach and selected materials and tools. The Institute will also focus

heavily on school culture—workshops on establishing structured but warm learning environment, code of conduct and discipline and norms for classroom management. Topics will include:

- Co-Teaching Strategies and Coaching
- Readers and Writers Workshop
- Guided Reading
- Phonics Instruction
- Character Education
- ESL and SIOP Model
- RTI Process and Special Education
- Enrichment and Intervention

**In-Service:** During the school year, professional development will take two forms: clinical supervision, primarily through classroom observation and feedback, and explicit training. Our instructional leaders—the Principal, Dean of Character and School Culture, Student Support, ELL Assessment Coordinators—will make frequent rounds to observe classroom instruction and provide teachers with actionable feedback. These may be short, “pop-in” visits or longer full class observations. They will target school-wide priorities as well as specific areas identified with teachers through self-assessment using the teacher evaluation rubric. Based on *Critical Friends* methodology, we will use a “glows and grows” approach to provide supportive and encouraging feedback as well as constructive criticism along with suggestions for ways to improve. This will all be documented as evidence that school leaders can use as part of formal teacher evaluation twice each year. A priority of observation will be implementation of professional development topics and our key design elements to ensure school-wide consistency. Our grade level teams will consist of more and less experienced educators, and we will expect the former to mentor the latter, again with formative feedback, though this will not contribute to their evaluation. Teachers will conduct peer observations of their team members and teachers in other grades.

Along with the Summer Institute, we have scheduled 4 PD days during the school year plus time after the students final trimester for training and grading. Topics will be selected by the instructional leadership team based on observed need and surveyed interest of faculty. We also expect our instructional leaders to provide training within teachers’ classrooms through modeling and team teaching. This could include instructional or classroom management techniques. Instructional leaders will participate in grade team meetings to provide guidance on curriculum and assessment development, lesson planning and use of data.

Non-academic staff will also receive training and support.

## **F. Facilities**

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The ideal space for *GACSP* would include large classrooms that support flexible instruction. They should be large enough and configured to accommodate the various instructional methods that co-teaching employs such as small-group and one-on-one instruction. Furniture, rugs and instructional materials can be used to create smaller learning areas as needed. There should be dedicated space in the building for special instruction to include music and art. Additional space needs include a cafeteria, gymnasium for instruction and indoor play, as well as an auditorium for the school-wide meetings and assemblies that are essential to our character education program and community building. A conference rooms and common spaces would also be needed. Office space and bathrooms would also be required. We would need a space large enough to house a K-8 school as we believe this model that incorporates the

elementary school and middle school instruction, best drives student achievement as well as meets community need and desire.

One such option is a building that once housed Assumption School, 920 First Street. It is easily accessible as it is located in downtown Peekskill; classrooms are large (1,500 square feet) and remain well stocked with furniture, lockers and cubbies making it an almost “turn-key” property. It is also large enough to house a K-8 school.

The proposed Board includes two facilities experts, Phil Whalen and John Greenan. Along with a search, which has already begun, they will prepare a rubric to assist the Board in evaluating properties in Peekskill.

We will inform the Board of Regents within ten business days of acquiring a facility. The facility will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### **G. Insurance**

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Based on the insurance coverage of other charter schools in New York State, below is the approximate coverage we intend to secure by the time the school begins operation.

- General Aggregate: \$2 million aggregate and \$1 million for each occurrence
- Umbrella Liability: \$5 million limit of coverage
- Directors & Officers: \$1 million in coverage
- Student Accident: \$500,000 aggregate per accident
- Student Accident Medical: \$25,000 per accident
- Student Catastrophic Accident: \$1 million limit
- Automobile/Bus Liability: \$1 million
- Property: \$250,000 in coverage for school furnishings, equipment, and leased space betterments
- Workers' Compensation: rate determined by state of New York
- Employee Benefits Liability \$1,000,000
- Employment Practices Liability \$1,000,000
- Educators' Legal Liability \$1,000,000
- Sexual Misconduct Liability \$1,000,000/occurrence; \$2,000,000 aggregate

We anticipate spending approximately \$35,000 annually for insurance, with requisite increases as the student population grows.

### **H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services**

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**Health:** Guardian Academy will work with the Peekskill School District to provide a nurse. If a nurse is not available, GACSP will employ a registered nurse to handle health services. The nurse will maintain all student records in a secure manner, conduct hearing and vision screenings, and supervise the disbursement of approved medication, and manage the care of ill or injured students. At least two staff members in addition to the nurse will be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment.

Health records will be stored in locked filing cabinets accessible only by authorized staff. These records will include proof of immunization, authorization for administration of medication, and at least three emergency contacts for each child. All visits to the nurse, including reason and treatment, will be documented in each child's file.

Our health services program will ensure that each student has a certificate of immunization that complies with the Public Health Law at the time of registration or within the acceptable time frame after enrollment (subject to exceptions permitted under the law for medical contraindications and religious exemptions). Required immunizations include:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis (DTaP, DTP, Tdap: 3 doses)
- Polio (IPV, OPV: 3 doses)
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR: 2 doses of measles containing vaccine and 1 dose each of mumps and rubella)
- Hepatitis B (3 doses)
- Varicella (1 dose)

The school will implement strict policies and procedures regarding the safe and secure administration of medication. The school will only administer medication that is necessary for a student to participate in school and which must be administered during school hours. All medications, including nonprescription over the counter (OTC) drugs, must be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis. Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage. Prescribed medication that requires administration through a subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or rectal route; or prescribed medications being administered through pumps, tubes or nebulizers; or oral, topical or inhalant medication needed by non-self-directed students will be given only by the nurse or licensed practical nurses under the direction of the nurse. The nurse may designate other staff to assist self-directed students taking their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication and will provide the training and supervision necessary to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner. .

Our physical education teacher will incorporate issues of health into the curriculum, and other teachers will be encouraged to raise health issues through discussion of character traits and habits leading to healthy lifestyle choices.

**Food:** We intend to participate in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program, administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Our meals will meet all nutritional requirements under these programs. We will establish systems for identifying students' eligibility for free and reduced price meals and tracking meals served each day. Given that many of families will be limited English proficient, we will use our Spanish speaking staff to ensure parents understand this opportunity and complete their paper work properly. No child will go hungry in our school; we have budgeted to cover extra meals for parents who have not or cannot pay.

We plan to contract with a vendor to provide nutritious meals and snacks that our students will like and eat. The criteria to select a food services provider will include: cost, menu options, nutrition, logistics and capacity; possible vendors in our area that we are considering include Preferred Foods, Whitson's or Butter Beans. In our early years of operation, we will likely have meals cooked off-site and then delivered to the school to be warmed in the kitchen. We will hire certified food services staff to handle and distribute meals. As we scale, we will consider hiring in-house staff to prepare hot meals, though this is not likely until at least the second charter term.

**Transportation:** Guardian Academy will be located in Peekskill. Under state law our students will be eligible for equivalent transportation compared to other students of the same age in district schools. The Peekskill City School District provides school bus service to in K-5. We will work with the district to coordinate efficient routes that meet the needs of all students in the community. The school will not provide transportation for other students who do not qualify for transportation, but will work with families to coordinate carpools. Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with their IEPs. We intend to have a longer school year and operate on some days the district schools are closed for students. We have dedicated funds for student transportation on those days as well as for field trips and other extracurricular programming and events.

#### **I. Family and Community Involvement**

**Family Involvement:** We believe the role of the family in a child's education is crucial, both at home and within the school, and GACSP is committed to family and community involvement in the planning, implementation, and design of the school. During the planning year we will continue to seek input into such areas as curriculum, enrichment and service learning opportunities, and partnerships. Immediately after our lottery is conducted, we will organize "meet and greet" events so families can begin getting to know each other. Orientations at the beginning of each year will provide parents with information about school culture, policies, and procedures, as well as ways they can help their child learn from home. We will instill a staff ethos that emphasizes frequent communication and transparency; for example, teachers will be expected to send home weekly newsletters describing what their scholars have been studying and their accomplishments. GACSP will welcome parents into the school during morning meeting or as classroom volunteers. Our Dean of School Character & Culture will be responsible for working with families around behavior and discipline issues and will provide parents with resources to help them support their child's academic success. Parent-teacher-student conferences will be held each trimester to discuss student learning and areas for growth. We recognize the challenge of drawing limited English proficient immigrant families into schools; we will have Spanish speaking staff and teachers to facilitate communication and translate materials sent home. The school will also coordinate social events throughout the year, including pot luck dinners, holiday festivities, and end of year "step up" and graduation celebrations. The school will also support a Parent Association that will help organize events and fundraisers and report to the board about parent issues of concern. The Board will maintain a seat for a "parent representative" and will actively seek parent representation on its various ad-hoc committees.

**Community:** The founding group sees the community's involvement as vital to the school's mission and will continue to seek ways in which community organizations and local businesses can collaborate with us to provide the best for our scholars. Because we believe that a high quality education involves education of the whole-child, we look to these organizations to enhance the curricula in meaningful ways. We are currently in discussion with a variety of community organizations, exploring ways we can collaborate to further *GACSP's* mission. We will continue to pursue other collaborations with mission-aligned organizations, such as the Center for Digital Arts of Westchester Community College, the Field Library, and the Peekskill Parks and Recreation Department who also may be able to provide our scholars with curricula enhancement. We will also seek partners for service learning opportunities, such as the Jan Peek Homeless Shelter, Fred's Food Pantry, Leave the Light on Foundation and the local Veterans Administration Hospital and Nursing Home complex. We will seek full membership in Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT), a coalition of representatives from over 20 groups providing services to children of Peekskill. By working with and through community based organizations, we will be able to expand academic and non-academic opportunities for our scholars and also coordinate out-of-school supports for families who may be facing greater challenges. Feedback from families and community will be essential in the ongoing development and implementation of our programs.

Partnerships are realistic and achievable.

By working with and through community based organizations we will be able to expand academic and non academic opportunities for our students and also coordinate out of school supports for families, who may be facing greater challenges. Feedback from families and community will be essential in the ongoing development and implementation of our programs.

## **J. Financial Management**

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**Policies and Processes:** *GACSP* takes seriously its responsibility for managing public funds to ensure that they are used appropriately and effectively. The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for approving a budget and use of funds, and delegates management of finances and operations to the school's School Leader. The Director of Operations coordinates day-to-day administration of financial matters with the support of a contracted financial management company. The company will assist the school in setting up its chart of accounts, accounting software, and data tracking, filing and reporting systems. It will provide ongoing bookkeeping and accounting, financial analysis and reporting, payroll processing, audit preparation and compliance management.

**Financial Management Obligations:** The School Leader and Director of Operations will draft an annual budget based on assessed need to present to the Board's Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will analyze the budget, determine whether it promotes the long-term financial health of the school and is aligned with the school's mission and Board priorities. The full board must approve the budget each year as well as any subsequent amendments to the budget. This budget will serve as a road map for monitoring the financial status of the school throughout the year. The Director of Operations will prepare monthly reports for the Finance Committee showing budget to actuals, balance sheet, cash flow statement and income statement.

The school will maintain all data with appropriate security and privacy, including personnel files and student records. The Director of Operations will ensure the accurate collection and reporting of data, including enrollment, special education, ELL and Title I counts. Should the school receive any grants with conditions, the Director of Operations will also ensure funds are tracked and used appropriately.

**Audits:** GACSP will hire a certified public accountant to conduct an annual audit. The Finance Committee will review the audit each year and make recommendations to the Board and school management regarding actions in response to any findings. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards (GAAP). All audits will be conducted in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards. We expect the auditor will produce an Initial Statement of Financial Controls in the beginning of the school year and complete the annual audit the following fall. The school's fiscal year will be from July 1 to June 30. The first annual audit period will include the start-up period through the end of the first fiscal year. The annual audit will be provided to NYSED and posted on the school's website along with the annual report for the sake of transparency.

The Office Manager, under the supervision of the Director of Operations, will develop adequate policies and processes for tracking enrollment, attendance eligibility, free and reduced lunch eligibility, special education services and other services for special student populations.

#### **K. Budget and Cash Flow**

We have budgeted conservatively to ensure a successful start-up and ongoing financial health.

**Pre-Opening:** Our primary costs during the pre-opening period are salary for start-up, including bringing on the School Leader in January, 2015, followed soon after by the Director of Operations and Office Manager, to focus on:

- Recruiting students and hiring staff
- Preparing the building
- Purchasing equipment and supplies
- Developing and securing curriculum and assessments
- Organizing Summer Institute for staff in August

We anticipate costs for basic office supplies and establishing our financial accounting and compliance reporting systems. We have assumed most of the pre-opening costs will be covered by the CSP grant; short-term bridge loan.

**Year 1:** We assume per pupil revenue of \$2,409,245 based on 100% of targeted enrollment. Title I funding is based on 70% of our students being eligible for free and reduced price lunch. Special education revenues are based on the assumption that 12% of our students with disabilities will qualify for 20-59% services and 2% will qualify for 60%+ services. Based on the experience of other charter schools, we assume IDEA funding will not begin until Year 2. We expect to use another \$200,000 of our CSP grant this year. Overall, 85.9% of revenue is from state sources.

Though expensive, we intend to hire most of our administrative team in Year 1 to ensure a strong start and to build a collaborative professional culture. We believe our salaries are in line with the local labor market, but have tried to shrink the gap somewhat between faculty and administration. Our average teacher salary will be \$70,000, compared to the median elementary school teacher salary in Peekskill of \$63,870. We believe this adequately compensates staff for the extended school day and school year. Our employees will receive standard benefits and the school will make a matched contribution to a retirement account up to 5% of base salary. In our first year 73% of expenditures are for personnel. We do not budget for substitute teachers, assuming co-teachers can manage classrooms in the elementary grades and specialty and teachers can cover classes in the upper grades. We will purchase two laptop carts in Year 1 and secure off-site technical support for our network. We believe it unacceptable that a student who does not qualify for free lunch may not be able to afford a meal, and have budgeted funds to cover delinquent meal payments. Similarly, we have budgeted funds to help needy families afford uniforms. In anticipation of the unexpected, we have set aside 10% of the cost of the lease for unplanned repairs and maintenance on the facility. We has also set aside 3% of our per pupil revenue as a contingency fund. Finally, \$25,000 is put into an escrow account towards building the required funds in case of dissolution.

**5 Year Budget:** As our school grows to serve grades K-6 in the fifth and final year of the charter term, the percentage of revenue from state sources rises to 97%. Assuming no change in the current funding rate for charter schools, in Year 5 our per pupil funding will be \$5,004,000 and total revenues will be \$6,885,822. We anticipate annual revenues from IDEA beginning in Year 2 and have assumed minimal fundraising of \$35,000 per year. Our assumptions for special education and Title I eligibility remain the same as in Year 1. CSP funds are budgeted for only the pre-opening and Years 1 and 2 of operation.

On the expenditure side, we assume a 3% annual increase in salaries, though this will be at the discretion of the Board based on the financial circumstances of the school and economic conditions. We will add a Social Worker in Year 2, an Assistant Principal in Year 3 and another Office Clerk in Year 4; otherwise our administrative team remains the same. Our faculty will grow considerably by Year 5 with personnel costs overall accounting for 81% of the budget, and instructional staff representing over three-quarters of those personnel costs. As student enrollment grows we will also add additional custodial and food service personnel. The non-personnel costs that increase with enrollment include instructional materials, office expenses, and back office costs (e.g., payroll). Once the school gets established we do not anticipate having to spend as much on student and staff recruitment. We will continue to invest in technology with the goal of one laptop cart per grade by Year 5. We have also budgeted 2% of our per pupil as a contingency fund, which we believe is prudent given the unknowns of operating a new schools.

We end every year with a surplus. Should our financial planning be generally accurate and our projections indicate stability we intend to use these funds for additional technology, learning experiences outside of the school and, an afterschool program.

**CSP Grant:** Though we have not included it in our budget, we believe Guardian Academy is eligible for the additional \$250,000 above the base \$500,000 grant provided to all schools because it meets both incentive priorities:

- **Underserved Student Populations Priority:** We intend to serve a growing immigrant population with a large percentage of English language learners and students eligible for free and reduced price lunch.
- **Authorizer Program Design Priority:** Guardian Academy fits the criteria for two design priorities:
  - **Design Priority 1: The school is specifically designed to meet the learning needs and raise the achievement of students who are English language learners.** Our school heavily emphasizes literacy instruction with an extended day allowing time for both Readers and Writers Workshop and phonics instruction. Every class in the elementary grades is co-taught and every grade team includes an ESL specialist. In addition to a Student Support Coordinator, our school also has an ESL Coordinator to support teachers and interventions programs for English language learners. Finally, our daily enrichment block provides additional time for supporting students outside their core courses.
  - **Design Priority 8: The school’s program will promote a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student population.** As noted, Peekskill is a small community with a growing immigrant population. We believe GACSP Academy will serve a critical need in our community by bringing together a diverse group of students with a shared purpose.

**L. Pre-Opening Plan**

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Action	Function Area	Start Date	End Date	Responsibility
Adopt bylaws and code of ethics	Governance	Jan 2015	Jan 2015	BOT
Appoint board officers	Governance	Jan 2015	Jan 2015	BOT
Conduct facility negotiations and execute lease	Facility	Jan 2015	Target Feb 2015	BOT
Plan and execute renovations	Facility	Jan 2015	Jun 2015	BOT, SL, DO
Recruit Principal	Governance	Oct 2015	Jan 2015	BOT
Obtain 501c3 status	Operations	Jan 2015	Jun 2015	PR, DO
Approve fiscal policies and procedures	Finance	Jan 2015	Jan 2015	BOT
Establish accounting and reporting systems	Finance	Jan 2015	Jun 2015	BOT, SL

<b>Action</b>	<b>Function Area</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Recruit Director of Operations	Staffing	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	SL
Recruit students	Recruitment	Jan 2015	Apr 2015	SL, DO
Hold lottery	Recruitment	Apr 2014	Apr 2014	SL, DO
Obtain student records	Operations	Apr 2015	Jul 2015	DO, SSC
Recruit school staff	Staffing	Feb 2015	Jun 2015	SL, DO
Hire school staff	Staffing	Mar 2015	Jun 2015	SL, DO
Research and secure curriculum resources	Academic	Mar 2015	Jun 2015	SL, SSC, EC
Research and secure standardized assessments	Academic	Mar 2015	Jun 2015	SL, SSC, EC
Approve budget for FY14-15	Finance	Apr 2015	Apr 2015	BOT
Secure food services	Operations	Apr 2015	May 2015	DO
Secure transportation	Operations	Apr 2015	Jul 2015	DO
Finalize staff handbook and personnel policies	HR	Apr 2015	Jun 2015	BOT, DO
Develop and distribute student handbook	Operations	May 2015	June 2015	SL, DCC
Install technology systems	Technology	May 2015	July 2015	DO
Prepare school calendar and distribute to families	Academic	May 2015	May 2015	SL, DO
Conduct open houses for admitted students	Recruitment	Jun 2015	Jun 2015	SL, DO, DCC
Contract with Related Service Providers	Academic	Jun 2015	Aug 2015	DO, SSC
Secure insurance policies	Operations	Jun 2015	Jul 2015	DO
Prepare Summer Institute materials	PD	Jun 2015	Aug 2015	SL, SSC, DCC, EC
Complete Initial Statement of Financial Controls	Finance	Jul 2015	Jul 2015	DO

<b>Action</b>	<b>Function Area</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Complete staff fingerprints and background checks	HR	Jul 2015	Jul 2015	DO
Secure IEPs and student records	Operations	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	DO, SSC
Create a draft SAVE plan and submit it to SED	Operations	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	DO
Purchase AEDs and train staff	Operations	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	DO
Conduct Summer Institute	PD	Aug 2015	Aug 2015	SL, DC, SSC, EC
Prepare student orientation	Academic	Aug 2015	Aug 2015	SL, DCC

BOT=Board of Trustees; SL=School Leader; DO= Director of Operations; SSC=Student Support Coordinator;

EC=ELL Coordinator; DCC=Dean of Character and School Culture

### **M. Dissolution Plan**

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We have included \$75,000 in our budget by setting aside \$25,000 each year for the first three years of operation to cover costs in case of the school's dissolution. In such a case, the assets of the school will first be used to satisfy the school's debts. All property that the school has leased, borrowed, or contracted for use will be returned. Any remaining assets will be transferred to the Peekskill City School District.

Should the school close, the Board will adopt a closure plan and form an ad hoc committee of Trustees to oversee the closure. The Board would expect to delegate to the Principal responsibility for managing the dissolution process; should the Principal be unavailable the Board will designate another school staff member to implement the closure plan. 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.

Parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the school will be notified of the closure plan within five days of the Board's adoption of said plan. An up-to-date student roster will be sent to the district and within 15 business days of the Board adopting a closure plan, the school will transfer student records to the district, notify parents and legal guardians of the transfer of such records, and send copies of each child's records to the child's parents or legal guardians. The school will maintain the privacy of records and information that may personally identify students. The school will also convene one or more meetings for all parents and legal guardians to provide information on the closure plan and the options for enrolling in other schools. School staff will also work with students and their families to identify appropriate schools with programs best suited to meet individual students' needs and to assist the students in enrolling in such schools. Every effort will be made to facilitate the students' transitions in a manner that minimizes the disruption to students and their families.

## **Attachment 1: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill Admissions Policies and Procedures**

All students who reside in the state of New York are eligible to attend Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (Guardian Academy). 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 ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools. There are no financial or academic requirements for admission to Guardian Academy; 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. Children will be admitted to Kindergarten who have reached the age of five by December 1 of the year in which they apply. The school will enroll students in all offered grades as space permits.

Guardian Academy will engage in extensive efforts to inform families in Peekskill School District and its neighboring communities about the new school. We will reach out to local schools, community based organizations, businesses and faith-based organizations to raise awareness in the community. We will conduct open houses at the school and disseminate materials and host information sessions at day care centers, Head Start programs, afterschool programs, and youth centers. Parental outreach and recruitment activities will be conducted in English and Spanish. Our marketing will highlight our services for students with disabilities and English language learners and encourage the children of immigrant families to apply.

To apply to Guardian Academy, families must submit a completed application for their child. Applications must be submitted by April 1<sup>st</sup> by families of students interested in attending the school. Applications must be hand delivered, mailed (post marked by April 1) e-mailed or FAXED, and received no later than midnight on April 1.

The school will provide via e-mail and/or return postcard confirmation of applications received by the deadline.

The Guardian Academy 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. The school will adapt the uniform application form within the following allowable parameters: print the application form with the school's letterhead and/or logo; brand the application form by including the school's mission statement and explanatory information about the school, and request additional information. All data elements that may be required to be submitted by the applicant will be marked with asterisk and the form will include the following notation: "\* The items marked with an asterisk (\*) are the only items that may be required in order to apply to this charter school. Any items not marked by an (\*) are

optional.”

The following statement will also be included in the application form:

**Non-Discrimination Statement:** A charter school shall not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry. A school may not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to that school.

The application will request information about students’ eligibility for free- and reduced-price lunch, but will not require that information.

Guardian Academy will use the following preferences to enroll new students:

- Siblings of students enrolled in the school will have an absolute preference.
- Students residing within the district of location will receive an absolute preference, i.e., will be drawn before students living outside the district.
- 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, according to Section 119.5 of the Commissioner’s Regulations. The lottery will be conducted by the Principal, 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 application is the appropriate age for the entering grade and confirming the school district of a student’s address, 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 Peekskill. The lottery will follow these steps for each grade:
    1. Siblings of students already enrolled will be enrolled
    2. Students who reside within Peekskill will be drawn
    3. Students who reside outside of Peekskill 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, 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.

For children not selected, the letter will indicate their number on the wait list, and will describe the steps that will take place if a space becomes available. That wait list will be maintained for the entire school year.

If a student withdraws, the next applicant on the wait list 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 waiting list 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 wait list 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 8th 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.

GEORGE E. PATAKI

August 4, 2014

Ms. Susan Megna  
NYSD Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA  
Albany, NY 12234

Re: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Dear Ms. Megna:

I am writing to you in support of the Letter of Intent that Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill has filed with the New York State Education Department Charter School Office.

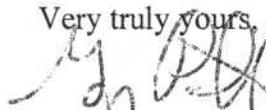
The creation of the Guardian Academy Charter School will give the Peekskill community and its school district the autonomy it needs to create, improve and advance public education. Additionally, it will expand the choices and academic opportunities for the students of Peekskill and their families. The founding group for the Guardian Academy is a cross section of experienced educators, public service professional and concerned parents drawn from different backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of the Peekskill community. They are committed to creating academic excellence and encouraging parental involvement within the school system, all the time honoring high expectations for the students.

The Charter School Program in New York State has proven to be an enormous asset to our educational system. As Governor, I championed the creation of charter schools and in December, 1998 the NYS legislature passed the charter school law, expanding the learning opportunities for all children of New York, with special emphasis on those students considered to be at risk for academic failure. The charter school program has continued to evolve with a wide range of curriculum and academic strategies.

Many years ago I attended the public schools in Peekskill and I see education as one of the cornerstones of my success. The formation of the Guardian Academy Charter School will enrich educational possibilities in Peekskill and will assure continued high quality education for all its students.

I respectfully request that you consider their Letter of Intent and I look forward to opening day of first charter school in Peekskill.

Very truly yours,



George E. Pataki



**CITY OF PEEKSKILL**  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

**Frank A. Catalina**  
Mayor

July 30, 2014

Ms. Susan Megna  
NYSED Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Ms. Megna and NYSED Charter School Staff:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill*.

A good school should encourage students to dream big dreams and, then, provide the necessary support to make those dreams come true.

*The Guardian Academy Charter School* seeks to provide a rigorous curriculum right from the start – encouraging that “big dream” – and intends to have the supports in place to help each child realize it. I also support the emphasis on character education and the Board’s vision to include community service into its program. The Board recognizes that academic achievement is simply not enough; the formation of men and women of integrity, perseverance and kindness along with a willingness to serve those around them is essential to the building of a strong community.

I am pleased to support this educational model – something new for the City of Peekskill – and hope you will look favorably upon the Board’s application.

Sincerely,

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Frank A. Catalina  
Mayor of Peekskill

FAC:le

**John G. Testa**  
Legislator, 1<sup>st</sup> District



August 6, 2014

I am pleased to be able to submit this letter of support for the creation of The Guardian Academy Charter School in Peekskill, New York.

My current position is that of Westchester County Legislator representing Northern Westchester, including Peekskill. I am also a former Mayor of the City of Peekskill and City Councilman before that. Most importantly, for the purposes of this letter, I have been a teacher at Peekskill High School for the last 33 years, retiring in 2013. I am also a graduate of Assumption School and Peekskill High School. So, as you can imagine, I have a very intimate knowledge and understanding of the Peekskill community and its needs.

The closing of the Assumption School last June created a tremendous void in the community. I am encouraged by the outstanding concept to create the proposed Guardian Academy Charter School. I believe this idea is long overdue for our community and region and I applaud those individuals who have taken on the difficult task of developing the Guardian Academy initiative.

Peekskill is an ever-growing diverse community and the Guardian Academy will be well equipped to service this population. This is key as the closing of the Assumption school has caused problems in the Peekskill City School District as to how to place the influx of students during what has become a very difficult time for our local public school system. Presently, there are hundreds of Peekskill youngsters enrolled in private schools outside the boundaries of the city. The new Guardian Academy will give those students living in Peekskill a place to come home to. This will help alleviate the overblown concerns that the academy will adversely affect the Peekskill City School District.

As an educator I can say that I am very excited about the educational plan that has been developed for the Guardian Academy. I support the holistic approach that is planned through high academic expectations coupled with building good citizens. The plan to focus on literacy and rigorous academic content is a good one and will be a successful addition to the educational choices of our local families.

Please look favorably on the Guardian Academy application and give the Peekskill area the opportunity to have such an outstanding educational institution established.

Thank you very much for your consideration and please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

John G. Testa  
Westchester County Legislator



# The Peekskill Museum

124 Union Avenue • PO Box 84  
Peekskill, New York 10566  
Phone: (914) 736-0473  
[www.peekskillmuseum.org](http://www.peekskillmuseum.org)

Ms. Susan Megna  
NYSED Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

August 6, 2014

Dear Ms. Megna,

I am writing on behalf of the Peekskill Museum to offer our support of the proposed *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill*.

As an educational institution ourselves, we realize the value of the high-quality, supportive learning environment the *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill* plans to provide. We also recognize that when it comes to education "one size" does not necessarily "fit all;" the *Guardian Academy* would represent choice for the families of Peekskill.

Furthermore, we look forward to exploring the many ways the Peekskill Museum and the *Guardian Academy* can collaborate to further a shared vision of enhancing the education of Peekskill's youngest scholars.

We would welcome the *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill* as an asset to our vital community!

Sincerely,

Bob Mayer  
President  
Peekskill Museum

Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art  
1701 Main Street, P.O. Box 209 Peekskill, New York 10566  
914 788 0100 914 788 4531 www.hvcca.org

Ms. Audrey Warn  
Lead Applicants  
The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill  
P.O. Box 2104  
Peekskill, New York 10566

May 28, 2014

Dear Audrey,

As the founder of the *Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art* in Peekskill, I welcome the opportunity to act as a community partner with the intent of enhancing and enriching the art curriculum of the *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill*.

HVCC is dedicated to the development and presentation of exhibitions and interdisciplinary programs that enrich our understanding of contemporary art, its contexts, and its relationship to social issues and, is also committed to the enrichment of Peekskill's multicultural community. Having access to art is essential to the development of the "whole child"—a pillar of the *Guardian Academy's* own mission.

We look forward to exploring the many ways we can collaborate to achieve both our missions!

Sincerely,



Dr. Livia Straus  
Founder  
*Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art*  
1701 Main Street  
P.O. Box 209  
Peekskill, NY 10566  
914.788.0100

Ms. Audrey Warn  
Mr. Carlos Martinez  
The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill  
P.O. Box 2104  
Peekskill, New York 10566

May 23, 2014

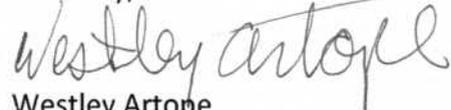
Dear Ms. Warn and Mr. Martinez,

As the Executive Director of *Peekskill Be First Boxing*, located in the heart of Peekskill, I welcome the opportunity to act as a community partner with the intent of enhancing and enriching the curriculum of the *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill*.

*Peekskill Be First Boxing*, is a non-profit organization, providing youth boxing programs as a means of teaching self-discipline and life skills and, has a goal of encouraging physical fitness, as well as equipping young people with character building skills to prepare them for positive community involvement—goals that are very much in keeping with those of the *Guardian Academy Charter School*.

I look forward to exploring ways we can work together to achieve this vital mission.

Sincerely,



Westley Artope  
Executive Director  
*Peekskill Be First Boxing*  
1137 Main Street  
Peekskill, NY 10566  
914.737.3178

Ms. Audrey Warn

Lead Applicant:

The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

P.O. Box 2104

Peekskill, New York 10566

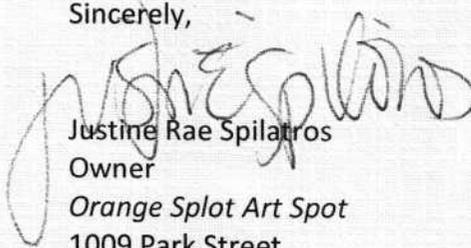
April 9, 2014

Dear Audrey

As the owner of *Orange Splot Art Spot*, an art lab for children, located in the heart of downtown Peekskill, I welcome the opportunity to act as a community partner with the intent of enhancing and enriching the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill's art curriculum.

A robust arts curriculum is in keeping with The Guardian Academy Charter School's mission to develop the whole-child and, I look forward to exploring ways we can together achieve this vital mission.

Sincerely,



Justine Rae Spilatros

Owner

*Orange Splot Art Spot*

1009 Park Street

Peekskill, NY 10566

914.736.1278



## **Charter Schools 101: The Most Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What are Public Charter Schools?**

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are free to be more innovative and are held accountable for improved student achievement. There are currently over 4,900 public charter schools open in 40 states and D.C., serving more than 1.6 million students. Children have different ways of learning, and public charter schools simply offer families a wider variety of options to serve such differences.

### **How are Public Charter Schools Held Accountable to State Educational Standards?**

Public charter schools are required to meet all state and federal education standards. In addition, they are judged on how well they meet student achievement goals established by their charter contracts. A quality public charter school must meet rigorous academic, fiscal and managerial standards.

### **How are Public Charter Schools Held Financially Accountable?**

Yes. Since public charter schools are funded with public dollars, they are required by law to be held accountable for taxpayer dollars are spent through regular audits and ongoing reviews from their authorizing entities.

### **What are Some Successful Innovations within Public Charter Schools?**

Across the country, public charter schools are creating a wide variety of innovations, including:

- Curriculum design (e.g., Montessori, Core Knowledge, Advanced Placement Courses, Foreign Language Immersion Programs, Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics)
- Extended learning time
- School cultures with high expectations for all students and adults
- More structured and disciplined learning environments
- Rewarding high-quality teachers with higher pay
- Parent contracts
- Multi-age programs

### **How Are Public Charter Schools Funded?**

When a student transfers from a traditional public school to a public charter school, the funding associated with that student will follow him or her to the public charter school. Public charter schools do not add any new costs to the state's public education system. They simply represent a reallocation of resources from one school to another based upon the decisions of families across the state.

### **How are Public Charter Schools Performing?**

In addition to increasing the number of public school options available to families, public charter schools are closing the achievement gap and raising the bar about what's possible – and what should be expected – in public education. These schools are shattering low expectations and breaking through long-standing barriers that have prevented large numbers of at-risk students from achieving educational success. Charter school studies that use the best data and the most sophisticated research techniques show charters outperforming comparable traditional public schools. Studies have also been clear that the quality of a state's charter school laws is a critically important factor in the success of public charter schools.



# The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

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## *the heart of excellence...*

**School Overview:** Based on our core belief in the inveterate potential of all our scholars, we know that academic success and impeccable character are well within their grasp. We will work to build a **culture of excellence**—excellence, excellence, excellence in all that we do and all that we are. Recognizing that we all learn and grow at different rates and have unique gifts, talents and challenges, we will have high expectations for **all—scholars**, teachers and staff. All are expected to bring their best selves to school each day and, the *Guardian Academy* will provide the tools necessary to achieve that goal.

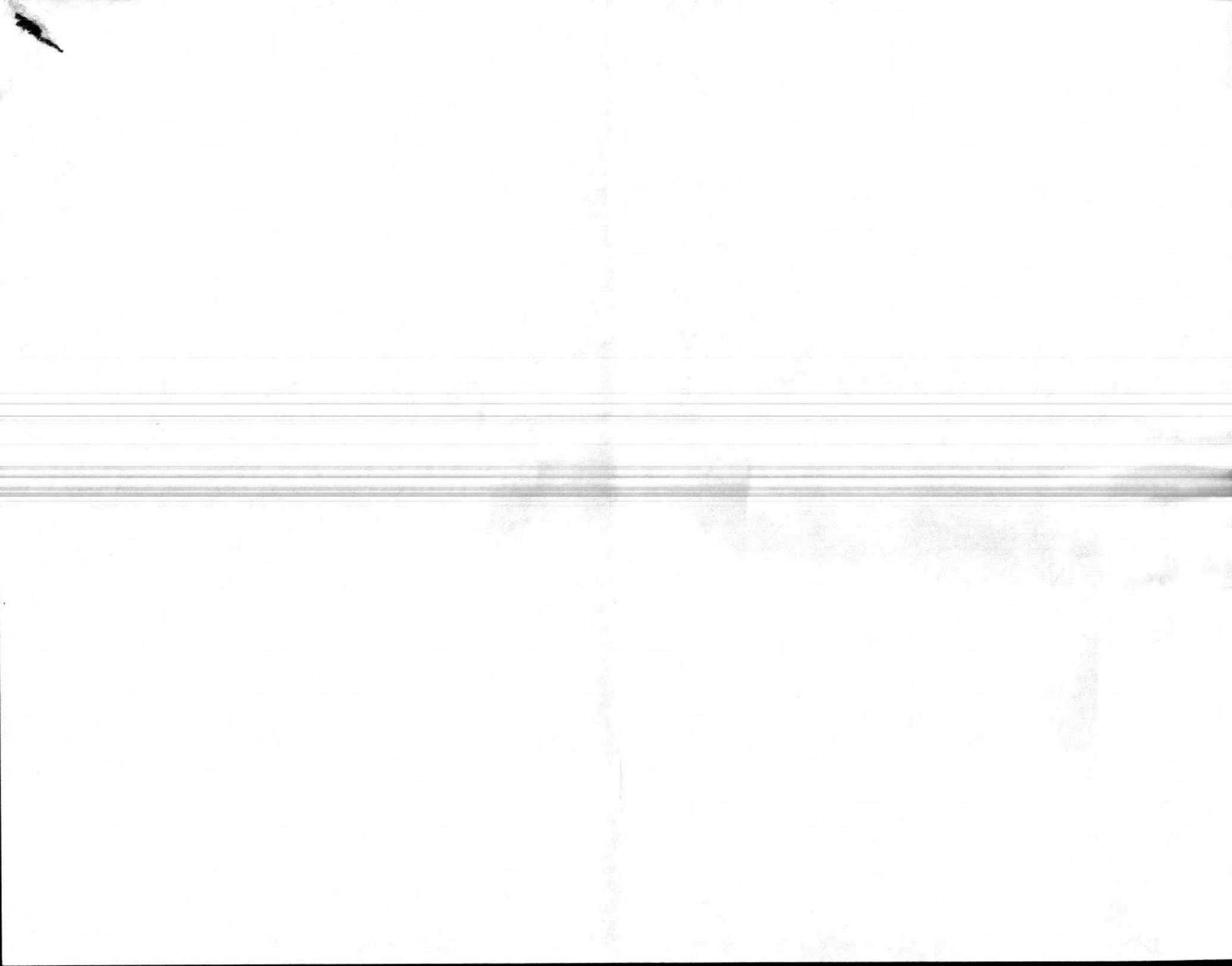
***Excellence Through Co-Teaching:*** Applying different variations of this model where two or more teachers are delivering instruction to a diverse group of scholars in one classroom is our response to the scholars we expect to enroll. In our purposeful use of Co-Teaching, we allow our focus to be on academics and high expectations for all scholars.

***Excellence Through Character Education:*** Research has found a profound link between academic success and character education. We will value helping scholars become young men and women of impeccable character who are not only achieving at their optimal academic level but, who will grow to become ethical leaders able to make substantial contributions to their communities.

***Excellence Through Community Engagement:*** We will succeed as a result of school staff, families, local community members and organizations all working together to meet our scholars' needs. Frequent communication, academic and social events, an engaged Board, opportunities to volunteer and partner with community will all contribute to a school deeply rooted in and responsive to the needs of our community.

***Excellence through Data Driven Decision Making:*** Using and evaluating data is an important step in our school improvement process. Looking at the combination of pieces of knowledge and facts together, whether it has to do with demographics, achievement, test scores, professional development or school climate, helps us formulate hypotheses to decide how best to use the information. Our school leadership team will focus their attention on specific indicators that are being displayed by the data and, identify priority areas in which to direct their focus. To move toward a data-driven decision making school, we utilize eight steps that help guide the process: create a leadership team; collect and organize several different types of data; analyze data patterns; generate hypotheses; develop goal-setting guidelines; design specific strategies for the action plan; plan the evaluation and implement the plan (Bernhardt, 2004). By following these steps, *Guardian Academy CS* can collaborate and prioritize needs in order to sustain our mission and, a vision that continuously focuses on school improvement.







# The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

## *What is a Public Charter School?*

- Charter schools are public schools. They are tuition-free and open to all students, including those with disabilities.
- Charter schools are non-selective. If there are more applying students than seats, students are enrolled through a non-discriminatory admissions lottery .
- Charter schools are governed by a volunteer board of trustees, which typically includes educators, community members, and leaders from the private sector.
- Charter schools were established to provide families with educational choice and educators with the flexibility to create schools that best meet the needs of their students.
- Charter schools have freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their human and financial resources.
- Charter schools are held accountable for raising achievement and helping their students meet state learning standards.
- There are currently 244 charter schools authorized in New York State.

## *The Guardian Academy*

By providing a community-centered learning environment, *The Guardian Academy* will empower a diverse group of scholars to reach their fullest academic potential by providing a rigorous yet flexible curriculum. We believe in a school culture focused on developing the whole-child—a scholarly culture of excellence that values character development as one of the hallmarks of academic achievement.

- **Excellence through Co-Teaching:** Applying the best practices of this innovative model—two teachers sharing the responsibilities of the general education classroom—allows for both individual and small group instruction, remediation and challenge.
- **Excellence through Character Education:** Research has found a profound link between academic success and character education. At the *Guardian Academy* we will value helping students become young men and women of impeccable character who are not only achieving at their optimal academic level but, who will grow to become ethical leaders able to make substantial contributions to their communities.
- **Excellence through Diversity:** Celebrating a diverse educational environment prepares scholars to be active participants and responsible leaders in an increasingly complex, global society. We recognize that all scholars can achieve regardless of ethnic, language or socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Excellence through Community Engagement:** *The Guardian Academy* will create a supportive family environment that is committed to the idea that when one of us succeeds, we all succeed and, when one of us falls, we are all responsible for helping him/her rise! We will seek community partnerships that promote academic success by allowing scholars to see that they are part of a larger world and help them to dream of their unique place in it.

Proposed Opening September 2015

**For more information contact:** [guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com](mailto:guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com)

Community Meeting, March 4, 2014, The Elks Club, 1038 Brown Street, Peekskill

# Academia El Guardián Escuela Chárter de Peekskill

*"DONDE LA EXCELENCIA ACADÉMICA Y CARÁCTER CUENTA..."*

El grupo fundador desarrolla un plan para abrir una nueva, escuela pública gratis para servir a los niños del área de Peekskill. La escuela abrirá en el otoño del 2015 con Kindergarten y 1º grado y agregará un grado cada año hasta tener un programa completo de K a 8. Las escuelas Chárter son escuelas públicas independientes libres de diseñar sus propios programas y contratar al personal que mejor llene las necesidades de sus estudiantes. La Academia Guardián será una pequeña escuela con solo 2 clases por grado para poder construir una comunidad muy cercana donde cada niño es conocido por sus maestros. Escuelas Chárter son abiertas a todo tipo de estudiantes, incluyendo aquellos con discapacidades y estudiantes de inglés. Los padres tendrán que aplicar a la Academia, pero para ser justos, todos los serán seleccionados por una lotería. Características claves incluyen:

- **Excelencia a través de Co-enseñanza:** La aplicación de las mejores prácticas de este innovador modelo—de dos profesores que comparten las responsabilidades del salón de clase educación general—permite una instrucción en grupos individuales y pequeños, la rehabilitación y el desafío. Asumiendo un plan de estudios riguroso y flexible basado en el aprendizaje secuencial y la instrucción directa, los profesores serán capaces de "mantener la barra muy alto", mientras proporcionando los apoyos necesarios para alcanzar esa barra alta.
- **Excelencia a través de la Formación del Carácter:** Las investigaciones han encontrado una relación profunda entre el éxito académico y la educación del carácter. En la Academia El Guardián valoraremos ayudar a los estudiantes a ser jóvenes de carácter impecable que no sólo han alcanzado su nivel académico óptimo, sino también que crezca para convertirse en líderes éticos capaces de hacer contribuciones sustanciales a sus comunidades.
- **Excelencia a través de la Diversidad:** Celebrando un ambiente educativo diverso prepara estudiantes a ser participantes activos y líderes responsables de una sociedad cada vez más compleja y global. Reconocemos que todos los estudiosos pueden lograr esto sin importar de las diferencias étnicas, idiomas o socioeconómicos orígenes.
- **Excelencia a través de Participación de la Comunidad:** La Academia El Guardián creará un ambiente de apoyo familiar que está comprometido con la idea de que cuando uno de nosotros tiene éxito—todos tenemos éxito y—cuando uno de nosotros cae, todos somos responsables de ayudar a los estudiantes ascender! También vamos a tratar de establecer asociaciones comunitarias que promueven el éxito académico al permitir que los estudiantes a ver que son parte de un mundo más grande.

Marque Uno:

- Tengo niños en edad escolar que serán elegibles para inscribirse en la *Academia El Guardián Escuela Chárter de Peekskill* en el 2015 y quisiera tener esta opción en mi comunidad
- No soy padre de niños en edad escolar, pero apoyo la creación de la *Academia el Guardián Escuela Chárter de Peekskill*.

Nombre:	Teléfono:
Dirección:	
Correo Electrónico:	

guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com | P.O. Box 2104, Peekskill, NY 10566

Sesión Informativa: 12 junio, 7:00 PM—The Elks Club, 1038 Brown Street, Peekskill



The Guardian Academy  
Charter School of Peekskill

*The Heart of Excellence*

**H**ARD WORKING

**E**NGAGED

**A**CCOUNTABLE

**R**ESPECTFUL

**T**HOUGHTFUL

*Creating an attitude for Success*



**Attachment 3a:****Sample Daily Schedule First Grade**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00-8:30	Community Meeting: Character Education/ HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/ HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART
8:30-10:00	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA
10:00-11:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:15-12:15	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess
12:15-1:00	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science
1:00-1:45	Arts/PE/Music	Arts/PE/Music	Arts/PE/Music	Arts/PE/Music	Arts/PE/Music
1:45-2:25	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math
2:25-3:10	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA
3:10-3:30	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART
3:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

**Sample Daily Schedule Fifth Grade**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00-8:30	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART				
8:30-10:00	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA
10:00-11:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:15-12:00	Differentiated Learning ELA				
12:00-1:00	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess
1:00-1:45	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science
1:45-2:30	Art/PE/Music	Art/PE/Music	Art/PE/Music	Art/PE/Music	Art/PE/Music
2:30-3:10	Differentiated Learning Math				
3:10-3:30	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART				
3:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

**Sample Daily Schedule for First Grade Teachers**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:00	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
8:00-8:30	Community Meeting: Character Education/ HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/ HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART
8:30-10:00	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA
10:00-11:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:15-11:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:45-12:15	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
12:15-1:00	Science	Science	Science	Social Studies	Social Studies
1:00-1:45	Grade level Team Planning Period	Grade level Team Planning Period	Meeting with Leadership team	Grade level Team Planning Period	Grade level Team Planning Period
1:45-2:25	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math	Differentiated Learning Math
2:25-3:10	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA	Differentiated Learning ELA
3:10-3:30	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART
3:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
3:45-4:15	Meeting with leadership team	Grade Level Team Planning Period	Faculty Meeting	Grade Level Team Planning Period	Grade level Team Meeting

Grade level team planning periods will allow for the four grades level teachers to work together to plan for which teachers will work together to co-teach lessons.

**Sample Daily Schedule for Fifth Grade Teachers**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:00	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
8:00-8:30	Community Meeting: Character Education/HEART				
8:30-10:00	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA	Reading/ELA
10:00-11:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:15-12:00	Differentiated Learning ELA				
12:00-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
1:00-1:45	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science
1:45-2:30	Grade level Team Planning Period	Meeting with Leadership team	Grade level Team Planning Period	Grade level Team Planning Period	Grade level Team Planning Period
2:30-3:10	Differentiated Learning Math				
3:10-3:30	Closing Meeting: Reflection/HEART				
3:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
3:45-4:15	Grade Level Team Planning Period	Grade Level Team Planning Period	Faculty Meeting	Meeting with leadership team	Grade Level Team Planning Period

Grade level team planning periods will allow for the four grades level teachers to work together to plan for which teachers will work together to co-teach lessons.

### Average Weekly Instructional Minutes

Subject	First Grade	Fifth Grade
ELA	675	675
Math	575	575
Science	135	135
Social Studies	90	90
PE	90	90
Arts	135	135

### Average Weekly Instructional Minutes

Subject	First Grade	Fifth Grade
ELA	675	675
Math	575	575
Science	135	135
Social Studies	90	90
PE	90	90
Arts	135	135

**Attachment 3b:**

**First Year Calendar**

The proposed calendar for 2015-2016 is provided below. Our school year includes 10 extra professional development days for staff. The teachers work day is from 7:30- 4:15 for 195 days. They are required each year to participate in our two week summer orientation/professional development. Scholars attend school for 190 days.

In order to maximize student time in school, we will only recognize major federal holidays and extended breaks that align with those of our public school district. For grading purposes, the calendar is divided into trimesters.

<p><b>August</b>            17<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup>: Staff Summer Orientation/PD            24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>: Staff Summer Orientation/PD</p>	<p><b>September</b>            1<sup>st</sup>: Family Orientation/Meet and Greet Day            7<sup>th</sup>: Labor day- school closed            9<sup>th</sup>: First day of school            14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Rosh Hashanah- school closed            23<sup>rd</sup>: Yom Kippur- school closed</p>
<p><b>October</b>            12<sup>th</sup>: Columbus Day- school closed            23<sup>rd</sup>: Professional development day- school closed</p>	<p><b>November</b>            11th: Veterans’ Day- school closed            26<sup>th</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving- school closed</p>
<p><b>December</b>            24<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Holiday recess- school closed</p>	<p><b>January</b>            18<sup>th</sup>: MLK, Jr. Day- school closed             *Re-enrollment begins</p>
<p><b>February</b>            5<sup>th</sup>: Professional development day- school closed            15<sup>th</sup>: Presidents Day- school closed</p>	<p><b>March</b>            25<sup>th</sup>: Good Friday- school closed            28<sup>th</sup>: Easter Monday- school closed</p>
<p><b>April</b>            25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup>: Spring Recess- school closed</p>	<p><b>May</b>            27<sup>th</sup>: Professional Development day-school closed            30<sup>th</sup>: Memorial Day- school closed</p>
<p><b>June</b>            3<sup>rd</sup>: Professional Development day- school closed            24<sup>th</sup>: Last day of school/report cards</p>	

## **Attachment 4: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill Student Discipline Policy**

### **Behavioral Expectations:**

We have high behavioral expectations for our scholars. We will take a preventative and proactive approach to discipline to ensure that scholars know what is expected of them and that we have created an environment where all scholars can learn. Consequences will help scholars recognize negative behavior and enable them to make better choices. We will expect our discipline policy to reflect our HEART Core Values (**H**ard -working, **E**ngaged, **A**ccountable, **R**espectful, **T**houghtful)

There is a range of consequences for breaking school rules depending on the severity of the action. The consequences may include:

**Verbal warning** –Scholars are warned by school staff member that they are negatively affecting the learning environment (their HEART health) staff member would refer to which of the HEART model scholar is not following.

**Time Out**- Scholars will take a break by going to a designated location in the classroom or another classroom. During a break scholar may be asked to complete their assignment or to reflect on why they needed a break. This will depend on the reason for the needed break

**Recess detention**- Teacher will keep scholar in at recess. Scholar will be required to complete a behavior reflection (*HEART check or Check HEART Health*). They may need to complete incomplete work or community service.

**Parent Contact**- Teacher will contact a scholar’s parent or guardian to discuss the scholars repeated need for classroom breaks or lunch detention.

**Office Referral**- If a scholar repeatedly disrupts the learning environment he or she may be referred to a school administrator (*identify the administrator*). During an office referral the scholar will be required to check their HEART. When a scholar is referred to the office the teacher will be required to contact the scholar’s parent. After discussion with the teacher a parent conference may be requested by the administrator.

**Behavior Contract**- A behavior contract will be developed for scholars who repeatedly violate the HEART model. Scholars will be required to review the requirements of the contract with their teachers to ensure they are following the contract.

**Losses of Privileges**- Scholars who continue to show negative behavior will loss the privileged such as participation in extra curricula activities, field-trips or other special events.

**HEART Check** - Scholars will be asked to refer to the HEART model and determine whether or not they are implementing all its components, if not make adjustments to their actions to reflect the HEART model.

**In-School Suspension**-during in-school suspension scholars will not be allowed to spend the day as members of their class. In-school suspensions will be determined by the Principal and will be used for serious or persistent infractions of school rules. Scholars will spend the day supervised by a staff member. The scholar will be assigned work that must be completed during their in-school suspension.

**Out of School Suspension** -Suspensions will be determined by the Principal. Scholars will be suspended from school for serious breaches of the Code of Conduct. In all cases, parents or guardians will be informed and must attend a conference with the Principal. Suspensions will be recorded in scholar’s records. In the event that a child is suspended the scholar will be responsible for completing assigned work. They will also be responsible for making up missed assignments.

**Expulsion:** Reserved for the most serious breaches of the Code of Conduct, when the safety of the school environment is compromised.

Scholars will be asked to reflect on the HEART model and identify which part they failed to implement (for example: were they being respectful, were they hard working) and determine with assistance of a school staff member if needed how they can rectify their action and avoid it the next time. During reflection scholars will be asked when necessary to make reparation for their actions.

Listed below is a list of possible infractions and their potential consequence. All discipline will take into consideration the scholar’s history and severity of the negative behavior. Consequences are subject to the discretion of the Principal. Any violation of federal law will be handled in cooperation with the police department or other authorities.

Infraction	Range of consequences
<b>Level 1</b>	
These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calling out an answer</li> <li>• Chewing gum or bringing candy to school</li> <li>• Rolling eyes or other minor disrespectful behavior</li> <li>• out of seat without permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warning/reprimand by school staff</li> <li>• Scholar reminded of appropriate behavior and task at hand</li> <li>• Scholar is reminded of past poor decisions and provided with productive alternative choices that should be made</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	
These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeating a Level 1 infraction</li> <li>• Being off-task</li> <li>• Being unprepared for class (which includes but is not limited to failing to bring pencil, not completing homework, etc...)</li> <li>• Failing to follow directions</li> <li>• Failing to complete work</li> <li>• Failing to be in school uniform and/or violating school uniform policy</li> <li>• Disrupting class or educational process in any way at any time (which includes but is not limited to making excessive noise in a classroom, failing to participate, refusing to work with partners, etc...)</li> <li>• Going to the bathroom without permission or at undesignated times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholar is reminded of appropriate behavior and task at hand</li> <li>• Scholar is given a verbal warning</li> <li>• Scholar is given a “Time Out” within the classroom and separated from other scholars</li> <li>• Removal from classroom for "Time Out" outside of the classroom (another classroom or administrator’s office)</li> <li>• Reflect ion on behavior in writing or orally (depending on grade)</li> <li>• Call home to parents/guardian</li> <li>• Scholar-Parent-Teacher conference</li> <li>• Scholar-Parent-Administrator conference</li> <li>• In-school disciplinary action (which includes but is not limited to exclusion from recess, school events,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making noise in the hallways</li> <li>• Inappropriate noise levels in lunchroom, gym, and during arrival and dismissal</li> <li>• Leaving the recess area during recess without permission from an authorized adult</li> <li>• Using school equipment (i.e. computers, faxes, phones) without permission</li> <li>• Verbally disrespectful to a fellow scholar (which includes but is not limited to teasing, name calling, being rude, mocking, etc...)</li> <li>• Verbally disrespectful to faculty, staff, or other school community members (which includes but is not limited to being rude, disobeying instructions, etc...)</li> </ul>	<p>trips, or other activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal or written apology to community</li> <li>• In-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Out-of-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Other consequences/responses deemed appropriate by school</li> </ul>
<p>Level 3</p>	
<p>These include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeating a Level 2 infraction</li> <li>• Using profanity, racial slurs, or any foul or discriminatory language toward another scholar</li> <li>• Using profanity, racial slurs, or any foul or discriminatory language toward a staff member</li> <li>• Disobeying or defying school staff or any school authority/personnel</li> <li>• Posting or distributing inappropriate materials (which includes but is not limited to unauthorized materials, defamatory or libelous materials, or threatening materials)</li> <li>• Violating the school's Internet policy (which includes but is not limited to using the Internet for purposes not related to school or non-educational purposes or which result in security/privacy violations. Personal internet use is contingent upon express permission from a school authority)</li> <li>• Forgery of any kind</li> <li>• Engaging in any academic dishonesty (which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarizing, copying another's work, or colluding/fraudulent collaboration without expressed permission from a school authority)</li> <li>• Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm or making false threats of any kind</li> <li>• Misusing other people's property</li> <li>• Vandalizing school property or property belonging to staff, scholars, or others (which includes but is not limited to writing on desks, writing on school books, damaging property, etc...)</li> <li>• Stealing or knowingly possessing property belonging to another person without proper</li> <li>• Smoking</li> <li>• Leaving class, school-related activity, or school premises without school authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent to Principal's office</li> <li>• Loss of classroom/school privileges</li> <li>• Reflection on behavior in writing or orally (depending on grade)</li> <li>• Removal from classroom for "Time Out" outside of the classroom (another classroom or administrator's office)</li> <li>• Scholar-Parent-Administrator Conference</li> <li>• In-School disciplinary action (which includes but is not limited to exclusion from recess, school events, trips, or other activities)</li> <li>• Verbal or written apology to Community</li> <li>• In-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Call home to parents/guardian</li> <li>• out-of-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Other consequences/responses deemed appropriate by school (including but not limited to extended suspension for a fixed period)</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>

Level 4	
<p>These include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeating a Level 3 Infraction</li> <li>• Repeated in-school and/or out-of-school suspensions</li> <li>• Exhibiting blatant and repeated disrespect for school code, policies, community, or culture</li> <li>• Engaging in intimidation, bullying, harassment, coercion, or extortion or threatening violence, injury, or harm to others (empty or real) or stalking or seeking to coerce</li> <li>• Engaging in behavior which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury/assault against any member of the school community</li> <li>• Engaging in sexual, racial, or any other type of harassment</li> <li>• Possessing, transferring, or using alcohol, other drugs or controlled substances</li> <li>• Participating in an incident of group violence</li> <li>• Possessing a weapon</li> <li>Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact</li> <li>• Fighting or engaging in physically aggressive behavior of any kind</li> <li>Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact</li> <li>• Fighting or engaging in physically aggressive behavior of any kind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on behavior in writing or orally (depending on grade)</li> <li>• Sent to Principal/school administrator</li> <li>• Loss of classroom/school privileges</li> <li>• Call home to parents/guardian</li> <li>• Removal from classroom or "Time Out" outside of the classroom (administrator's office)</li> <li>• Scholar-Parent-Administrator Conference</li> <li>• In-school disciplinary action (which includes but is not limited to exclusion from recess, school events, trips, or other activities)</li> <li>• Verbal or written apology to community</li> <li>• In-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Out-of-school suspension (possibly immediate)</li> <li>• Other consequences/responses deemed appropriate by school (including but not limited to extended suspension for a fixed period)</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>

While GACSP works diligently to ensure scholars are following directions and demonstrating exceptional character, there are certain behaviors that call for stringent and immediate action: Physical Assault Destruction or Theft of Property and Inappropriate Touching.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal Punishment is prohibited by *GACSP*, is against the law, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including the immediate termination of employment. If an employee becomes aware of an incident of corporal punishment, he/she must report it immediately to his/her supervisor or the School Leader. Failure to report an incident of corporal punishment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **School Busses**

Bus drivers must focus on the road to make sure all scholars arrive to school and home safely. On the bus, scholars must remain in their seats with seatbelts fastened, sit silently, and follow all directions given by the bus driver. Scholars who behave poorly or do not follow directions on the bus compromise the safety of themselves and others. Riding the bus is a privilege and poor

bus behavior may result in suspension or termination of transportation services. Scholars will be suspended from the bus for the following infractions: fighting, jumping over seats, screaming, throwing objects, beeing out of seat, and any general behavior that puts the driver or other scholars at risk. If a child is suspended from the bus, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange for alternative transportation.

### **Dress Code**

Guardian Academy is a community of learners and expects a school uniform to be a unifying factor within our school community. Our school uniform identifies its wearer as part of a distinctive group with a distinctive purpose. Uniforms also allow parents to save money by not having to buy an entire wardrobe of school clothing and they minimize learning distractions in the school. While the school will identify an inexpensive uniform provider, it understands that all families may not be able to afford the uniform. No scholar will be denied access to the school because of an inability to purchase the school uniform. The school will keep reserves on hand to assist families who cannot afford the uniform.

1. Scholars are to wear the Guardian Academy uniform every day.
2. All shirts are to be tucked in and worn appropriately.
3. All pants must fit around the waist. Boys must wear a belt every day. Belts should be of appropriate size and nature, i.e., no large-faced images or symbols which may pose as a distraction.
4. Pants may not be excessively baggy and may not cover the shoes.
5. Scholars may not wear jeans, jogging pants, sweat pants or shorts. Shorts are permitted if the weather is above 85 degrees and must be of appropriate length.
6. Scholars may not wear sleeveless or cut-off shirts, blouses, or dresses.
7. Scholars may not wear inappropriately tight clothing.
8. Girls may not wear skirts that are inappropriately short (above the center of their knee) or that have inappropriately long slits (above their knees). Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under their skirts as scholar frequently sit on the floor during class.
9. Scholars may not wear hats, caps, do-rags, or other head coverings in the school (except in the case of religious observance).
10. For safety reasons the following jewelry will not be permitted: necklaces outside of shirt, chains, chokers, multiple finger rings, and dangle earrings. Earrings should not hang from the earlobe (studs are permitted). Scholars are permitted one bracelet and one ring to be worn in school. One necklace may be worn but must remain tucked in at all times.
11. Scholars may not wear makeup, contacts and hair with color, sparkles or glitter. (Scholars may use clear lip balm, such as Vaseline, Chapstick, etc. to moisturize lips. As with any items, these may be taken away for inappropriate and excessive use).
12. Scholars cannot wear open shoes.
13. Scholars may not use nail polish or fake fingernail tips.

**New York State Dignity Act for All Scholars** Guardian Academy abides by the New York State dignity act and does not condone bullying, taunting, harassment, discrimination, intimidation at any point. The dignity act is described below:

New York State's Dignity for All Scholars Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school scholars with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.

### **Closed Campus**

Under no circumstances may scholars leave the school building without permission. A scholar with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult. Once scholars have entered the school in the morning, they may not leave the building unless they are escorted by a school staff member or other authorized adult.

### **Student Searches**

In order to maintain the security of all scholars, GACSP reserves the right to conduct searches of scholars and their property. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that scholar privacy is protected to the extent possible. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the scholars is respected to the extent possible, and that scholars and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search.

School cubbies, lockers and desks, which are assigned to scholars for their use, remain the property of the school and scholars should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time.

**Disciplinary Procedures and Due Process:** Parents will be notified of all consequences that involve removing scholars from class, activities or the school. Scholars will be told of all charges against them and be provided with the opportunity to describe their side of the story. The principal or other school official shall consider this explanation prior to taking disciplinary action. For minor infractions parents may be merely notified and/or a conference requested to assist in resolving the situation. For more serious issues that involve removal of the scholar from participation in the school, parents will always be notified and have opportunities to discuss the disciplinary action. In cases where the scholar has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified. When the school proposes suspending a scholar, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as possible by telephone. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a short-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian that he/she will have the opportunity to request an informal conference with the Principal. At an informal conference, the scholar and parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to deny or explain the charges. A written decision will be issued after the informal conference.

**Short-Term Suspension:** A short-term suspension is defined as an in-school or out-of-school suspension of 5 days or less. The Principal may impose short-term suspension for serious cause.

If necessary, the scholar will be immediately removed from the class or the school. The school staff involved shall make reasonable efforts to verify facts and statements prior to recommending suspension. When the school proposes suspending a scholar, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as practicable by telephone. If the school has the parent/guardian's email address, notification will be provided by email. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a short-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian that he/she will have the opportunity to request an informal conference with the Principal or his/her designee. At an informal conference, the scholar and parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to deny or explain the charges and to present his/her own evidence. The Principal may then, at his or her discretion, decide to impose lesser consequences than suspension. A written decision will be issued after the informal conference. Both the informal conference and subsequent written notice shall be in the parent/guardian's dominant language or translation will be made.

**Long-Term Suspension:** A long-term suspension is defined as an in-school or out-of-school suspension of more than 5 days. When the school proposes a long-term suspension, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as practicable by telephone. If the school has the parent/guardian's email address, notification will be provided by email. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a long-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian and the scholar of the scholar's right to a formal hearing at which he/she may be represented by counsel, cross-examine witnesses against him/her, and present witnesses and evidence of his/her own. If the scholar or his/her parent/guardian will be represented by counsel at the hearing, notice must be provided to the Principal no less than 2 days before the hearing is scheduled. The written notice and hearing shall be in the parent/guardian's dominant language or a translation will be made. The Principal or a delegate will preside over the hearing and all members of the staff who were involved in witnessing the alleged discipline violation are required to participate. A decision by the Principal will stand as the final decision regarding the scholar's long-term suspension status, though the scholar's family has the right to appeal to the Board of Trustees.

**Expulsion:** An expulsion is the permanent removal of a scholar from the school. In the case of conduct which in the school's judgment warrants expulsion, the scholar may be subjected to a short or long-term suspension first. If the Principal decides that an infraction warrants expulsion, a hearing as described above will be held. Based on that hearing, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which will make the final decision. That decision may be appealed to the Board. If the school expels a scholar, the school will cooperate with any school to which the scholar seeks to enroll, including providing the receiving school

with all relevant information regarding the scholar's academic performance and scholar records, upon request of the school or parent/guardian.

**Students with Disabilities:** The school's disciplinary policy, as regards any scholar with a disability, will be consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), its implementing regulations and applicable New York State law respecting scholars with disabilities. The school will cooperate with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the scholar's district of residence as necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Generally, a scholar with, or suspected of having, a disability may be disciplined in the same manner as his/her non-disabled peers as set forth above. However, when a scholar is suspended for more than 10 days, or on multiple occasions that, in the aggregate, amount to more than 10 days in a school year, additional safeguards are in place to ensure that the scholar's behavior was not tied to or was a manifestation of his/her disability. An exclusion from school for a period greater than 10 days, as described in this paragraph, is considered a change in placement.

A scholar whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the scholar or others if the BIP is followed with respect to an infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for consideration of a change in the guidelines.

If a scholar identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight days, the school will contact the CSE for reconsideration of the scholar's educational placement. Such scholar shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the scholar's district of residence prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

Guardian Academy will work with the CSE to ensure that it meets within seven days of notification of any of the following:

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

Specifically, when a change of placement of greater than 10 days is proposed, a manifestation team consisting of: (a) someone from the CSE who is knowledgeable about the scholar and can

interpret information about the scholar's behavior generally; (b) the parent/guardian; and (c) relevant members of the scholar's CSE IEP team (as determined by the parent and CSE) shall convene immediately if possible, but in no event later than 10 days after the decision to change placement, to determine whether the conduct was a manifestation of the scholar's disability. In the event of a proposed short-term or long-term suspension or expulsion of a scholar with disabilities, the school will follow the notice procedures described above for scholars without disabilities. The notice to the parent/guardian will advise that the CSE has been notified. The notice will state the purpose of the CSE meeting and the names of the expected attendees, and indicate the parent/guardian's right to have relevant CSE members attend.

The manifestation team must review the scholar's IEP together with all relevant information within the scholar's file and any information provided by the parent/guardian. If the manifestation team concludes that the child's behavior resulted from his disability, the manifestation team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) to address the behaviors giving rise to the conduct, unless an FBA or BIP was made prior to the scholar's violation of school rules giving rise to the suspension, in which case each should be reviewed and revised, if necessary, to address the behavior. A scholar whose IEP includes specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear not to be effective or if there is concern for the health and safety of the scholar or others if those guidelines are followed with respect to a specific infraction, the CSE may consider a change in the guidelines.

Moreover, the scholar must also be returned to his or her original placement (i.e., the placement from which he/she was removed), unless:

(a) the parent and district agree to another placement as part of the newly created or revised BIP, or (b) in cases where the child: (i) carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a function under the jurisdiction of the State or local educational agency; (ii) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or local educational agency; or (iii) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or local educational agency;

The Committee on Special Education shall determine an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), which shall not exceed 45 days.

If a scholar does not currently have an IEP, but prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary action the school has a basis of knowledge that a disability exists, the scholar's family may request that the scholar be disciplined in accordance with these provisions.

**Alternative Instruction:** Scholars who are suspended will be provided with alternative instruction. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family on a case-by-case basis. In cases of suspension, alternative instruction by qualified staff will be offered within 24 hours of any suspension. Such instruction can be at a location and time of the school's choosing, so long as each is reasonable and the scholar has notice of it. The school can

choose to provide tutoring to a suspended scholar at the school, the scholar's home or some other reasonably accessible location, either during the school day or before or after school hours. Alternative instruction means actual instruction as opposed to simply giving homework or assigning self-study. The quality of the instruction will be designed to allow the scholar to keep pace with school work, receive all assignments and assessments, and generally advance with the curriculum. In addition, when appropriate, the scholar may be assigned a project designed to address the conduct that gave rise to the suspension. During long-term suspensions, the school may also seek to place the scholar during the term of the suspension in any alternate education program that is operated by the scholar's school district of residence. For a scholar who has been expelled by the school, the means and manner of alternative instruction will be the same as for a scholar who has been suspended. Alternative instruction will be provided until the scholar is enrolled at another accredited school, or otherwise participating in an accredited program, including any alternative education program operated by the scholar's school district of residence, to the extent the provision of such services is required by law. As above, the school may seek, where appropriate, to place the scholar in an alternative education program operated by the scholar's school district of residence either through agreement with the school district or by operation of law.

If the suspension of a scholar with a disability is upheld, the scholar, at the school's sole discretion, may be placed in alternative instruction, or be required to remain at home during the pendency of the suspension, but not for a period of time greater than the amount of time a non-disabled scholar would be subject to suspension for the same behavior. A suspended elementary school scholar will be assigned to alternative instruction for direct instruction for a minimum of one hour per day. The school will assign staff to develop alternative instruction that will enable the scholar to complete required coursework and make sure that the scholar progresses toward his/her IEP goals. If the school believes it is unable to accommodate the provisions of the scholar's IEP, it will immediately contact the CSE to convene a meeting to remedy the situation. The school will coordinate with the scholar's general education teachers to ensure that the coursework and homework is gathered and provided to the scholar. During alternative instruction, the school will insure all assignments are taught, reviewed, and submitted to the general education teacher in a timely fashion. In addition, when appropriate, the scholar may be assigned a project designed to address the behavior that gave rise to the suspension.

## School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

**Name: Audrey Cummings Warn**

**Charter School Name: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill**

**Charter School Address: P.O. Box 2014 Peekskill, NY 10566**

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): **Chairman of Board**

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. **I am part of the Founding Group which began discussions concerning the founding of a charter school in January 2013.**

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. **Serving on the Board will allow me to make a significant contribution to the city I love and to the city's most precious resource—its children.**

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here): **While I have not served on a school Board, I have served on the Boards of a variety of volunteer organizations to include the Fort Knox Officers' Wives' Club (Recording Secretary, Welfare Chairperson), Peekskill Historical Preservation Board, Assumption School Parents' Association (President) and have built and advised a fundraising Board.**

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: **I know Jamie Sanchez from being a parishioner and employee of**

**Assumption Church. I met Stefania while working on a fundraiser. I came to know the rest of the Board through our working together over this past year.**

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.  
If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:  
As the Lead Applicant, I have met many charter school employees as I have endeavored to educate myself on both the application process and what the future holds if we are granted a charter.
11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.  
 No.  Yes.  
If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:
12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a

management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.  
 None  Yes
17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. **I would bring it to the Board's attention immediately for evaluation.**

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. **The Guardian Academy Charter School's mission emphasizes a rigorous yet flexible curriculum that raises the bar for both academic achievement and behavior/character while providing the scholars the necessary support to reach the attain the bar thus developing young men and women of keen intellect and impeccable character.**
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. **An exciting element of the academic program is the co-teaching model in which a 4-teacher team of two General Education teachers, one English Language Learner teacher and one Special Education teacher. This will ensure both the flexibility and the rigor needed for achievement.**
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. **Characteristics of a successful charter school include high standards and expectations for both academic achievement and behavior/character. Excellent leadership both in the school building and on the Board are essential. Hiring the best staff and recruiting the best for the Board are essential as well as**

**constant monitoring and quick response in areas identified as needing improvement. Fiscal soundness is vital as well as maintaining good governance and high standards of integrity and ethical behavior.**

**Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. **The role of charter school board member is to ensure that the school's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter and is a viable organization. Specifically, keeping the mission clearly in focus, selecting and evaluating the school leader, ensuring effective organizational planning, ensuring adequate resources, managing resources effectively, enhancing public standing and ensuring legal and ethical integrity and maintaining accountability.**
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. **I affirm.**
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.



## Experience

**Advancement Director/Special Projects Coordinator:** Assumption Church, Peekskill, NY; January 2008-present

### Advancement Director:

- Developed and executed annual fundraising plan
- Coordinated annual appeal and fund drives
- Cultivated and solicited major gifts
- Managed donor prospecting, cultivation, tracking and, acknowledgement of all gifts
- Built and managed the *Assumption School Advisory Board*
- Coordinated special events including *Pastor's Walking Pilgrimage to St. Patrick's Cathedral*, annual golf outing and, alumni reunions
- Wrote foundation grants and sought individual scholarship opportunities for students
- Conveyed the Assumption School "story" via e-mail, social media, *web logging*, direct mail, media relations and all promotional materials
- Raised over \$200,000 in unrestricted funds for 2011-2012 academic year

### Special Projects Coordinator:

- Coordinate every phase of special events/projects for example: Visits by Rwandan Genocide Survivor Immaculée Iligabiza and renowned Praise and Worship Singer, Tori Harris; *Mary of Nazareth* movie event at the Paramount Theater, Peekskill
- Formed Theology on Tap group

**Freelance Writer:** Memphis, TN; 1997-2000; *Memphis Women's Journal*

**Family Support Facilitator:** 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Bad Hersfeld, Germany; 1992-1993  
Delta Company, 10th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Knox, KY; 1994-1996

**Testing Administrator:** Army Education Services; Fulda, Germany; 1992-1993

**Public Affairs Officer (Civilian):** I Corps and Fort Lewis; Fort Lewis, WA; 1989-1990

**Publicity Coordinator:** American Red Cross; Fort Knox, KY; 1990-1991

**Teacher (Substitute):** Fort Knox Community School System; Fort Knox, KY; 1990-1991

**Publications Assistant:** Japan Society; New York, NY; 1987-1989

## Education

- Manhattanville College, B.A. International Relations/Asian Studies and Japanese; Summa Cum Laude; 1987
- *Association of Development Officers' Certification Course in Fundraising and Board Development* in partnership with Purchase College – *Fundraising and Board Development*

## Community Leadership

- Assumption School Parent's Association, 2000-2012
- Cub Scout Troop 127, Den Mother and Leadership Committee, 2003-2006
- Adult Religious Education Instructor, Assumption Church, 2005-present
- Peekskill Historic Preservation Commission, January 2008-January 2011
- Children's Liturgy of the Word Minister, Assumption Church, 2009-present
- Lector, Assumption Church, 2010-present
- Leader, Life in the Holy Spirit Prayer Group, February 2014-present

**School Trustee Background Information**

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

Name: CARLOS MARTINEZ

Charter School Name: THE GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF ROCKVILLE

Charter School Address: 920 HERSHMAN AVE WAY, ROCKVILLE, MD

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): BOARD MEMBER

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

**Background**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.  
REV. JOHN HIGGINS
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. SEE ATTACHED

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here): *SECRETARY*

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit) please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.
- Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
- I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.
- Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
- I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.
- Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
- I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.
15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.
- None  Yes

17-23 SEE ATTACHED.

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

### **Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

Carlos E. Martinez: Attachment

5. I wish serve on the board because I believe that the future of our youth, city, state and nation will be based on academic success.

6. I am a board member of the Peekskill Youth Bureau. That board experience, along with interpersonal skills and community knowledge will help me to serve as an advocate for the charter school.

17. If such a situation arose, I would immediately advise the board for evaluation.

18. All students have the ability to learn at a high capacity given the required tools and support system.

19. Our curriculum is geared toward academic excellence and character development. Academic proficiency counts when being interviewed for job, but retention and success will depend on understanding the norms and appropriate behavior in the professional world.

20. The most important characteristic of a charter school, which is tailored to the needs of the students, is the students' ability to acquire a high degree of academic achievement which will ensure the students to further their educational goals. The onus of student learning should be solely the responsibility of the administration and educators. Evaluation of programs and educators should be monitored constantly and changes made when required.

21. It is imperative that board members attend meetings and be active participants in deliberations and decisions. Board members should be vigilant for conflicts of interests and maintain code confidentiality. Board members should be able to advise management and advocate for the school.

22. I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school boards by-laws and the proposed policies.

23. I believe that my law-enforcement experience coupled with academic achievement and life experience will enable me to well serve the board.



# Carlos Martinez

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**Objective** Secure a position as a board member for the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill.

**Experience**

Commanding Officer, 42<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York  
1993 - 1994 New York City Police Department, New York, New York

- Manage and evaluate unit's effectiveness.
- Implement initiatives as needed.
- Certify annual evaluation of personnel.
- Implement training and integrity programs.
- Administer disciplinary proceedings.

Executive Officer, 40<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York  
1990 - 1985 New York City Police Department, New York, New York

- Case management and review.
- Conduct training sessions and maintain integrity programs.
- Annual evaluation of personnel.

Detective Investigator, Detective Borough Bronx, Bronx, New York  
1982 - 1985 New York City Police Department, New York, New York

- Sex Crimes Unit.
- Homicide Apprehension Unit.

Detective Investigator, Organized Crime Control Bureau, New York, New York  
1976 - 1982 New York City Police Department, New York, New York

- Undercover Narcotics Operative.

Police Officer, 44<sup>th</sup> Precinct, Bronx, New York

- Sector Patrol Duties.

**Education**

March 1992 University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

- Certificate of Achievement: Criminal Justice

December 1980 John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY, NY.

- Bachelor of Science: Police Science

June 1977 John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY, NY.

- Associate in Science: Police Science

**Interests**

Current board member of Peekskill Youth Bureau  
Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy Associate  
Member: Sergeant Benevolent Association

**References** References are available on request.

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## School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

**Name:** Stefania Raschella

**Charter School Name:** The Guardian Academy Charter School Of Peekskill

**Charter School Address:** Not Determined

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.  See Attached
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.  See Attached

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board. X This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

X This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

X This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons. X Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: See Attached

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

X I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

X No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

X Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

X Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.  Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

X Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate. X This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

X None  Yes

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. See Attached

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. See Attached
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. See Attached
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. See Attached

### **Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. See Attached
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. See Attached
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

A Statement of Assurance must be signed by and submitted for each proposed Board Member.

## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Stefania Raschella (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Stefania Raschella  
Signature

7-21-14  
Date

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided below will be redacted.*

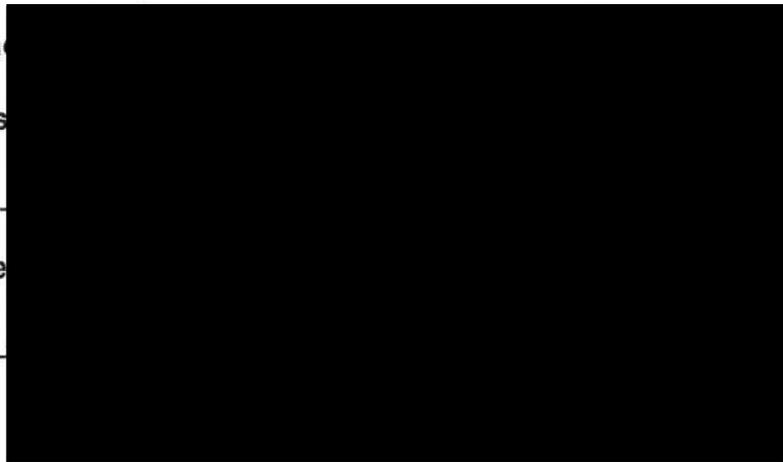
Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

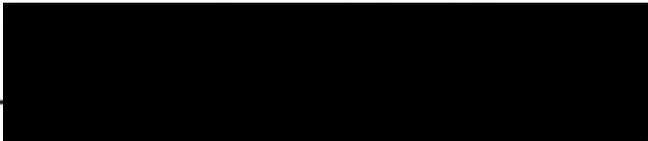
Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_





**EXPERIENCE**

**Office of the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York**  
**Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Strategic Planning** **February 2014 - Present**

- ◆ Manage the daily operation of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools' Office
- ◆ Update the Regional Policy Manual
- ◆ Prepare all documents for meetings conducted by the Deputy Superintendent of Schools
- ◆ Assisted in the creation of the Regional Boards Annual report document
- ◆ Assisted in the development of the evaluation form for the Business Managers
- ◆ Prepare minutes for all meetings

**Saint Angela Merici, Bronx, N.Y.**  
**Teacher, Kindergarten** **Oct. 2013 - January 2014**

- ◆ Teach whole class and small group lessons on all subjects
- ◆ Prepare weekly lesson plans based on Common Core Curriculum
- ◆ Analyze students' Interim Assessment data and plan instruction based on analysis

**Holy Rosary School, Bronx, N.Y.**  
**Assistant Principal** **Sept. 2005 - Aug. 2013**

- ◆ Work with teachers concerning classroom management
- ◆ Responsible for tracking teachers' attendance and arranging classroom coverage
- ◆ Acting principal when principal is not available or not in school
- ◆ Meet with parents and professional staff concerning behavior and academic issues related to students
- ◆ Testing coordinator for state and standardize testing
- ◆ Oversee implementation of school policy
- ◆ Responsible for preparing the master schedule
- ◆ Work with principal during the admission process for new students
- ◆ Responsible for organization and management of the after school program
- ◆ Administrator of the READ Alliance tutoring program
- ◆ Coordinate special outreach events
- ◆ Teach integrated technology to Pre-K thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade

**Sacred Heart Private School, Bronx, N.Y.**  
**Teacher, Second Grade** **Sept. 1999 - June 2005**

- ◆ Teach whole class and small group lessons on all subjects
- ◆ Prepare weekly and monthly lesson plans based on various learning styles
- ◆ Incorporate technology into weekly lessons
- ◆ Prepare quarterly report cards and progress reports
- ◆ Assess students' progress on a weekly basis through a variety of methods
- ◆ Communicate with parents as needed
- ◆ Library Connection grade level coordinator

## **EARLY CAREER**

### **EXPERIENCE**

**Information Resources, Inc., Towne-Oller & Associates**  
**New York, N.Y.**

**1989 - 1996**

**Account Executive, (1993 - 1996)**

- ◆ Supervised client team and communicated to Director all significant client issues
- ◆ Coordinated and conducted sales training and issue oriented presentation for clients
- ◆ Assisted in the preparation of annual budget

**Account Coordinator, (1990 - 1993)**

- ◆ Maintained 26 accounts on a daily basis
- ◆ Assisted clients to effectively utilize data to make marketing and sales decisions

**Sales Analyst, (1989 - 1990)**

- ◆ Worked with executive staff to develop presentations focusing on brand problems and opportunities

### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**Holy Rosary Church, Bronx, N.Y.**

**Liturgy Committee Advisor (2003-Present)**

- ◆ Work with Pastor and committee members to coordinate seasonal decoration of the church

**Parish Council Member (2012 -Present)**

- ◆ Assist Pastor in developing and maintaining a plan for the parish and its needs and development
- ◆ Present to the council updates of committees to which I am a member

**Moderator, Young Disciples of Christ (1997- 2011)**

- ◆ Helped establish the youth group
- ◆ Worked with youth to plan and lead weekly meetings including prayer services and spiritual activities
- ◆ Supervised planning of and leading summer retreats
- ◆ Supervised youth members during various volunteer activities and outings
- ◆ Organized various fundraisers
- ◆ Coordinated trips to World Youth Day

**Sacred Heart Private School, Bronx, N.Y.**

**Moderator, Serving Others with Love (1999- 2005)**

- ◆ Cofounder of the service club
- ◆ Supervised students in planning various fundraisers and drives
- ◆ Supervised organization and planning of school wide activities

**COMPUTER  
PROFICIENCY**

Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint

**EDUCATION**

Master of Science in School Building Leadership,  
Mercy College, Bronx, N.Y. 2012

Master of Science in Teaching, Elementary Education,  
Fordham University, New York, N.Y. 1999

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration,  
Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. 1989

**CERTIFICATION**

New York State Professional Certification in School Building Leadership  
New York State Permanent Certification, Pre-K-6  
Master Teacher Program, Archdiocese of New York  
Catechist Certification, Level I & II

### School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

Name: JAMIE J. SANCHEZ

Charter School Name: GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL

Charter School Address: 920 FIRST STREET, PEEKSKILL, NEW YORK 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Board of Trustees

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

#### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I became aware of the Guardian Academy Charter School through Reverend John J. Higgins, Pastor of Assumption Church in Peekskill. I have known Reverend Higgins since his arrival to Peekskill in 2006 and have witnessed his spiritual leadership and guidance influence many lives—especially our ethnically and culturally diverse families. I am a native of Peekskill, pursuing a degree in accounting, determined to contribute to the city that has and continues to nurture me. Reverend Higgins reached out to me believing that I had the skill set required to serve on the Board.

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

As a Peekskill native, I welcome the opportunity to serve the children of this community that was so nurturing to me. I wholeheartedly support the concept of school choice reflected in the charter school movement. It allows families the opportunity to make educational choices that suit the needs of their children. I firmly believe in this proposed school and will make every effort to be a strong voice and advocate for the children we will serve.

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.  This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

## Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.  
If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.  
If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.  
 No.  Yes.  
If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:
12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be

conducted.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.

16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would immediately inform my fellow board members of this situation, request an immediate meeting and then comply with bylaws for investigation.

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The mission of the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill is to provide its students with an opportunity to learn in an environment that has high expectations for their achievement, provides the tools to help them meet those expectations and emphasizes a values-infused curriculum.

19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

The educational program will be rigorous yet supportive. It will emphasize fundamentals, especially strong reading and language arts skills across the curriculum. Above all, character counts at the Guardian Academy Charter School as it recognizes that it takes more than academic achievement to be a success.

20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the

board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A charter school board will need to be mindful of the diverse community it will serve—making consideration for cultural differences and language barriers. The board must have a high level of commitment and dedication. It must be fiscally responsible and make responsible management choices.

### **Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.  
The appropriate role of a Board member is to be committed, dedicated, accountable and ever mindful of the people we serve.
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.



# Jamie J. Sanchez

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## EDUCATION

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### **Pace University**

*Bachelor of Business Administration in Public Accounting,  
Expected December 2014, 150 credit course—GPA: 3.71  
Minor: Finance*

**Pleasantville, New York**

*September 2011 – Present*

## WORK EXPERIENCE

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### **Church of the Assumption**

*Receptionist*

- Prepare and translate documents for non-English speaking members of the parish
- Schedule appointments either manually or electronically on Microsoft Outlook
- Provide information to callers in either English or Spanish

**Peekskill, New York**

*February 2011 – Present*

### **McGladrey LLP**

*Tax Intern*

- Completed tax preparation of large and small companies in various industries
- Attained an understanding of tax regulations and accounting pronouncements

**Stamford, Connecticut**

*June 2014 – August 2014*

### **Deloitte & Touche LLP**

*Audit Intern*

- Utilized Excel skills and tied-out financial statements and footnotes to supporting work-papers
- Acquired knowledge and exposure to the audit profession

**Stamford, Connecticut**

*June 2013 – August 2013*

## LEADERSHIP, HONORS, & ACTIVITIES

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### **Ernst & Young Fund for Excellence in Accounting Education Scholarship, 2013**

- Demonstrated leadership and involvement in co-curricular activities at Pace University
- Awarded \$5,000 as 1-of-9 outstanding accounting students in the Lubin School of Business

### **ALPFA—Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting**

*VP of Recruitment*

*September 2013 – Present*

- Initiated a new agenda for recruiting and maintaining membership

*Treasurer*

*April 2012 – May 2013*

- Prepared weekly workshop budgets and served as a conduit between executive board members

### **Robert S. Pace Accounting Society**

*Vice President*

*January 2012 – December 2013*

- Coordinate with club President to meet goals and objectives of organization
- Organize and administrate meetings in the club President's absence

### **Knights of Columbus, Peekskill Council #462**

*Fraternal Benefit Society Member*

*October 2012 – Present*

- Participate in charitable, religious, and educational engagements
- Record minutes of semi-monthly meetings and help coordinate charitable projects

**International Honor Society of Beta Gamma Sigma, Pace University Chapter Member**

**Alpha Chi National College Honor Scholarship Society, Pace University Chapter Member**

## SKILLS

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**Computer:** *MS (Word, Outlook, Excel, and PowerPoint), Completed a course in QuickBooks*

**Language:** *Fluent in Spanish*

## School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

**Name:** Natalie DiPaolo

**Charter School Name:** The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

**Charter School Address:** 920 First Street, Peekskill, NY 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.  
Father John Higgins gave me an overview of the charter school and its mission.
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

The school's mission is in accord with my own vision and educational philosophy. I know that all children can learn when placed in the appropriate environment. Serving on this board allows me to make a positive contribution to this community by laying a foundation for student achievement, and fulfills my civic duty to prepare citizens who will one day be entrusted with making educated decisions which affect our nation and world.

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.  This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: I know Stefania Raschella as a parish member of my previous church.

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.  
If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.  
 No.  Yes.  
If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:
12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.
15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you

have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.

16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

In such a situation, I would be obligated as a board member to report this to the board because self-interest has no place on the board. We represent the interest of the community. If I found that the board did not take the appropriate actions, then I would be obligated to inform the charter entity. The Board of Regents would be contacted only if the issue was not resolved. Failure on my part to do so would compromise the charter school functioning in an ethical manner and would not comply with the laws and regulations set forth in the school's Code of Ethics and with the New York General Municipal Law.

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The school's mission is to provide a strong curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in which students develop the attitudes and ethics which will help them to be successful in this school and in their future endeavors.

19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

The educational program of this school focuses on providing a strong academic foundation in all content areas as well as character development for all students.

20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A successful charter school has several characteristics that are intertwined with management as the tie that binds. A charter school should have plans in place for the management of all aspects of the school, from security and facility maintenance to the management of finance, learning, etc. A

successful charter school hires qualified school leaders and staff who share the school's philosophy, and understand their individual roles in carrying out the school's mission. The school should hold all accountable (all faculty, board members, students, and parents) and have high expectations for these people as well. Learning demands that there is not only a strong curriculum aligned with the state standards, but high expectations for performance and behavior from all parties in order for students to learn that curriculum. Therefore, the board will need to find a school leader and qualified staff to make the school successful. It will also be need to engage in reflective practices, evaluating student performance, staff, and their own effectiveness on a constant basis.

#### **Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.  
A charter school board member attends regular board meetings and school events, and participates in board decisions. The board member has a legal responsibility to ensure that the school operates efficiently, effectively and in accordance with the school's charter, so the member needs to keep abreast of the issues so as to make well informed decisions. A board member must contribute a financial gift to the school, participate in fund raising activities for the school, and serve on a committee. The member must also attend annual board meetings.
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.  
I affirm that I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school's by-laws and all proposed policies.
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

A Statement of Assurance must be signed by and submitted for each proposed Board Member.

## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Natalie DiPaolo (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Natalie DiPaolo 8/4/13  
Signature Date

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided below will be redacted.*

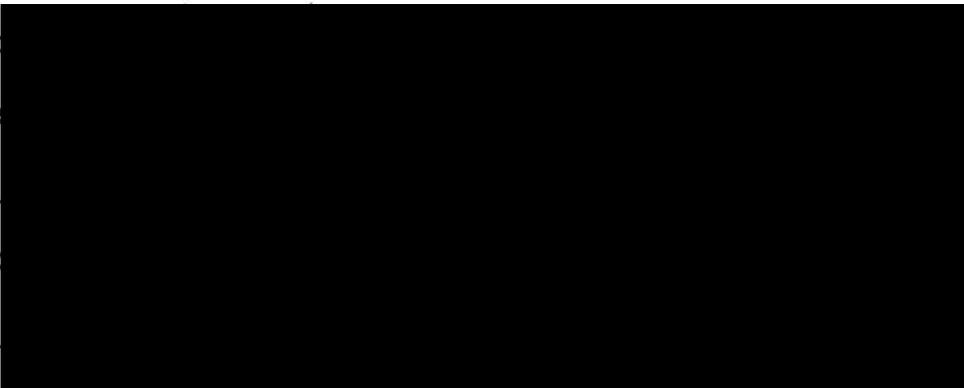
**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Natalie DiPaolo

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## PROFILE

- Thirteen years of successful teaching experience in middle school, high school, and adult settings.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills necessary for building rapport with the community and participating in shared decision making.
- Ability to create a stimulating, challenging learning environment.
- Enthusiastic and a deep commitment to high quality education for children enriched by doctoral studies and teaching fellowship.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Family School 32, Yonkers, NY

### **General Science/Living Environment Teacher (September 2009-present)**

- Teaching General Science/Living Environment courses to students in grades 7-8.
- Preparing eighth grade students for NY State Regents exam.
- Work closely with team members to monitor student progress and make home to school connections.

Gorton High School, Yonkers, NY

### **Living Environment/Forensic Science Teacher (September 2008-June 2009)**

- Taught Living Environment lecture and laboratory courses to ninth grade students and taught Forensics to twelfth graders.
- Served as a member of the school's medical magnet and was involved in planning with team

Saunders High School, Yonkers, NY

### **Biology/Living Environment Teacher (September 2000-October 2003)**

- Taught Biology/Living Environment lecture and laboratory courses to students in grades 9-12 in preparation for the NY State Regents exam.
- Planned and instructed each subject area using a wide variety of teaching aids and strategies to engage students in active learning.
- Served as a member of the school's curriculum design team.

Satellite West Academy (JHS 265), Brooklyn, NY

### **Biology/General Science Teacher (September 1997- June 2000)**

- Taught Life Science course to sixth grade students, General Science to seventh grade students and Regents Biology to eighth grade students in an accelerated program.
- Designed a science laboratory, and was instrumental in creating a prerequisite course for sixth grade students to provide a foundation for science concepts encountered in grades 7 & 8.

Stahl's Surgical Supply, Riverdale, NY

### **Surgical Appliance Technician (December 1994- August 1996)**

- Taught diabetic patients in the New York City hospitals to monitor their blood glucose levels, and measured patients for pressurized garments such as surgical stockings.

- Developed productive relationships with patients and hospital staff.

## EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

***Ed.S. in progress, Leadership for Social Change in Education***, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN

**M.S., Education**, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT, 1997

**B.S., Biology**, College of Mount Saint Vincent, Riverdale, NY, 1995

**NY State Permanent Certification: Biology/General Science (Grades 7-12)**

### **Professional Affiliations**

Columbia University Summer Science Research Fellow

Phi Delta Kappa

<b>School Trustee Background Information</b>
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Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

**Name:** John T. Greenan

**Charter School Name:** The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

**Charter School Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): **Board of Trustees**

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

### **Background**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. **I learned about this opportunity after meeting with Lead Applicant Audrey Warn. We discussed the plans for the school and the volunteer opportunities that were available.**

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. **I wish to serve on the board of trustee for several reasons. I was born and raised in Peekskill NY, my sister is a police officer here and I have family and friends that reside in Peekskill. When I was in grade school I had the opportunity to attend a private school in Peekskill NY. My parents were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to have an alternative to district run schools. Unfortunately my almatater was closed by the archdiocese of NY in June of 2013. The schools closure left a void in the community effecting over 200 children and their families ability to have a local alternative to district run schools. I strongly believe Peekskill needs an alternative to traditional district run schools.**

Aside from my ties to the local community and eagerness to give back to Peekskill, I have business knowledge and experience that will help the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill become successful. In being in the business management field since 2004 and most recently in my position as Executive Director for a not-for-profit company since 2008, I have knowledge in not for profit corporate law, understand board structure and responsibilities, have experience in writing bylaws, composing annual budgets, understand accounting, am familiar with preparing and reviewing financial statements, overseeing committees, staff and volunteers. I am also well versed in marketing, recruiting volunteers, and fundraising. I have completed numerous leadership trainings and received several recognitions in the course of my career. I am eager to bring this knowledge and leadership to the board of trustees at the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill.

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here): **I am currently serving as chairman of the board of governors for the Exempt Firemen's Association in Poughkeepsie, NY and have volunteered and chaired several other boards and committees in the local community in the past.**
7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.  This does not apply to me.  Yes.  
If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts

and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

**academically and socially through a rigorous yet unique structure which will foster character development and a learning environment that is community focused.**

19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. **Below is a brief description of the academic program we've used in the development of our marketing materials.**

**What makes us different?**

By providing a community-centered learning environment, The Guardian Academy will empower a diverse group of scholars to reach their fullest academic potential by providing a rigorous yet flexible curriculum. We believe in a school culture focused on character development as one of the hallmarks on academic achievement.

**Excellence through Character Development:**

Research has found that a profound link between academic success and character education. At the Guardian Academy, one of our core values will be helping students become young men and women of impeccable character who are not only achieving at the optimal academic level, but who will grow to become ethical leaders who will be able to make substantial contributions to the communities in which they work and live.

**Excellence through Co-Teaching:**

Through our innovative model, two teachers will share the responsibilities of the classroom education. This allows for both individual and group instruction, remediation and challenge.

**Excellence through Community Engagement**

The Guardian Academy will create a supportive family environment that is committed to the idea that when one of us succeeds, we all succeed, and when one of us falls, we are all responsible for helping him or her rise! We will also seek community partnerships that promote academic success by allowing scholars to see that they are a part of a larger world and help them to dream of their unique place in it.

**Excellence through Solid Leadership and Management**

The Guardian Academy will be geared up with a school leader with the ability to motivate scholars, faculty and other staff. This person will focus on student achievement, respond creatively to challenges and possess an entrepreneurial spirit essential to fostering a culture of excellence.

**Innovative Governance**

The Guardian Academy will be governed by an independent Board of Trustees comprised of distinguished members from the Hudson Valley. The board of trustees will consist of a variety of industry leaders and professionals. The board's meetings will be open to the public and parents will be encouraged to get involved.

20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. **I believe a business that is governed by a volunteer board of trustees needs the following:**

- **A professionally trained board of Trustees**
- **Diversity in school leadership**
- **A relationship with and a presence in the local community**
- **A strong staff**
- **A cooperative relationship with the local school district**
- **An ongoing strategic plan**

**The board of trustees for the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill will have a strategic plan which will outline goals, objectives and the timeframes in which we wish to achieve these items. The strategic plan will be ongoing and the board will review it at trustee meetings to measure progress, success, or address any shortcomings if necessary.**

**Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter

school board member. **My understanding of the role of a charter school board member is that they have a fiduciary responsibility to the charter school. Board members must attend monthly meetings and oversee the operations of the school, assure that the school is in good standing financially and meeting the goals and objectives outlined by New York State and in its own strategic plan.**

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. **I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.**
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review. **My professional resume is included with this application.**

- Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.
15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.  
 None  Yes
17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. **I would defer to the board of trustees conflict of interest policy. This policy would be signed annually by all board members.**

### Educational Philosophy

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. **The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill's mission provides the opportunity for students to be educated both**

A Statement of Assurance must be signed by and submitted for each proposed Board Member.

## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, **John T. Greenan** (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



Signature

8/10/14

Date

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided below will be redacted.*

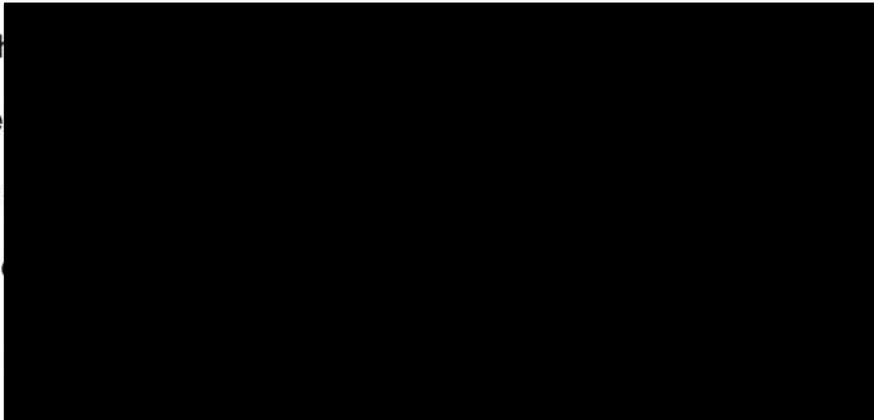
**Business Telephone:**

**Business Address:**

**E-Mail Address:**

**Home Telephone:**

**Home Address:**



# JOHN T. GREENAN

## Professional Experience

### **Dutchess County Association of REALTORS®, Poughkeepsie NY Executive Director, September 2008 – Present**

*Manage a 501C6 not-for-profit association consisting of 800+ realtor and professional affiliate members, manage 10 standing committees, report monthly to the board of directors, compose annual budgets, manage association finances & investments, manage accounts payable & receivable, oversee staff, interface with state and national associations, organize networking events & fundraisers, serve as the community liaison, also serves as the professional standards administrator and education coordinator. Founded "Fuel", the association's first professional networking group in 2009. [www.dcar.com](http://www.dcar.com)*

### **Prudential Serls Prime Properties, Hopewell Junction, NY Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker, April 2008 – December 2008**

*Residential & commercial real estate sales. Resale & new construction.*

### **WorldSelect Real Estate Wappingers Falls, NY Office Manager / Director of Professional Development, Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker, September 2004 – April 2008**

*Residential & commercial real estate sales, managed office operations, company growth, agent production and professional development.*

## Community Involvement:

### **Exempt Firemen's Association, April 2012 – Present**

*Chairman of the Board of Governors*

*Former personnel committee chair*

### **The Hub, Young Professionals of the Hudson Valley, January 2008 – February 2011**

*Advisory Board Member*

*Chairman- Special Events Committee*

### **Ancient Order of Hibernians, Division 1, 2006 – 2008**

*Treasurer*

### **Rebuilding Together of Dutchess County**

*Participated in "adopting a house" and volunteering to rehab the homes of those in need. 2006, 2007, 2008*

### **Great Strides Cystic Fibrosis Foundation**

*Participated in Fundraising and Annual Walk-a-Thon 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007*

## Awards & Recognitions:

*GLSEN Hudson Valley: Ally Award Recipient November 2013*

*Poughkeepsie Neighborhood Club Honoree, February 2013*

*Exempt Firemen's Association Officer of the Year 2012*

*Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce Top 40 under 40 Award Recipient, 2010*

*Dutchess County Association of REALTORS® Excellence Award, 2010*

*Women's Council of REALTORS® Dutchess County Chapter Red Carpet Honoree, 2009, 2010*

*REALTOR® of the Year 2005, 2006, 2007 –WorldSelect RE*

*Office Top Producer 2006, 2007, 2008- WordSelect RE*

### School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

Name: José Rodriguez

Charter School Name: The Guardian Academy Charter School

Charter School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): member Trustee Board

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

#### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. Board member information.
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.  
To enable Peekskill students achieve future success in academia.

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.  Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.

16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. *Smaller class size, qualified educators and proper school equipment.*

### **Other**

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. *To make all necessary plans & contacts.*
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. *I Affirm.*
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

A Statement of Assurance must be signed by and submitted for each proposed Board Member.

### STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Jose Rodriguez (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Jose Rodriguez Signature 2/20/14 Date

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided below will be redacted.*

<sup>cc 11</sup>  
Business Telephone: 

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: 

**Jose Rodríguez**



**Objective:** To volunteer for various community board commissions in the Peekskill School Districts.

**Education:** Juris Doctorate, May 1996 Seton Hall Law School  
Dean's list for Social Justice: In Family Court and Immigration Law.

Bachelors of Science, June 1983 New York Institute of Technology  
Major: Criminal Justice  
Minor: Court Management & Government.

**Work Experience:**

New York State Supreme Court, Grand Jury Division  
Job Title: New York State Senior Court Officer  
From: 2005 to 2010

NYS Supreme Court Criminal Division  
Job Title: Senior Court Officer  
From: 2003-2005

Bronx County Clerk Division  
Job Title: Senior Court Officer  
From: 1990-2003

NYS Supreme Court Civil Division  
Job Title: Senior Court Officer  
From: 1988-1990

New York State Office of Court Administration  
Job Title: Applicant Investigator  
From: 1986-1988

New York City Criminal Courts Criminal Division  
Job Title: Uniformed Court Officer  
From: 1977-1986

**Bronx Court Employment Project**  
Job Title: Court Screener Supervisor  
From: 1976-1977

**Eastern Airlines**  
Job Title: Aircraft Line Worker  
From: 1975-1976

**New York City Department of Correction**  
Job Title: Correctional Counselor Supervisor  
From: 1973-1975

**Military Service: 1971-1973**  
US Army R, Military Intelligence Co. C. 826<sup>th</sup>, MI, BN, (FA)  
MOS: Investigator  
Honorable Discharge  
Clearance: Classified/Secret.

**Special Skills & Training:**

- Completed Emergency Response to Terrorism Course for New York State Government Peace Officers
- Completed U.S. Army Military Intelligence Course
- Completed Red Cross First Aid course
- Completed New York State Investigator Course for the Unified Court System
- Completed Basic Training Course for NYS Peace officer at Court Officer Academy
- Knowledgeable in Westlaw and Lexus legal research programs

**Extra Curriculum Activities:**

- Community Referral Volunteer Counselor
- New York City Voter Registrar
- Legal Intern at Seton Hall Social Justice Clinic Seton Hall Law School
- Coach Mentor for the Thurgood Marshall Junior High School Moot Court Competition
- High School Equivalency Director at Bronx House of Detention
- Appointed to Peekskill Youth Commission in Westchester County

## School Trustee Background Information

Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

**Name: Phil Whalen**

**Charter School Name: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill**

**Charter School Address: P.O. Box 2014 Peekskill, NY 10566**

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): **Board of Trustees**

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

### Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé.  Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.  I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have 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.  I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. **I became aware of the project through former founding group member Ed Beglane.**
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. **I was honored and very interested in assisting the Board in bringing the charter school to**

**fruition. My father and uncle were both involved in academia---one in medicine and the other in higher education. That, coupled with my own business experience has lead me to assist and be a part of what I feel is a most worthy project.**

6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.  This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here): **I serve as Chairman of the Board of the *John, Marie and Joseph Whalen Foundation, Inc.***

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

Your response to question seven may also include any relevant written information that you wish to be considered in support of your application, including, but not limited to: certificates of conviction; any parole and/or probation documentation; any certificates, including any certificate of relief from disabilities; any proof of counseling and/or rehabilitation; any documentation attesting to your good conduct or your good character; and any letters of support from friends, family, co-workers, employers, etc.

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: **I did not know any of the current prospective Board members upon joining the group, but have gotten to know them over the course of working on this project.**

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.  
If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.  
 No.  Yes.  
If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:
12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we have no such interest.  Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.  
 I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes.
15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the

charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate.  This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.  Yes.

16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.  
 None  Yes
17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. **I would bring it to the Board's attention for immediate review.**

### Educational Philosophy

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. **The Guardian Academy Charter School's mission emphasizes a high standards for both achievement and behavior and will provide the supportive atmosphere necessary for success. It recognizes that "one-size" does not fit all when it comes to education and seeks to give all its students the high quality of education every child deserves.**
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. **Rigor and flexibility are the hallmarks of the academic plan, through the unique use of the co-teaching model. It will allow us to keep our standards of high and, tailor instruction based on student need.**
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. **Characteristics of a successful charter school include maintaining excellence at every level and throughout the organization. Hiring the best, monitoring and evaluating progress and constantly looking for ways to improve will ensure success. Fiscal health is imperative as well and, the same applies—constant vigilance and monitoring to ensure the best allocation of resources.**

### Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. **The role of charter school board member is to**

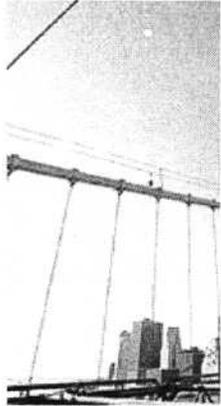
**ensure that the school's mission is carried forth with fidelity by selecting and evaluating the school leader, sound fiscal management, raising awareness and public standing and guaranteeing legal and ethical integrity.**

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. **I affirm.**
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review. **Please see Bio attached.**





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#### CLIENT CENTER

user name:

password:

**LOGIN**

#### KEY REAL ESTATE ASSOC., LLC

217 Broadway., Suite 309  
 New York, NY 10037  
 Phone: 212-233-1700  
 Fax: 212-233-6455  
 email [info@keynyc.com](mailto:info@keynyc.com)

### EXECUTIVE PROFILES

#### Arline Kob, Esq. – Principal

Arline Kob has over 20 years of experience working in residential real estate in New York City. She started at WPG Residential in 1998 and is now one of the principals of Key Real Estate Associates.

Arline currently holds the position of Director of Management and works with the firm's Chief Operating Officer in supervising the staff, managing the portfolio of buildings and representing the company at various professional meetings. She provides ongoing training, support and motivation for staff.

Arline is a graduate of Fordham Law School, a licensed New York State real estate broker and a resident of New York City.

#### Joan Marie Konow - Principal

Joan Konow was born in NY but spent most of her childhood in neighboring PA. She is a graduate of Denison University, Ohio, with a degree in Psychology. Joan spent a year studying in England with an affiliate program with Oxford University and was able to explore Europe. After graduating Joan returned to the east coast and began her real estate career as an assistant property manager with WPG Residential, Inc. She rapidly moved on to become a property manager with a sizeable portfolio.

While Joan excelled at property management, her drive led her to obtain her salesperson license and ultimately a brokerage license. She created the residential brokerage division of WPG Residential which developed into a thriving and profitable adjunct for the firm. After seven years at WPG Residential, Inc. Joan and her partners purchased the company. She currently heads the new expanded real estate brokerage division for the company.

#### Philip J. Whalen – Principal

Phil and his partners purchased WPG Residential, Inc in January of 2004. Prior to becoming a principal of Key Real Estate Associates, Phil was the Chief Operating Officer of WPG Residential, Inc for eight years. Phil's past experience includes having worked for the Archdiocese of New York for eight years as a consultant, managing all aspects of a variety of major capital improvements. Phil began his career in real estate while working for the then Bowery Savings Bank in NYC.

Phil graduated from Fordham University cum laude, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and Science. Phil is married with two daughters and lives with his family in Westchester County.

#### Alayne Berenson – VP, Administration/Transfer Department

Alayne Berenson started out with then WPG in 1985 when the residential management division was just an idea. Alayne created procedures and developed a client basis. She formulated the current management systems still in use today. Her efforts, endless energy and extensive knowledge of every aspect of management makes her an invaluable great asset to Key. Alayne is a graduate of the University of Buffalo.

Now serving as the head of the closing/transfer department, Alayne continues to cultivate relationships with future residents and oversees the department that processes a myriad of services including sales, refinancing, sublets and the like.

**Attachment 5b:**

**BYLAWS OF**  
**GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL**  
**(An Education Corporation)**

ARTICLE I

Name, Office and Purpose

Section 1.01. Name. The name of the education is Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (“Guardian Academy”).

Section 1.02. Office. The principal office of Guardian Academy shall be located at 920 First Street, Peekskill, NY 10566. Guardian Academy may have offices at other places within or out of the State of New York as the Board of Trustees may determine from time to time.

Section 1.04. Non-Discrimination Policy. Guardian Academy seeks diversity in its student/parent body, faculty, staff and administration. Guardian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or affectional preference, or any category protected by law, in its educational policies, employment practices and all other school administered procedures and programs.

ARTICLE II

Board of Trustees

Section 2.01. General Powers and Duties. The Board of Trustees shall have control of and manage the operations and affairs of Guardian Academy, and it shall have all the powers customarily held by a Board of Trustees of a corporation organized under the Education Law of the State of New York. In exercising its powers and duties, the Board of Trustees shall establish and maintain policies and procedures for the operation of Guardian Academy and shall oversee that such policies and procedures are carried out by the Head of School and such other staff of Guardian Academy as the Board of Trustees may employ or authorize the Head of school to employ from time to time. The Board of Trustees shall have primary responsibility for seeing that Guardian Academy is provided with the financial and other resources that the Board of Trustees deems appropriate for its proper operation.

Section 2.02. Number of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall fix the number of voting trustees of Guardian Academy from time to time, which shall not be less than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15). The Executive Director shall be a trustee ex-officio of the Board of Trustees but shall have no voting rights. The balance of the trustees shall be elected (“Elected Trustees”) pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.04 of these Bylaws.

Section 2.03. Term of Office. Unless otherwise provided by the Board of Trustees at the time a Trustee is chosen, term of office each Elected Trustee shall be a period of two (2) calendar years commencing with Regular Meeting following his or her election and continuing until a successor shall have been elected. No Elected Trustee shall serve more than three (3) consecutive two-

year terms, unless the Board of Trustees designates otherwise. The Executive Director shall continue for his or her term of office as Executive Director at the school.

The Elected Trustees shall be divided into two (2) classes, known as Class One and Class Two, for the purpose of staggering their terms in office. This will help balance continuity with new perspective. The terms of Elected Trustees shall be fixed so that the terms of one-half of such trustees (as nearly as possible) expire at the close of each Annual Meeting.

Section 2.04. Election of Trustees. Elected Trustees shall be chosen by the Board of Trustees as provided in subsections (b) and (c).

- (a) Nomination. Prior to June 1 in each academic year and at such other times as there may be vacancies among the Elected Trustees, whether by expiration of the terms of office, death, resignation, removal or an increase in the number of Elected Trustees, the Governance Committee shall nominate candidates for the vacancies which it recommends be filled and shall specify the number of such vacancies which are to be filled by the Annual Election of Trustees pursuant to subsection (b) and the number which are to be filled by the Board of Trustees pursuant to subsection (c) at an Annual or Regular Meeting or at such other time as may be appropriate.

No employee of Guardian Academy shall be eligible to be nominated or serve as an Elected Trustee.

- (b) Annual Election of Trustees. At an Annual Meeting, or any subsequent Regular or Special Meeting, the Annual Election of Trustees shall take place. The Board of Trustees shall vote on the candidates nominated by the Governance Committee pursuant to subsection (a) to fill vacancies in the Elected Trustees, and each candidate shall be elected by the vote of a majority of the whole Board of Trustees. Voting shall be done by confidential ballot and the ballots shall be counted by the Clerk and confirmed by the Chair or Co-Chairs or any Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees.

- (c) Board of Election of Trustees. If any of the Elected Trustees shall die, resign, refuse to act or be removed from the Board of Trustees, or if an Elected Trustee's term of office shall expire, the vacancy or vacancies created thereby shall be filled by the vote of a majority of the whole Board of Trustees acting upon recommendation of the Governance Committee. Any trustee so chosen shall have all of the rights and powers of an Elected Trustee and shall serve for the balance of the unexpired term of the trustee whom he or she replaces.

Upon recommendation by the Governance Committee, the Board of Trustees may create positions for additional Elected Trustees for such term not exceeding two (2) years, as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any vacancy among the Elected Trustees created by increasing the number thereof shall be filled by vote of a majority of the whole Board of Trustees.

Upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the Board of trustees acting upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee may abolish a vacant Elected Trustee seat; provided that the total number of trustees may not be less than that required by law or by these Bylaws; and further provided that the Board of Trustees files a certified copy of such action with the Board of Regents of New York State Education Department.

Section 2.05. Meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may transact any business permitted by these Bylaws at an Annual, Regular or Special Meeting as provided below. All meetings will comply with the New York State Open Meetings Law.

- (a) Annual Meeting. Unless otherwise provided by the Board of Trustees, the “Annual Meeting” of the Board of Trustees shall be held in June of each year.
- (b) Regular Meeting. The Board of Trustees may provide for holding of the “Regular Meetings” and may fix the time and place (which may be within or out of the State of New York) of such meetings. Regular Meetings shall be held at least six (6) times per year.
- (c) Special Meeting. “Special Meetings” of the Board of Trustees shall be called by the Chair or Co-Chairs or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, at such time and place (which may be within or out of the State of New York) as may be specified in the respective notice or waivers of notice thereof. A Special Meeting shall be called by the Chair or Co-Chairs or a Vice Chair promptly upon receipt of a written or electronic request to do so from a majority of the Board of Trustees. There shall be two classes of Special Meetings of the Board of Trustees
  - (1) Special Meetings, to be held in executive session, to consider matters with respect to employees which shall not be attended by the Executive Director as a trustee unless requested to attend by a majority of the whole board of Trustees.
  - (2) Special Meetings to consider any other matter.
- (d) Notice. Notice of the time and place of an Annual or Regular meeting shall be given to each trustee either by messenger, regular mail, e-mail or facsimile at least ten (10) days before the meeting. Notice of the time and place of a Special Meeting shall be given to each trustee either by messenger, regular mail, e-mail, or facsimile not less than three (3) days before the meeting. Notices by messenger, regular mail, e-mail or facsimile shall be sent to each trustee at the number and/or address designated by him or her for that purpose. Oral or telephonic notices of meetings shall not be permitted. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of any Regular or Special Meeting need to be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of the meeting, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws or required by law. Unless otherwise required requested by statute, notice of any adjourned meeting need not be given.

Section 2.06. Conflicts of Interest. The Board of Trustees affirms that the trustees, officers, administrators, faculty and other employees of Guardian Academy have an obligation to exercise their authority and to carry out the duties of their respective positions for the sole benefit of Guardian Academy. They should avoid placing themselves in positions in which their personal interest are or may be in conflict with the interests of Guardian Academy. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, it shall be the responsibility of the person involved or any other person with knowledge to notify the Board of Trustees of the circumstances resulting in the potential conflict so that the Board of Trustees can provide such guidance and take such action as it deems appropriate. Areas of potential conflict of interest include financial interests, inside information, conflicting interests other than financial ones and gifts and favors. The Board of Trustees shall, in its discretion, adopt a policy on conflicts of interest to address these areas of potential conflict.

Section 2.07. Quorum and Manner of Acting. At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, a majority of the voting members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by these Bylaws, the act of a majority of the trustees present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Trustees. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the trustees present at the time and place of meeting (or one trustee, if less than three (3) are present) may adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum shall be present.

Section 2.08. Action by Consent. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Board of Trustees, or of any committee as provided in Article III, may be taken without a meeting, if written consents are signed by each trustee of the Board of Trustees or each member of such committee, as the case may be. Such written consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Trustees or a committee, as the case may be.

Section 2.09. Meetings held Other Than In Person. Trustees of the Board of Trustees or members of any committee may participate in a meeting of the Board of Trustees or committee, as the case may be, by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Such participation shall, however, not constitute presence in person at the meeting. Trustees who participate in a meeting of the Board of Trustees in such manner may not be counted for purposes of having a quorum and may not vote.

Section 2.10. Resignations. Any trustee may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Board of Trustees or the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees. Unless otherwise specified in such written notice, such resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof. If any trustee shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned and the vacancy shall be filled as provided in section 2.04.

Section 2.11. Removal or Suspension. Any trustee may be removed or suspended from office by a majority of the whole Board of Trustees. Such action shall be taken only upon written complaint of misconduct, incapacity or neglect of duty submitted to the Board of Trustees. No trustee shall be removed without being provided with at least seven (7) days notice of the proposed removal and copy of the complaint. If in the opinion of a majority of the whole Board of Trustees such complaint shall have been sustained, the accused trustee may be removed or suspended from office.

Section 2.12. Compensation of Trustees and Officers. Trustees, as such, shall not receive any salary for their services as trustees. Nothing in these Bylaws shall be construed to preclude any trustee or officer from serving Guardian Academy in any other capacity and receiving compensation if the Board of Trustees so decides.

Section 2.13. Evaluations. Evaluations of the Executive Director shall be conducted by the Governance Committee on an annual basis. Evaluations to the Board of Trustees shall be coordinated by the Governance Committee on at least a bi-annual basis. Results of both evaluations, which may be in summary form, will be distributed to the Board of Trustees, preferably in the middle of the school year. On-going informal assessments of the Executive Director and the board of Trustees shall be conducted on an as-needed basis determined by the Governance Committee.

### **ARTICLE III Committees**

Section 3.01. Standing Committees. The Board of Trustees shall establish and maintain the following "Standing Committees" Executive Committee, Governance Committee, Finance Committee, Development Committee and Academic Accountability Committee.

Section 3.02. Ad Hoc Committees. The Board of Trustees may from time to time establish one or more "Ad Hoc Committees" with such names powers and functions as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

Section 3.03. Committee Members: Chair. Members of committees shall be appointed annually by the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees, subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees first Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held after the appointment. Vacancies in the membership of any committee shall be filled by appointment by the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees after consulting with the Chair, if any, of such committee. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the membership of committees shall not be restricted to trustees but shall be drawn from the administration, faculty, parent body and community at large, as appropriate. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or by the Board of Trustees, the Chair of each committee shall be chosen by the Chair or Co-Chairs of the board of Trustees from among the trustee members of the committee.

Section 3.04. General Powers and Responsibilities of Committees. All matters that come before the Board of Trustees shall be considered first by the appropriate committee. Any problem, concern grievance or other matter referred to a committee shall be considered by such committee which shall consult with such interested parties as the committee deems appropriate. A committee to which any matter has been referred shall report on such matter to the Board of Trustees and, to the extent appropriate, make recommendations with respect thereto. Except as specifically provided by the Board of Trustees, each committee's powers are advisory to the Board of Trustees.

Section 3.05. Executive Committees. The Executive Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) members, including the Executive Director, the Chair or Co-Chairs and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and such other Trustees as may be designated by the Board of trustees. The Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees shall be the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall set the policy agenda, coordinate committee agendas, and set the agenda for the full Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee shall

operate in place of the Board of Trustees during those times when the Board of Trustees does not or cannot meet. Between meetings of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee may take any action on behalf of the Board of Trustees that could be authorized by a vote of the majority of the whole Board of Trustees or is limited to the Board of Trustees by law. An action taken by the Executive Committee may be subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees. A member of the Executive Committee shall record the minutes of each meeting and include a report on any actions taken. Such member shall forward the minutes to the Clerk and the Clerk shall distribute the minutes of such meetings to the full Board of Trustees.

Section 3.07. Governance Committee. The Governance Committee shall be composed of at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees and elected by a majority of the Board of Trustees. The Governance Committee shall be responsible for evaluating and making recommendations about the role, responsibilities and expectations of the present and future Executive Director; developing, as necessary a process for leadership succession; evaluating and making recommendations about the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees; reviewing governance policy and practice; and evaluating and making recommendations about the Board of Trustees' composition, organization and committee structure. The Governance Committee shall evaluate the ability of the Board of Trustees and its members in terms of specific skills, interests, and diversity. The Committee shall also canvass the community at large for potential candidates for vacancies on the Board of Trustees. It shall interview potential candidates, guide them through the application process and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees with respect to various candidates and, in appropriate circumstances, the creation of additional positions for elected Trustees. The Governance Committee shall be responsible for presenting a slate of candidates for election as officers of the Board of Trustees and the orientation of newly chosen trustees.

Section 3.08. Finance Committee. The Treasurer or an Assistant Treasurer shall be the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Finance committee shall be responsible for overseeing the preparation of budgets, financial reports and for supervising the management of Guardian Academy's finances, including notifying the Board of Trustees of significant deviations from the approved budget. The Finance Committee shall review, analyze and recommend for approval the annual audit. On a periodic basis, the Finance Committee shall review investment policies, objectives and performance. It shall work closely with Guardian Academy's Director of Finance and Operations and business manager, if any, and the Executive Director in overseeing the performance of the operations staff.

Section 3.09. Academic Accountability Committee. The Academic Accountability Committee shall be responsible for evaluating whether Guardian Academy is adhering to its Charter and achieving its goals of attaining high student academic achievement and preparing its students for success in college and active citizenship. It will examine the results from city, state, national and internally developed assessments, which are both criterion and norm-referenced. In addition, the Academic Accountability Committee will meet with the Directors of the school to analyze assessment data. Based on the assessment data, Academic Accountability Committee

will make recommendations regarding the allocation of resources in terms of classroom materials, staffing, professional development and outside consultants.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Officers**

Section 4.01. Titles. The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be a Chair or Co-Chairs, one or more Vice Chairs, the Executive Director, a Clerk, a Treasurer and such other officers as may be appointed in accordance with these Bylaws.

Section 4.02. Election, Term of Office, and Qualifications. The Board of Trustees shall elect the Chair or Co-Chairs, one or more Vice Chairs, a Clerk, a Treasurer and any other officers annually at the Annual Meeting or Regular Meeting designated for that purpose or a Special Meeting called for that purpose, except that officers appointed to fill vacancies shall be elected as vacancies occur.

Section 4.03. Subordinate Officers and Agents. The Board of Trustees from time to time may appoint subordinate officers or agents (including one or more Assistant Secretaries and one or more Assistant Treasurers), to hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as may be provided in the resolutions appointing them. The Board of Trustees may delegate to any officer or agent the power to appoint any such subordinate officers or agents and to proscribe their respective terms of office, authorities and duties.

Section 4.04. Resignations. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Board of Trustees or the Chair or Co-Chair of the Board of trustees. Unless otherwise specified in such written notice, such resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof.

Section 4.05. Removal or Suspension. Any officer elected or appointed by the board of Trustees or by any officer of Guardian Academy may be removed or suspended by the Board of Trustees at any time by a majority of the whole Board of Trustees. Such action shall be taken only upon written complaint of misconduct, incapacity or neglect of duty submitted to the Board of Trustees. No officer shall be removed without at least seven (7) days notice of the proposed removal and a copy of the complaint.

Section 4.06. Vacancies. A vacancy in an office by reason of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or another cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in section 4.02.

Section 4.07. The Chair or Co-Chairs. The Chair or Co-Chairs shall be the chief presiding officer of the Board of Trustees and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The Chair or Co-Chairs shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, if he or she is present. The Chair or Co-Chairs shall, when directed by the Board of Trustees, sign on behalf of Guardian Academy all contracts, securities and other obligations of Guardian Academy.

Section 4.08. Vice Chairs. The Vice Chair shall have such power and perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chair or Co-Chairs on the Board of Trustees. The Vice Chair (or if there shall be more than one, the Vice Chair designated by the Chair or Co-Chairs or the Board of Trustees) shall in the absence or disability of the Chair or Co-Chairs or at the Chair or Co-Chairs's request, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair or Co-Chairs.

Section 4.09. Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of Guardian Academy. He or she shall be appointed from time to time by the Board of Trustees and shall exercise control over the affairs of Guardian Academy, subject to the supervision of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4.10. The Clerk. The Clerk shall keep the minute books of Guardian Academy be responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Clerk and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Trustees or the Chair or Co-Chairs.

Section 4.11. The Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have oversight of the general custody of all money and securities of Guardian Academy and from time to time shall render to the Board of Trustees, and to the Chair or Co-Chairs, upon request, a statement of the financial conditions of Guardian Academy and all of his or her transactions as treasurer. In general, the Treasurer should perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Trustees or the Chair or Co-Chairs.

Section 4.12. Agreements, Contracts, Checks Requiring Signatures of Officers. All agreements, contracts, checks and other instruments of Guardian Academy requiring an expenditure or imposing an obligation of more than \$10,000 shall be executed by any two officers of Guardian Academy or by one officer and such other person or persons as may be designated by the Board of Trustees. All agreements, contracts, checks and other instruments of Guardian Academy requiring an expenditure or imposing an obligation of less than \$10,000 may be executed by any one officer or by such other person or persons as may be designated by the Board of Trustees.

## ARTICLE V Miscellaneous Matters

Section 5.01. Corporate Seal. The corporate seal of Guardian Academy shall be circular in form and shall bear the name Guardian Academy and the words and figures denoting its organization under the laws of the State of New York and otherwise shall be in such form as shall be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Section 5.02. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of Guardian Academy shall begin on the first day of July in each year and shall end on the thirtieth day of the following June.

Section 5.03. Conflict with Bylaws. To the extent a conflict exists between any provision in these Bylaws and Open Meetings Law, the Open Meetings Law shall control. Moreover, to the extent a conflict exists between any provision in these Bylaws and a provision in Guardian Academy's Charter, the Charter shall prevail and control.

Section 5.04 Conflict with Charter. To the extent there are any conflicts between the terms of the charter of Guardian Academy Charter School, and the terms of these by-laws, the terms of the charter will control.

Section 5.05. Indemnification.

- (a) To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, as is in effect at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws or as amended from time to time, Guardian Academy shall indemnify any person who was or is a party, or threatened to be made a party, to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that he/she is or was a trustee or an officer of Guardian Academy's acting within the scope of his/her normal duties, against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding. Guardian Academy, however, will not indemnify a trustee or an officer against any costs incurred, in any action, suit, or proceeding if there is judicial determination that such person failed to act in good faith or that such acts were the result of active and deliberate dishonesty, and were material to the cause of action so adjudicated, or from which the person personally gained financial profit or their advantage to which he or she was not legally entitled. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which a person seeking indemnification may be entitled under the Charter (as may be amended and/or restated from time to time) or any Bylaw, agreement, vote of disinterested Trustee, or otherwise.
- (b) Guardian Academy may maintain insurance, at its expense, to protect itself and any person describe in subsection (a) against any expense, liability or loss, whether or not Guardian Academy would have the power to indemnify such person against such expense, liability or loss under applicable law.

Section 5.06. Amendments. These Bylaws may be altered, repealed or amended and new Bylaws may be made by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Trustees. Any proposed alteration, repeal, amendment or new Bylaws shall be provided to the Board of Trustees at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting at which such changes in the Bylaws will be voted on.

Section 5.07. Notice. Unless otherwise required by law or these Bylaws, notices required by these Bylaws may be given in writing, by messenger, regular mail, email or facsimile.

**Attachment 5c:**

**GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL  
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY  
(CODE OF ETHICS)**

The General Municipal Law defines prohibited conflicts of interest for school trustees, officers and employees.

Under the General Municipal Law, no school officer or employee may have an interest, direct or indirect, in any contract with the School, when such trustee, officer or employee, individually or as a member of the Board, has the power or duty to (a) negotiate, prepare, authorize or approve the contract, or authorize or approve payment under the contract; (b) audit bills or claims under the contract; or (c) appoint an officer or employee who has any of the powers or duties set forth above. No Treasurer may have an interest, direct or indirect, in a bank or trust company designated as a depository or paying agent or for investment of funds of his/her school. This, however, does not preclude payment of lawful compensation and necessary expenses of a school employee in one or more public offices or positions of employment, the holding of which is not prohibited by law.

**Exceptions to Law**

The General Municipal Law enumerates a number of exceptions to its general rule prohibiting conflicts. Specifically, the statute provides that its prohibitions on conflict of interest do NOT apply to:

- a) The designation of a bank or trust company as a depository, paying agent, registration agent or for investment of funds of a municipality except when the chief fiscal officer, treasurer, or his/her deputy or employee, has an interest in such bank or trust company; provided, however, that where designation of a bank or trust company outside the municipality would be required because of the foregoing restriction, a bank or trust company within the municipality may nevertheless be so designated;
- b) A contract with a person, firm, corporation or association in which a municipal officer or employee has an interest which is prohibited solely by reason of employment as an officer or employee thereof, if the remuneration of such employment will not be directly affected as a result of such contract and the duties of such employment do not directly involve the procurement, preparation or performance of any part of such contract;
- c) The designation of a newspaper, including but not limited to an official newspaper, for the publication of any notice, resolution, ordinance or other proceeding where such publication is required or authorized by law;

- d) The purchase by a municipality of real property or an interest therein, provided the purchase and the consideration therefore is approved by order of the supreme court upon petition of the governing board;
- e) The acquisition of real property or an interest therein, through condemnation proceedings according to law;
- f) A contract with a membership corporation or other voluntary non-profit corporation or association;
- g) The sale of lands and notes pursuant to Section 60.10 of the local finance law;
- h) A contract in which an officer or employee has an interest if such contract was entered into prior to the time he/she was elected or appointed as such officer or employee, but this does not authorize a renewal of any such contract;
- i) Employment of a licensed physician as school physician for a school upon authorization by a two-thirds vote of the board of trustees;
- j) A contract with a corporation in which an officer or employee has an interest by reason of stockholdings when less than five percent of the outstanding stock of the corporation is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by such officer or employee;
- k) A contract for the furnishing of public utility services when the rates or charges therefore are fixed or regulated by the public service commission;
- l) A contract for the payment of a reasonable rental of a room or rooms owned or leased by an officer or employee when the same are used in the performance of his/her official duties and are so designated as an office;
- m) A contract for the payment of a portion of the compensation of a private employee of an officer when such employee performs part-time service in the official duties of the office;
- n) A contract in which a school officer or employee has an interest if the total consideration payable thereunder, when added to the aggregate amount of all consideration payable under contracts in which such person had an interest during the fiscal year, does not exceed the sum of seven hundred and fifty dollars;
- o) A contract with a member of private industry council established in accordance with the federal job training partnership act or any firm, corporation or

association in which such member holds an interest, provided the member discloses such interest to the council and the member does not vote on the contract.

### **Express Prohibitions**

In addition, the law clearly states that a trustee, officer or employee may not:

- a) Directly or indirectly, solicit any gift, or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$75 or more, whether in the form of money, service, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing, or promise, or in any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to or could reasonably be expected to influence him/her in the performance of his/her official duties, or was intended as a reward for any official action on his/her part;
- b) Disclose confidential information acquired in the course of his/her official duties or use such information to further his/her personal interests;
- c) Receive, or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the Board; or
- d) Receive, or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the Board whereby the compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by the agency. This does not prohibit the fixing of fees based upon the reasonable value of services rendered.

### **Penalties**

Any contract willfully entered into by or with a school in which there is a prohibited interest is void and unenforceable. In addition, any trustee, officer or employee who willfully and knowingly violates the foregoing provisions shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

**Attachment 8a: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill  
Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures**

**CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

**Equal Opportunity:** Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (Guardian Academy) is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of the school to afford equal employment and advancement opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, citizenship status, medical condition, or any other legally protected status. This policy extends to all employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship, including the hiring of new employees and the training, transfer, promotion, compensation, and benefits of existing employees. To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, the school will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result.

**Employment At-Will:** Except if stated expressly otherwise by employment contract, it is the policy of the school that all employees are considered at-will employees of the school. Accordingly, either the school or the employee can terminate this relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice. Nothing contained in an employment application, school memoranda or other materials provided to employees in connection with their employment shall require the school to have cause to terminate an employee or otherwise restrict the school's right to release an employee from their at-will employment with the school. Statements of specific grounds for termination are not all-inclusive and are not intended to restrict the school's right to terminate at-will. No school representative, other than the Board of Trustees or its designee, is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to make any representations to employees or applicants concerning the terms or conditions of employment with the school that are not consistent with the school's policy regarding at will employment. This policy shall not be modified by any statements contained in employee applications, school memoranda, or any other materials provided to employees in connection with their employment. Further, none of those documents, whether singly or combined, or any employment practices shall create an expressed or implied contract of employment for a definite period, nor an expressed or implied contract concerning any terms or conditions of employment.

**HIRING PROCESS**

Guardian Academy will conduct national searches for the best qualified faculty and staff. Teachers will be expected to be certified, though the school may employ up to five staff members, or no more than 30% of its teaching staff, whichever is less, who are not certified, and 100% of its core content teachers are No Child Left Behind Highly Qualified. The school may hire teachers in the process of obtaining certification (e.g., Teach For America Corps members).

While the School Leader has final authority to hire staff members, he/she may delegate conduct of the hiring process to other administrators or committees. All job applicants must fill out completely and sign an application for employment. In addition, all job applicants must:

- Provide an up-to-date resume
- Supply proof of teaching certification and qualification pursuant to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (such as college matriculation, copies of school transcripts)
- Be interviewed by the School Leader or his/her delegate.
  - Prospective teachers will be observed teaching, either at Guardian Academy, their current school, or another school. Video of instruction may be substituted.

The hiring process will include the following additional mandatory steps:

- At least two references checked, credentials verified, qualifications confirmed
- Documentation of employment eligibility, i.e., proof of identity and legal authority to work in the United States
- Fingerprinting and a criminal background check and clearance
- The candidate's signature on an offer letter confirming the offered position

Refusal to comply with any of the above requirements or the falsification of information, or the inability to provide proof of legal authority to work in the U.S. will result in the individual not being hired or the job offer being rescinded.

Employees shall receive annual letters of employment that state the terms of their employment. Employees may be hired as regular full-time employees, and as such will be eligible for all benefits provided by the school. The organization also may hire part-time staff. Part-time staff members are those who are employed for less than 40 hours per work week. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits. Time off work without pay for part-time employees may be granted by the School Leader or his or her designee. Guardian Academy will verify that all of our employees are authorized for employment in the United States. All employees will complete an I-9 form.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **School Leader:**

- Commitment to Guardian Academy's mission, vision and goals
- Demonstrated success in leading teachers and raising student achievement
- High expectations for themselves, staff and students

- Teaching and leadership experience, especially with at-risk students
- Commitment to the education philosophy and academic model
- Experience hiring, supervising, coaching and evaluating employees
- High level of organization and resourcefulness necessary for start-up environment
- Exemplary communication skills with staff, parents and community members
- Commitment to involving families in the life of the school
- Strong recommendations from prior employers, colleagues and employees
- Fluent in Spanish (preferred)
- Experience with charter school start-up and operation (preferred)

**Director of Operations:**

- At least 5 years relevant professional work experience, ideally in a charter school or other K-12 education organization
- At least 3 years direct experience successfully managing and developing staff
- Highly organized, detail-oriented with proven ability to deliver for multiple stakeholders on deliverables and deadlines
- Thrives in entrepreneurial start-up environment and working conditions; can work effectively within an ambiguous, fast-moving environment
- Systems thinker, organized planner and project manager Demonstrated success providing superior customer service
- Quantitative skills and experience with accounting, budgets, and financial management
- Strategic and critical thinker
- Values input and feedback
- Team-player capable of working both collaboratively and independently
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, ability to interact with various stakeholders, including parents, students, vendors, teachers, etc.

**Student Support Coordinator**

- Demonstrated success raising the achievement level of at-risk students
- Experience supervising, coaching and evaluating intervention staff
- Commitment to data-driven instruction
- Knowledgeable about best practices and programs in special education and elementary education
- Knowledgeable about CSE and IEP referral processes
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with experience in presentations, process facilitation, problem solving and relationship building
- Demonstrated respect and concern for children and their parents and a passion for education
- Special Education certification
- Fluent in Spanish (preferred)

**ELL Coordinator:**

- Demonstrated success raising the achievement level of English language learners
- Experience supervising, coaching and evaluating intervention staff
- Commitment to data-driven instruction

- Knowledgeable about best practices and programs in special education and elementary education
- Knowledgeable about SIOP model and ESL techniques
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with experience in presentations, process facilitation, problem solving and relationship building
- Demonstrated respect and concern for children and their parents and a passion for education
- Fluent in Spanish

#### **Director of Character and School Culture**

- Demonstrated ability to build rapport with students and families
- Experience leading organizations and team building
- Ability to handle stressful situations calmly and productively
- Knowledgeable in effective classroom management and discipline systems, procedures and techniques
- Knowledgeable in character education and values-infused curriculum
- Experience coaching adults
- To build a culture of highly ambitious academic expectations, structure and order, intellectual rigor, and joyfulness
- Ability to administer consequences consistently and fairly
- Capacity to create a sense of identity among students at the school that drives academic achievement and excellent behavior

**ELL Coordinator:** will train and support our ELL teachers and implement intensive intervention programs.

**Assessment Coordinator:** will provide leadership, ongoing development, improvement and evaluation of curriculum instruction and student data management. He/she will help schedule/coordinate/administer standardized assessments, evaluate data and coach teachers in instructional delivery systems, provide input for staff and curricula development; manage scholar data systems; assist school leader in the development of school created assessments; serve as liaison to parents with regard to assessments; assist in making formal reports.

**Assistant School Leader** will join in Year 3 to begin preparing for implementation of the middle school grades. As another instruction leader, the ASL adheres to and enforces board policy, school guidelines, and administrative directives; support overall school improvement process including teacher observation, modeling best practices and analyzing student data; supports and assists in monitoring implementation of RTI; assists in development, communication and implementation of discipline, conduct and attendance; performs other duties as defined by the School leader.

The **General Education Teachers** will be responsible for the daily instruction and assessment of the scholars and will partner with ELL or Special Education certified co-teachers and work as

part of a grade level team comprised of two general education teachers, an ELL teacher and a Special Education teacher.

**ELL Certified Teachers** will partner with General Education teachers to provide daily instruction and assessment of scholars with particular attention to the needs of the English Language Learners. They will join the General Education teachers and Special Education teacher to comprise the grade level team described above.

**Special Education Certified Teachers** will partner with a General Education teacher to provide daily instruction and assessment of scholars with particular attention to the needs of Special Education and at-risk scholars. They will work closely with both the General Education teachers and ELL teacher that will comprise the grade level team described above. They will work closely with the Special Education Coordinator.

**Specialty Teachers** will include physical education, arts teachers and a media specialist to assist teachers with technology integration. They will have a deep knowledge of their subject area and an ability to deliver instruction to all scholar populations; they will work closely with classroom teachers to integrate instruction whenever possible.

#### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Employees of Guardian Academy will be required to successfully clear a background criminal check before their first day of work. If a situation arises where an employee must begin before clearance is received, the employee must receive an emergency conditional appointment that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Under a conditional appointment, measures will be taken to ensure that the staff person is supervised on a regular basis to ensure the safety of students. Employees who have never been fingerprinted for the New York State Education Department or the New York Board of Education, will need to be fingerprinted at a facility approved by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services and at the employee's own expense

#### **EMPLOYEE REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS**

Each employee will receive periodic performance reviews conducted by their supervisor as well as a summative evaluation at least annually. The frequency of performance evaluations may vary, depending on length of service, job position, past performance, changes in job duties, or recurring performance problems. Performance evaluations may review factors such as the quality and quantity of work, knowledge of the job, initiative, work attitude, and attitude toward others. The performance evaluations are intended to make staff aware of progress, areas for improvement, and objectives or goals for future work performance. Favorable performance evaluations do not guarantee increases in salary or promotions. Salary increases and promotions are solely within the discretion of the school and depend on many factors in addition to performance. After the review, staff will be required to sign the evaluation report simply to acknowledge that it has been presented to them, that they have discussed it with their supervisor, and that they are aware of its contents.

Newly-hired employees will have their performance goals reviewed by their supervisor within the first (90) days of employment. Salary and potential for advancement will be based largely on job performance. Guardian Academy's evaluation system will in no way alter the at-will employment relationship.

### **FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Faculty members are expected to attend the Summer Institute in August, be present for the entire academic school year, and work an additional four days after the school year ends for students. Faculty should expect to be at school from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on school days. Faculty members are required to be present at all classes or other scheduled responsibilities. When not in the classroom or performing scheduled duties, faculty members are expected to be at school to attend all school meetings and assemblies, and to be available to students.

### **LEAVE AND ABSENCES**

Guardian Academy does not distinguish between Personal Leave, Bereavement Leave or Sick Leave. All staff members must request of the School Leader the use of leave, giving advance notice whenever possible, and all instructional staff should make every reasonable attempt to use leave so as to disrupt classroom instructional time as little as possible. All employees should use their best judgment in determining what constitutes "reasonable" leave-taking. As a general guideline, the school shall consider three days in the case of bereavement, five days for illness, and three personal days annually "reasonable." Additional days may be considered reasonable with sufficient explanation to the School Leader.

All absences and lateness must be reported directly to the Director of Operations or his/her designee by telephone by 6:30 a.m. In addition, all teachers in co-teaching classrooms are expected to call their classroom colleagues and report their absence. Leaving messages with another co-worker is not acceptable. The Director of Operations will retain substitutes as necessary. If a co-teacher is absent a substitute will not be called; instead, the remaining teacher is expected to adapt his/her plans to reflect the absence of his/her colleague. Teachers are expected to keep up-to-date lesson plans on file, which can be referred to in case of an absence. When an absence is planned ahead of time faculty members should communicate, in writing, to the School Leader and Director of Operations, the day(s) he/she will be absent. If a faculty member knows that he or she will be absent far enough in advance, it is the faculty member's responsibility to make every effort to see that classes and other obligations are covered by another faculty member. In-class and homework assignments should be carefully communicated to the class and to the substitute teacher and the Director of Operations should be informed of the arrangements that have been made. Faculty must call the Director of Operations each day they are absent unless the staff member is on an approved leave of absence. Failure to call in daily may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees who are absent for three (3) or more days and have not contacted the Director of Operations will be considered to have abandoned their employment, and school records will reflect that the individual voluntarily terminated his or her employment with Guardian Academy. Faculty with excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness cannot perform their jobs effectively and disrupt the operation of the school. Therefore, excessive absenteeism or lateness may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to notify the Director of Operations before the start of school or failure to call his/her designee will be considered an unexcused absence and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including

termination. Teachers who must be absent for reasons other than illness must communicate, in writing, and arrange for their absence in advance with the Director of Operations.

### **MANDATED REPORTING**

All staff members of Guardian Academy will be considered mandated reporters under Section 413 of the New York State Social Services Law. Mandated reporters are legally required to initiate a report under this statute's provisions when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or maltreated. Guardian Academy will require all staff members who suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect to immediately bring the matter to the attention of the School Leader before completing all other mandatory reporting requirements. It will be the responsibility of every staff member to report any suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect directly to Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Guardian Academy will also submit a report to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the law. New York law defines an abused child as a child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for his or her care inflicts or allows to be inflicted serious physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse. A maltreated child is any child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for him or her fails to provide him or her with food, clothing, shelter, education, medical or surgical care, who abandons the child, who uses excessive corporal punishment, or who uses drugs or alcohol to the point where he or she loses control of his or her actions. Although New York law defines child abuse and maltreatment narrowly, Guardian Academy will require employees to report suspicion of any serious physical or mental injury (other than by accidental means) or sexual abuse to the School Leader and ACS directly, regardless of who the suspected perpetrator. In all situations involving suspected or alleged child abuse or maltreatment, Guardian Academy will endeavor to act in the best interests of the student and to cooperate with the appropriate authorities.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

### **DUTY TO REPORT SUSPECTED MISCONDUCT**

When an employee becomes aware of another staff member having violated school policies or rules applicable to local, state and federal laws, he/she must speak to this staff member, if the violation appears to be minor, or report the matter to school administrators. If the observed behavior appears significant, it is the duty of every staff member to immediately report it to an administrator. All reports shall be confidential. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

### **HARASSMENT**

Guardian Academy is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment. Guardian Academy's policy prohibits sexual harassment and harassment

based upon pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, race, religion, creed, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance, or regulation. Guardian Academy will not condone or tolerate harassment of any type by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the school does business. This policy applies to all employee actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. Guardian Academy will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and, if warranted, take appropriate corrective action.

**Prohibited harassment includes:**

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs;
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex, race or any other protected basis;
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment; or
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected classes above.

**Prohibited sexual harassment includes:**

- Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.
- Sexually-oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
- Subjecting or threats of subjecting an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of the employee's sex.
- Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic or bringing to work or possessing any such material to read, display, or view at work;
- Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic; and
- Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an employee by sex in an area of the workplace (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this policy.

Complainants and witnesses under these policies will be protected from further harassment and will not be retaliated against in any aspect of their employment due to their participation, filing of a complaint or reporting sexual harassment. Guardian Academy will investigate complaints promptly and provide a written report of the investigation and decision as soon as

practicable. The investigation will be handled in as confidential a manner as possible consistent with a full, fair, and proper investigation.

While in most situations a personal relationship is a private matter, these relationships are not appropriate in a professional setting, particularly where one of the parties has management or supervisory responsibilities.

### **WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

Guardian Academy requires its trustees, officers, employees, and volunteers to observe high standards of ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities in the school. As representatives of the school, such individuals must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling all responsibilities and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to create an ethical and open work environment, to ensure that the school has a governance and accountability structure that supports its mission, and to encourage and enable directors, officers, employees, and volunteers of the school to raise serious concerns about the occurrence of illegal or unethical actions in the school before turning to outside parties for resolution.

All Trustees, officers, employees, and volunteers of the school have a responsibility to report any action or suspected action taken in the school that is illegal, unethical or violates any adopted policy of the school. Anyone reporting a violation must act in good faith, without malice to the school or any individual at the school and have reasonable grounds for believing that the information shared in the report indicates that a violation has occurred. A person who makes a report does not have to prove that a violation has occurred. However, any report which the reporter has made maliciously or any report which the reported has good reason to believe is false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. No one who in good faith reports a violation, or who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment action.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Guardian Academy is committed to providing a drug-free workplace and to promoting safety in the workplace, employee health, and well-being, customer confidence and a work environment that is conducive to attaining high work standards. The use of drugs and alcohol by employees, whether on or off the job, jeopardize these goals, since it adversely affects health and safety, security, productivity, and public confidence and trust. Drug or alcohol use in the workplace is extremely harmful to workers. The bringing into the workplace, possession or use of intoxicating beverages or drugs on any school premises is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

School Employees are required to preserve the confidentiality of any and all records containing personally identifiable information to students. Student records are confidential by virtue of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), state privacy laws and other laws and regulations. School employees may not disclose personally identifiable information about school students unless they have been given

clearance by the School Leader and are certain the disclosure is permitted by law. All student records maintained in the school central office as well as an individual teacher's classrooms must be secured at all times. Only those employees with a legitimate need for access to social security numbers of school personnel are required to preserve the confidentiality of such information and only disclose the information for legitimate or necessary business purposes.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All employees must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflict of interest. Employees involved in any relationships or situations that may constitute conflict of interest should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to the School Leader or the Board of Trustees for determination about whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, the school may take whatever corrective action appears appropriate according to the circumstances. Failure to disclose facts shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

### **TERMINATION**

Each employee will be employed on an "at will" basis. The Board of Trustees has the authority to terminate an employee with or without cause, unless such termination would violate applicable law. Offenses which can result in immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to:

1. Possession, use, sale, purchase, or distribution on school property, or reporting to work under the influence, of drugs and/or alcohol
2. Falsifying or altering records
3. Theft of school property
4. Sabotaging or willfully damaging school equipment or the property of other employees
5. Insubordination involving, but not limited to, defaming, assaulting, or threatening to assault a supervisor, and refusing to carry out the order of a supervisor
6. Fighting or provoking a fight on school premises
7. Absence for three days without notice, in which event the employee will be deemed to have quit voluntarily
8. Working for another employer while on leave without consent of the school
9. Carrying concealed weapons on school property or during any school sponsored event
10. Treating a student in a cruel or inappropriate manner
11. Failure to perform professional duties
12. Poor job performance
13. Undermining the Guardian Academy Code of Ethics