

**APPLICATION SUMMARY**

Charter School Name	<b>Mohawk Valley Community Charter School</b>
Applicant Name(s)	B. Ann Maher Dr. Kimberly Fiato
Media Contact Name	B. Ann Maher
Media Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:MVCCS2012@gmail.com">MVCCS2012@gmail.com</a>
Media Contact Telephone Number	315-717-4257 or 315-891-3952
District of Location	Utica City School District
Opening Date	August 29, 2013
Proposed Charter Term	Five Years
Proposed Management Company or Partners	N/A
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	Year 1 Kindergarten and Grade One 150 students Year 2 Kindergarten-Grade Two 225 students Year 3 Kindergarten-Grade Three 300 students Year 4 Kindergarten-Grade Four 375 students Year 5 Kindergarten-Grade Five 450 students
Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	When fully enrolled, MVCCS will serve 450 students in Grades Kindergarten through Five.
<b>Mission Statement:</b> The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS) serves students from a variety of language, cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as students with different learning needs from Kindergarten through Grade 5. An academically rigorous, innovative curriculum prepares students to think critically, to problem-solve effectively, and to live responsibly. MVCCS students will become well-rounded, successful, global citizens prepared for higher education and the work force, empowered to effect positive change in the world.	

The opportunity to help children living in New York’s Mohawk Valley to meet their potential through high quality education has brought together a committed, caring group of individuals with a common goal. That goal is to create, implement, and oversee the first charter school in the region, to be called the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School. This school, whose acronym will be MVCCS, will use an Individual Achievement Plan uniquely designed for each student. It will focus on student resiliency, self-regulation and problem solving techniques to help its students thrive academically, socially and emotionally. The curriculum will be aligned with the NYS Common Core Standards. It will be governed by a not for profit board of trustees.

It is the vision of our Founding Group to create a school environment conducive to generating knowledgeable, global leaders equipped for leading successful lives in the 21st century. The objectives of the school are these:

- Prepare students to meet the rigorous academic benchmarks as required by the Common Core Standards and the New York State Curriculum Guidelines.
- Immerse students in academic programs incorporating literature, math, science, technology, cultural events, and activities that emphasize and teach respect for diverse cultures.
- Instill respect, honesty, self-control and responsibility for personal choice in each student.
- Increase/improve language proficiency:
  - English speaking students will learn about and be exposed to other languages.
  - English Language Learners and Limited English Proficiency (ELL/LEP) students will become proficient in English.
- Empower students to reach academic and behavioral goals by utilizing an Individual Achievement Plan (IAP). Instill confidence in the learning and discovery process.
- Have students learn from the environment around them, understanding math, science, engineering and technology concepts from a real-world view.
- Encourage curiosity, wonder, and creativity in each student about their environment.
- Provide experiential learning units aligned with each student's strengths and learning styles.
- Enrich academics by providing professional development for staff regarding best practice.

MVCCS is committed to creating a community that accepts and respects cultural diversity. The following Key Design Elements will fulfill the mission:

- **Global Academic Curriculum** that employs place-based learning and community-based education, among other strategies, to make learning engaging and authentic.
- **Individualized Approach to Learning** that uses a strength-based or individualized approach to instruction for every child.
- **Positive and Supportive Environment** that provides a school culture that emphasizes leadership skills, personal responsibility, cooperation and collaboration.
- **Parent and Community Involvement** in which MVCCS parents and caregivers are partners in learning, through shared decision-making and an active parent teacher organization.
- **School-wide Accountability** maintained through a collaborative, strength-based educational opportunity.

The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School will strengthen the community through connected families and successful children.

**CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT**

Proposed Charter School Name: **Mohawk Valley Community Charter School**  
 Proposed School Location (District): **Utica City School District**

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

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

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

- An assurance that the charter school will annually provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in this application <sup>2</sup>
- An assurance that the charter school will cooperate with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;<sup>3</sup> and,
- That the charter school will provide such other information and assurances as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department may require.<sup>4</sup>

Signatures of Applicants:	 
Date:	July 30, 2012
Print/Type Name:	B. Ann Maher Kimberly Fiato, Ph.D.

<sup>1</sup> N.Y. Education Law § 2854(2)(a)  
<sup>2</sup> ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(J)  
<sup>3</sup> ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(K)  
<sup>4</sup> ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(N)

# Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Application July 2012

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### Required Attachments

Attachment 1	Admissions Policy	Five Pages
Attachment 2	Samples of Outreach	Eleven Pages
Attachment 3a	Sample Daily Schedules	Four Pages
Attachment 3b	First Year Calendar	One Page
Attachment 4	Student Discipline Policy	Six Pages
Attachment 5a	Trustee Background	Forty-seven Pages*
Attachment 5b	By-Laws	Ten Pages
Attachment 5c	Code of Ethics	Two Pages
Attachment 8a	Hiring and Personnel	Fifteen Pages
Attachment 8b	School Leader Resume	Two Pages
Attachment 9	Budget and Cash Flow Template	

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

### A. Mission Statement and Objectives

The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS) serves students from a variety of language, cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as students with different learning needs from Kindergarten through Grade 5. An academically rigorous, innovative curriculum prepares students to think critically, to problem-solve effectively, and to live responsibly. MVCCS students will become well-rounded, successful, global citizens prepared for higher education and the work force, empowered to effect positive change in the world.

It is the vision of our Founding Group to create a school environment conducive to generating knowledgeable, global leaders equipped for leading successful lives in the 21st century. The objectives of the school are these:

- Prepare students to meet the rigorous academic benchmarks as required by the Common Core Standards and the New York State Curriculum Guidelines.
- Immerse students in academic programs incorporating literature, math, science, technology, cultural events, and activities that emphasize and teach respect for diverse cultures.
- Instill respect, honesty, self-control and responsibility for personal choice in each student.
- Increase/improve language proficiency:
  - English speaking students will learn about and be exposed to other languages.
  - English Language Learners and Limited English Proficiency (ELL/LEP) students will become proficient in English.
- Empower students to reach academic and behavioral goals by utilizing an Individual Achievement Plan (IAP). Instill confidence in the learning and discovery process.
- Have students learn from the environment around them, understanding math, science, engineering and technology concepts from a real-world view.
- Encourage curiosity, wonder, and creativity in each student about their environment.
- Provide experiential learning units aligned with each student's strengths and learning styles.
- Enrich academics by providing professional development for staff regarding best practice.

### B. Key Design Elements

MVCCS is committed to creating a community that accepts and respects cultural diversity. The following Key Design Elements will fulfill the mission:

- **Global Academic Curriculum:** The curriculum will reflect the diversity of the student body, meet the requirements set forth by the New York State Education Department and will be aligned with the New York State Common Core Standards and Curriculum Guidelines. Instructional approaches, such as place-based and community-based education, will build upon the cultural diversity of the community.
  - **Place-based learning.** An instructional approach that utilizes the surrounding environment and local community as a setting for learning. It is characterized by student-driven, project-based explorations of local environmental issues, social questions, cultural heritage, and civic leadership. Students learn and develop skills through examinations of their natural surroundings. Students apply learned knowledge to solve real-world problems and drive change. Research has

demonstrated that place-based learning increases student attendance, parent participation, graduation rates, and community harmony<sup>1</sup>.

- **Community-based education.** An educational method that makes “learning more relevant and meaningful to students by placing it in local and familiar issues, contexts, and challenges. Curriculum is deeply connected to the people, landscapes, cultures and politics students can know and experience locally”<sup>2</sup>. A growing body of literature supports that community-based education increases student motivation and engagement<sup>3</sup>, as well as community involvement<sup>4</sup>.

- **Individualized Approach to Learning:** A strength-based or individualized approach to instruction will be emphasized for every child. Researchers have long advocated the use of individualized approaches, as they are proven to lead to greater average gains in reading and math<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, studies have confirmed that all categories of students/learners tend to benefit significantly from individualized instruction. Each student’s academic, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral strengths and learning challenges will be assessed regularly. Through an Individual Achievement Plan (IAP), MVCCS students will acquire an understanding of their personal learning style, learn to set personal goals and maintain a “growth mindset”<sup>6</sup>. Goals will be reached through collaboration of students, family members and school personnel.

- **Positive and Supportive Environment:** A school culture that emphasizes leadership skills, personal responsibility, cooperation and collaboration will assure a positive learning environment<sup>7</sup>. Professional growth and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year for all staff will create Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) to hone teaching strategies, improve instruction, and revise curricula, thereby enhancing school effectiveness and promoting the success of all students<sup>8</sup>. The essential questions guiding our school are “How can our school community meet the needs of its members?” and “What daily activities will increase each child’s resiliency, self-regulation and problem-solving capacity?” Weekly opportunities for groups of students to work collaboratively on projects while teachers participate in data discussions are an innovative approach we will utilize.

- **Parent and Community Involvement:** Educational research firmly supports that parent and community involvement are central to school achievement<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, student achievement will be strengthened by parent and community involvement. MVCCS parents and caregivers will be partners in learning, through shared decision-making and an active parent teacher organization. Students and families alike will benefit from our strong school partnerships with family service agencies and community organizations. Programs will be

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<sup>1</sup> Keyes, M. C., & Gregg, S. (2001). *School-Community Connections: A Literature Review*. Washington, D.C.: AEL, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> Cole, A. (2010). *School-Community Partnerships and Community-Based Education: A Case Study of a Novice Program*. *Perspectives on Urban Education*, 15-26.

<sup>3</sup> Melaville, A., Berg, A. C., & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community-Based Learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship*: Coalition for Community Schools. Umphrey, M. L. (2007). *The power of community-centered education: teaching as a craft of place*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

<sup>4</sup> Gruenewald, D. (2003). The best of both worlds: A critical pedagogy of place. *Educational Researcher*, 32(4), 2-12.

<sup>5</sup> McCoach, D., O’Connell, A., & Levitt, H. (2006). Ability grouping across kindergarten using an early childhood longitudinal study. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 99(6), 339-347.

Ray, J. K. (2011). *A study of the effectiveness of an individual achievement plan on student academic success*. Trevecca Nazarene University). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

<sup>6</sup> Dweck, Carol (2006). *Mindsets: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Random House.

<sup>7</sup> Covey, S. (2008). *The Leader in Me*. New York, Free Press.

<sup>8</sup> DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

<sup>9</sup> Henderson, A., & Berla, N. (1995). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education.

offered to expand communication, teach nurturing family skills, and increase English proficiency for children and adults.

- **School-wide Accountability:** Both the effective use of data and effective assessment procedures are central to driving continuous improvement and student achievement. Teachers will employ web-based software programs like eDoctrina<sup>10</sup> to organize and plan instruction that prioritizes standards, utilizes curriculum mapping and fuels data analysis. School leaders will be actively involved with instruction, curriculum implementation and staff discussions about student progress. Achievement data will be analyzed, discussed, and shared with each student’s family regularly. Collectively, these strategies will guide continuous improvement, target interventions and support change initiatives necessary for ensuring student achievement and high-performance.

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

### **Enrollment**

As the first charter school in the Mohawk Valley, we anticipate a high interest in MVCCS for families seeking an alternative to traditional public school options. Our local education system is struggling to meet the needs of children in our community. One online source ranks the Utica City School District (USCD) as 646 out of 683 total districts<sup>11</sup>. Due in large part to a depressed economy, parochial schools have closed, leaving extremely limited alternative educational options for families. Over the past three years, the idea of establishing a charter school in the Mohawk Valley has gained momentum. Multiple town hall meetings, specific “community conversations”, and feedback surveys have provided broad evidence to support the establishment of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School.

One of the strengths we envision for our school is the diversity of our community and the multicultural population that resides in our region. MVCCS will have a broad and open recruitment process that welcomes and encourages all students to apply for enrollment. We will also specifically target students who are historically underserved and uninformed about educational choices and opportunities. Our intended school site is located in West Utica, one of the most economically challenged areas of the city; we will also recruit heavily in the Corn Hill area. These areas have become home to many of the city’s refugee families, and as we evolve into our intention to serve as a true “community school”, our location and outreach will be assets.

We have selected an elementary school model (K-5) for our initial charter term, but plan to expand to a K-8 configuration over time. Immigrant/refugee parents with a strong interest in our design, particularly those in the Burmese/Karen community, have large families and embrace our ideas of multi-generational learning. Our plans are to open for the 2013-14 school year with Kindergarten and Grade One, adding one grade level annually for the term of the charter. Applications for MVCCS will be accepted from any family interested in participating. Preference for attendance will be given to Utica City residents who fall into one of the at-risk categories. In subsequent school years, priority will be given to siblings of enrolled students.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.edoctrina.org](http://www.edoctrina.org). Copyright 2010.eDoctrina.

<sup>11</sup> [www.schooldigger.com/go/NY/district29370](http://www.schooldigger.com/go/NY/district29370)

<b>Table I.A. Projected Enrollment Table Over Charter Term I</b>						
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
		<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
<b>K</b>	<b>4-5*</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>6-7</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>7-8</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>8-9</b>			<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>9-10</b>				<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>10-11</b>					<b>75</b>
<b>Total # of students</b>		<b>150</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>450</b>

*\*Students who turn 5 on or before Dec.1, 2013 will be eligible for kindergarten entry in Sept. 2013.*

MVCCS expects to be an attractive school choice option for students who experience learning and behavioral challenges in a traditional school setting. We have chosen an enrollment number of 75 per grade level as economically and educationally feasible. This grade level size will allow individualized student attention, a collaborative teaching model, and fiscal responsibility.

MVCCS will not discriminate against any students in its admissions policies or practices, and will comply with all applicable laws including Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

### **Recruitment**

We are aware that enrollment targets will be established by the state and we will recruit rigorously in order to meet those required targets. According to the 2010-11 Utica City School District (UCSD) Report Card, 76% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Limited English Proficiency students comprise 14% of the student population while 16.6% of students were classified as students with disabilities (SWDs).<sup>12</sup> Our recruitment efforts will concentrate on seeking a high enrollment of English Language Learners (ELLs), students living in poverty, and special needs learners for our school. MVCCS will not only accept, but will value the diversity of our students as critical to our mission.

*General Recruitment Strategies:* An enrollment petition drive has been implemented and is underway; Community Conversation meetings have been held at a variety of locations, including a local education fair, Holy Trinity School, and with groups such as the Utica College Education Club and Utica Sunrise Rotary Club. These events will continue to be held in strategic locations in the community to inform and identify supporters and potential students. More than 100 supporters have registered on our website; almost 60% of those who have children in elementary

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<sup>12</sup> Utica City School District Report Card, 2010-11

school indicated interest in enrollment. We have firm verbal and/or written commitments from parents with whom we have talked, making us confident that we will fill the 150 enrollment openings in our first year.

We are actively creating relationships with preschools in the Mohawk Valley to inform parents of children who are eligible to attend MVCCS. One example is the Neighborhood Center – one of the larger preschools in the Mohawk Valley – whose childcare providers have offered assistance in providing parents with information. Head Start has also provided a Letter of Support for our initiative. Information has been and will continue to be disseminated through community organizations such as the Family Nurturing Center, Child Care Council of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Youth Empowerment Program, and the Oneida/Herkimer Counties Literacy Coalition. Other family-oriented service providers such as health facilities and dental offices have indicated their willingness to help us inform the community.

Invitations to all MVCCS events will reach parents and families of our target population through media advertising, flyers at businesses and organizations, our website and Facebook page, and through word of mouth. MVCCS founders will continue to be receptive and open to new and alternative ways to reach our community.

***Recruiting Low-Income Families and English Language Learners:*** For many reasons, we expect a high enrollment of low-income and ELL students. Recognizing that personal contact is always the best way to inform and invite participation, presentations for local churches and ethnic organizations are underway. Examples of successful outreach include the Hispanic and Burmese/Karen communities; both groups have indicated strong support for our initiative. Parents and translators have clearly defined the frustrations of their present circumstances, and their desire to advance educationally and economically. These conversations have affirmed our decision to create a community school model. As we move forward, we will use volunteers to canvass identified neighborhoods, to speak directly with the residents, and assist them with enrollment.

Recruitment of ELL/LEP students is being done in collaboration with agencies that have a long history and that are known and trusted by these communities such as the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRRCR). In conjunction with the local institutions of higher education, we are developing brochures in languages prevalent in Utica (e.g., Burmese, Karen, Spanish, French and Russian); translators will be provided when needed to assure quality communication with families.

***Recruiting Students with Disabilities:*** In order to recruit students with disabilities, MVCCS will print informational handouts that will include specific information about our Special Education program. These handouts will be strategically placed at community agencies that serve special education populations, such as Sylvan Learning Center, Masonic Learning Center, and Learning Disability Association of the Mohawk Valley. We will also reach out to all special education coordinators in local school districts to provide an overview of our available programs. Our lead applicants and founding members will offer personal contact to families and confer with families interested in learning more about MVCCS.

The UCSD SWD rate of 16.7% is measurably higher than the state average (13.1%); MVCCS will be an attractive option for students with special needs.

## **Retention**

Our commitment to family involvement and our focus on community development will assure high retention levels for our students. As a school of choice, we will support parents in every way possible, beginning with our school entry process. Applications will be as simple as possible, only requesting information necessary to ascertain eligibility and preference criteria, and will be available in multiple languages.

Based on our recruitment strategies and academic program design, we will attain both enrollment and retention targets. We will monitor our enrollment data carefully, and consider incorporating additional preferences in our admissions policy and/or changes to our interventions and program offerings as indicated by our data.

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

The Mohawk Valley is an area rich in natural resources and history. Among the region's challenges are sluggish job growth, declining incomes relative to inflation, and lower education levels among adults than the state or nation. Child poverty rates are above the state and nation. . MVCCS will provide a catalyst of educational change leading to new possibilities and renewed optimism in Utica, and in the Mohawk Valley of Upstate New York.

For over 200 years, Utica, New York, a city of 60,000, has attracted immigrants and refugees. The immigrant communities that settled in the city many years ago include Italian, Irish, German, Polish, and Arab populations. In the past 30 years, Utica has been host to more than 13,000 refugees. Oneida County now has one of the highest concentrations of refugees in the U.S, with a refugee population of 14%. Refugees and immigrants from more than 31 countries, including Bosnia, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia, Haiti, Hungary, Laos, Poland, Romania, the former Soviet Union, Vietnam, Sudan, Somalia Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, China, Somalia, Burma, now live, work, and learn in the Mohawk Valley. Our school intends to serve the needs of this diverse and interesting population.

MVCCS will be a highly attractive option for families in our community. Presently there are no other viable tuition-free educational alternatives in the Mohawk Valley area. Because this will be the first Charter School in the Mohawk Valley, parents and community members have indicated strong interest and support. The goal of our school is to provide a strength-based, individualized approach to learning for every student, with high levels of family involvement.

## **E. Public Outreach**

There is an air of urgency and need in the region; the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties is partnering with area schools and funders to make literacy and education the focus of community growth. Members of our initiative are actively involved in these efforts, which include bringing Geoffrey Canada to speak in Utica this fall. We intend to be seen as a positive solution and collaborative partner, rather than a competitor for resources. Local political leaders are interested in our ideas; scheduled meetings will take place in August. Outreach efforts to UCSD Superintendent Bruce Karam and the Utica Board of Education have been made; it is our hope to meet with school representatives in the near future.

The MVCCS planning committee has embarked on an outreach initiative in order to ensure that families, parents and community leaders are given a voice in the planning process for this school. The breadth and depth of our Founders Group speaks to the excitement that is building around the reality of this vision. In October, we were a group of five; now there are 30 names on our core email distribution list, with eight or more typically attending our regular meetings.

“Community Conversations”, our version of town hall meetings, already have been held at least monthly since last November and will continue on a regular basis. We hold these discussions at a variety of locations and with differing formats in order to inform the public, engage their interest, and establish their supports. These various constituencies are providing feedback to the Founding Group about the problems facing the Mohawk Valley, as well as what they are hoping for in a charter school. By creating a climate of inquiry and dialogue, each event opens new doors and creates positive relationships.

Representatives of our Founding Group recently met with Mr. Howard Mettelman, District Superintendent of the Oneida Herkimer Madison (OHM) BOCES, and with Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri to provide information and exchange viewpoints. Media coverage in the Utica Observer Dispatch, our local newspaper, has been positive, letting the public know of the new initiative. Informational brochures are being widely distributed. Television coverage by regional news agencies has been provided. One news clip can be viewed from our website: [www.mvccs.com](http://www.mvccs.com).

Presentations for community groups such as Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and local groups that support the needs of families have been held and are ongoing. Technology tools including our website, email distribution list, Facebook and a LinkedIn group discussion have become effective tools to inform and invite a broad base of community involvement. Partnerships with area non-profit agencies have been established and will continue to be developed.

One example is a working partnership with Utica’s Family Nurturing Center. As part of our family support system, we intend to offer the nationally-recognized Nurturing Parenting Programs®, in collaboration with FNC. We are grateful for the administrative and clerical support the FNC leaders have already provided.

Dr. Joanne Joseph, a well-known and highly regarded clinical psychologist and SUNY-IT professor, leads a unique group called STOP-ACEs in our region. ACE is an acronym for Adverse Childhood Experiences; this group is committed to reducing and hopefully eliminating ACEs in our region. Service providers involved with STOP-ACEs are supporting our initiative.

Collaborations with area colleges are also growing in exciting ways. In addition to SUNY-IT’s support through Dr. Joseph, MVCCS is becoming a known force among educators at Utica College, Mohawk Valley Community College, Herkimer County Community College, Hamilton College, and the Utica School of Commerce. Creative ideas are emerging about the many and varied ways that students at area colleges, as well as faculty/staff members, might become involved with the Charter School movement.

## **F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact**

The Mohawk Valley in general and the city of Utica specifically are experiencing deep fiscal challenges. The Utica City School District faces significant budget deficits and, according to recent newspaper reports, project major job reductions in the educational workforce. Schools in the Mohawk Valley are being forced to provide services and attempt to maintain programs with reduced fiscal resources.

Four parochial schools have closed since 2002. These facilities sit empty, waiting for renewal of use. At the same time, the needs of an ever-growing refugee/immigrant population exert pressure on the non-profit and educational agencies in the community that seek to provide support and growth for these citizens.

We believe that education is a positive element in the revitalization of the Mohawk Valley. The ideas of choice, innovation and opportunity through this new educational entity have begun to build positive community conversations among individuals, agencies, and organizations. The funding we receive through the CSP will allow us to share resources with the UCSD in areas such as professional development and sharing of best practices. Currently, the UCSD kindergarten class size exceeds 28 students in some classes; rather than being perceived as a competitor for resources, we hope that a collaborative relationship with USCD will benefit both parties, through a reduction in class size for the city district.

We expect that MVCCS will have a slight fiscal impact on public schools in Oneida County. As shown in the table below, the charter school will fiscally impact Utica, New Hartford, Whitesboro, and New York Mills school districts. For the purposes of this analysis, we assume no more than a 2% annual budget increase. Based on 2012-2013 allocation for the school districts, we expect that Utica CSD will have to transfer \$9,820 annually for each child enrolled. Column E in the fiscal impact table includes other funding, such as SPED funding, food, service and grants, that will transfer from each school district to MVCCS. During the first year, MVCCS will have 150 students and the fiscal impact on Utica CSD will be 1.33% (\$1,824,184) of the total district budget. Although the fiscal impact for subsequent years will increase, the impact will still remain fairly minor. As for the other schools in Oneida County, the fiscal impact is insignificant. During year 1 the fiscal impact on New Hartford, Whitesboro and New York Mills will be 0.16%, 0.12% and 0.63% of the total district budget respectively. The fiscal impact for subsequent years will remain relatively insignificant.

MVCCS will continue to reach out to local school districts and the general public in order to promote Community Conversations about educational improvement. We will host best practice seminars open to educators, administrators, and other personnel from all schools in the area, thereby offering all schools a chance to participate. We will initiate contact with local schools and speak with educators and administrators who have experience in implementing any techniques or models that we are considering and benefit from their knowledge, challenges, and success. We will also maintain close relationships with the local committees on special education. We will actively seek out high-quality professional development sessions being hosted by other schools in the area, to which we will send our staff members.

**Table I.B. Fiscal Impact**

School District	Operational Year	Enrollment (# of Students)	Per Pupil Allocation	Projected Per Pupil Charter Cost	Other Projected District Revenue (SPED Funding, Food, Service, Grants, etc.)	Total Projected Funding to Charter School from District	Total Budget for District	Projected Impact (i.e. % of District's Overall Funding)
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(B x C = D)	(E)	(D + E = F)	(G) *	(F / G = H)
Utica	2012 - 2013	135	9,820	\$1,325,700	\$498,484	\$1,824,184	\$137,297,447	1.33%
	2013 - 2014	204	9,820	\$2,003,280	\$538,197	\$2,541,477	\$140,043,396	1.81%
	2014 - 2015	273	9,820	\$2,680,860	\$419,015	\$3,099,875	\$142,844,264	2.17%
	2015 - 2016	342	9,820	\$3,358,440	\$464,197	\$3,822,637	\$145,701,149	2.62%
	2016 - 2017	411	9,820	\$4,036,020	\$523,988	\$4,560,008	\$148,615,172	3.07%
New Hartford	2012 - 2013	5	11,431	\$57,155	\$18,464	\$75,619	\$46,964,445	0.16%
	2013 - 2014	7	11,431	\$80,017	\$18,468	\$98,485	\$47,903,734	0.21%
	2014 - 2015	9	11,431	\$102,879	\$13,484	\$116,363	\$48,861,809	0.24%
	2015 - 2016	11	11,431	\$125,741	\$14,930	\$140,671	\$49,839,045	0.28%
	2016 - 2017	13	11,431	\$148,603	\$16,574	\$165,177	\$50,835,826	0.32%
Whitesboro	2012 - 2013	5	9,886	\$49,430	\$18,464	\$67,894	\$57,454,334	0.12%
	2013 - 2014	7	9,886	\$69,202	\$18,468	\$87,670	\$58,603,421	0.15%
	2014 - 2015	9	9,886	\$88,974	\$13,484	\$102,458	\$59,775,489	0.17%
	2015 - 2016	11	9,886	\$108,746	\$14,930	\$123,676	\$60,970,999	0.20%
	2016 - 2017	13	9,886	\$128,518	\$16,574	\$145,092	\$62,190,419	0.23%
New York Mills	2012 - 2013	5	11,834	\$59,170	\$18,464	\$77,634	\$12,242,856	0.63%
	2013 - 2014	7	11,834	\$82,838	\$18,468	\$101,306	\$12,487,713	0.81%
	2014 - 2015	9	11,834	\$106,506	\$13,484	\$119,990	\$12,737,467	0.94%
	2015 - 2016	11	11,834	\$130,174	\$14,930	\$145,104	\$12,992,217	1.12%
	2016 - 2017	13	11,834	\$153,842	\$16,574	\$170,416	\$13,252,061	1.29%

\* **Note:** We assume no more than a 2% annual budget increase.

## II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

**Mission:** The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS) serves students from a variety of language, cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as students with different learning needs from Kindergarten through Grade 5. An academically rigorous, innovative curriculum prepares students to think critically, to problem-solve effectively, and to live responsibly. MVCCS students will become well-rounded, successful, global citizens prepared for higher education and the work force, empowered to effect positive change in the world.

**Vision:** Create and provide a school environment conducive to generating knowledgeable, global leaders equipped for leading successful lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### A. Achievement Goals

In keeping with our mission and vision to prepare students for success in a global community and excellence in academic achievement, we have set rigorous student achievement goals for our school and our students. We will evaluate academic performance against New York State Standards, and develop skill-specific rubrics with which to measure non-academic elements.

<b>GOAL 1:</b>	<b>MVCCS students will possess English literacy skills at or above grade level.</b>
<b>Metric 1</b>	75% of students who have attended the school for at least one year will score at Levels 3 or 4 on the New York State ELA exam.
<b>Metric 2</b>	At least 85% of students will show positive growth on teacher-designed monthly assessments of progress in reading and writing
<b>Metric 3</b>	At least 85% of students will show positive growth on a standardized assessment such as the DRA2, to be administered in fall, winter and spring
<b>GOAL 2:</b>	<b>MVCCS students will possess mathematics skills at or above grade level.</b>
<b>Metric 1</b>	75% of students who have attended the school for at least one year will score at Levels 3 or 4 on the New York State Mathematics exam.
<b>Metric 2</b>	Teacher-designed assessments of progress at least monthly
<b>Metric 3</b>	School-wide assessments September, January, May
<b>GOAL 3:</b>	<b>MVCCS students will demonstrate competency in science and technology skills</b>
<b>Metric 1</b>	90% of students who have attended the school for at least one year will score at Levels 3 or 4 on the fourth grade New York State Science exam.
<b>Metric 2</b>	At least 75% of students will score at Level 3 or 4 on quarterly performance-based classroom assessments.
<b>Metric 3</b>	100% of students will complete a self assessment of one project per year, and complete at least one peer assessment, using a school-wide performance rubric
<b>GOAL 4:</b>	<b>MVCCS students will demonstrate leadership and self-regulation skills through critical thinking and problem-solving.</b>
<b>Metric</b>	Self, peer and adult assessment measured by a school-wide performance rubric, completed at least twice per year.
<b>GOAL 5:</b>	<b>Each MVCCS student will achieve 90% of his/her personal annual goals at a level 3 or 4 as defined in the Individualized Achievement Plan.</b>
<b>Metric</b>	Self and adult assessment measured by a school-wide performance rubric

## B. School Schedule and Calendar

We have learned from our Community Conversations that many parents feel that their children need more time in school to learn. Further, parents who speak another language have asked us to create family learning time, so that oral and written language can be enhanced for all family members. To meet those needs, MVCCS students will have a longer school day and a longer school year compared to the local public schools. Students will benefit from increased time in learning, enabling them to achieve mastery of academic skills and concepts.

**Schedule:** Our goal is to have a school day from 7:45 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., which will be dependent upon our successful negotiation of transportation with the UCSD. This extended school day will maximize student time on task while providing time for staff members to plan collaboratively, provide data driven instruction, and operate as a professional learning community. Grade level schedules will provide frequent opportunities for teamwork among adults, by effectively utilizing our Teaching Assistants and parent volunteers.

A typical day will be organized in this way:

7:45-8:15	Breakfast and Community Time	Breakfast served in cafeteria while staff and family members interact; physical activities provided in gym for social time
8:15-8:45	Morning Meetings	The school day begins with a sharing time – sometimes a school-wide Morning Program; sometimes by grade level; sometimes by classroom.
8:45-10:15	Literacy Block	Students experience Readers’ Workshop, Writers’ Workshop,
10:15-10:30	Brain Break	Structured play may include Brain Gym exercises, free play, or activity to develop social skills and provide a creative outlet.
10:30-11:30	Math Block	Students work on math skill development with authentic materials that promote high level thinking and problem-solving opportunities.
11:35-12:05	Lunch	The school serves a nutritious, health-minded lunch
12:05-12:45	Personal Learning Time	Depending on individual student need and interest, this block of time may be used for IAP goal pursuit, remediation, enrichment, or personal reading time.
12:45-1:30	Science/Social Studies	These blocks will alternate by schedule so that all classrooms receive equal services. Fine arts and wellness/PE classes alternate daily; teachers provide inquiry-based science and social studies units developed within curriculum maps; specialists provide individual/small group services to students.
1:30-2:15	Special Class	
2:15-3:00	Enrichment/Remediation 1	
3:00-3:15	Classroom Quiet Time	Classroom teachers review the day with students, provide read-aloud, prepare students to transition home.
3:15-4:15	Dismissal/Enrichment/Remediation Block 2	Per student need, some students are dismissed, and others stay for extended day learning. Parents may join these extended learning groups as partners or volunteers.
4:30	Second Dismissal/Day Ends	

Daily schedule design will be built around theme-based learning units, and teachers will provide an inquiry-based, creative environment in which to learn. Students will each, over time, build and Individual Achievement Plan (IAP) and will learn to identify their personal learning style, build from their strengths, and tackle their learning challenges in authentic ways. A working draft of the IAP concept is included in Attachment 3a, following the sample schedules.

Every classroom will be staffed by a certified, highly-qualified teacher and teacher’s assistant. Grade levels will function as learning teams, with responsibility for student success shared by all. Therefore, each grade level will have a regular education staff of six – three teachers and three teacher assistants. Teachers will plan instruction based on the strengths and needs of individual students. Weekly data team meetings to review student progress toward achievement benchmarks will promote frequent regrouping of students as instructional adjustments are made; students will be able to move between classrooms as needed for developmentally appropriate instruction. Support teachers (ELL, Literacy, and Special Education) will provide co-teaching and support within the classrooms as well as small-group instruction in alternate locations, as determined by student need. Based upon our classroom sizes, we will be able to offer a greater staff to student ratio than is commonly found in the Utica City School District. This will enable each student to receive a combination of classroom, small group, and individualized instruction, enhancing the personal attention each student receives. The presence of two adults in each classroom will provide for greater support for all students.

Given the importance of literacy and language acquisition as a foundation for learning in all subjects, MVCCS will organize and oversee learning time to assure student mastery of literacy skills. The table below presents the number of minutes per week devoted to each content area:

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Minutes Per Week</b>	<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Minutes Per Week</b>
Literacy and Language	585	Fine Arts	90
Mathematics	490	Fitness/PE	90
Science/Technology	225	Play/Brain Gym	100
Social Studies	180		

Sample weekly schedules for students and teachers are provided in Attachment 3a. The formal school day for students will be 8:00-3:15, with extended time at each end of the day for students who need it. On Thursdays, the afternoon will follow a different design, in order to provide staff with job-embedded professional development time. From 2:30-4:30, instructionally-appropriate learning projects and activities will be provided for students, while groups of staff members participate in Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions, based on data and curriculum needs. Parent/community volunteers will be instrumental in supervising and providing student activities, working collaboratively with school personnel.

The teacher work day will be from 7:30-4:30 daily, in order to assure coverage for all student activities while providing a reasonable work schedule for adults. Because this is an extended workday, teachers will have a one-hour lunch duty-free lunch period and at least one planning period daily.

**Calendar.** The proposed calendar for 2013-14 is provided in Attachment 3b. Our extended school calendar is projected to be 192 instruction days (210 staff days), more than two weeks

beyond what a traditional public school offers. In August, staff members will participate in three weeks of Summer Institute for staff development and planning; the school year for students will begin before Labor Day and run through June. For student assessment purposes, the school year is divided into four quarters.

Additional days/weeks are positioned in our calendar in ways that create the best transportation options for parents. Transportation contracts will need to align with those held between UCSD and their provider. We can assume that if transportation is not provided, some students will not be able to take advantage of our extended hours and opportunities. Public transportation options in Utica are limited; the ability for parents to supply transportation for children will vary greatly. Therefore, we will be diligent in our efforts to work collaboratively with the transportation provider and seek creative solutions, such as optional attendance at some before and afterschool programs, for the successful implementation of our calendar. Compliance with Education Laws 2852(2)(n) and 3204(4) will be assured because our extended day and extended calendar year offers higher than adequate opportunity for learning time.

### **C. Curriculum and Instruction**

It is the vision of our Founding Group that our school will be instrumental in generating knowledgeable, global leaders equipped for leading successful lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Key objectives of the MVCCS school design include our intention to prepare students to meet the rigorous academic benchmarks as required by the Common Core Standards and the New York State Curriculum Guidelines. We plan to do this by immersing students in academic programs that incorporate literature, math, science, technology, and social learning. Our curriculum will assure a wide variety of personal experiences, cultural events, and activities that emphasize and teach respect for diverse cultures, in order to efficiently and effectively meet the needs of Utica's diverse population. As stated in the NYS Common Core for ELA and Literacy<sup>13</sup>, we acknowledge our reasonability to prepare "students who are college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language." Our students, over time, will:

- Demonstrate independence
- Build strong content knowledge
- Comprehend as well as critique
- Respond to varying demands
- Value evidence
- Use technology and digital media strategically and capably
- Understand other perspectives and cultures.

Because our school will open with Kindergarten and Grade One, we have paid special attention to the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core<sup>14</sup>, adopted in January, 2011. This document addresses the needs of the whole child, as we intend our school to do, and provides a thorough roadmap to follow in preparing young children for success in life and school. It describes five broad developmental and interrelated domains:

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<sup>13</sup> Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy...Introduction

<sup>14</sup> NYS PreKindergarten Foundation for the Common Core, Introduction

- **Domain 1: Approaches to Learning** – How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge.
- **Domain 2: Physical Development and Health** – Children’s physical health and ability to engage in daily activities.
- **Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development** – The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children’s experiences in the home, school, and larger community.
- **Domain 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy** – How children understand, create, and communicate meaning.
- **Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World** – What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know. This domain is a direct reflection of the content competencies and knowledge of the Common Core Learning Standards.

We have organized our Curriculum and Instruction design to describe the ways we plan to meet our students’ needs in the five domain areas.

### **DOMAIN 1: APPROACHES TO LEARNING**

We agree with author Tony Wagner, who outlines the following set of core competencies that every successful student must master before the end of high school.<sup>15</sup>

- Critical thinking and problem solving (the ability to ask the right questions)
- Collaboration across networks and leading by influence
- Agility and adaptability
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism
- Accessing and analyzing information
- Effective written and oral communication
- Curiosity and imagination

Acknowledging both the challenge and the learning power that these competencies represent, our school design will lay the foundation necessary during the elementary grades in order to produce students who are competent in these ways, equipped for success in a global society.

Beginning in Kindergarten, and throughout their school experience, MVCCS students will acquire an understanding of their personal learning style, learn to set personal goals and maintain a “growth mindset”<sup>16</sup>. Each year, students will be assisted in setting personal goals to be reached, through collaboration of students, family members and school personnel. By utilizing an Individual Achievement Plan (IAP), and receiving constructive feedback about their work, students will gain confidence in the learning and discovery process. We will have students learn from the environment around them, understanding math, science, engineering, and technology concepts from a real-world view. It will be our priority to encourage curiosity, wonder, and creativity in each student about their environment.

### **DOMAIN 2: PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH**

Physical education plays a pivotal role in a child’s development of loco motor skills, object-control skills, and personal/social skills. We envision a “Wellness Program” for MVCCS that

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<sup>15</sup> Wagner, Tony. *The Global Achievement Gap*. . . . need to finish citation

<sup>16</sup> Dweck, Carol. *Mindsets: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Random House.2006.

will integrate general knowledge of activity, nutrition, and fitness. Every student will gain the knowledge and skill sets necessary to proficiently perform physical tasks, demonstrate positive social interaction, and make positive personal choices regarding health, nutrition, and personal fitness. Since research now clearly indicates a positive relationship between physical activity and the academic performance of children<sup>17</sup>, we plan to incorporate daily opportunities for movement into the instructional day through structured play, free play and intentional activities such as BrainGym<sup>18</sup>. We plan to consult with other charter schools, such as Buffalo's Charter School for Applied Technology (CSAT) who provide students with a comprehensive Health/Fitness curriculum, and model our design accordingly.

We are considering the Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum (EPEC)<sup>19</sup>, an evidence-based, task-mastery driven system designed to promote excellence in physical education. Our Physical Education program will be an important avenue of social and emotional expression for all students, and through our integrated, collaborative approach, students will achieve mastery of the state learning standards in this area. That is, each student will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physical fitness, participate in physical activity, and maintain personal health (Standard 1). By providing and nurturing a Safe and Healthy Environment (Standard 2) in our school, our students will acquire the knowledge and ability necessary to create and maintain their own safe and healthy environment. Our school-wide emphasis on personal accountability and self-regulation will assure that students will understand and be able to manage their personal and community resources (Standard 3).

### **DOMAIN 3: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Research has demonstrated an increase in academic achievement for students who are socially, emotionally<sup>20</sup>, and physically healthy<sup>21</sup>. In addition, students have been shown to have higher academic achievement when teachers implement behavioral strategies that provide clear behavioral expectations and help students learn to self-monitor, make positive choices, and communicate their needs effectively. Resilient, nurtured children succeed in all areas of life.

The attitude "I will do my best" is useful for the development of resilience because it helps the child develop "mental muscle". To do one's best one has to push beyond the what's expected in order to get into the habit of working hard and sticking with the task.<sup>22</sup> We will utilize evidence-based practices to improve students' critical thinking skills, and teach students to persist in the face of difficulty, to monitor one's feelings and the feelings of others, to delay gratification to accomplish a higher or longer-term goal. Programs such as Second Step, Responsive Classroom, and Leader in Me will provide curricular framework for teachers and alignment with the MVCCS PBIS approach. (Further information is provided in Section IIF.)

**Individual Achievement Plans:** Each student will have an Individual Achievement Plan (IAP) – a proactive, annual plan that includes at least one goal in social, emotional, physical, self-regulatory, and academic domains. IAPs will serve as the glue that binds all of the proactive

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<sup>17</sup> JAMA and Archives Journals, January issue of *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.braingym.org/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.michiganfitness.org/EPEC/default.htm>

<sup>20</sup> Durlak et al., (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82, 405-432.

<sup>21</sup> Grissom, J.B. (2005). Physical fitness and academic achievement. *Pediatric Exercise Physiology*. 8, 11-25.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph, Joanne. The Resilient Child: Preparing Today's Youth for Tomorrow's World. Perseus Publisher. 1994. p.41.

universal approaches implemented at MVCCS, enhancing the mastery of learning standards. IAPs will enable children to set goals and develop plans to achieve those goals, thereby improving their emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills. The achievement of IAP goals will fuel students' growth in all major domains of child development, which will enhance their overall engagement with learning and their ability to achieve academic excellence. Awards and privileges will be available for students to earn based upon the successful achievement of IAP goals, thereby teaching students valuable lessons in self-regulation. Students will set their IAP goals in the first month of each school year and in consultation with family members and school personnel (e.g., teachers, counselors).

**Global Academic Focus through Social Studies Curriculum and Instruction:** Our Social Studies curriculum will be built upon the foundation of Utica's multicultural population, integrated within and strengthened by ELA/literacy instruction. We will embrace the cultural opportunities provided by the diversity of Utica's refugee population, through daily interactions, and community involvement, and experiential learning projects. These experiences will help students see how we are united by certain shared values, practices, traditions, needs, and interests, some of which have evolved over centuries. They will come to understand how the nation's political institutions developed and created many of these traditions. Following the NYS Dimensions of Teaching and Learning in Social Studies, our Social Studies units will develop high level intellectual skills and provide multidisciplinary approaches. Beginning at the earliest grades and developing over the years of our charter implementation, teachers will design authentic, inquiry-based instructional units with depth and breadth that will lead students to explore essential questions about the global society in which we live.

Through experiential learning units aligned with each student's strengths and learning styles, our students will come to understand the complex issues of our time, and will demonstrate attitudes of multiculturalism and multiple perspectives. They will utilize patterns to organize data; through multiple learning environments and resources, they will use technology and digital media strategically to build strong content knowledge. Teachers will combine learning standards in ways that provide student-centered teaching, learning, and assessment. Through project-based learning and differentiated instruction, MVCCS students will become highly literate 21<sup>st</sup> century thinkers and problem solvers, working collaboratively to apply their knowledge to build strong local and global communities.

To provide strong support for our teachers in the initial years of the charter, we are currently exploring content-based materials such as National Geographic School Publishing's<sup>23</sup> *Avenues* and *Windows on Literacy* series to support both literacy and social studies goals. Nonfiction reading and writing in the content areas will be reinforced with this approach. As teachers deepen their understanding of standards and instructional design, we anticipate broad use of online resources for Social Studies planning and instruction, utilizing educational sites such as *Edutopia*<sup>24</sup>, social media resources, virtual field trips, and associations with school communities around the globe. Social Studies instruction will provide opportunities to discuss and explore higher level thinking skills, practice problem-solving strategies, and provide students with project-based, experiential learning that relates directly to their lives.

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ngsp.com>

<sup>24</sup> [http:// www.Edutopia.com](http://www.Edutopia.com)

**Building Personal Resiliency Skills through an Assets-Based Approach:** Clearly, it will take a strong partnership with parents and caregivers to help students attain the emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships. Our school will provide a place where children’s experiences in the home, school, and larger community can find expression and meaning. Using resources such as the Developmental Assets checklist from the Search Institute<sup>25</sup>, we will gain a strong understanding of each child’s personal situation, and build their instructional program accordingly. The chart below illustrates one small example of how ELA Common Core standards can and will be incorporated into the social and emotional exit outcomes for our students in kindergarten and grade one:

Common Core Standard	Kindergarten`	Grade Two
ELA/Speaking and Listening (1)	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>kindergarten topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups. a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g. listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion). b. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges. c. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 2 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups. a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion b. Build on others’ talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others. c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed d. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
ELA/Speaking and Listening (4)	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.	Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
ELA Language (6)	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe.

#### DOMAIN 4: COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE, AND LITERACY

It is one of our intentional objectives to increase and improve language proficiency for ALL of our students. Living in such a diverse community as Utica provides a unique opportunity to increase global understanding and expand communication skills. There are 23 countries and 44 languages represented in the Mohawk Valley region. Through instruction, community partnerships, and parental involvement we will provide opportunities for our English speaking students to learn about and be exposed to other languages, while we assure that our English Language Learners and Limited English Proficiency (ELL/LEP) students will become proficient in English.

**Focus on Language Proficiency Through ELA/Literacy Curriculum and Instruction:**  
To provide a strong foundation for our ELA curriculum, we will use The Teachers College

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>

Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)<sup>26</sup> . This model was selected because it will support the language needs of our culturally diverse student population, and will provide our educators with the scaffolding needed for experiential instruction. Our ELA curricula will focus on language and vocabulary development, recognizing the power of teaching reading through writing. We intend that all members of our school community will be competent readers and confident writers, able to communicate effectively with the world around them.

Using the TCRWP model, Readers' Workshop and Writers' Workshop will provide the daily structure for a balanced literacy program, including whole class, small group, and individualized instruction. Multiple opportunities for each student to master skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening will be incorporated into an active, experiential classroom design that will include instructional elements like word study, shared reading, and morning meetings. Within this literacy model, MVCCS teachers will have the professional autonomy to create and deliver integrated units of instruction that maximize content learning, student engagement, and authentic learning. Comprehension strategies will be reinforced through discussion groups, book reports, art projects, and research.

Writers' Workshop will provide the framework for daily writing experiences; MVCCS teachers will utilize *Units of Study* and the TCRWP annual curricular calendar provided by the institute for instructional foundation design. Performance assessments aligned to the NYS Common Core Standards are included in these materials, and will be part of our Response to Intervention (RTI) Plan to measure progress.

**Guided Reading Instruction** will be provided in small, flexible, homogenous groups, based upon students' reading proficiency. It will increase each student's achievement in reading and related skills. Small group direct instruction will be provided by teachers and teacher assistants daily for students whose reading is in the lowest 25%, and at least 3 times weekly for all other students. By carefully monitoring the progress of each student through formative assessments, teachers and their assistants will continually adjust student groups to maintain the homogeneity of reading abilities within each Guided Reading group, assuring reading success for each child. The teacher will select and introduce texts to the students, support them (as needed) in reading the text, engage them in discussion, and introduce a mini-lesson on specific skills after the reading. Each group session will include activation of background knowledge and vocabulary, instruction and practice with reading and skills, and a post-session assessment, reflection and sharing.

**Learning Centers** for independent exploration and skill mastery will be incorporated into the daily routine of each classroom; this will be a time when all students rotate through a series of carefully planned learning activities that lead to understanding and mastery of grade level standards. Learning Centers will expressly focus on the integration of literacy development into content-area learning experiences (math, science, social studies). Learning centers will provide motivating and experiential learning opportunities for our students. Further, teachers can provide opportunities for individual skill development efficiently by utilizing technology tools in learning centers; for instance, providing a computer center in the classroom where each student completes sequential lessons tracked and reported electronically.

The importance of non-fiction reading and writing is emphasized in the NYS Common Core Standards, and will be addressed through authentic, content-rich integrated units in science and social studies. Kindergarten students, for example, will use the social studies theme of "Self and

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<sup>26</sup> <http://tc.readingandwritingproject.com/>

Others” as an avenue for learning about the diversity of families in our school. A second grade integrated science unit may involve students in virtual field trips with other second graders who are also studying weather. An experiential, project-based approach will involve parents and others as helpers and mentors.

## DOMAIN 5: COGNITION AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

**Math Curriculum and Instruction:** In order to be successful in a knowledge-based society, MVCCS graduates will need to develop confidence, skills, and talents in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). We understand and embrace the importance of STEM stated in the newly adopted NYS Common Core Standards for Math (P-12) for developing both “*processes and proficiencies*” for our students. This focus will assure that each learner will connect the particulars of content to a deep understanding of related concepts. Our curriculum and instruction will be focused and sequential, providing frequent assessment and mastery of understanding for every student, in order to prevent or close gaps in learning. **Process standards** (*problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, representation, and connections*) will be aligned with **mathematical proficiencies** (*adaptive reasoning; comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations and relations; habitual inclination to see mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile*) while building each student’s confidence that diligence, perseverance, and self-efficacy will lead to achievement and success.

In order to support the needs of both teachers and learners, we will utilize a research-based, evidence-driven mathematics series to provide consistent instruction and assessment for all students. One such series under consideration is *Everyday Mathematics*<sup>27</sup>, chosen because it emphasizes the following elements that align strongly to our school design:

- **Real-life Problem Solving**, emphasizing the application of mathematics to real-world situations.
- **Balanced Instruction**, including time for whole-class instruction as well as small-group, partner, or individual activities. Activities balance teacher-directed instruction with opportunities for open-ended problem solving, hands-on explorations, long-term projects, and ongoing practice.
- **Multiple Opportunities for Basic Skills Practice**, including written and choral fact drills, mental math routines, homework assignments, and math games.
- **Emphasis on Communication** - students are encouraged to explain and discuss their mathematical thinking. Opportunities to verbalize their thoughts and strategies give children the chance to clarify their thinking and gain insights from others.
- **Enhanced Home/School Partnerships** provide opportunities for family members to participate in students' mathematical learning.
- **Appropriate Use of Technology** - students learn how to use technology appropriately.

Differentiated instruction techniques will be used to allow students to progress at their own pace and utilize different modalities of learning. Classroom Learning Centers will provide talented students with challenges to enhance knowledge and will give struggling students the necessary material to master concepts. Students will engage deeply in mathematics by working with manipulatives and authentic problem-solving scenarios. They will discuss and write about the problems they solve, often identifying a variety of ways to tackle a single problem. Our

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<sup>27</sup> [www.everydaymath.uchicago.edu](http://www.everydaymath.uchicago.edu)

professional development will focus on helping teachers to build on what students already know and guide them in discovering algorithms and concepts in the key strands of mathematics.

At all grade levels of NYS Common Core Standards, students are expected to demonstrate developmentally appropriate mastery of the following behaviors:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

As per the directives of the NYS Common Core Standards, instruction for each grade level is designed to spiral in ways that deepen understanding and develop critical thinking capacities in students. For example, Kindergarten learning will focus on two critical areas: (1) representing and comparing whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; (2) describing shapes and space. Building on that foundation, first grade will focus on these critical areas: (1) developing an understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; (2) developing an understanding of whole number relationships and place value, including grouping in tens and ones; (3) developing understanding of linear measurement lengths as iterating length units; and (4) reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.

At MVCCS, units of mathematical study will incorporate a variety of assessed activities to measure student growth. Teacher-designed classroom rubrics, for example, will provide informal, ongoing measures of student success with math center activities and project-based learning.

Over the course of our charter implementation, STEM initiatives and rigorous mathematics instruction will be foundational to our curriculum and instruction design. It is our confident belief that we will become a high performing charter school because of our clear academic focus and ability to assist each student to understand and apply mathematical concepts in their daily lives.

**Science Curriculum and Instruction:** Research shows that young students work well in a cooperative learning environment. Students will be actively involved in place-based and community placed learning, as defined in Section I. Students will have a variety of opportunities to explore phenomena in the natural world, posing questions and seeking answers as they arise. All MVCCS educators will foster the development of science content and process skills. The application of these skills will allow students to investigate important issues in the world around them. Inquiry-based units will include the following process skills: classifying; communicating; comparing and contrasting; creating models; and gathering/organizing data. MVCCS students will, at all levels and in all content areas, learn to generalize, infer, interpret data, and make appropriate decisions. Through the process of experiential learning, they will manipulate authentic materials, make measurements and observe their real world. From these experiences, they will become competent at making predictions, evaluating situations, and synthesizing new solutions to problems, demonstrating their competence as critical and creative thinkers.

Kindergarten and first grade students will develop skills of observation, measurement and number sense as they actively participate in simple investigations. Students will have

opportunities to use tools such as magnifiers, thermometers, rulers, or balances to gather data and extend their senses. Students will have ample time to talk about their observations and compare their observations with those of others. They will be encouraged to employ language, drawings, and models to communicate results and explanations of investigations and experiments.

To integrate STEM into the learning process, students will collaborate on an interactive white board, use a simulation program to graph and model formulas through spreadsheets to learn algorithms, manipulate molecules to understand reactions, collect and analyze data to solve real world environmental problems, or use technology to understand connections. Teachers will be encouraged to empower students to be independent learners, critical thinkers, and problem solvers. MVCCS will be an environmentally responsible school, and our science curriculum will be built around this STEM model. Recognizing that critical thinking is developed and honed by careful attention to the scientific method, students will begin in kindergarten to understand and use their skills of observation, reporting, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Environmental studies and the concept of “being green” as a school community will be incorporated into our science curriculum. Through project work and hands-on activities, students will learn to be environmentally responsible, generate new ideas, and contribute to the improvement of global issues.

Integrating technology into the curriculum and providing a balance between core knowledge and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills will be paramount in educating students at MVCCS. Daily use of technology, providing access for student use of this technology and encouragement to utilize this technology will be encouraged in all classrooms. Teachers will receive staff development to keep them current in the latest technology and provide them with the tools necessary to build curriculum to allow students to be successful in competing for jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

During our start up years, MVCCS will utilize science curriculum resources that will provide appropriate learning experiences for our students and ample teaching resources for our staff members. Integration of science concepts into our literacy approach (e.g., non-fiction reading sources, science centers, and thematic classroom instructional units) will be reinforced by utilizing *Reach*, a curriculum product from National Geographic School Publishers<sup>28</sup> that effectively connects literacy and content-area instruction.

MVCCS will also link instruction to collaborative and innovative educational institutions like the Center for Science Education at Education Development Center, Inc.<sup>29</sup>, a nonprofit organization that brings together a unique staff of educators, researchers, scientists, and curriculum developers. Our active involvement in such partnerships will afford our administrators and teachers the opportunity to become research-based learners themselves, and to make timely, effective decisions about 21st Century science instruction. One example is Education for Sustainability, offered by the Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education in New York<sup>30</sup>. A school-wide program such as their *TerraCycle*<sup>31</sup> Curriculum may provide thematic, ongoing learning embedded within our school culture. Decisions about adopting a formal science curriculum will be made by year three of our charter.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.ngsp.com/>

<sup>29</sup> <http://cse.edc.org/aboutus/edc.asp>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.cloudinstitute.org>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.terracycle.net>

**Technology Curriculum and Instruction:** As described by Milton Chen in his book *Education Nation*,<sup>32</sup> the “Technology Edge” of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education involves “putting modern tools in young hands.” Our students will access technology in their learning in a multitude of ways. Participating in virtual field trips, authoring books, using software to master skills, developing multimedia presentations, having email pen pals in other countries – the menu of possibilities is truly limitless. In our school, all students will know how to access information and use technology to learn and communicate. Technology tools will be as important as paper, pencils, and journals to MVCCS students. Technology use will be an integrated element of our instructional program.

At appropriate grade levels, over time, our students will complete technology projects that demonstrate comprehension of content material as well as visual literacy, technological literacy, and media literacy, as measured by NYS Technology Standards<sup>33</sup>. MVCCS students will become competent in their use of technology to connect to the larger world, and that technology will help them to demonstrate mastery of learning standards. An emphasis on personal responsibility and self-regulation will develop students’ understanding of the ethical use of technology tools, and promote creativity.

MVCCS educators will be technology-literate and expected to incorporate technology tools, electronic data use and instructional integration of technology into their professional work. We will provide initial and ongoing professional development to allow all of our teachers to integrate electronic learning into MVCCS classrooms, and to assure global awareness to our students. Ethical and responsible use of technology will be an essential element in meeting our school’s mission. We will explore the possibility of using digital portfolios as an efficient way to track and measure student progress over time.

**Fine Arts (Music, Art, Media):** Opportunities for learning about, in, and through the fine arts will be an important part of the MVCCS curriculum design. Our staffing will include one full-time fine arts teacher, who will be in charge of collaborating with all teachers to plan interdisciplinary, standards-based, experiential units and provide a wide array of visual arts, drama, and musical learning opportunities for our students. These engaging, cross-curricular opportunities will facilitate content integration as each student masters:

- Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts
- Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources
- Standard 3: Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art
- Standard 4: Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts.

## **D. Assessment System**

MVCCS is dedicated in teaching the whole child. We recognize that each child learns differently and has diverse strengths and weaknesses. The school will use different assessments to measure student progress: formative, interim, diagnostic, and summative assessments. MVCCS will create and maintain a school culture where data analysis is viewed as an essential piece of the teaching and learning process. In order to assess our effectiveness at meeting the developmental needs of every student, we will seek and use assessment tools that measure growth in all domains

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<sup>32</sup> Chen, Milton. (2010) *Education Nation: Six Leading Edges of Innovation in our Schools*. Jossey-Bass.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.iste.org/standards.aspx>

articulated in the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core and imbedded throughout the Common Core Standards:

- Domain 1: Approaches to Learning
- Domain 2: Physical Development and Health
- Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development
- Domain 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy
- Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World

**Diagnostic Assessments:** In order for our students to achieve mastery levels on summative assessments, we must understand the needs of every student in our school. One of our Key Design Elements focuses on having an individualized approach to learning. Using a strength-based approach, each student's academic, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral strengths and learning challenges will be assessed at the time of entry to our school. By determining our incoming students' knowledge, skill levels, interests, and special needs, that data will provide a strong foundation for each child's Individual Achievement Plans (IAP) and school-wide RtI planning. Diagnostic assessments will begin in August of each year, and be completed by September 15. Individual Achievement Plans (IAPs) will be established for each child by September 30 of each year, and monitored at least bi-monthly thereafter.

Elements of our diagnostic assessment plans include:

- **Home Visits:** At the outset of each school year, staff will visit the homes of newly enrolled students to get to know the family, share school policies and procedures, and learn about each child's interests, strengths, and areas of challenge. Staff may conduct informal diagnostic assessments with the student. They will also administer the Home Language Survey as the first step in identifying students eligible for ELL services. Home visits will be an important step in establishing a strong home/school partnership.
- **School Visitation Experience:** In August of each year, all families of newly enrolled students will visit the school, complete paperwork, and participate in a series of screening activities for their child(ren). Using screening protocols we will develop, students will be evaluated in the five domain areas of the NYS Pre-Kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.
- **ELA Inventory:** A developmentally-appropriate assessment tool, such as the Brigance, Degrees of Reading Assessment 2, or Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments will be administered to establish individual achievement levels that will assist teachers and students to set goals for increasing reading and writing levels throughout the year.
- **Math Skills Inventory**
- **Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R):** Students who score at the beginning, intermediate or advanced levels are deemed limited English proficient and eligible for ESL services.

**Formative assessments:** Professional learning communities judge their effectiveness on the basis of results. Working together to improve student achievement becomes the routine work of everyone in the school. Every teacher team participates in an ongoing process of identifying the current level of student achievement, establishing a goal to improve the current level, working together to achieve that goal, and providing periodic evidence of progress. As teacher teams develop common formative assessments throughout the school year, each teacher can identify how his or her students performed on each skill compared with other students. Individual

teachers can call on their team colleagues to help them reflect on areas of concern. Each teacher has access to the ideas, materials, strategies, and talents of the entire team. Students will also be taught how to use formative feedback to maximize their own learning.

The types of formative assessments that we will use include:

- **Rubrics:** Following the proficiency model of the New York State Assessments, MVCCS student achievement will most often be measured on a four-point rubric. Teachers will develop classroom and grade-wide rubrics to evaluate student work, especially writing and projects. One of the guiding questions of our school will be “Are you proficient yet?” Students will learn to write rubrics as well to self-assess and peer-assess.
- **Questioning:** Our school culture will be inquiry-based; that is to say asking questions will be recognized as the first and necessary step to discovery and new learning. Using Bloom’s Taxonomy as a guide, high-level questions (analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation) will be used to assess and expand student understanding.
- **Checklists and Surveys:** Teachers will develop grade-wide checklists to identify student mastery of specific skills. Checklists and surveys may also be used to gain feedback from parents and students, individually or in groups.
- **Observation:** Staff members will be expected to maintain ongoing written anecdotal evidence of student learning. This may be done electronically; examples include one-on-one conferencing and small group instruction.
- **Computer-Based Assessments:** Technology tools will be used when developmentally appropriate to assess student progress. An advantage to this type of assessment is the opportunity to receive immediate feedback. This allows both students and teachers to determine mastery and pace instruction appropriately. Moreover, parents can monitor students’ learning and administrators can evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.

**Benchmark Assessments:** As an integral part of the MVCCS RtI Plan, frequent informal assessments tools will be used by individual teachers, students, and school teams to measure progress toward individual and group goals. Benchmark assessment tools will include:

- **Portfolios and poster presentations** will become part of our school culture over time, as effective tools for students to measure their own performance against a standard. Self-assessment, peer review, and community feedback will be utilized to assist students in understanding their individual style, and make them confident about sharing their work.
- **Benchmark Assessments of classroom/grade level learning** will be created by teaching teams to evaluate student mastery of content and skills in each subject area.
- **Running records and written responses** will provide feedback on ELA skill progression. TCRWP rubrics will be key tools in this area.
- **IAP goals review sessions** will take place with individual students at least monthly.

Weekly, grade-level RtI data review meetings will provide opportunity and responsibility for careful monitoring of student progress, and adjustment of instruction as needed. More detailed information about the MVCCS Response to Intervention Plan is detailed in *Section II.G*.

**Summative Assessments:** Beginning in grade three, all eligible students will take the New York State ELA and Mathematics exams annually, as well as the NYS Science Test in grade four. Anticipating the evolution of changes to the state assessment system to reflect implementation of the Common Core Standards, and to adequately prepare our students for Proficiency and

Advanced levels of learning mastery, we will also use other summative assessment tools to monitor progress toward student achievement goals. These measures may include:

- **New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT):** all limited English proficient students will take this exam annually to determine academic progress and eligibility for services
- **New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA):** students specified by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) will take an annual datafolio assessment that measures their progress in achieving learning standards through alternate grade level indicators. Eligibility is determined by the Committee on Special Education (CSE).
- **Achievement Testing** annually, using a standardized instrument such as Terra Nova or Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- **Reading Progress** measured at least two times during the year (three for students below grade level benchmark), using a **standardized measure** such as Degrees of Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2), or Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments
- **Physical/Wellness** measured annually by BMI Index
- **Social/Emotional stability** measured annually by a tool such as The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires<sup>34</sup> or the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System®<sup>35</sup>

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

**Performance:** MVCCS is committed to creating a community that accepts and respects all kinds of students. Within that diversity we acknowledge the academic challenge for students across a continuum of academic achievement. And we believe that students must demonstrate mastery of skills and knowledge, in order to progress from one learning level to the next. NYS standards, including the Common Core Standards for ELA and Math, provide our framework for grade level expectations, and will inform promotion and retention decisions. A clear set of grade level expectations and promotion standards will be the foundation of our instructional accountability plan. A well-developed Response to Intervention Plan (RtI) will guide instruction, assessment and remediation needs for all students. A decision to retain a student in a particular grade level will be based on data, such as the Light's Retention Scale, the student's school record, and of the student's Individual Achievement Plan.

**Regular Assessment of Student Progress:** Using assessment data to drive key decisions will support a data-driven instructional program. Faculty and administrators will work together to analyze student assessment data, identify student needs and create differentiated instructional strategies to address them. We will use a multi-tiered approach to student assessment. Beginning with incoming kindergarten and grade one students, and continuing on an annual basis, individual student profiles will be established and maintained, providing evidence of progress in all domains: academic, social, emotional, physical, and self-regulatory. This will allow us to gain a full understanding of each child's strengths and needs.

- Appropriate instruction will be delivered to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel, using research-based programs that include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies, and targeted teacher support where needed.

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.sdqinfo.com/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://psychcorp.pearsonassessments.com>

- Screenings will be applied to all students in the class to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates.
- Instruction will be matched to student need with increasingly intensive levels of targeted intervention for students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards.
- Repeated assessments of student achievement will include curriculum based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward age or grade level standards. This will include lesson reviews and observations to understand the full connection between student assessment and results and teacher effectiveness and results
- Application of information about the student’s RTI will aid educational decisions about changes in goals, instruction and/or services and the decision to make a referral for special education programs and/or services.
- Direct communication will be made with parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom. Through personal, electronic and/or written communication, we will inform parents/guardians about the:
  - amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided;
  - strategies for increasing the student’s rate of learning; and
  - parental right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

**Promotion and Exit Standards:** Our sample exit standards below are for the second and fifth grade in English language arts, mathematics and science, based on the Core Knowledge Sequence and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Student mastery of these standards will be evaluated using results from state exams, achievement tests and internal school assessments and rubric scores.

<b>MVCCS Core Promotional Standards for English Language Arts</b>			
	<b>Related Standard</b>	<b>Grade 2 End of Year Expectations</b>	<b>Grade 5 End of Year Expectations</b>
<b>Reading</b>	ELA RL 9	With prompting and support, students will make cultural connections to text and self.	Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.
	ELA RL 11	Make connections between self, text, and the world around them (text, media, social interaction).	Recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.
	ELA RI 10	Read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed.	Read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
	ELA RF 4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
	ELA RF 3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills to decode words.	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills to decode words.

<b>Writing</b>	ELA W1	Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses
	ELA W2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. Link ideas within and across categories.
	ELAS W 3	Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
<b>Speaking &amp; Listening</b>	ELA SL 1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about <i>grade 2 topics and texts</i> with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 5 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
	ELA SL 2	Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds	Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds
<b>Language</b>	ELA L1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
	ELA L2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
	ELA L3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening

<b>MVCCS Core Promotional Standards for Mathematics</b>			
	<b>Related Standard</b>	<b>Grade 2 End of Year Expectations</b>	<b>Grade 5 End of Year Expectations</b>
<b>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</b>	OA 2 and 5	Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.	Write and interpret numerical expressions.
	OA 2 and 5	Add and subtract within 20.	Analyze patterns and relationships.
		Work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication.	Work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication.
<b>Number and Operations</b>	NT 2 and 5	Understand place value.	Understand the place value system.
		Perform addition and subtraction operations.	Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and with decimals to hundredths.
		Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract.	Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions.
		Apply and extend previous understandings of addition and subtraction.	Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions.
<b>Measurement and Data</b>	MD 2 and 5	Measure and estimate lengths in standard units.	Convert like measurement units within a given measurement system.
		Relate addition and subtraction to length.	Use appropriate tools strategically.
		Work with time and money.	Represent and interpret data.
		Represent and interpret data.	Geometric measurement: understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition.
<b>Geometry</b>	G 2 and 5	Reason with shapes and their attributes.	Graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems
		Analyze, compare, create and compose shapes.	Classify two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties.

<b>MVCCS Core Promotional Standards for Social Studies *</b>		
<b>Related Standard</b>	<b>Grade 2 End of Year Expectations</b>	<b>Grade 5 End of Year Expectations</b>
<b>SS History</b>	Create and present a poem, narrative, play, art work, or personal response to a particular author or theme studied in class, with support as needed. ELA W11	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. Produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. ELAW4
<b>SS Geography</b>		
<b>SS Economics</b>	Demonstrate understanding of NYS Standards as related to "My Community and Other US Communities."	Create and present an original poem, narrative, play, art work, or literary critique in response to a particular author or theme studied in class. Recognize and illustrate social, historical, and cultural features in the presentation of literary texts. ELA W11
<b>SS Civics and Citizenship</b>	Maintain school attendance level above 90%.	Maintain school attendance level above 90%.

\* Demonstration of Social Studies achievement will occur through integrated units of study with student projects and performances.

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

A school culture that emphasizes leadership skills, personal responsibility, cooperation and collaboration will assure a positive learning environment. Professional growth and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year for all staff will create Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) to hone teaching strategies, improve instruction, and revise curricula. In our school, every student is a teacher, and every teacher is a learner.

MVCCS will utilize a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model to create and guide careful development of its school culture and climate, as described below. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a systems approach that creates and maintains positive school climates. This evidence-based framework focuses on the prevention of school discipline problems. PBIS provides ideas to support teaching, modeling and the recognition of positive, appropriate behavior in schools. It also identifies systems for logical response to classroom and individual student problems. Through the reduction of behavioral problems, PBIS fosters a safe learning environment where teachers can teach and students can learn.<sup>36</sup>

The elements of positive school climate are these:

- Core values provide foundation of behavior for both children and adults
- Leadership skills are understood, developed, and practiced by all.

<sup>36</sup> <http://nyspbis.org/AboutUs/PBISTACBrochure2010.pdf>

- Clear expectations for behavior are defined and appropriate behavior skills are taught. (Tier I for all students).
- Intervention for behavior challenges occurs quickly, provides solutions, and monitors individual student progress (Tier II for some students).
- Individualized Behavior Plan are developed, implemented, and monitored for success when students display high-risk or chronic negative behaviors (Tier III for specific students as needed).

These elements will be achieved through:

- Tier I School-Wide Programs such as The Leader in Me<sup>37</sup>, Responsive Classroom<sup>38</sup>, and Second Step Curriculum<sup>39</sup>.
- Regular school community gatherings that teach, celebrate and reinforce positive behavior and leadership skills. These will include events like a school-wide Morning Program, daily classroom “Morning Meetings”, assemblies, and student-led presentations of learning.
- Tier II intervention strategies for small groups of students and for early intervention of negative behavior. One such strategy (as utilized by the CSAT School, Buffalo NY) will be a “STOP Room”, where students can “Spend Time On the Problem”.

We will build in our students a strong foundation of followership and leadership skills vital to leading in a global community through the following **Core Values**:

- **Respect.** Good citizens treat all people fairly with equal respect, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or religion.
- **Responsibility.** Good citizens accept their duties and take responsibility for their own success or failures.
- **Honesty.** Good citizens are honest and do the right thing even when no one is watching.
- **Courage.** Good citizens have moral courage to do what is right in all situations.

The following **Leadership Competencies** will be presented, nurtured, and developed over time:

- **Communication.** Leaders are excellent readers, listeners, speakers and writers.
- **Problem-solving.** Leaders can analyze situations and develop solutions.
- **Teamwork.** Leaders work well with others.
- **Vision.** Leaders can set and reach their own goals.
- **Lead by Example.** Leaders set the example for others to follow.

Students will be deliberately exposed to valuable and meaningful experiences that instill MVCSS guiding characteristics and cultivate leadership competencies. Respect, responsibility, honesty and courage will serve as the foundation of leadership development and will be emphasized throughout students’ education from grade K to grade 5. At the same time, students will learn how to problem-solve, work in groups, communicate with others, and set academic and personal goals. As students grow and advance, they will be provided greater opportunities to develop and hone their communication, problem-solving, teamwork and leader skills.

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<sup>37</sup> [www.theleaderinme.org](http://www.theleaderinme.org)

<sup>38</sup> [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

<sup>39</sup> [www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org)

Student leadership programs will be implemented to provide students with meaningful leadership roles and responsibilities in order to develop and demonstrate their leadership competencies.

- **Leadership Day:** Leadership Day will be a student-led event to share the schools leadership model with other schools and the community.
- **School-wide Activities:** Students will help plan and lead school-wide activities, such as morning meeting presentations, school clean-up and decoration projects, and holiday events.
- **Leadership Roles and Responsibilities** – Students will assume roles and responsibilities, such as group leader and/or project leader, which allow students to develop leadership competencies.

Evaluation of the school's PBIS Plan will be implemented and monitored by a team comprised of staff members, parents, Board members, students and community members. Each team member will serve as a liaison to their stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups shall include school staff, parents, school leadership team, Board of Trustees, community members, and partner organizations.

It will be the function of the school's PBIS Team to monitor the progress of the plan, discuss student progress with the Executive Director and the School Leadership Team, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for any necessary adjustments or changes. Meetings of the team will be held on a regular basis, facilitated by the Executive Director or designee. Recommendations of the Team will be achieved by consensus and discussion.

The PBIS Plan represents an integral part of the MVCCS Student Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct. As such, it provides a practical foundation for the daily actions of staff and students. Information pertinent to school-wide events, PBIS Team Meeting minutes, and any other important information will be reported to the school's Board of Trustees on a regular basis by the Executive Director or designee.

An annual review and revision of the PBIS plan will take place. Elements of the annual review will include a comparative analysis of academic achievement and social-emotional progress of students individually and collectively, as well as discussion and action on any recommendations made by the PBIS Team. Regular data collection, analysis, and discussion of individual, classroom and school achievement will be used as measures of progress for the PBIS plan. Program evaluation will be ongoing, utilizing annual surveys of parents, students, and staff members. Surveys will be designed to measure comparative data points, including perceptions before, during, and after instruction and practice.

Parent involvement will be encouraged at all levels. Annual professional development for staff will be provided to assure that it begins as and continues to be a dynamic, evolving process for high student achievement and school-wide success.

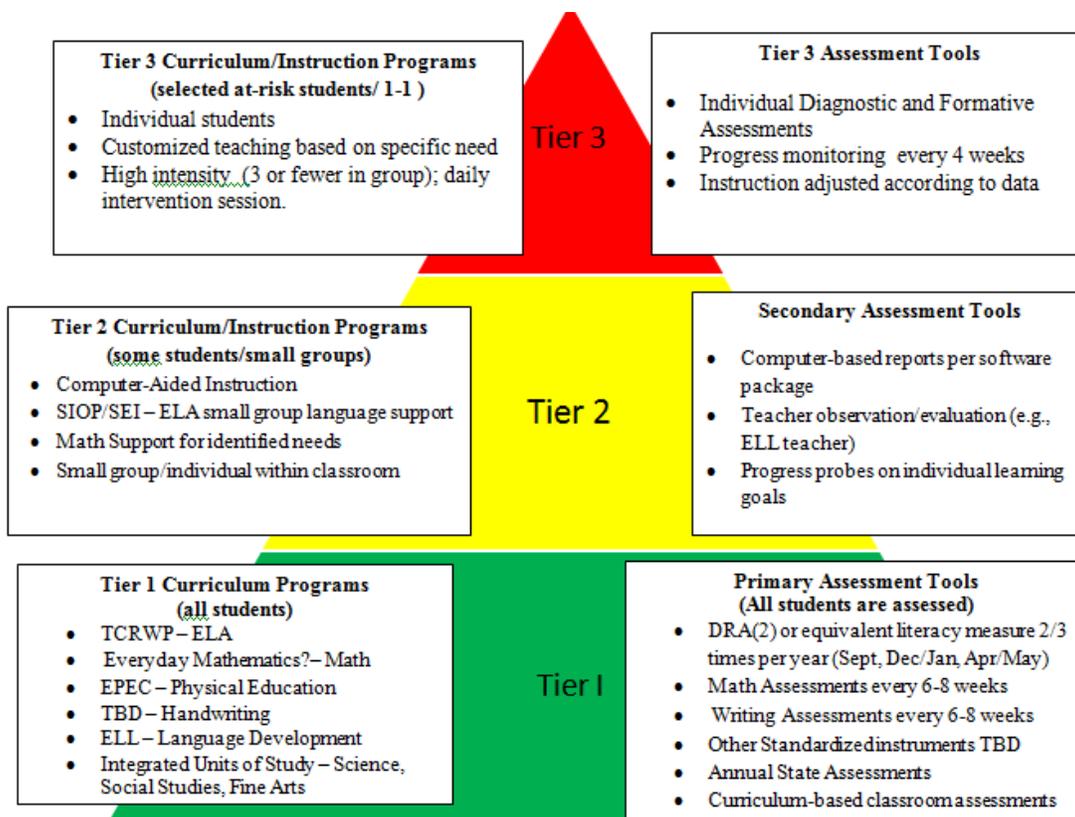
## **G. Special Student Populations and Related Services**

MVCCS will provide a strength-based, individualized approach to learning for every student, specifically designed to accelerate the achievement of at-risk students who experience learning and behavioral challenges in a traditional school setting. According to the 2010-11 Utica City School District (UCSD) Report Card, 76% of UCSD students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Limited English Proficiency students comprise 14% of the student population while 16.6% of

students were classified as students with disabilities (SWDs).<sup>40</sup> We are aware that enrollment targets will be established by the state and we will recruit rigorously in order to meet those required targets. (See *Section IC* for recruitment efforts of underserved students). Interested ELL/LEP families have requested that the school remain open outside traditional school hours so that working parents have an opportunity to learn with their children, and we will honor that need.

**Response to Intervention.** Our individualized approach to student success is built into our Response to Intervention (RTI) plan. Weekly data meetings to discuss student progress will allow teachers to identify specific student needs before serious failure occurs and design interventions to put them back on track to academic success. It is a process that provides intervention options of varying intensity that are linked to specific learning needs.

Our RTI program will be coordinated by the Director of Student Services who will train teachers in its implementation during Summer Institute and regularly attend grade team meetings during the school year. These meetings will follow explicit protocols to focus on identifying struggling students, hypothesizing causes, developing intervention strategies, establishing measurable goals and timelines, and reviewing progress. These will be data-driven discussions using all available information, including standardized test results, teachers' observations and records, assessment results from computer-based programs, behavior and discipline data, and parent input. The result will be the creation of an intervention plan.



MVCCS RTI Plan Overview

<sup>40</sup> Utica City School District Report Card, 2010-11

**Special Education.** We believe that all MVCCS students can achieve academically, and special education students will be expected to master the general curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other non-academic activities to the maximum extent possible. An important goal in all of our academic endeavors is to be proactive in the education and assessment of our students so that they will not experience major deficits in learning and achievement. Through the methods described below, our approaches will be consistent with the IEP developed by the CSE of the student's school district of residence.<sup>41</sup>

**Identification:** Some students may enter MVCCS with a pre-existing IEP. MVCCS staff will request student records from the district of residence to identify students with disabilities. Working collaboratively with the home district CSE, the IEP will be reviewed and modified as necessary to assure that the students' needs are met. Students who do not respond to the increasing intensity of our RTI components instances will be appropriately referred to the student's home school district CSE for assessment in compliance with Child Find requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) under 34 CFR 300.111.

When appropriate, we will partner with the home school district's Committee on Special Education and effectively utilize our regular education data tools to create an IEP to maximize student involvement with regular education peers and provide the least restrictive environment for each child.

**Staffing:** Our approach to special education will be collaborative and student-centered. Recognizing the important flow of instruction between classroom, regular education intervention, and special education instruction, our Literacy/RtI Specialist, ELL/LEP Specialist(s), and Special Education Teacher(s) will work as a team to organize instruction, create realistic schedules, and support students in all learning environments. Specialists and teachers will work from a model of co-teaching that will meet the needs of students in both full classroom settings and small group/"pull-out" situations.

**Services:** We will provide one inclusion classroom at each grade level, where a special education teacher will provide daily direct consultation in each classroom. The teacher will also provide resource room support for students and indirect consultation with teachers, according to the needs of students' IEP documents.. In the initial years of the charter, we will contract with the home district to provide speech, OT, and PT services.

**Logistics:** The Director of Student Services will oversee the processes and procedures related to both special education and ELL/LEP student services. One of the Special Education Teachers may be paid a stipend to take on additional duties as Special Education Coordinator as needs are determined. The SEC, Literacy/RtI Specialist, and ELL/LEP Specialist will attend weekly RtI Data Team meetings with the ED and DSS. A Child Study Team may be convened as needed to discuss individual student concerns leading to program review, action planning and CSE referral.

**English Language Learners.** MVCCS will support the needs of our ELL/LEP students through a variety of measures.

**Identification:** We will use the NYS Education Department's process for identifying students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and those students who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP). At the time of enrollment, usually during the introductory summer home

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<sup>41</sup> N.Y. Education Law § 2853(4)

visit, school staff will complete the Home Language Survey with the family. If this screening process reveals that the home language is other than English, appropriate school staff will administer the Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R) to determine eligibility for services. Beyond that formal measure, staff members will also gather information that will assist them in developing an appropriate IAP for each child.

**Staffing:** In our initial year, we will have one ELL/LEP specialist; that staffing level is planned to increase in year two. Our ELL/LEP Specialist will work collaboratively with teachers, and directly with students, where identified needs exist. Partnerships are being established with community agencies that unify and provide support to this diverse population to assist us in providing a positive and supportive environment for all students. Our Family and Community Specialist will support the needs of our ELL/LEP families in many ways. Given the diversity of languages in our region, we will seek assistance from local translators and the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRRCR) to support and guide our work with the specific families who enroll in our school.

**Services:** All of our staff will be trained in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)<sup>42</sup>, so that, in all our classrooms, ELL students will master grade-level academic content and key concepts. All ELL students will receive curriculum within the framework of the SIOP model, which includes the adjustment of teacher practices such as modification of speech rate and tone; simplification of vocabulary and grammar; repetition of key words, phrases, and concepts; extensive use of context clues and models; relation of instruction to students' knowledge and experience; use of methods of language instruction such as demonstrations, visuals, graphic organizers, or cooperative group work. The use of SIOP is directly aligned with our KDE of utilizing evidence-based practices, and ensuring the effectiveness of such practices through assessment and data analysis. Teachers will be routinely assessed by the ELL teacher and DCI for their effectiveness in utilizing SIOP methods. Furthermore, the responsibilities of the ELL teacher will include support of classroom teachers in their use of SIOP. Our use of SIOP for ELL students will enable all ELL students to achieve academic excellence. We will also adapt the techniques from SIOP to allow our educational staff to understand and improve the delivery of instruction to SWD.

**Logistics:** The Director of Student Services will oversee the processes and procedures related to ELL/LEP student services. The Family and Community Specialist, the Literacy/RtI Specialist, and ELL/LEP Specialist will attend weekly RtI Data Team meetings with the ED and DSS. A Child Study Team may be convened as needed to discuss individual student concerns leading to program review, family discussion with interpretation provided as needed, leading to action planning and an appropriate IAP for every ELL/LEP student.

**Academically Advanced/Gifted Learners.** We have chosen an elementary school model in order to capture and build upon the natural attitudes of engagement, curiosity, and questioning in our youngest learners. Through our Individualized Achievement Plan, academically advanced learners will have an avenue to expand their learning independently, while progressing socially with their peers. We will meet the needs of all learners, especially those who are academically advanced or gifted, by doing the following:

- Instilling confidence in the learning and discovery process.
- Having students learn from the environment around them, understanding math, science, engineering and technology concepts from a real-world view.

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<sup>42</sup> "The SIOP Institute," *Pearson Education, Inc.*, 2008, January 29, 2011. [www.siopinstitute.net](http://www.siopinstitute.net)

- Encouraging curiosity, wonder, and creativity in each student about their environment.
- Immersing students in programs incorporating literature, math, science, technology, cultural events, and activities that emphasize and teach respect for diverse cultures.

**Related Services.** The Director of Student Services, who will be a trained school psychologist, will provide a variety of support services for children, including counseling in our initial year. As the school grows, a Social Worker will be added in year two and beyond. Our Family and Community Coordinator will provide family outreach and act as a liaison with community organizations. The FCC will work closely with teachers and school leaders to identify needs and provide timely support. Where needed, MVCCS will contract with agencies and local school districts to provide services for individual or groups of students.

Family programs and adult learning opportunities will be organized both within and outside of the regular school day. Funding for these activities will come from grants and partnerships with community service providers.

**Program Evaluation.** School leaders will regularly evaluate the efficacy of our ELL/LEP programs by analyzing student performance data and comparing it with progress toward English proficiency. Classroom observations, support team meeting discussions, and data tracking will provide qualitative data about our programs. Surveys of parents, students and staff will give us information on stakeholder perceptions of our programs.

### III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

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

**Founding Group Origin.** The opportunity to help children of the Mohawk Valley meet their potential through high quality education has brought together a committed, caring group of individuals as our Founding Group. Interest in opening a charter school in Utica has been building since 2009, with growing community support. During the 2011 Application Cycle, several of our Founding Members were active participants in a proposal to create the Mohawk Valley Charter School for Excellence. When that application was withdrawn, many of its original founding members reorganized in October 2011 with a new initiative, a new school design plan, and a new name, “The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School” (MVCCS).

This strong and diverse Founding Group, representing a wide array of community perspectives and skill sets, is led by Ann Maher, an experienced school teacher and administrator. Frank Sheldon, proposed Business and Operations Manager, has been instrumental in the startup of four new charter schools in the Capital District, serving as the Business & Operations Manager for these schools. Several founding members intend to serve on the school’s Board of Trustees. Additional information for those members is provided in Attachment 5a.

**Table IIIa. Applicant/Founding Group**

Name	Current Employment	Relevant Experience/Skills and Role on Founding Group	Proposed Role(s)
B. Ann Maher	Grant Administration; Retired Public Educator	Co-Lead Applicant; Facilitator; over 30 years of public education experience	Executive Director*
Frank Sheldon	Business & Charter School Consultant	Business and Operations experience; able to advise on facilities and finances	Business/Operations Manager*
Dr. Kimberly Fiato	Retired Military; Professor, M.V. Community College	Technology and Leadership Background, Website Development	Board of Trustees Webmaster, Technology
Dr. Joanne Joseph	Psychologist and College Professor, SUNY-IT	Published author/recognized authority in social/emotional resiliency	Curriculum Development
Donna LaTour-Elefante	Executive Director, Family Nurturing Center	Founder and trainer of Nurturing Families Curriculum; non-profit leader	Staff Trainer
Colleen Cavallo	Program Planner, Family Nurturing Center	Grant-writer; parent; broad experience with community needs and programs	Board of Trustees
Courtney Hahn	Teacher, Head Start	Child-centered educator; local perspective	Educational Team
Edna Rivera	Parent	Community leader, parent, Utica experience	Board of Trustees
Christina Johnson	Consultant, Writer, Editor	Charter School Consultant; Board Dev.	Professional Dev.*
Gustav DeTraglia III	Attorney	Legal issues, Utica native	Board of Trustees
Mike Conley	Realtor, Consultant	Business Management	Finance/Governance
Bernadette Kapps	Educator	Administrative; teaching; local contacts	Supporter*
Heather Wixson	Associate Director, Hamilton College	Parent; invested in educational reform	Educational Team*
Dr. Tanya Perkins-Mwautuali	Physician, St. Elizabeth Hospital	Parent; community activist; experience with underserved populations	Supporter*

\*Denotes individuals involved with 2012 Mohawk Valley Charter School for Excellence initiative

**Proposal/Application Development:** The MVCCS Founding Group has met on a regular basis since October 2011 to develop, plan and write a school charter proposal application. The Founding Group has actively sought public support and input through ongoing Community Conversations to establish strong community ties and to further their understanding of the unique nature of Utica’s multicultural population. Ann Maher, Colleen Cavallo, Frank Sheldon, and Kimberly Fiato functioned as the primary authors of the application. Christina Johnson, a consultant to other Charter Schools, served as an advisor. The Founding Group members were asked to provide input, review and comment on aspects of the charter application based on their areas of expertise. Each member of the founding group contributed to the development of the charter proposal, not only through the writing process described above, but also by mobilizing community and parental support, which is a critical component of the MVCCS application.

**B. Board of Trustees and Governance**

**Proposed Founding Board of Trustees:** There are currently five proposed members of our Board of Trustees; two additional members will be added in the near future. In order to build a model of consistency and assure a balance of experience within the Board membership, the length of the initial terms of each board member will range from 1-3 years when MVCCS is formally chartered. As per the MVCCS By-Laws contained in Attachment 5(b), the Board will be composed of a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 members. The By-Laws provided in Attachment 5b provide more detail regarding the information requested in this question on Board Terms (Article III, Sec. C, Paragraph 4)

**Table IIIb. Proposed Board of Trustees**

Trustee Name	Relevant Experience	Voting Y/N	Position on the board (e.g., officer or constituent representative)	Initial term
Colleen Cavallo	Grantwriter, Agency Provider	Y	Non-Profit Representative (Executive Committee)	TBD*
Gus DeTraglia, Esq.	Attorney	Y	Community Representative (Executive Committee)	TBD*
Kimberly Fiato, PhD	Retired military, Professor	Y	Educational Representative (Executive/Finance Committee)	TBD*
Joanne Joseph, PhD	Clinical Psychologist	Y	Educational Representative (Education/Accountability Committee)	TBD*
Edna Rivera	Parent, Volunteer	Y	Parent Representative (Education /Accountability Committee)	TBD*

\* The length of the initial terms of each board member will be determined at the first meeting of the MVCCS Trustees when it is formally constituted.

**Administrative Relationship between Trustees and the Board of Regents:** We understand that the charter agreement is between the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School’s Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents. All decisions will be guided by the approved charter agreement. The Trustees must seek approval prior to making a decision contrary to any provision in the charter. MVCCS understands that there will be inspection visits conducted by NYSED staff and their representatives, and will submit required reports in a responsible manner. This

includes but is not limited to: (1) information related to student academic performance; (2) a description of the school's progress in achieving its Accountability Plan Goals; (3) a certified financial statement, the MVCCS's most recent independent audit report; and (4) a demonstration of the school's success in meeting enrollment targets of special populations. The MVCCS Board and leadership team will also ensure that all reports and data required by the authorizer will be delivered accurately, in detail, and in a timely manner.

***Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Its Officers:*** The Board of Trustees is the School's oversight and policy-making body. The Board may delegate certain responsibilities and duties to the Executive Director (ED) and the Business & Operations Manager (BOM) or other staff directly related to the school's daily operation, under the following conditions: (a) that the school staff will operate with oversight from the Board; and (b) that the Board is ultimately responsible and accountable for the actions of any person to whom responsibility has been delegated, and for any and all obligations, programs and policies of the school. A more complete discussion of the organizational structure of the school is provided in Section *III.C. Management and Staffing*. The Board will solicit reports and ideas from administration, faculty, and parents in the process of conducting their responsibilities, which include ensuring the financial soundness of the school, determining annual priorities, formulating major policy, and overseeing MVCCS's compliance with relevant laws and regulation. Specifically, among the Board's responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that MVCCS implements its programs in a manner consistent with the mission, goals, terms and conditions of its charter, including all state and federal laws and regulations.
- Operate at all times in compliance with the MVCCS Code of Ethics and overseeing the implementation of standing policies on all aspects of governance.
- Oversee implementation of the educational program to ensure that the school operates in an educationally sound manner.
- Hire the Executive Director and Business & Operations Manager and evaluate his or her performance annually.
- Oversee the evaluation of the staff by the Executive Director or his or her designee.
- Approve MVCCS's annual budget, reviewing regular financial updates, and ensuring that the school operates in a fiscally sound manner, with adequate internal financial controls.
- Provide support to the school with additional fundraising, marketing and other services.
- Advocate on behalf of the school by establishing partnerships with community-based organizations, institutions of higher learning and corporate entities.
- Hear and make determinations regarding complaints submitted to the Board in a timely manner pursuant to MVCCS's complaints process. (Further details specifying the roles and responsibilities of the Board are included in the attached By-Laws.)

The Board will use data to help improve the quality of its decision-making. Student assessment and achievement data will be collected, managed and stored in a secure data location that provides online access to data and presents it in comprehensive and understandable reports. The Board will require MVCCS's Administration to prepare reports and/or make Board presentations on a regular basis regarding a variety of data, including ongoing assessment results, state test results, attendance/disciplinary information and relevant personnel-related data.

***Board Structure.*** The Officer positions on the Board are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (see by-laws for full position descriptions). Initially, the Board will have three

standing committees, each consisting of at least three members. Per the bylaws, the Board may establish additional committees as needed.

The standing committees are:

- **The Executive Committee**, chaired by the Board President, facilitates effective decision-making by the board. Comprised of a subset of board members—i.e. the President and officers—the Executive Committee is responsible for: a) planning board meeting agendas; b) making decisions on behalf of the full board; c) overseeing MVCCS’s careful compliance with all applicable laws; and d) serving as a communication link with other board members.
- **The Finance Committee**, chaired by the Treasurer, coordinates the board’s financial oversight responsibilities. The Finance Committee is responsible for developing annual budgets with assistance from the Executive Director and the Business & Operations Manager in conjunction with the short- and long-term plans of MVCCS. Additional responsibilities include oversight of the school’s auditing, facilities and financial management initiatives. The Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer with involvement of the Executive Director, Business & Operations Manager and, if requested, assistance from a contracted accountant.
- **The Education and Accountability Committee** works to ensure that the school meets its accountability goals related to student achievement; ensures the academic quality and credibility of the school; and supports the leadership to maintain, promote and improve the academic standards in the charter. The primary responsibilities of the Education and Accountability Committee are: (a) advising the Board on the values and activities that define the core activities of teaching and learning; (b) recommending academic policies consistent with the school’s vision, mission and strategic plan; (c) adopting procedures for Board-approved academic policies; (d) protecting and enhancing the quality of academic programs at all levels; (e) advising the Board on academic aspects of the overall strategic direction of the school; and (f) working with the Executive Director to monitor and advance the quality of academic activities.

All Board members, working collaboratively, will continue to build their individual and collective capacities to serve the school. As part of this work, ongoing recruitment of interested parties will help to assure that there will be a pipeline of qualified individuals to serve on school’s Board of Trustees.

Parents and staff will collaborate with the Board of Trustees in a variety of ways. Parents and staff will work together in organizations that support student achievement, promote family involvement, and provide meaningful parent input. These organizations may include a Parent Advisory Council (PAC), dedicated to giving parents/guardians the opportunity to openly express their viewpoints, formulate recommendations, and make suggestions to the school leadership team and Board of Trustees. Another organization be a traditional Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), with parents providing instructional support, organizing volunteers, serving as homeroom parents, and helping wherever needed to support the school in its mission.

Parents and staff may also participate as members of standing committees. More detail on parent involvement in the school is provided in *III.I. Family and Community Involvement*. The school will encourage at least one teacher volunteer to attend every Board meeting. A regular agenda item at each meeting will be reserved for teacher feedback. The Executive Director and the Board will promote staff involvement in school improvement initiatives such as the Title I School-Wide Planning process and the activities of various committees.

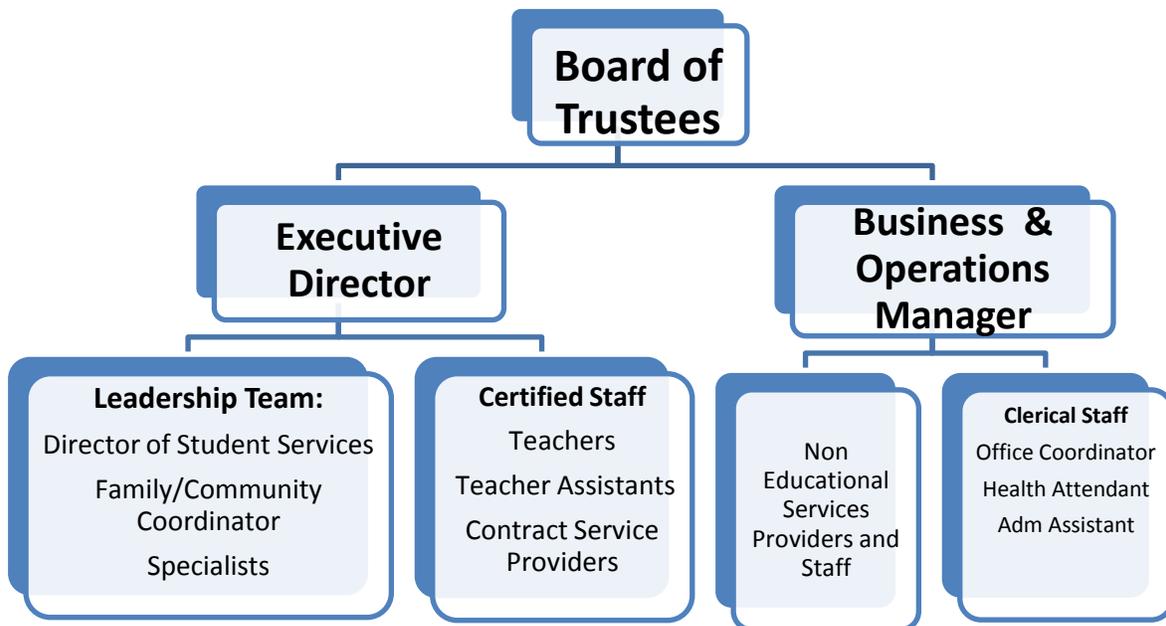
**Board Development.** The Board understands the need to continually recruit new members, with particular attention to the following areas: finance, accounting, real estate, elementary education, fundraising, community and public relations, marketing, business and strategic planning, legal, and human resources. The Board members will engage in prospecting, contacting, recruiting, orienting, supporting, training, and evaluating Board members ensuring that the Board as a group reflects and strengthens its relationship with the community served by the charter school.

**Board Training.** The Trustees will plan a formal program of Board training and development for all members. In addition to new Board member orientation, the *Executive Committee* will be responsible for planning annual and ongoing Board education and training program for all Trustees, including preparing Trustees to take officer positions. Professional development providers will be selected by the Executive Committee after identifying Board training needs.

### C. Management and Staffing

**Organizational Chart:** The following organizational chart shows the staffing structure and reporting lines for the board, administration and staff. In the initial years of the charter, we will access contracted service providers as needed to meet the Special Education needs of identified students. Dedicated therapy staff will be added as the school continues to grow, and we evaluate the educational needs of the students.

**Figure C1. Organizational Chart**



**Description of Organizational Structure:.** Job descriptions and the qualifications for each of the staff positions on the organizational chart are provided in Attachment 8(a). The Executive Director, under the authority of and with oversight by the Board, is responsible for management of the school’s academic programs and fiscal and business operations. The Executive Director

and school staff will be responsible for implementing the educational and fiscal programs in accordance with Board policies and the school's charter. The Executive Director as the instructional leader is supported by the Director of Student Services (DSS) and, eventually, by an Assistant Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for all aspects of curriculum, instruction, assessment, teacher support, evaluation and Professional Development. The Leadership Team will provide feedback and share in decision-making activities with the ED.

The Executive Director and the Business & Operations Manager have the overall responsibility for managing all academic and operational aspects of the school. They work collaboratively to arrange building maintenance and security through contracts with outside entities. The specific responsibilities of every staff member of the school are provided in Attachment 8(a).

The School Business & Operations Manager will manage the school's human resource functions, (reference Att. 8A) and manage the day to day financial operations of the school, in coordination with and oversight by the Board Treasurer. The Business & Operations Manager, with support from the Executive Director, will prepare and report on the school budget, the annual operating and capital budgets, and cash flow projections. The process for and roles involved in preparing and approving the school budget is provided in *III.d. Evaluation*.

The Office Manager will support the leadership team by taking responsibility for administrative and secretarial tasks. Teaching Assistants and the Business Office Assistant will supply help as directed by the leadership team. The number of Teaching Assistants will increase over time. The Executive Director has overall responsibility for setting priorities and making key organizational decisions that are aligned with the Board's goals and objectives to meet the school's mission established in the charter. At all times, discussions around needs will be supported by student data and other data, including fiscal and operational, from quantitative and qualitative measurement tools.

Recommendations will be made to the Executive Director by the DSS, BOM, SEC and other key staff to increase performance outcomes in each of their areas of purview; recommendations must always be aligned with supporting the school's mission. It is the Executive Director's responsibility to evaluate these recommendations, prioritize them against constraints such as budgetary limits and human resource capabilities, and make key organizational decisions that support his or her prioritization, including those around recruitment, evaluation, retention and professional development. (Note that further detail on how student data drives decision-making and resource allocation is provided in *III.D. Evaluation*).

The Executive Director, in consultation with the Leadership Team and other school teams, will determine what organizational changes are necessary to implement recommendations (including how they impact current and future annual budgets). The Executive Director will present a report to the Board of Trustees outlining recommendations with supporting evidence that these changes meet an identified need and will result in increased performance outcomes aligned to the school's mission. The Board will consider and act on any recommendations that require their approval. Further, any necessary legal counsel will be available on retainer to the Board and the Executive Director to ensure that the school and its programs operate responsibly and in full compliance with all regulations that apply.

***Staff Plan for the Term of the Charter:*** MVCCS founders believe that a school's academic progress emerges from robust, reflective relationships among the people most directly involved

with students. MVCCS staff members will possess the characteristics that embody the spirit and philosophy of MVCCS: educators who enjoy teaching, are dynamic and stimulate intellectual curiosity; staff members who encourage and motivate students to be self-directed in their learning; adults who encourage active participation of every student, and establish a positive learning environment; and teachers who convey high expectations for student achievement while supporting their students towards academic excellence. MVCCS staff will work as a team, meeting regularly to share experiences, being reflective about school issues and continually exploring ways to improve the learning environment. The table on the following page presents the school’s staffing expectations for the first charter term.

Our staffing structure over the five years is aligned with the educational and operational model that is delineated in this charter application. The following staffing chart includes the necessary administrative and instructional staff anticipated in the operational and academic program for general education students, special education students, Title I students, ELL/LEP students and other students at risk, and takes into consideration the needs of our projected student enrollment and growth plan, and the fiscal impacts thereof.

**Table III.C. Staffing Chart**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Executive Director	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Executive Director	0	0	0	0	1
Director of Student Services	1	1	1	1	1
Business and Operations Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Family and Community Specialist	1	1	1	1	1
Office Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Administrative Assistant	1	1	1	1	1
Health and Student Support Attendant	1	1	1	1	1
Teachers - Regular	6	9	12	15	18
Teachers - Special Education	1	2	2	3	3
Teaching Assistants	6	9	12	15	18
Literacy Teacher / RTI Specialist	1	1	1	1	1
ELL/LEP Specialist	1	2	2	2	2
Art/Music Specialist*	1	1	2	2	2
Physical Ed/Wellness Specialist*	1	1	2	2	2
Library/Media Specialist	0	0	1	1	1
Speech and Language Pathologist*	0	0	1	1	1
Occupational Therapist*	0	0	.5	1	1
Physical Therapist*	0	0	.5	1	1
Social Worker	0	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>59</b>

\*May be part time based on student need

As described more fully in *II.G Special Populations*, the school has a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of at-risk populations. The budget is aligned with the academic needs of at-risk populations including special education students with a Special Education Teacher/Coordinator for the Grades K-5; a Literacy Specialist beginning in Year 1 to focus on struggling

students; and an ELL/LEP Teacher beginning in Year 1. In addition, the five year budgets take into account the need for staffing during the four-week summer academic intervention program for struggling students. Funding for summer interventions after year 1 will come from federal, state, and foundation grant funds as available. Support for family and student activities designed to enhance, enrich, and extend learning will be provided through fundraising, private donations and collaboration with area colleges.

***Recruiting Head of School.*** Mrs. B. Ann Maher, a Founding Member and experienced public school educator, is projected to be the MVCCS School Leader with the title of Executive Director. However, should there be a future need to recruit an Executive Director, the MVCCS Board will establish a rigorous recruitment, screening and selection process ensuring the appointment of a highly qualified School Leader with the requisite professional and management experience necessary. Candidates will be recruited through various methods including networking with relevant educational organizations and nonprofits, and the posting of ads in the *Utica Observer Dispatch*, *Education Week*, at graduate programs for business and nonprofit management, the National Charter School Alliance, and on-line career websites.

The Board will establish a task force/work group which will coordinate the recruitment and screening process. It will be comprised of members of the Founding Board as well as key outside individuals whose insight and experience with charter schools and nonprofit leadership will add value to the interview process. The full board will make the final decision. The responsibilities of the School Leader Selection Committee will include: (1) monitoring the School Leader recruitment initiative and conducting an initial screening of all candidates; (2) establishing a list of finalists and conducting additional screening of the candidates; and (3) making a hiring Recommendation. Qualified candidates for this position will meet the criteria in the Executive Director Job Description contained in *Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures*.

***Recruiting Effective Teachers.*** The Executive Director will work with the Board to establish a broad and diverse applicant pool by recruiting through a variety of means, which may include advertisements in newspapers and educational journals; online job postings; job ads at graduate education programs; leveraging relationships with colleges, Board members and supporters; and teacher recruitment fairs. MVCCS will promote diversity in its applicant pool by advertising positions in targeted media (e.g. minority newspapers), networking with minority organizations and participating in minority recruitment events. The school will comply with all federal, state and local laws and requirements regarding the hiring of staff and will not discriminate in hiring, employment, contracting, or retention for reasons of race, sex, age, religion, disability or other reasons prohibited by local, state or federal law. MVCCS will recruit teachers who will be excited to work in an environment of innovation and student diversity in which data is central, instruction is differentiated, and success matters. See *Attachment 8a* for more details.

***Retaining Effective Teachers.*** MVCCS has incorporated effective teacher retention strategies into the school design. Our embedded professional development model and performance plan provides structure for all teachers to grow and be recognized, and the school will offer very competitive compensation packages. Staff compensation will be based on annual performance reviews. MVCCS's teacher salaries will be competitive with the surrounding districts' salary and compensation packages and will be implemented by the salary step system. MVCCS will use overlapping salary steps and overlapping salary bands, giving administrators more flexibility in

offering differentiated salaries related to workload, performance, skill-sets, and reward systems. The benefit of this approach is that each step can be defined by differing expectations for workload, performance and skill-set.

***Performance Based Incentives (PBI).*** To ensure maximum accountability in achieving the school's goals, MVCCS will establish a Performance Based Incentive Plan. The instructional staff may receive a PBI award annually. Upon completion of the first year of school operations, the school will set aside five to ten percent of the school's previous years gross salaries to be distributed to staff based on performance to school goals and adherence to the school's mission. The following will be key elements to determine incentive pay: ED observations, student academic growth, student academic achievement, closing the gap between the lowest performing students and the other students, a parent survey that rates teachers, and leadership recognition based on self-nominations that are peer-reviewed. The final plan will be formulated by the instructional team with approval by the ED and the Board of Trustees, and will follow Annual Professional Appraisal Review (APPR) guidelines as outlined by NYSED.

***C.1. Charter Management Organization*** (Not Applicable)

***C.2. Partner Organization*** (Not Applicable)

## **D. Evaluation**

***Programmatic Audit Overview.*** The school shall submit to NYSED an Annual Report by August 1st each year, which will include the state mandated School Report Card. The Annual Report will include a Progress Report which evaluates the school's progress in meeting its approved Accountability Plan goals. *II.A. Achievement Goals* provides detailed information on the data and process we will use to measure MVCCS's progress towards student achievement goals. MVCCS expects to undergo programmatic audits related to any federal entitlement grants and competitive public grants it receives, including but not limited to Consolidated Title Funds, CSP and SSF grant funds.

***Progress Monitoring.*** An ongoing process of progress monitoring will occur throughout the academic year to ensure that the school is on target to meet its Accountability Plan goals. As described in *II. A. Achievement Plan Goals*, monitoring progress towards meeting the Accountability Plan Goals is addressed at four different levels:

- 1. Individual student level:** the teaching team uses individual, aggregate and disaggregated student assessment data to evaluate instruction.
- 2. Classroom level:** classroom assessment data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction.
- 3. School level:** aggregate and disaggregated school-wide student assessment data is referenced in order to make programmatic and resource allocation decisions; and,
- 4. Authorizer level:** data sources provide the information necessary to make regular reports. The school will use data to inform instruction on a regular basis through a process called "Response to Intervention", or "RtI", whereby student data is informally reviewed weekly and formally reviewed every 8 weeks. Action steps will be collaboratively developed for students who do not meet benchmarks; these academic goals will be incorporated into each student's Individual Achievement Plan (IAP). Shortcomings will be revealed as the instructional staff analyzes progress against achievement goals for all students, including special populations.

As discussed in *III.E. Professional Development*, Response to Intervention (RtI) plays an important role in the formation of the school's Professional Development program. The school's assessment protocol includes assessments to be utilized with Grades K-5 to monitor the students' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics, which will indicate whether or not they will be on track to meet proficiency standards beginning in Grade 3. The school's instructional leadership will use various vehicles to assess student needs and provide appropriate PD to address any instructional and curricular gaps. The following data will be collected daily: attendance, demographic data, student assessment data, and student enrollment data. The school will utilize one or more powerful student information management system(s), such as EDoctrina, Rediker, and/or Power School, to house data and provide users with data in efficient ways. These proven, evidence-based systems will give staff the capability to view, analyze, report, and discuss data trends on a real time basis, and track the performance of individual students, classroom and school-wide performance. School leaders will use this data to determine instructional effectiveness and identify gaps in the curriculum. This identification of gaps and weaknesses will allow for the reallocation or addition of human and financial resources to identified areas, professional development, and retention and compensation decisions.

***Operational and Fiscal Health.*** The Board is committed to ensuring that it holds itself and the school's leadership team accountable for the operational and fiscal health and viability of the organization, which includes sound budgeting practices. The Board's work to develop a budget will begin each January.

The accountant (if desired by the BOT), Executive Director, and Business & Operations Manager will prepare the annual operating and capital budgets as well as cash flow projections, after working together to identify and prioritize needs. The group will prioritize needs based on how they will support student achievement and fiscal and operational efficiency. The draft budgets will be reviewed and revised as necessary by the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will present the budget to the full Board of Trustees for approval by May of each year. The adopted budget totals, produced by the Business & Operations Manager with oversight from a contracted accountant (if requested by the BOT), will be used to prepare budget information for actual reports. The BOM will be responsible for preparing monthly budget presentations, including updated annual budget information, monthly budget information, monthly actual expenditures against the budget, and projected year end against budgeted year end. The Executive Director and the Business & Operations Manager will review these presentations with the Treasurer prior to each Board meeting. All material deviations will be documented and explained by the Executive Director. Any expected deviations in a budget category of more than \$5,000 and +/-10% of the budget amount will be considered material. A discussion will be held regarding any material items by the Finance Committee regarding that particular budget category. If necessary the Finance Committee will bring the deviation to the Board's attention to discuss any impact that it may have on the school's cash flow and financial position. *III.D. Financial Management* provides detail on the process for independent fiscal audits - an integral part of the process to verify the school's fiscal soundness.

***Teacher Evaluation.*** While the actual evaluation process tools will be developed during the start-up period, MVCCS will adopt a Framework for staff evaluation that incorporates the new expectations of the New York State APPR Evaluation Plan, and will be based on Charlotte

Danielson's Framework for Teaching<sup>43</sup>. The Framework aligns with our school design and is an approved rubric for teacher evaluation reflecting NYS standards of teacher practice. Teachers will be formally evaluated 3 times per year, and informally throughout the year. The Executive Director may share responsibility for staff evaluations with the DSS and other members of the Leadership Team to provide support to all staff members. However, the Executive Director will formally evaluate instructional staff.

Teacher supervision and teacher evaluation are tied to evidence-based teacher observations, a professional development tool that supports teachers on an individual and collective basis. The evaluation process will follow this general pattern to assure continual feedback to the employee:

- Initial conference to discuss performance goals and develop a Staff Performance Plan
- Informal observations
- Formal observations that may include pre- and post-observation conferences
- Summative annual evaluation

The Staff Performance Plan (SPP) is an important element of this evaluation process. The SPP is a document reflecting collaboratively created annual goals designed to guide professional development and to promote professional learning. The SPP provides an opportunity for all staff members to express their needs for professional growth that is aligned with better student outcomes, school mission and initiatives in content, and pedagogy. Frequent reference and review of the SPP throughout the evaluation process ensures that the teacher reaches the goal of improved teaching quality and improved student outcomes. The summative evaluation is an annual process that uses data from all of the components in the evaluation system including evidence collection, student assessment data, and both formal and informal observations as a culmination of the total evaluation process and a source of feedback on the teacher's performance and student learning in meeting the standards.

The ED, the DSS and staff will engage in ongoing dialogue that supports the development of teaching practices and improved student outcomes by discussion of the following:

- review of student performance and other data;
- review of effective teacher practices;
- survey of knowledge of staff training and use in the classroom;
- expectations for grade level planning and common planning periods;
- expectations for the use of teacher preparation time;
- lesson plan development and review;
- individual grade level and school level development;
- identification of staff development needs.

Ultimately, teachers' compensation, performance-based financial incentives and annual renewal of their position with MVCCS will be tied to performance evaluations. These evaluations will place emphasis on each teacher's performance as it relates to the four domains of teaching responsibility as well as his or her students' achievement of academic goals and/or students' progress towards the achievement of academic goals.

***School Leader and Other Administrator Evaluation.*** The Board will carry out an annual evaluation of the Executive Director that uses key instructional benchmarks, progress towards accountability goals, operational benchmarks, staff and parent satisfaction surveys and other

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.danielsongroup.org>

criteria that measure the overall health of the school. The Executive Director will evaluate the DSS using designated academic benchmarks in a similar fashion. During the start-up period, the Executive Director and DSS will work with the Board and if necessary, outside consultants to design evaluation processes and tools that utilize data-driven measures and clear rubrics to assess the performance of all staff. Aspects of the Danielson Group's model will be employed in the evaluation of staff in management positions, in particular the development of Staff Performance Plans as described previously. In the Executive Director's case, he/she will create a Performance Plan with the Board Chair, to be regularly reviewed. The Performance Plan for the DSS and other members of the School Leadership Team will be developed and created in collaboration with the Executive Director. Should the goals of the Executive Director not be realized, the Board Chair will establish an action plan with the Executive Director to include mentoring and/or increased monitoring with a timeline for improvement. The executive committee of the Board will be informed of progress or the lack thereof.

***Board Evaluation.*** MVCCS's success will ultimately be directly correlated to the capacity and effectiveness of its Board of Trustees. Therefore, it is critical that evaluation of the Board both collectively and individually takes place on at least an annual basis. The process will involve each board member completing three self-evaluation forms which evaluate the performance of the board as a whole; the second in which the board member evaluates his or her own personal board performance and involvement; and the third in which each board member evaluates a fellow board member. These tools will ask relevant and clear questions related to the functioning of the board, the functioning of the charter school, clarity of roles and responsibilities, shared mission and vision, contributions, engagement, openness, personalities, processes, etc. This information will be analyzed annually by the board development committee to inform Board development and training and to ensure that the Board has the requisite knowledge and skills to be responsible stewards of the charter school.

***Family and Student Satisfaction.*** MVCCS will formally gauge parent and teacher satisfaction through the use of a survey designed with clear questions and relative to the operations of the school, the academic program, school leadership, and overall communications. The survey will be designed for students grades K through 5 and will also gauge student satisfaction through conversations with parents during parent-teacher conferences. All parents will receive the survey during the fourth quarter of each school year. The results of the survey will be tabulated and made public in the MVCCS School Report Card and will also be available on our website. Additionally, results of the survey will be published in our Annual Report to the NYSED. MVCCS will also conduct its own survey of parents that will reflect family satisfaction with their children's classroom teachers. Finally, satisfaction data will be reviewed in a public Board meeting. The data will used to inform any changes to the school's operations, if necessary.

***Evaluation of Partner Organization.*** (Not Applicable)

## **E. Professional Development**

***Professional Development (PD) at MVCCS.*** The Executive Director and the DSS will be responsible for identifying the needs of teachers and staff throughout the school year. Instruments used for objective planning include but are not limited to teacher/staff surveys, teacher/staff observations and analysis of student assessment data. The Response to Intervention process may reveal specific information for which targeted PD is needed. The job embedded PD

model, combined with teachers' schedules that allow for both individual and common planning time, facilitates the ability of the instructional leadership to address needs on a real-time basis

As members of a Professional Learning Community, or PLC, it is our culture that all staff members are engaged in professional learning daily. At MVCCS, teachers will solve problems in teams or as a whole faculty because every teacher will feel responsible for the success of every student. As necessary, the Leadership Team will engage outside consultants to provide specific training to teachers. Curriculum and instructional professionals will be contracted as needed to providing training and support in areas around curriculum and development, instruction in core subjects, culture, and ELL instruction. This support will include proper implementation in support of assessment and around specific instructional choices. The professional climate that results from this PD supports MVCCS investment in and commitment to build the instructional and professional capacities of our teachers and staff. It will attract the quality teachers we hope to recruit and retain at MVCCS and will be designed and delivered in a manner consistent with the NYS Professional Teaching Standards and the NYS Professional Development Standards to ensure consistent high quality PD leading to increased student achievement.

The process of designing and coordinating the PD program will be led by the Executive Director and supported by the DSS and the School Leadership Team. In a collegial atmosphere, designated time blocks will provide for coaching, modeling, reflection, and celebration of *all* learners, including special populations of ELLs, Special Needs, at-risk students and academically advanced students. All staff members, including the Specialists, will be involved in this process.

PD will begin prior to the start of the school year and continue throughout the year. Pre-opening PD time will be spent reviewing the charter agreement with specific emphasis on expectations for student achievement. The Executive Director, Director of Special Services and various topic-specific consultants will present workshops to prepare teachers to work with all students, emphasizing at-risk, ELL and special education students. The topics being covered in preopening PD activities will support all teachers, including returning, novice and new teachers to the school as well as Paraprofessionals (Licensed Teaching Assistants).

Topics included in pre-opening PD include: (1) differentiating instruction through interpretation of written assessments; (2) assessing student needs and evaluating student learning; (3) effective use of data in instruction; (4) special education procedures, services and the IEP and its use in guiding student learning; (5) methods of teaching to ELL students; (6) the role of the general education, teachers, the ESL teacher, special education teachers, and special service providers; (7) forming partnerships with parents, teachers, and other staff members; (8) analysis of the instructional environment; (9) classroom management and (10) Response to Intervention.

Teachers must be provided with ongoing PD and support that includes both new learning, reinforcement of prior learning and the opportunity to reflect on their work on a weekly basis. This, in turn, enables them to continually assess their students' progress. Ongoing professional support and development for teachers include mini-workshops and regular classroom observations and consultations with the Executive Director and DSS. Regularly programmed staff development is an integral part of MVCCS's embedded PD model. The Executive Director and the DSS will model instruction and provide support to all teachers, providing more guidance as needed to teachers new to the profession, and will facilitate mentor relationships between new teachers and more experienced teachers. PD activities and supports will be in the form of

workshops, classroom modeling and demonstration, development of “model classrooms” and teacher inter-visitation within the school and to other schools.

Staff development at MVCCS will be supported by the Board of Trustees providing opportunities for the sharing of best practices, resources and inclusion in a broader community of practice. At MVCCS, teacher scheduling will provide for grade level common planning time at least three times per week. In addition, once a week a concentrated block of time will be provided that will allow staff members to: (1) engage as a group in comprehensive PD;(2) break out into smaller groups by grade level or across grade level to cross-plan how each grade will cover similar topics in different and increasingly advanced ways; (3) convene study times around specific students who have been demonstrating needs and challenges; (4) allow for planning and collaboration between general studies and ESL/ELL teachers and instructional specialists (ELL specialist, ELA/RtI Specialist, Special Education staff) so that the capacities of all teachers to address the needs of special populations can be strengthened; and (5) plan together to allow for effective and authentic integration of the science, social studies, art, music and physical education programs.

***Evaluation of Professional Development.*** The ultimate worth of PD for teachers is the essential role it plays in the improvement of student learning. At MVCCS, evaluation of the PD program has two important goals: to improve the quality of the program and to determine its overall effectiveness. Tools for evaluating our Professional Development Program will include:

- Instructional staff surveys
- Response to Intervention (RtI) data
- Questionnaires,
- Observations
- Self-assessment instruments
- Analysis of teacher evaluation records

Using these tools, the instructional leaders will analyze how the PD programs have improved teacher and student practices. This process involves teachers describing changes in how they think, what they believe, and what they do in the classroom. They describe their own professional growth and evaluate the program in meeting their personal and professional goals. Student assessment data will be evaluated in the aggregate as well as broken down into disaggregated groups. Evaluation of student assessment data is Fundamental to determining if the school has met or is making progress towards meeting its annual goals.

The Executive Director will draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the PD program data and make recommendations for program modifications in order to improve teacher practice and student outcomes. These recommendations will be presented by the Executive Director to the Board’s Education Committee which will present a report to the full Board of Trustees.

## **F. Facilities**

We will begin our inaugural year with 150 students and 6 classrooms. In addition, we will have dedicated rooms for ELL instruction, resource room, music and arts, and a media center, which will initially be staffed by volunteers. Classrooms will serve as the primary instructional settings for academic subjects of ELA, math, social studies, and science. Special Education services including speech/language, occupational and physical therapy will utilize multi-purpose rooms

that are strategically scheduled to minimize space requirements. Administrative offices will include shared space for administrative assistants with individual offices for the Executive Director, Business & Operations Manager, , Director of Student Services, and space for Health Services. Food services will be provided in a dedicated cafeteria within the school and Physical Education will be provided in a gymnasium.

**Projected School Site.** Several considerations were made in identifying potential appropriate sites for MVCCS. Chief among those considerations were cost of facility, ability for the facility to accommodate an increasing student enrollment, and appropriateness of facility to serve as a school (e.g., classrooms, cafeteria, gym). We have identified a site that is currently vacant and had previously been operated as a parochial school. We are working with Mr. Michael Conley who is the Sales Representative at Pyramid Brokerage located in Utica, NY. Mr. Conley has extensive experience in procurement of facilities and planning and has worked with MVCCS to negotiate and acquire a viable facility. With Mr. Conley's assistance, we have selected the Holy Trinity School, a site that meets our needs for the majority of the first charter period.

Holy Trinity School is a 35,276 square-foot facility located in Utica at 1214 Lincoln Avenue that was constructed specifically for use as an elementary school. Currently vacant, it is in excellent condition and has great potential as the facility for MVCCS. The building has a dedicated kitchen, cafeteria, gym, administrative offices, and 16 classrooms. This large facility is ready-made to serve our initial and ongoing needs during the majority of the first charter period. Our selection of Holy Trinity School as the site for MVCCS is fiscally responsible since the facility is already suited to serve as a school and has many amenities (e.g., fully equipped kitchen) and furniture (e.g., cafeteria tables and seats) that will not need to be purchased. Minimal capital improvements have been suggested in discussions between our Lead Applicants and owners of Holy Trinity School including a complete HVAC and roof audit, as well as window sealant replacement, updated lighting (including emergency lighting), and upgrades to the fire alarm detection system. The owners of the Holy Trinity School have agreed to make necessary renovations and improvements in order to accommodate the needs of MVCCS. We will ensure that the facility is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, with the occupancy requirements under the Charter School Law and with all other health, safety, sanitation, local zoning land use and building code requirements.

We have entered into a memorandum of understanding with the owners of Holy Trinity School that outlines the parameters of a lease once MVCCS is chartered (see attached Proposed Term Sheet). With the collection of 24 months of utility costs and continued conversation between the building owner and Mike Conley, we have been able to develop a pro forma with estimated costs for the lease per square foot, all utilities (divided equally between building owner and MVCCS), janitorial, insurance, building maintenance, supplies, and property management. The total estimated cost for 25,000 square feet at \$1.50 per square foot (in year 1) plus expenses is slightly above \$155,000. The leasing parameters are within our budget (see attached Budget). Given that Holy Trinity School will not meet our space requirements during the entire first charter period; we have developed a plan to explore alternative sites within the Utica City School District. The Board will appoint a Site Exploratory and Planning focus group within the first year of the charter period. The Site Exploratory and Planning focus group will work with the School Leader to identify all reasonable options for MVCCS's ongoing space requirements, including investigating the feasibility of construction of a new building to house MVCCS. We will also work with the Utica Mayor's Office and present administration to identify sites and buildings

that may be suitable for MVCCS and that qualify for building renovation grant funding under City, State, or federal mechanisms.

**Table III.C. Facilities**

Facility Acquisition Tasks	Timeline
Enter into final lease negotiations to acquire Lincoln Academy	Timeline will begin once MVCCS is officially chartered
Walk through building and outline improvements and repairs required	
NYSED approve site plans and specifications	
NYSED issue certificate of occupancy	
Sign Lease	
Ensure that improvements and repairs are made	TBD pending lease
Order furniture	March 2013
Ensure delivery and assembly of furniture	July 2013
Ensure technology network is installed and tested	July 2013
Ensure internet connectivity is installed and tested	July 2013
Ensure phone lines, systems, and fax are installed and tested	July 2013
Ensure copy machines are delivered and training is completed	July 2013
Finalize facility preparation (e.g., prepare rooms, hallways, offices; post signs and emergency exit procedures)	July 2013
Provide necessary training of staff/teachers	April-August 2013
<b>School Opening - Students Arrive!</b>	<b>August 29, 2013</b>

**G. Insurance**

MVCCS will purchase all necessary insurance policies to protect the corporate entity itself, its Board, staff and teachers and students from liabilities and claims arising under operations. This would include, without limitation, all the areas listed in *Section III.f.* (insurance amounts and coverage). MVCCS will obtain all necessary insurance coverage. We will acquire basic liability insurance for Directors and Officers during the start-up phase, and acquire the following insurance coverage beginning no later than July 1, 2013: Commercial General Comprehensive Liability, Educators’ Legal Liability, Employment Practices Liability, Sexual Abuse Liability, Automobile Liability, Umbrella Liability, Workers Compensation Liability and Surety bond for the school’s chief financial officer (see attached estimate). We have budgeted \$27,800 (a conservative estimate) for each operational year, which will cover the costs of the above-referenced insurance coverage. Based on discussions with Christopher Spofford from Ten Eyck Group each coverage area needed during the start-up phase will be pro-rated based on the number of months the coverage will be in place prior to July 1, 2013.

The above quote that MVCCS has received from Ten Eyck Group will help establish a starting baseline of costs. MVCCS will receive additional quotes from other prominent carriers (e.g. EBNY Insurance Services, INC & Austin & Co.) once the charter is approved. The BOM will be responsible for reviewing quotes and proposals and making recommendations to the Executive Director and Board for approval. The BOT will review all quotes and proposals for service and make the final selection by reviewing references from other schools, previous experience with other insurance carriers, quality of service, and cost. The Business & Operations Manager will also be responsible for monitoring the policies and claims. MVCCS will initiate Directors and

Officers insurance as soon as it is chartered and then will commence with other coverage as needed within the operational time frame (e.g., Employment Practices Liability before hiring employees).

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

**Food Service.** MVCCS intends to provide food service to its students that are reflective of our commitment to student health and well-being in accordance with our mission. MVCCS will adhere to all applicable requirements from the NYS Child Nutrition organization and including, but not limited to: meal pricing; determination of eligibility for free and reduced price meals; nutritional value; and reporting requirements. Once chartered, we will begin the application process to become authorized by the NYSED as a Food Service Site Provider. A School Wellness Policy and Procedure will be developed and implemented to insure that all students are receiving nourishment as required by NYSED.

MVCCS has begun discussions with a prominent food service provider who is interested in providing lunch and breakfast services equal to the services that are presently provided to other Charter Schools located in the Albany, NY area. There will be no cost to the school since the expense for food and supporting materials is factored into their costs based on the income from Child Nutrition reimbursement and collection of monies from students who do not qualify for free or reduced lunches, and pay for their meals at the lunch line. Estimates of startup cost will depend on the physical space available in the building that MVCCS will be utilizing as its educational facility. The building that MVCCS is presently evaluating has a lunchroom, cafeteria, and kitchen available. The cost to implement a full service program by MVCCS will be minimal since the responsibility for preparing the meals on-site will be done by the food service provider. MVCCS will purchase cooking utensils and minor instruments as needed to assist the food service provider. The estimated cost is approximately one thousand dollars. MVCCS assumes that there will be no revenue received from the food service program. The food service provider will be selected based on the bidding specifications as mandated by the NYS Child Nutrition Department and their income will be based solely on a fair and reasonable price from Child Nutrition reimbursement and in line with the Utica City School District.

MVCCS, in conjunction with the food service provider and a nutritionist, will select foods that are nutritious and palatable. If MVCCS is unable to contract with a licensed food service company in its initial year due to not yet being authorized by the NYSED, we will work with the Utica City School District to handle MVCCS food service needs until a time when MVCCS is licensed and approved to be a Food Service Site Provider. In either event, MVCCS will ensure that breakfast and lunch will be available to all students at a fair and reasonable price. In addition, students will bring their lunch and/or breakfast to if they so desire.

Approximately 75% of UCSD students are eligible for Free (64%) or Reduced Lunch (10%). We will distribute Form 1041 to all students upon enrollment and ensure that completed forms are collected from parents. Meal categories will be assigned to students based upon the completed 1041 form. Once all applications are received and income levels verified, the parents and/or guardians will be notified of the decision whether the student is free, reduced price, or full pay. The Business & Operations Manager will be responsible for overseeing the school lunch program and overall food services program. Any and all food service subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs will be used exclusively for the purpose of providing meals to eligible students, and for no prohibited purpose.

**Health Services.** MVCCS will utilize the health services of the Utica City School District, including a licensed Nurse, in the initial years of operation. A Health Office Attendant will be provided by MVCCS to assist the UCSD Nurse in areas of requests for immunization records, record filing, replenishing health office supplies, bringing students to and from the health office, making phone calls if instructed to do so and any other duties as assigned by the UCSD Nurse.

**Transportation.** MVCCS's students will receive transportation services for which they are eligible under Education Law § 2853(4) (b) and § 3635. Since Utica City School District currently provides transportation to nonpublic schools, it is understood that it is the Utica City School District's responsibility to provide transportation at their expense to eligible students living within a two to fifteen mile radius of MVCCS. This includes transportation of students with a disability or special need when the IEP requires special transportation. Families will be responsible for transportation if they reside within two miles of MVCCS unless a shorter distance is set forth by the Utica City School District.

Because MVCCS will operate longer than any local district's school calendar, transportation will occur as follows. MVCCS will not provide transportation for additional calendar days if the student did not qualify for transportation under Education Law § 2853(4) (b) and § 3635 during the home district's school calendar. MVCCS will provide transportation during additional school calendar days beyond 180 days wherein MVCCS is in operation to any student who receives transportation by their home district during the normal 180 day school calendar or transportation needs are specified on a student's IEP. The budget submitted for review reflects the anticipated transportation needs of our students and accounts for transportation necessary for MVCCS to operate 10 additional school days.

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

Utica is a small city with a broad multicultural population. Twenty percent of the residents have come to Utica as refugees or immigrants. The public education system struggles to meet the diverse needs of these students; adult family members themselves need opportunities for learning as much as their children to. A charter school is seen by many as an opportunity to use innovative instructional strategies to assist both students and families to improve their educational, economic, and social skills in ways that will strengthen the entire community.

Interest in opening the area's first charter school has built over the past several years; members of the present Founding Group have worked intentionally toward this goal since 2010. "Community Conversations" have been held at least monthly since November 2011 in a variety of venues, including the proposed site of the school, churches, local colleges, and at community meetings. Founders have made targeted presentations to local Rotary Clubs, church groups, college Education Clubs, and preschool organizations. These outreach efforts have drawn positive response, and will continue as a means of informing and engaging community members, local politicians, and family members. Education surveys about the strengths and needs of students have been solicited both at events and on the MVCCS website. Surveys were distributed widely in the community seeking input about the plans for the school. Specifically, parents of school-age children were sought for their input and comments on the plans and school design. The comments of community stakeholders and parents informed the ultimate design of the school which is delineated in this application. MVCCS will continue to engage parents and community stakeholders in the implementation of the school if chartered.

Student achievement is strengthened by parent and community involvement. MVCCS parents, caregivers, and community members will be partners in learning, through numerous avenues. To meet the needs of our ELL/LEP families, all written materials for parents and caregivers will be translated into Spanish, Burmese, Karen, Bosnian, and other language(s) required by our parent community. Additionally, translators will be available during individual meetings with parents as well as during larger meetings of the parent body. Students and families will benefit from our strong school partnerships with family service agencies and community organizations. For example, we will teach parents and students about resiliency and nurturing through workshops and lessons through a working partnership with Utica's Family Nurturing Center.

MVCCS founders believe the most important role a parent can play in their child's academic career is to be an active partner with the school providers. In order to build strong family support and understanding of our school, we will plan a series of orientation events that will take place during the week preceding the traditional opening of school. Opportunities for children and parents to meet school staff, visit the learning areas, and become comfortable with the school environment will be the focus of these events.

MVCCS's Family and Community Specialist will be knowledgeable about the community resources available to help parents. Parents will be encouraged to: (1) work with their child(ren) on homework; (2) be cognizant of the amount of "screen time" spent by each child (television, cell phone, computer, video games); (3) take advantage of family counseling to support them in their role as parents (MVCCS's school staff will provide parents with referrals as necessary).

There will be ongoing communication between staff and parents. Regularly, parents will receive notices, memos, phone calls, e-mails and other communications indicating the upcoming month's school events, homework assignments and planned tests or quizzes. The school will maintain a website that provides information on important school matters including the school calendar, testing dates, events, parent-teacher meetings, etc. Student achievement data such as NYS test scores and school assessments will be posted on the school's website so parents may review the school's effectiveness. The website will also provide a means by which the Parent Organization (PO) can provide information to its members. For families without access to computers at home, computers dedicated for parent use will be available on-site at the school. A Parent Handbook containing comprehensive information about the school's standards, curriculum, school policies, and other items important to our academic and school culture will be provided to each family; this information will be posted on the school website as well.

There will be four report cards annually, and parent-teacher conferences four times per year when report cards are released, plus "open house" days for parents. Parents will be encouraged to reach out to their children's teachers as necessary and as desired. Each teacher and administrator will have voicemail and a school e-mail address that is made available to parents and students.

Student achievement will be enhanced when parents bring their energy and talents to bear on the school community. MVCCS will establish formal ways in which parents can volunteer by helping teachers, administrators, and students, such as inviting parents to read to students, becoming active in the Parent Teacher organization (PTO) and/or asking them to help plan events at the school. MVCCS will also invite parents to school-wide events that showcase students' talents and engage parents as active participants in their child's learning. As described previously in *Section IIIb*, MVCCS plans to have an active role for parents in the governance and administration of the school. Specifically:

- The school will facilitate the development of the Parent Advisory Group (PAC) to be governed by the parents of the children at the school. The PAC will be free to organize its own governance and committee structure. The PAC will be involved in a variety of activities in the school, such as fundraising, field trips, and school/community projects.
- At every Board meeting, there will be a regular item on the Board's agenda for PAC representatives to report on their work or discuss school related issues.
- Parents may also be members of certain standing and other Committees of the Board.

Collaboration with the community will be a priority for MVCCS. We will build programs through which community members and agencies can volunteer time to work with our students. This will be one of many ways students will enhance and enrich their appreciation and understanding of persons and skills within their community. Eventually, we will also facilitate student involvement as volunteers at community organizations to increase their learning through practical application of knowledge and skills.

The school's Family and Community Support Specialist will compile and share information with students and families regarding community health services, social support programs and community activities available to them. Forums and discussions about mutual needs, interests and resources will be offered, resulting in a portfolio of community assets that MVCCS can draw on for the benefit of its children, parents and families and academic program.

## **J. Financial Management**

The Business & Operations Manager (BOM) will have oversight responsibilities for the financial management of the school and thus will be responsible for the protection of the school's financial records with oversight from the Board of Trustees and its Treasurer. The Executive Director will be supported in implementing all financial matters by the BOM and the Board of Trustees. Should the Board decide to contract additional services when preparing the financial statements, they will be prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Such financial statements would be prepared for each fiscal year and would include a statement of financial position, a statement of activities, a statement of cash flows, a schedule of functional expenses, and notes to the financial statements.

***Independent Audit.*** The School's Board of Trustees will be responsible for hiring an independent auditor to perform an annual audit of the financial statements prepared by the school management. The Board Finance Committee will have the ultimate responsibility to oversee the audit process. The audit will be performed by the independent auditor in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP). Upon completion of the audit, the Finance Committee will meet with the independent auditor to discuss the report and any findings. Once done, the Finance Committee will meet with the full Board of Trustees to go over the audit findings. A corrective action plan will be discussed and implemented by the Finance Committee to correct any findings by the independent auditor. A copy of the audit report and Management Letter will be provided to the full Board and NYSED by the November 1 deadline.

***Accounting Procedures and Fiscal Controls.*** MVCCS is committed to developing and maintaining fiscal policies and procedures that ensure sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility and accountability in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting

Principles (GAAP), and adherence to the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) rules and regulations. The following explains the Internal Control System that MVCCS will implement. *Internal Control Systems:* The internal control structure is composed of the following two basic elements: (1) the control environment and (2) the control procedures.

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

**2. Control Procedures:** Control procedures will be set up to strengthen MVCCS's internal control structure and thus safeguard the school's assets. They are divided into the following:

- Segregation of Duties will ensure that no single person will control all key aspects of a transaction or event, and the functions performed by one person may be checked by the functions performed by the other.

- In general, the transaction approval function, the accounting/reconciliation function and the asset custody function would be separated among employees (ED, BOM, and Office Assistant) and a contracted financial consultant (should the Board decide to contract with one). These functions are not or cannot be separated since these activities should be undertaken by managers or officials as a compensatory control.

- Physical Access to valuable and movable assets will be restricted to authorized personnel (ED and BOM). Systems access to make changes in accounting records will be restricted to authorized personnel (Board Treasurer, ED, and BOM) with changes and explanation for any changes necessary and documented as a safeguard.

- Document Control will ensure that all documents are captured by the accounting system, all documents will be pre-numbered and the sequence for documents must be accounted for.

- Processing Controls will be designed to catch errors before they are posted to the general ledger. Common processing controls that MVCCS expects to implement are : source document matching; clerical accuracy of documents; and general ledger account code checking.

- Reconciliation Controls will be designed to catch errors after transactions have been posted to the general ledger. Such controls include reconciling selected general ledger control accounts to subsidiary ledgers. All bank statements will be reviewed by the Treasurer.

- Fraud Prevention measures will be implemented in banking relationships to deter check fraud (such as Positive Pay). All purchase orders and checks over \$5,000 will require approval by the Board Treasurer with notification provided to the Board President.

- Cash Handling Controls will include having all cash receipts handled exclusively by the Business & Operations Manager. In his/her absence, a designee such as the ED or Office Coordinator will adhere to all controls. On a periodic basis, a contracted accountant may perform unannounced review of the cash. Such review involves reconciling cash on hand and the expected balance calculate using the opening cash balance and accounting for the receipts and disbursements of cash. Such review is performed at least on a bi-monthly basis.

The Board Treasurer (with the ED, BOM and Board of Trustees) will develop fiscal policies and procedures. A contracted accountant may also be utilized if desired by the BOT. MVCCS will adopt those fiscal policies and procedures and implement the above-mentioned control structures. The independent auditor will be engaged to form an opinion about the proposed internal controls policies and procedures. Adjustments will be made to the policies and

procedures based on any weaknesses identified by the auditor. Fiscal policies and procedures will be ratified by the School's board and adopted by the School no later than January 2013.

***Student Records.*** The School will have trained personnel on staff who are responsible for managing the student information. The BOM, with oversight from the Executive Director and support from the Office Manager, will be responsible for tracking enrollment and attendance, maintaining school lunch program records, including student eligibility and other data to ensure accurate billing and reimbursements, and transportation documentation and applications. The BOM will work closely with the DSS, who will serve as the School's Title I Coordinator, to ensure all data relevant to Title I services is collected and maintained to ensure accuracy in program reporting and reimbursement. The School will have one or more robust student information systems such as EDoctrina, Rediker and/or Power School that will be utilized by the BOM to store, analyze and produce needed reports on all relevant student data. The BOM will be responsible for the protection of student records under the supervision of the Executive Director. The Special Education Coordinator/teacher has the responsibility for maintaining and securing all records. He or she will be responsible for submitting all required reporting on Special Education Services and the services provided to the student in accordance with their IEPs to appropriate agencies including necessary reporting for special education reimbursement. MVCCS understands its obligations to comply with FERPA and will follow all appropriate procedures to comply fully with the New York State Freedom of Information law (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law).

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

The school's start-up budget plan, first-year budget and the five-year budget plan use conservative assumptions. MVCCS will use the accrual basis of accounting in all its financial statements, but the budget shown in Attachment 9 was prepared on a cash basis. Major assets have not been capitalized and depreciation expenses are not charged in the budgets.

The budgets reflect the following conservative revenue assumptions:

- MVCCS will receive \$9,280 per pupil revenue from the District(s) over the life of the charter. MVCCS is using this number since the majority of students will be from the Utica City School District (UCSD). The other districts as noted in the budget may have a slightly higher per pupil rate, however, since the numbers of students will be smaller from those districts, MVCCS is using the lower number from the UCSD so that the estimated income will not be inflated and will be more realistic.

- MVCCS expects 17% of our students will be Special Education Students (based on UCSD data) times a .9 % reimbursement rate, assuming that students receive services slightly higher than 20% of the school time. Thus, the school assumes it will receive special education reimbursement for 17% of its special needs students. MVCCS may have students that will receive services at a higher level; however, this is a conservative assumption since MVCCS will not know the actual extent of services per student until after enrollment numbers are tabulated.

On the expense side, however, the budget reflects one special education teacher that will act also as the Special Education Coordinator for the first year. One additional SPED Teacher will be added in year 2 and an additional SPED Teacher in year 4, should the number of SPED Students increase as projected in year three. The budget also includes PD and staff training related to serving special needs students and curriculum and instructional materials needed by students with special needs. The School also assumes that it will receive the Federal IDEA funding it is entitled to for each Special Needs Student beginning in Year 2.

- While MVCCS will apply for all eligible Title Grant funding, for budgeting purposes MVCCS is only assuming receipt of Title I and IIA.
- While MVCCS will apply for all competitive public grants available for start-up and implementation including CSP and State Stimulus Funds (SSF), we only assume CSP in the total amount of \$500,000 over the start-up and first two years of operations.

The budget reflects the following conservative expense assumptions:

- The School has projected a realistic staffing structure over the five years, incorporating all administrative and instructional staff contemplated in its operational and academic program for general education students, special education students, Title I students, ELL students and other students at risk (see table in *III.C. Management and Staffing*). In addition, the five-year budgets contemplate the need for staffing during the 3 to 5 week summer academic intervention program for struggling students. Furthermore, specialty teachers including art, music, and physical education teachers are assumed within the five-year budget, as is administrative, office, business, and support staff.
- The School has a written estimate for the D&O, Property & General Liability, Employee Dishonesty and other Insurance coverage which forms the basis for our insurance assumptions.
- The budget rent line item reflects the anticipated lease arrangement with the Holy Trinity School which will provide in-kind rent for years 1-5.

In each of the five operational years beyond the start-up period, the School's budgets reflect very conservative assumptions. All revenue—including the largest revenue source State & Local per pupil aid—remains flat while most expenses increase at 3% and other expenses (health insurance and D&O, Property, Employee Dishonesty and General Liability by as much as 8% and 5%, respectively). The budget is aligned with our charter application. We have incorporated all possible costs contemplated by our educational, fiscal and operational program. The one-year budget plan required a breakdown of revenues and expenses between Program Services and Support Services and then a further breakdown within those categories among *Regular Education, Special Education, Other, Management and General, and Fundraising*. All revenues and expenses have been allocated to each of the main categories and subcategories using general assumptions based on the expected student demographic and the expected percentage of time those administrators, instructional and non-instructional staff would devote to these areas. In certain instances, MVCCS assumed that for school operation costs that would benefit all students a certain percentage was allocated to general education and special education students. Once the school is established and accounting systems developed, there will be formal systems and procedures to track the allocation of expenditures into these categories and subcategories. At that point MVCCS will have the background based on operational experience to prepare budgets that reflect these programmatic allocations.

## **L. Pre-Opening Plan**

MVCCS will comply with pre-operational procedures and requirements as dictated by NYSED. MVCCS has prepared an extensive checklist of pre-operational tasks (see Table below) that begin on the date of authorization of MVCCS's charter through the first day of full operation on or about August 29, 2013. Our budget reflects the capacity to achieve these goals in a timely manner by including all relevant personnel required for a successful pre-operational phase. Facilities information and timeline can be found in the table in *Section III.c*.

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Steps to Complete</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>Education Program</b>				
Curriculum	Jan -Aug 2013	Finalize scope curriculum mapping in alignment with NYS standards. Develop specials curriculum. Develop lesson plan template.	ED, DSS, T	EDoctrina
Assessment	Apr 1, 2013-Jul 1, 2013	Finalize assessment protocols. Design data analysis system. Plan for summer assessment.	ED, DSS, T, TA	EDoctrina
Education Program	Jul 1, 2013-Aug 1, 2013	Finalize system to observe and evaluate teachers. Develop system to evaluate curriculae.	ED, DSS	EDoctrina; successful school models
Special Education	Jul 1, 2013-Aug 1, 2013	Confirm plan for preparing/monitoring IEPs. Finalize plan for identifying IEP students	ED, DSS	NYSSED; collaboration with districts
Professional Development	Jan-Jun 2013	Plan pre-service PD (e.g., school culture, data system, curriculum).	ED,DSS, BOM, Office Mgr.	Fee for space and materials
	Jul-Aug 2013	Train staff		
<b>Human Resources &amp; Staff Recruitment</b>				
Personnel Manual/ HR Documents	Feb 2013	Complete draft	ED, BOM, legal counsel	Seek pro-bono legal counsel
	Mar 2013	Legal review and board approval		
Staff Hiring	Dec 2012 - Feb 2013	Identify final candidates for ED and finalize preliminary agreement	Board	Recruiting costs Salary and benefits
	Jan-Feb 2013	Interview, identify, and hire candidates for DSS, BOM, Office Manager	ED, Board	
	Jan-Apr 2013	Interview and hire teachers and assistant teachers	ED, DSS	
	Jan-Apr 2013	Hire non-academic staff	ED, BOM	
New Hires	As hired	Complete staff background checks and confirm certifications	BOM	None
Professional Development	Aug 2013	Train all staff on all financial, operational, HR and safety procedures	BOM	None
Benefits	Jan 2013	Research and Select benefits	Board, ED, BOM	Quotes on packages
	As hired	Enroll staff in benefits (e.g., health, dental, vision, disability and retirement)	BOM	
<b>Fund Development</b>				
Grants	Mar 15, 2011	Contact Walton Foundation about non-geographical grants and apply when invited	Founders	None
	ASAP	Confirm if received CSP grant	Founders	None
Fund-raising	Dec 1, 2011	Develop fundraising plan	Board	Supplies
<b>Student Recruitment</b>				
Recruiting and Enrolling	Jan 2013	Prepare recruitment materials; start campaign	ED, BOM, DSS	None
	Apr 1, 2013	Applications due		
	Apr 9, 2013	Lottery		
	May 2013	Complete enrollment; identify possible ELL, SWD, and FRL students		
	Jun 2013	Obtain all available records		
	Per district	Attend IEP meetings for all SWD		
<b>Finance and Operations</b>				
Financial Procedures	Jun 2013	Set up accounting and reporting system	Board, BOM	None
	Jul 2013	Finalize manual		

Business	As soon as authorized	Obtain Employer Identification Number	BOM	None
		Apply for 501(c)3 status and Federal Tax I.D.		Applications
	Feb -Apr 2013	Open bank accounts		Initial deposit
	Jul 2013	Select payroll vendor and get training		Quotes
	Feb-Apr 2013	Select school wide insurance policies (e.g., umbrella, liability, D&O, student accident)		
Jul 2013	Finalize manual			
Title and E-rate	ASAP	Apply for applicable Title and E-rate grants	BOM	Applications
Student Data	Feb 2013	Complete research	Board, BOM	Purchase of system
	Mar 2013	Purchase and set up system		
Record Keeping	Jun 15, 2013- Jul 1, 2013	Develop system for student records, immunization records, IEP records	BOM	None
Enrolling	Apr 2013	Align enrollment with budget	BOM	None
Technology	Dec 1, 2011- Feb 28, 2013	With IT Consultant complete 5-year technology plan; select server/computers to be purchased	BOM	None
Safety and Operations	Feb-Mar 2013	Complete school Safety Manual, Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) plan, and Operations Manual	BOM	None
Transportation	Apr 1, 2013	Applications submitted and services in place with local districts	BOM	None
<b>Governance</b>				
Board Procedures	Jan 2013	Hold organization meeting, elect trustees and officers once MVCCS is incorporated	Board	None
		Develop and implement FOIL (Freedom of Information Law) and FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) policies		
		Develop meeting calendar, minutes book, board training plan, dashboard		
Manuals	Apr 2013	Approve manuals (HR/Operations/ Safety)	Board	None
Budget	Jun 2013	Vote on Final Budget for 2013-13 school year	Board	None

## M. Dissolution Plan

In the event of closure or dissolution of MVCCS, the Board shall delegate to the Executive Director and the BOM the responsibility to manage the dissolution process in accordance with Education Law §2851(2)(t). This process shall include notification to parents of children enrolled in MVCCS. A list of MVCCS students will be sent to the local district where MVCCS is located. MVCCS shall transfer student records to the student's school district of residence, and the parents of the enrolled students shall be notified of the transfer of records. It is MVCCS's preference that the school's remaining assets, after satisfaction of outstanding debts pursuant to Education §220, shall be transferred to another charter school within a reasonable proximity. The budget will maintain an escrow fund of \$75,000 to be used for legal and audit expenses in the event of its dissolution. The dissolution process would begin with a meeting of the leadership team of MVCCS that will include at least the Board's Executive Committee, the ED, BOM, and legal counsel. The purpose of this meeting would be to confirm a plan and timeline to guide the dissolution process. Upon approval of the plan and timeline, the ED and the Board Chair would meet with representatives from the NYSED Office of Charter Schools or other appropriate staff to review and discuss the dissolution plan and timeline. The outcome of this meeting would be a final dissolution plan and timeline to manage the process of dissolving the MVCCS.

## **Student Admissions Policy**

This policy reflects the recent amendments to the New York State Charter Schools Act.

### **Student Recruitment**

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS) will conduct extensive local community outreach to solicit applications from prospective students entering lottery-eligible grades. As a public charter school, MVCCS is open to children who are eligible for admission to a public school under New York State law. Additionally, MVCCS will follow all applicable state and federal laws in admitting students.

MVCCS will conduct a blind admissions process requesting only basic data from parents about prospective students. MVCCS will not discriminate on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, national origin, ancestry, religion, or any other grounds that would be unlawful if done by any other public school.

### **Open Admissions Only to Designated Grades**

MVCCS will only open admissions for designated grades (“lottery grades”). Prospective students must submit an application (“lottery application”) to be eligible for lottery grades. If MVCCS receives more lottery applications than the school has seats available for that lottery grade, then the school will conduct a blind lottery to determine which children will be admitted into that lottery grade.

Kindergarten will be a lottery grade in each year that the school operates an elementary school (grades K-5). In our initial year of operation only, both kindergarten and 1st grade will be lottery grades. By year four, kindergarten will be the only lottery grade remaining at the school.

If the school determines that seats are available outside of the lottery process, in any grade K-5, the waiting list that has been developed will be the only official source for identifying eligible applicants to fill those vacant seats. The complete waiting list policy can found below in this student admissions policy.

#### **Qualifications**

- Kindergarten applicants must turn five years old on or before December 1st of the year in which they matriculate; and
- All applicants must submit a completed and valid application by the April 1 admissions deadline.

### **Automatic Preferences**

Automatic preferences will be given to eligible applicants in the following order:

- MVCCS will give an admissions preference to students who reside in the City of Utica and who are students at risk. This may include students who are economically and/or academically disadvantaged.

- First preference will be given to students who attended the school the previous year and will be returning to the school. Returning students do not need to re-apply; and
- Second preference will be given to siblings of students enrolled in the school. A sibling is defined as a brother, sister, or other child legally under the same parent/guardian's care and residing in the same household. Siblings will be granted a space, if and only if, there is space in the grade. If not, they will be placed on the school's waiting list as described in the waiting list policy below.

### **Selection**

Once all applicants with automatic preferences have been admitted, all other applicants will be considered. Each applicant will be entered into the lottery, based on the admission criteria preference described below. Siblings applying to the lottery where no sibling already attend the school, will share all entries; if their entry is selected the siblings will occupy the next available spots on the list in alphabetical order by first name. Entries will be selected at random until all currently available spots are filled. The remaining entries will be sorted in the same random manner to create the waiting list in each grade. This waiting list will be used to fill empty spaces as necessary.

### **Additional Preference**

MVCCS will grant admission criteria preference for applicants who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, demonstrating economic disadvantage, who do not reside in Utica.

This admissions criteria preference for "students at-risk of academic failure" is defined as students whose families meet the following criteria for the academic or calendar year in which the lottery occurs: (1) qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program ("FRL"); (2) meet requirements for the supplemental nutrition assistance program ("SNAP"); (3) meet requirements for the temporary assistance for needy families ("TANF") program; or (4) family income is equal to or less than the income levels necessary to qualify for FRL, SNAP, or TANF based on the criteria designated in the FRL application which is updated yearly.

MVCCS will use this preference to divide the applicants into three groups:

- Group 1: Applicants who are at-risk but do not reside in Utica
- Group 2: Applicants who reside within the city of Utica but are not at-risk
- Group 3: Applicants who are not at-risk and do not reside in Utica.

The preference will be applied by conducting the lottery in this manner:

- we will select one applicant sequentially from each of the three groups until the vacant slots are filled
- any remaining applications will enter the waiting list.

To ensure lottery preferences are properly applied, both MVCCS reserves the right to request additional proof of eligibility for FRL, SNAP, or TANF, or additional proof of residency at any time. Accordingly, MVCCS may require students to submit an FRL application after the lottery in order to secure provisional enrollment in the school. MVCCS reserves the right to eliminate a student from the

lottery, rescind school admission, or remove the child from the waiting list upon proof that incorrect FRL, SNAP, TANF, household income, or residency documentation was submitted.

Any and all applications received after the deadline will be automatically added to the bottom of the waiting list in the order in which they are received, except applications submitted by siblings of currently enrolled students. These sibling applicants will continue to receive preference and will be added to the waiting list behind any other sibling applicants already on the list, but ahead of all other students on the waiting list. In order to avoid such a situation, MVCCS will make a concerted effort to inform current parents of the need to submit sibling applications prior to the admissions deadline. Either the “at-risk” preference or the Utica residency may also grant priority for applications received after the deadline.

### **Application Deadline**

In July 2007, New York State Education Law governing charter schools was amended to include a statewide deadline for lottery applications. The deadline for all lottery applications to MVCCS is April 1. All applications must be received on or before the close of business on April 1 to be included in the admissions lottery.

### **Application to Waiting List**

Students will apply for admission to non-lottery grades at MVCCS by submitting a waiting list application, which is maintained in the school Business Office for each grade. Waiting lists will be rolled over from year to year and new applicants will be added to the list in order of application receipt, excepting new applicants (i) with siblings already attending the school, who will be added to the waiting list behind any other sibling applicants already on the list, but ahead of all other students; or (ii) with “at-risk” preferences. This waiting list will be the only official source for identifying eligible applicants for admission to the school in case of vacancy.

### **Vacancy**

Should a space become available in a class at MVCCS, the school will contact the parents or guardians of the next student on the waiting list. The school will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents or guardians of the first student on the waiting list to determine whether the student wants to enroll in the school before proceeding to the next name on the list. If attempts to contact the student’s parents or guardians are unsuccessful, the school **will** remove that student from the waiting list and contact the next student on the waiting list.

### **Enrollment and Eligibility**

All students who are accepted for enrollment or re-enrollment must complete all of the school’s enrollment forms, which may include an FRL application, by the date required by the school, in order to secure provisional enrollment. First and foremost, a parent must submit the lottery acceptance form, which may include an FRL application, as required to reserve a seat in the school. Thereafter, students **will be** required to submit admissions paperwork as directed by the school. Students may forfeit their right to enroll if forms are not returned by the designated date. All new students must take the school’s baseline assessments as required.

In addition to the requirements described above, a child is eligible for grades K-5 only if:

- The student successfully completes the preceding grade by the opening day of school; and
- The parent/guardian and student complete all required forms timely and truthfully.

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

MVCCS is a public charter school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. Circumstances may arise in which a parent or guardian wishes to transfer a child to a different school. With parent or guardian permission, students may withdraw from MVCCS at any time. Parents may withdraw students verbally or in writing. A student who begins attending another school without a formal withdrawal is subject to being automatically withdrawn from MVCCS. If the parents or guardians wish to transfer their child to another school, the staff at MVCCS will make reasonable efforts to help the student find a school that better serves the family's desires. MVCCS will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

### **Limited and Temporary Withdrawal**

In certain and limited instances, a parent or guardian may request a temporary withdrawal from the school for reasonable personal circumstances. In these cases, the student's parent and/or guardian must give the school written notice at the time of withdrawal of the temporary withdrawal and the student's estimated return date.

### **Intent to Return**

The school will grant temporary withdrawal on a case by case basis. In assessing whether to grant temporary withdrawal, the school will review the validity of the request and the parents' intent to return. If temporary withdrawal is granted, the school may re-admit the student to MVCCS.

### **No Child Left Behind Set Aside**

While the school will adhere to the enrollment plan presented in its charter, it may create additional seats during the school year to admit No Child Left Behind transfer students ahead of any students on the waiting list. The number of No Child Left Behind students that may be admitted under this set aside policy will be no more than 10% of the school's total enrollment, and may not increase the school's total enrollment over what is allowed under the charter and the Charter Schools Act.

### **New York State Charter School Uniform Application Form**

#### **Section A: To be completed by Charter School**

<b>Applicable School Year:</b>	2013-14
<b>Name of Charter School:</b>	Mohawk Valley Community Charter School
<b>Contact Information for Charter School:</b>	{INSERT ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, WEBSITE, EMAIL, ETC. OF CHARTER SCHOOL}
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	APRIL 1, 2013
<b>Lottery Date and Location (if known):</b>	{INSERT DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION OF THE ADMISSIONS LOTTERY, IF KNOWN}
<b>Directions for Submission of Applications:</b>	{INSERT DIRECTIONS}

**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, 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.

**Section B: To be completed by Applicant**

**Note:** A separate application must be completed and submitted for each child applying for admission.

**Applicant Student Information:**

1.* Name (First, Last):	
2.* Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):	
3.* Gender (circle one):	Male / Female
4.* Home Address (street address, city, state, zip code):	
5.* School District (or New York City Community School District), if known:	
6.* Grade Applying for:	
7.* Does the applicant student have a sibling(s) who is currently enrolled in this charter school? (circle one). If yes, list at least one sibling's name, current grade and date of birth.	Yes / No

**Parent/Guardian Information:**

1.* Name (First, Last):	
2.* Relationship to Student:	
3. Home Address (street address, city, state, zip code):	
4. * Phone Number(s), if available:	
5. Email Address(es):	

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* 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.*

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Section 1 – Overview of Events and Activities**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Number Held</b>	<b>Results</b>
Founders' Meetings	Approximately 25	Collaboration and Shared Vision
Community Conversations	6	Awareness and Support
Organization Presentations	Rotary – 3 Utica College Ed Club -2 STOP-ACES - 1	Awareness and Support
Information Tables	MVCC Education Fair Sangertown Mall	Petition Signatures
Petition Drive/Individuals	Numerous	Petition Signatures
Faith Group Presentations	Ongoing	Awareness and Enrollment
Website and Social Media	<a href="http://www.mvccs.com">www.mvccs.com</a> Facebook LinkedIn	Interactive information
Meetings with Community Leaders	Completed: Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri BOCES Supt. Howard Mettelman Scheduled: Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi Senator Joe Griffo Congressman Richard Hanna Anticipated: Utica Superintendent Bruce Karam and School Officials	

**Section 2 – Letters of Support**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Author</b>
Community Foundation	Peggy O'Shea, Executive Director
Cornell Cooperative Extension	Ron Bunce, Executive Director
Mohawk Valley Community Action	Amy Turner, Executive Director
CARE Interpreters	Kathy Tin, Owner
Utica School of Business	Scott Williams, President
Family Nurturing Center	Donna Elefante, Executive Director
SUNY-IT	Dr. Joanne Joseph, Psychologist

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School



July 16, 2012

MVCCS  
Box 1691  
Utica, NY 13503

To Whom It May Concern:

The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, Inc. has been a force for improving lives and promoting philanthropy throughout Herkimer and Oneida counties since 1952. The Foundation seeds priority community initiatives, supports new and expanded programs, leverages outside funding for projects that benefit the region, and has long been a proponent for excellence in education.

Our organization has been part of the following efforts and programs:  
We have made more than 5,100 grants totaling over \$40.8 million in support of causes ranging from education and health care, to the arts and the environment. Grants are generated by the more than 288 funds that comprise The Foundation's endowment, established and advanced by area individuals and families.

During the past year, approximately 30% of total projects funded went to educational programs. The Foundation is an ongoing supporter of the Young Scholars Liberty Partnerships Program and has developed, and is sustaining, a two county literacy coalition that includes critical funding for staff through discretionary monies and donor advisor partners. Providing school choices for families can help to strengthen our region.

We are interested in learning more about charter schools and their place in our community, and how we can all work more collaboratively to enrich the educational potential for local children.

Sincerely,

Peggy O'Shea  
President & CEO  
The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, Inc.

*Confirmed in Compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations*

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Lauren E. Bull  
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Keith Fenstermacher  
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Eve Van de Wal  
Bonnie Woods

1222 STATE STREET  
UTICA, NEW YORK 13502  
315-735-8212  
Fax 315-735-9563  
www.foundationhoc.org  
E-Mail info@foundationhoc.org



## *Care Interpretation Services (CIS)*

Specializing in Karen & Burmese language

Date: July 15, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to show my support for the Mohawk Valley Community Center School, applying for a charter in Utica, New York.

My name is Kathy Tin and I am an ethnic Karen from Burma, and I speak both Karen and Burmese fluently. I moved to Utica almost two years ago to be closer to my parents and family, and I am currently working as a medical interpreter with Faxton-St. Luke's Healthcare in Utica.

In my community, I have seen eighty percent of children needed more closely attention by their teachers because the lack of English and they are new to the country. With very limited English and their parents have no education that would be able to teach or help them with homework. Also, teachers couldn't pay close attention to the students individually because the population of the students in a classroom. Therefore, we would need Charter school to make it a better and quality school and education to the children in this community.

Most parents in my community are working and do not have time to lean a Basic English to be able to communicate with others. They would like to see if they could study some Basic English while waiting and siting with their children in class or evening adult learning hours. I am very positive that many parents would like to get involved and support Charter school if there is a school that would provide both children and parents to learn.

I am strongly support MVCCS project and I would very much like to see we have a Charter School in Utica, NY.

Yours sincerely,  
Kathy Tin

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School



**Family Nurturing Center® of Central New York, Inc.**

209 Elizabeth Street 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Utica, New York 13501  
Telephone: (315) 738-9773 Fax: (315) 738-1486 email: admin@fncny.org

February 10, 2012

TO THOSE CONCERNED:

The administrators and board members of the Family Nurturing Center of Central New York are pleased to affirm their enthusiastic support and willing partnership with the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School.

The Family Nurturing Center is a private not-for-profit organization formed in 1988 to provide parenting education and supportive services for children and families. The agency's mission is to enhance personal development, relationships and family functioning through nurturing interactions; to empower children, adolescents, and adults through education to live healthy, fully functioning lives; and to promote the well being of the individual, family and community through educational services and information.

The agency's staff members are trained, experienced professionals that provide group-based parenting education, private consultations, parent/family assessments, educational/supportive home visits, family group conferencing, supervised parent-child visitation services, family celebrations, enrichment activities, information and referrals to community resources. FNC services are open to all families in the community.

All services of the Family Nurturing Center are based on the philosophies and goals of the Nurturing Parenting Programs®, developed by Stephen Bavolek, PhD. These are evidence-based curricula based on a strength model of empowerment for parents and children. The Nurturing Parenting Program® is recognized by the National Registry of Effective Programs (NREP), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP).

The Family Nurturing Center (FNC) is committed to working with the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS), during the start-up year and into the future.

1. Grant-Seeking Activity: FNC will contribute (in-kind) its expertise by working with the MVCCS

Lead Applicants to identify and apply for appropriate grants that will meet the school's needs and develop its capacity for providing a variety of supportive services for children and their families. The agency's Program Planner, Colleen Cavallo, will serve on the Board of Trustees to participate in the planning and assessment of the school's fund development activities.

2. Parenting Education Programs: When specialized grant funding has been secured, FNC will provide students, parents, guardians and family members with group-based programs and workshops based on the Nurturing Parenting Programs®. FNC will also offer private consultations for parents, family members and school staff at the MVCCS site upon request. The curricula to be used will include:

## ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach

### Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

*The Nurturing Program for Parents and Their School-Aged Children and The ABC's of Parenting for Families with Children Entering Kindergarten.*

3. Staff Training: FNC will provide an initial training (40 hours) and ongoing technical assistance for MVCCS teachers, administrators and support staff. This targeted training will qualify individuals to serve as Trained Facilitators of the Nurturing Parenting Programs® and will also increase their competence at providing “nurturing skills education” in the classroom and throughout the school.

The Family Nurturing Center has many years of experience working in this way with public schools. Currently, FNC is training and mentoring teachers and staff of BOCES component schools, as part of a Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative in Oneida County.

The Nurturing Parenting Program® philosophy of teacher/staff education is an ideal complement to the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) strategy planned by MVCCS.

4. Student Recruitment: FNC manages the following community outreach programs that will promote ongoing public awareness and student recruitment for MVCCS, focused on families with elementary school aged children:

- ♦ Healthy Families-Oneida County (NYS Home Visiting Program funded by OCFS).
- ♦ Family Place Resource Center (free, drop-in site for parenting support and family activities).
- ♦ Family Resolutions Program (Family Group Conferences and Supervised Visits funded by OCFS).
- ♦ Evelyn's House for Young Mothers and Babies (residential program funded by HUD and NYS).

The Family Nurturing Center is proud to stand by the value of choice in educating the children of this Central New York community. The agency pledges to remain an active partner and to provide its direct support toward ensuring the successful opening and continued growth of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School.

Sincerely,



Donna LaTour-Elefante  
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Oneida County

121 Second Street  
Oriskany, NY 13424-3924  
t. 315-736-3394 f. 315-736-2580  
e. [Oneida@cornell.edu](mailto:Oneida@cornell.edu)  
[www.cce.cornell.edu/oneida/](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/oneida/)

February 21, 2012

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Founders' Group  
Box 1691  
Utica, New York 13503-1691

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County, I am writing this letter of support for the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School initiative. Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Charter School share the same vision of enriching the education of children in Oneida County. In support of such enrichment our educational outreach initiatives that will be available to the Charter School include: touring teacher programs, STEM education curriculums, teacher trainings and out of school time support.

Our Cornell Cooperative Extension educational goals are to provide young people hands-on, experiential learning opportunities in an effort to develop higher level thinking skills. These efforts complement those of the Charter School's focus to promote resiliency, self-regulation and problem solving techniques.

We welcome the opportunity to work together to help Oneida County students thrive academically, socially and emotionally, so that they can be productive members of our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. For further clarification and/or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 315-736-3394 ext. 101 or [rab76@cornell.edu](mailto:rab76@cornell.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Bunce".

Ron Bunce  
Executive Director

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Oneida County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School



Helping People Change Lives  
Ending Poverty

February 22, 2012

□ **MAIN OFFICE**  
9882 River Road  
Utica, New York 13502

PHONE: 315.824.8680  
FAX: 315.824.8031

□ **ROME OFFICE**  
1721 Black River Boulevard  
Rome, New York 13440

PHONE: 315.329.2649  
FAX: 315.336.0709

□ **CORNERSTONE CENTER**  
1100 Miller Street  
Utica, New York 13501

PHONE: 315.733.4973  
FAX: 315.733.6928

□ **HERKIMER OFFICE**  
401 E. Canton Street  
Herkimer, New York 13350

PHONE: 315.866.0030  
FAX: 315.866.2523

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Amy Turner, C.C.A.P.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, CHAIRPERSON  
Dorlene MacDermott

WWW.MVCAA.COM

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School  
PO Box 1691  
Utica, New York 13503

Dear Founders Group,

The Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency is pleased to support your application for a Charter School in Utica, New York.

Established in 1966, Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. has an annual operating budget of over \$18 million, employs over 300 full-time staff, operates 24 sites throughout Oneida and Herkimer Counties, and offers numerous programs and services to residents in the two-County area. MVCAA serves approximately ten thousand households annually with an array of services through three components: Housing, Family Resources and Child Development.

Over the past 45 plus years, Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. has been an advocate for families in times of crisis and works hard to help its families develop their own resources in order to break away from the cycle of poverty. Over 63% of the families MVCAA serves are the working poor. MVCAA provides intervention for their unmet needs and a path towards independence.

With our Head Start program in the City of Utica, we provide comprehensive services including transition to Kindergarten to over four hundred families. We can support the Charter School by educating families about the choices, inviting representatives from your school to speak with parent groups and by offering services to families enrolled at your school.

If you should need additional information or have any questions about the agency, please don't hesitate to contact me at (315) 624-9830 or by e-mail at [aturner@mvcaa.com](mailto:aturner@mvcaa.com).

Sincerely,

Amy Turner, Executive Director

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School



February 23, 2012

To whom it may concern:

USC the Business College would like to indicate our support for the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Initiative. This region will benefit from an alternative to the area public schools, as we recognize that some students need a different environment to excel or do well academically. I/we support the idea that a charter school can provide a new kind of learning environment to enhance opportunities for academic, social, and personal achievement for each student.

USC has been providing top quality Higher Education since 1896 with thousands of proud alumni. As an Associate Degree granting College, USC is committed to the communities that we serve in providing the best possible Business Education. The Charter School initiative would enhance quality education in the area and provide opportunities for students to flourish where they may not otherwise.

Please accept this letter in recognition and support of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Initiative.

Sincerely,

Scott K. Williams  
Executive Vice President  
USC the Business College

ATTACHMENT 2: Samples of Outreach  
Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Joanne M. Joseph PHD  
Psychologist  
2614 Genesee St.  
Utica, New York 13502**

(

February, 20, 2012

To Whom It Concerns:

I would like to indicate my support for the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Initiative. This region will benefit from an alternative to the area public schools, as we recognize that some students need a different environment to excel or do well academically. I support the idea that a charter school can provide a new kind of learning environment to enhance opportunities for academic, social, and personal achievement for each student.

I am a practicing Psychologist working with children with learning and behavior problems. Often these children require environments that can be more flexible and attentive to their psychosocial needs. I have reviewed the documents and plans for the proposed Charter School initiative and feel that it can provide an enriched psychosocial and learning environment.

Please accept this letter in recognition and support of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Initiative.

Sincerely,

Joanne M. Joseph PHD

Psychologist

Section 3 – Media Coverage

## **Group resurrects plan for charter school in Utica**

[Observer-Dispatch](#)

Posted Dec 09, 2011 @ 06:41 PM

Could Utica possibly have two charter schools?

One, maybe both, of the two sides of the proposed Mohawk Valley Charter School for Excellence that split in September plans on filing a letter of intent with the state Education Department next month.

On Friday, the newly organized Mohawk Valley Community Charter School sent out a news release indicating it planned to submit its letter of intent.

“We’re taking all the good ideas that were in the application submitted and carrying those forward,” said Ann Maher, a member of the new group.

In September, the lead applicant of Mohawk Valley Charter School for Excellence, Dr. Andrew Lopez-Williams, used his power as lead applicant to pull the application after an argument over control of the proposed school with the school’s proposed board.

At that time, he also pledged to resubmit an application in January.

Now, he’s less sure, but he’s keeping the possibility open.

“I don’t think any less that there’s a need for this,” Lopez-Williams said. “I’ve got a great life and a great practice. I’m just not sure I want to put myself in the crosshairs again.”

Maher said the members of her group still want a charter school.

“We respect all of Dr. Lopez’ ideas and that he got the whole thing started. We’re just disappointed he withdrew the application,” Maher said.

Between 15 and 20 people are behind the new school’s application. Maher said the group will keep the idea of each student having an individualized educational plan that puts emphasis on the students’ strengths. One difference, she said, is that the school would focus more on global history because so many students in Utica are refugees.

“Promoting not only American education but linking all the roots where they come from,” Maher said.

While Lopez-Williams wished the new school success, he cautioned that he would defend his “intellectual property” in the original application and complain to the Education Department if they were repeated.

“That application was written by a group of people, but those were my ideas and my professional work,” he said. “I would hope that they would have enough wherewithal to create a novel application. Certainly, I hope they succeed, but not with my ideas.”...

She said the charter application will have co-applicants so no one person can derail the school.

“We hope to build a stronger checks and balances in, so what happened with the first application” doesn’t happen again, Maher said.

The new group hopes to have a better relationship with the Utica City School District, which opposes charter schools because of how they’re funded.

“We want this to be a collaborative measure,” Maher said. “We want to minimize perceived competition with the Utica City School District...”

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## Could a Charter School be Coming to the Mohawk Valley?

By: Elsa Gillis WUTR Television News Coverage on Monday, February 20, 2012



A new type of school may soon be holding classes in Utica. Others have tried to bring a charter school to Utica, and failed. But a new group says they have the plan to make it possible. It's a type of schooling that developed about 20 years ago, and now exists in every urban area across the state, except for Utica.

Now, the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School Initiative says it's time to bring what it feels is innovative schooling to this area, keeping the best practices of public school education and applying them to a small creative setting.

The MVCCS is just about to submit a written application to the state asking for a charter to start the school. The school initiative held a community conversation today to educate anyone interested in the charter school.

"This is about teaching kids to take responsibility for their own life from very early on," says Ann Maher, a co-lead applicant for the school, and a public school educator for over thirty years, says one of the more unique aspects of the school is its individualized approach to learning.

"We want very specifically to address all aspect of a child's life: academic, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral," she says.

The schools typically have longer school days, and a longer school year. The idea is that the school works closely with not just the student, but the family as well. And, Maher says they're looking to incorporate technology into all facets of the school day.

Maher says they'll find out in June if the application is accepted, and the school year would officially start in August of 2013. Maher also says they're looking to form a cooperative relationship with the Utica City School District, not a competitive one. A charter school is considered a public school governed by a not-for-profit board of trustees. It's not a school students need to pay for, and is open to anyone to apply, although Maher says many of the successful charter schools do develop a wait list.

**MVCCS  
 Sample Student Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
7:45-8:15	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00-8:30	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide
8:30-8:50	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting
8:50-10:15	<b>Readers' Workshop</b> Guided Reading Word Study Independent Read Learning Centers	Writers' Workshop	<b>Readers' Workshop</b> Guided Reading Word Study Independent Read Learning Centers	Writers' Workshop	<b>Readers' Workshop</b> Guided Reading Word Study Independent Read Learning Centers
10:15-10:30	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack
10:30-11:30	Mathematics	Project/Unit Work	Mathematics	Project/Unit Work	Mathematics
11:35-12:05	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:05-12:45	Writers' Workshop	Mathematics	Literacy: Writing Workshop	Mathematics	Literacy: Writing Workshop
12:45-1:30	Fine Arts	PE/Wellness	Fine Arts	Fitness	Fitness
1:30-2:15	Science or Social Studies	Science or Social Studies	Science or Social Studies	Science or Social Studies	Science or Social Studies
2:15-3:00	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation	"Power Hour" Group/Grade Level Projects and Activities	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation
3:00-3:15	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1		Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1
3:15-4:15	E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation	E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation	E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation	<i>All students are dismissed on Thursdays by 3:30</i>	E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation
4:30	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends

**MVCCS**  
**Sample Teacher Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
7:45-8:15	Breakfast or Prep	Breakfast or Prep	Breakfast or Prep	Breakfast or Prep	Breakfast or Prep
8:00-8:30	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide	Morning Program School-wide
8:30-8:50	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting	Classroom Morning Meeting
8:50-10:15	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy
10:15-10:30	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack	Brain Break Exercise Read-Aloud/Snack			
10:30-11:30	Mathematics	Project/Unit Work	Mathematics	Project/Unit Work	Mathematics
11:35-12:05	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:05-12:45	Writers' Workshop	Mathematics	Literacy: Writing Workshop	Mathematics	Literacy: Writing Workshop
12:45-1:30	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
1:30-2:15	Science or Social Studies	Science or Social Studies			
2:15-3:00	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation	Planning	E/R Block I Enrichment Remediation	Professional Development  Data Team Meetings  Grade level Collaboration Time	Planning
3:00-3:15	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1	Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1		Classroom Quiet Time Dismissal 1
3:15-4:15	Planning	E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation	Planning		E/R Block 2 Enrichment Remediation
4:30	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends	Dismissal 2 Day Ends		Dismissal 2 Day Ends

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School  
 Individualized Achievement Plan

\_\_\_\_\_ 's IAP for \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level Team \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Student's Name) (Time Period) (Grade and Homeroom)

Start Date of Plan: \_\_\_\_\_ Check-in Date(s) Completion Date of Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

PLANNING INFORMATION		
My strengths are:	I am interested in learning about:	The areas where I need to get stronger are:



MY GOALS			
Areas to choose from:	What will I do?	Who do I need to help me?	How will I know when I'm done?
Reading			
Writing			
Math			
Leadership and Friendship			
Learning about the world			
Learning about science			
Using technology			
Using tools			

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School  
 Attachment 3a: Sample Daily Schedules  
 Added: Draft of our Individual Achievement Plan Template

Mohawk Valley Community Charter School  
 Individualized Achievement Plan

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:**

<b>As a parent/caregiver, I will:</b>	<b>As a teacher/school helper, I will:</b>	<b>To keep my plan moving forward, I will:</b>
<b>Parent/Caregiver Signature</b>	<b>Staff Signature</b>	<b>Student Signature</b>

**RUBRIC FOR SUCCESS:**

<b>Rubric Score of :</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>To get this score, these elements must be clearly met:</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<i>Rubric elements to be developed as needed for specifics of the plan</i>
<b>3</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Developing</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	

**RECORD OF PROGRESS:**

<b>Goal evaluated:</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Rubric Score</b>	<b>Plan of action:</b>	<b>Next evaluation Date:</b>

**Attachment 3b: MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL  
PROPOSED CALENDAR 2013-2014**

AUGUST 2013				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

SEPTEMBER 2013				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

OCTOBER 2013				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER 2013				
M	T	W	T	F
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

DECEMBER 2013				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

JANUARY 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

APRIL 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

MAY 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

JUNE 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

JULY 2014				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

Instructional Days Per Month		
	Student	Staff
August	2	20
September	20	
October	21.5	.5
November	16	
December	16	.5
January	20.5	.5
February	15	
March	21	
April	19	1
May	21	.5
June	20	.5
<b>Total Instructional Days</b>	<b>192</b>	
<b>Professional Development</b>		<b>23</b>

Key	
	No School for Students & Staff
	No Students—Staff In-Service
	Student Half-Day—Staff In-Service
	Final Day for the 2012-13 school year

Marking Periods		
	DATES	# DAYS
Quarter 1	Aug. 29-Nov. 8	49
Quarter 2	Nov. 11-Jan. 31	49
Quarter 3	Feb. 3-April 11	45
Quarter 4	April 14-June 27	48

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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### MVCCS Student Behavior and Discipline

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#### CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct sets forth the expectations of our school for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity. As a school body, we are committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and school personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School has high expectations for its students. We believe in recognizing and encouraging students to live up to the high standards set by the school's mission and key design elements. Our students must show personal responsibility and good citizenship in all that they do. We believe strongly in the power of positive reinforcement. Students who are making progress both academically and behaviorally will be recognized and supported for their work. Student leadership, citizenship, and community service may be part of each student's Individual Achievement Plan (IAP).

#### EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

##### School-Wide Rules for A Positive Learning Environment

We expect our students to conduct themselves properly in a responsible manner at all times. That means we expect every child to:

1. Show respect at all times to everyone.
2. Behave in a responsible manner.
3. Be dressed in accord with the dress code currently in effect.
4. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
5. Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.

To assure that students have the skills needed to comply with these rules, the following expectations will be taught, modeled, and discussed. Each student will demonstrate ability to:

1. Accept responsibility and consequences for their actions.
2. Use self-control in all situations.
3. Exhibit habits of leadership, teamwork courage, and kindness.
4. Cooperate with and show respect to **ALL** adults and classmates.
5. Be prepared for learning every day and demonstrate a positive attitude towards excellence in all that they do.

**Bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.** Behaviors considered to be bullying may include but are not limited to verbal, physical, or electronic incidents of harassment or intimidation, pursuant to the Dignity for All Students Act of 2010.

##### Consequences and Interventions

Our discipline system will be premised on clear expectations, positive reinforcement, and taking responsibility for choices and behavior. In the classroom, teachers will use a variety of subtle cues and low-level interventions (e.g., eye contact, body language, and whispered cues) to correct poor behavior. Students who do not respond to such cues will face corrective measures.

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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When students are unable to demonstrate compliance with any of the school's expectations, interventions will be implemented in a timely manner. These interventions will include one or more of the actions from the following list, appropriate to the situation:

- “Time away” from activities or events.
- Loss of privileges
- Time in a “*STOP*” Location (Student has the opportunity to “Spend Time On Problem”, in a supervised setting other than the classroom, with a staff member, to re-evaluate inappropriate behavior, and have an opportunity to refocus and attend to learning).
- Restitution and/or community service
- Apology to those impacted by infraction of rules
- Written plan for achieving success in problem areas
- Meeting with staff members
- Meeting with parents
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension.

### **CLEAR COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS**

We will work closely with parents to reinforce positive behavior and social choice-making. The development of self-control begins in the family unit. Parents are a child's first teachers. Parents who have established clear and consistent expectations for behavior help prepare their children to adjust to a formal educational setting. It is important to the success of all children that parents remain involved and support the school in maintaining proper discipline. In those instances where it is needed, MVCCS wants parents to be included in the problem-solving process to correct poor behavior as well. Strategies that will assure parent involvement include the following:

- Parent/Guardian Phone Call and/or Conference

As part of the school's personal responsibility expectations, a supervised conference call to parents, made by a student experiencing a behavioral challenge, may be part of a problem resolution plan. At other times, a member of the staff will call parents/guardians in response to significant or persistent violations of the school behavior expectations. Parent conferences may be held by phone, in person, or through electronic means. This commitment to communication is important as we maintain our partnership to best serve the child.

- Community Service / Reflection Activities

When a student is so disruptive that he or she needs to be removed from the classroom, the School Leadership Team may require the student to complete a writing assignment, perform some sort of community service (e.g. clean the school), or assign the student another task that forces him/her to reflect and compensate for the problem he/she has caused. The goal of these consequences is to help the student to realize the value of his/her education and to help the student to practice appropriate behavior. Parents will be informed and consulted as appropriate.

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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### POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND INTERVENTION SUPPORT

MVCCS will follow a Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) program developed to support high student performance. Some key factors are:

1. An approach to discipline that is proactive and outcome based.
2. Adapted throughout the whole school.
3. Establishes and reinforces clear, behavioral expectations.
4. Emphasizes continuous data-based improvement; all decisions based on supporting data.

Each classroom will have rules and consequences specific to the room, yet consistent with the school-wide rules, created with student input and discussion. It is the responsibility of the students to know and follow these expectations. Classroom practices that lead to excellent behavior and discipline include these:

- **Morning Meeting**—gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead
- **Rule Creation**—helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals
- **Interactive Modeling**—teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors
- **Positive Teacher Language**—using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline
- **Logical Consequences**—responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity
- **Guided Discovery**—introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility
- **Academic Choice**—increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work
- **Classroom Organization**—setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity
- **Working with Families**—creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches
- **Collaborative Problem Solving**—using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students.

### SUSPENSION

For severe or repeated violations of the MVCCS Code of Conduct, students may be assigned to in-school or out-of-school suspension. In-school suspension means that the student is not allowed to participate in any part of the school day. The student will spend the school day in a supervised setting with appropriate work to complete.

If a student is assigned to out-of-school suspension, that student may not come to school for the period of the suspension and will be expected to complete all schoolwork missed with quality. In the event of a suspension, parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the reason. Repeated offenses are of serious concern and will result in longer periods of suspension. Serious offenses could involve law enforcement intervention.

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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When a student is suspended, he/she may only return to school with a parent/guardian. The students and his/her parent/guardian will have a personal conversation with a staff member on the day the student is scheduled to return. In most cases, the student will be required to explain his/her plan for correcting the situation causing the suspension, and to apologize to others who were victims of his/her actions.

At MVCCS, students are taught strategies to avoid fighting. Fighting demonstrates disrespect for self, for peers, and for the values of the school community. In the event of student fighting, the student will receive at least one day of out-of-school suspension. In addition, any student who hits or pushes another student, regardless of who started the conflict, will be suspended. We encourage students to consult an adult whenever another student hits or pushes them.

In addition, a student may be suspended for one or more days if it is determined that he/she committed any of the following offenses:

- Refusal to obey a member of the school staff
- Disruptive behavior in the classroom or other school activity
- Cursing at a member of the school staff
- Destruction or theft of school property or the personal property of others
- Threatening, intimidating, or blackmailing school staff or other children
- Use of obscene or profane language or gestures with a member of the school staff
- Unauthorized leaving of classroom, building, or school grounds
- Sexually harassing or use of sexual words, gestures, touching, or other actions
- Bomb threats
- Possession or use of fireworks or other explosive material or lighting any flammable material in school
- Forgery
- Gambling
- Pulling or attempting to pull a fire alarm
- Unauthorized possession and/or use of electronic devices
- Violation of any local, state, or federal laws
- Any other violation of school rules or regulations that make the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive

### **EXPULSION**

In case of severe or repeated violations, the Executive Director may recommend that a student be expelled. The Board of Mohawk Valley Community Charter School has the right to expel any pupil who has engaged in conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity which endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or violates a publicized policy of the Board of MVCCS. Expulsion only takes place after a hearing of a designated panel of the Board of Trustees.

Under federal law, if a student is found in possession of a dangerous weapon on school property, on the school bus, or at a school-sponsored function, the student will be recommended for

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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expulsion. If a student is found in possession of drugs or alcohol on school property, on the school bus, or at a school-sponsored function, the student will be recommended for expulsion.

If a student physically assaults a staff member, the Executive Director may recommend the student for expulsion.

Students may be referred to the police for any offense that violates local, state, or federal law.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual Harassment is not only wrong, it is illegal. Sexual harassment is defined by New York State Human Rights Law as “any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature”.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Suggestive or lewd comments or gestures
- Unwanted hugs, touches, kisses
- Retaliation for complaining about sexual harassment
- Derogatory [or negative] or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings.

MVCCS is the work environment of its teachers and students. Every member of the MVCCS community is entitled to feel safe both physically and emotionally while involved in school activities (i.e. during the school day, and during after-school and weekend events). MVCCS will do its best to uphold New York State Law by addressing all reported instances of sexual harassment.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The procedures relating to the discipline of students with disabilities require school personnel with authority to suspend or remove students to work closely with Committees on Special Education, establishing clear guidelines for communication and decision making on disciplinary matters. Mohawk Valley Community Charter School shall implement the following disciplinary policy procedures with respect to students with disabilities.

If a student violates the charter school’s discipline code and is being considered for a suspension or removal, the school must ensure the following due process protections are provided to the student and to the student’s parent(s) in addition to those set forth in the regular education discipline code. For suspensions of five school days or less, the student’s parent(s) or guardian must be provided with a written notice, and a follow up telephone call if possible, within 24 hours of the incident leading up to the suspension which describes the basis for the suspension and explains that the parent or guardian has the right to request an informal conference with the Executive Director and appropriate staff to discuss the incident. For suspensions in excess of five consecutive school days, the student’s parent(s) or guardian must be provided with a written notice which indicates that the district proposes to suspend the student from school in excess of five consecutive school days, describes the basis for the proposed suspension, explains that the student has an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by the Executive Director or designated officer. Where possible, notification must also be provided by telephone. For any student of compulsory school age, the school must provide alternative education to the student during the

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policies

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suspension as set forth below, including any special services required by the Individualized Education Program prepared by the students' CSE of their district of residence. The Executive Director shall make final determination on a suspension or removal of a student, following due process.

In addition to the above, there are additional procedures and protections that apply to students with disabilities including:

- The provision of a free and appropriate education to students who are suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons for more than ten school days in a school year, this includes a teacher going to the student's home or the student coming to the school during or after the scheduled school day to receive the required instruction according to the IEP;
- The responsibility of schools to address behaviors that result in suspensions or removals for more than ten school days in a school year (functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plans);
- The determination of the relationship between the behavior and the student's disability when a suspension or removal would result in a disciplinary change of placement (manifestation determination);
- Providing the parent of the student a copy of the procedural safeguards notice (special education rights) whenever a disciplinary action will result in a disciplinary change in placement which is a removal for more than 10 consecutive school days;
- An expedited process to resolve disagreements between parents and schools regarding certain disciplinary actions; protections for students who are not classified when a parent asserts that the school had knowledge, prior to the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action, that the student was a student with a disability;
- Expedited evaluations of students suspected of having a disability during the time the student is suspended.

The charter school has the authority to suspend or remove students with a disability to interim alternative educational settings for up to 45 days for offenses relating to illegal drugs, controlled substances, weapons, or where the student represents a safety concern. In instances when the school maintains that it is dangerous for a student to remain in his current educational placement, the school can request an expedited due process hearing to move the student to an interim setting. The school can remove a student with a disability from his or her current placement when necessary, even though the student had previously been removed earlier in the school year, as long as the removal does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement.

The charter school will work closely with the committee on special education to establish clear guidelines for communication and decision-making on disciplinary matters, and to adhere to legal mandates as they evolve over time.

## School Trustee Background Information

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

**Name:** Colleen Cavallo

**Charter School Name:** Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Charter School Address:** P. O. Box 1691, Utica NY 13503

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.

**I was contacted directly by B. Ann Maher, one of the Lead Applicants.**

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

**I have long had an interest in efforts that will improve school environments and increase educational options for students in the Utica area. I am the mother of five children, ages 19 to 35. Three of them graduated from public schools and two opted for a Catholic high school which came closer to meeting their individual needs and interests.**

**From 1981 through 2010 (when our youngest graduated), I was continuously active in Parent-Teacher organizations, fundraising groups and other activities to support positive, healthy school environments.**

**For several years, I served on a Shared Decision-Making Team – having been recruited by the principal when Proctor High School was under “Registration Review.”**

**One of my sons spent three years as a high school math teacher in the South Bronx, and together we learned about the advantages and successes being reported by charter schools in New York City.**

**Separate from our own family, I have spent my professional life working with parents and children in one way or another. I am strongly committed to an educational approach that responds to the individual needs of each student across the spectrum of intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative pursuits.**

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): **See attached resume.**

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 have known Joanne Joseph, another MVCCS Board Member, for 31 years. She and my husband, Roger Cavallo, are both professors at SUNY Institute of Technology. Her husband, Michael Moore, has been an adjunct instructor in my husband's department. We have participated in family events together. In the 1980s, I was a student in two of her college classes. Joanne and I have also served together on community coalitions related to services for children and families in Oneida County.**

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:

**I am employed by the Family Nurturing Center of Central New York, a non-profit parenting education agency that is written into the application as a service provider for families enrolled in MVCCS.**

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 send a letter expressing my concerns to every board member, indicating my intent to raise the matter at the next board meeting; and, if necessary, request a special session to determine all the facts and decide on a course of action.**

### **Educational Philosophy**

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

**I understand that the MVCCS mission is for the students to become well-rounded, successful, global citizens prepared for higher education and the work force, empowered to effect positive change in the world.**

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

**I understand that MVCCS will accomplish its goals through an academically rigorous curriculum that prepares students to think critically, problem-solve effectively and live responsibly.**

**Further, the school's global academic curriculum will utilize: a multi-faceted, inquiry based approach; direct teacher instruction; project-based learning; NYS Common Core Standards; certified and highly-qualified teachers; multi-cultural learning; a longer school day and longer school year; an individualized approach to learning; a positive, supportive environment; parent and community involvement; and school-wide accountability via data-driven decision-making and demonstrated student 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.

**I believe that the MVCCS will ensure success by contracting and retaining highly committed and qualified individuals to serve as teachers, administrators and trustees. All of these individuals must be cooperative, responsible agents and advocates, insistent upon total commitment to the school's mission and fidelity to every design element.**

## Other

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

**Toward making my decision to accept this position, I consulted a document by the NYS School Boards Association (nyssba.org). From this, I understand that a NYS school board member's responsibilities include: (1) setting the school's direction by drawing upon the community; describing a shared vision; and establishing goals, standards and strategy; (2) ensuring alignment of strategy, resources, policies, programs and processes with school goals; (3) assessing and accounting for progress, using data, deliberation and open communication; (4) continuously improving the school by accentuating and reinforcing the positive and correcting the negative.**

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 so 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, Colleen Cavallo (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.

*Colleen Cavallo*

February 20, 2012

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Signature

Date

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*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:**

[REDACTED]

**Business Address:**

[REDACTED]

**E-Mail Address:**

[REDACTED]

**Home Telephone:**

[REDACTED]

**Home Address:**

[REDACTED]

## COLLEEN DONOVAN CAVALLO

- Education:**
- 1970-1979 State University of New York - Binghamton NY.  
Part-time English major while employed on campus.
  - 1987-1988 State University of New York - Empire State College - Utica NY.  
Received Bachelor of Science in Human Services.  
Concentration in Childbirth and Parenting Education.
  - 1989-1992 State University of New York - Cortland NY.  
Completed 30 credits toward Masters in Health Education.  
Concentration in Adult Education.
- Employment:**
- 1970-1980 State University of New York - Binghamton NY.  
Administrative Assistant to Dean, School of Advanced Technology.
  - 1980-1983 Hemisphere Publishing Company - Washington DC. Editorial Assistant.
  - 1981-present Certified Childbirth Educator and Birth Assistant (self-employed).
  - 1984-1985 Faxton Hospital - Psychological Services - Utica NY. Office Manager.
  - 1988-1990 March of Dimes (non-profit) - Utica NY. Community Outreach Director.
  - 1990-1992 Mentor Moms Program - United Cerebral Palsy (non-profit) - Utica NY.  
Coordinator, Senior Case Manager, Grant Writer.
  - 1993-present Family Nurturing Center of Central New York (non-profit) - Utica NY.  
Program Planner, Grant Writer, Teen Services Coordinator.  
Trained in implementation of the Nurturing Parenting Programs®.  
Trained in implementation of the Healthy Families America Program®.  
Successful in acquiring government and foundation grants ranging up to \$300,000 (per grant, per year) for parenting education and support services.
- Volunteer Positions:**
- 1981-2010 Shared Decision-Making Teams; Parent-Teacher Organizations and Fundraising Committees at two private schools and four public schools (K-12) attended by my five children.
  - 1985-1990 Midwifery Task Force of New York State (non-profit; consumer education and public support of professional midwives). Vice President.
  - 1988-present Mohawk Valley Breastfeeding Network (non-profit). Founding Member and Continuing Education Coordinator.
  - 1993-present Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network (non-profit; formerly named Healthy Mothers-Healthy Babies Coalition). Board of Directors Member; Agency Fund Development and Personnel Policies Committees.

<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:** Gustave J. DeTraglia III

**Charter School Name:** Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Charter School Address:** 1214 Lincoln Avenue, Utica, NY 13502

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-attorney

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.

A member of the founding team with whom I had previously worked on a totally unrelated project contacted me and asked if I would be interested in helping to found the school and serve as a member of the Board of Trustees for the school.

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

I wish to serve on the Board of Trustees for the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School because I think that as a professional who lives and works in the Mohawk Valley, it is important for me to give back to the community. This school is an organization that I deem to be extremely worthy of my time and energy. As a practicing attorney who is heavily involved in the Family Court system representing both parents and children, I am constantly aware of children for whom traditional methods of education simply are not the answer. This school will provide an alternative to traditional methods of education, and is just what is needed for many children in our area. I view a Charter School as an asset to not only those who will be educated within its walls, but also to everyone around it. This includes the families of the students, the neighborhood, the community and the common good.

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.

The first and best way to handle a situation such as this would be to consult the bylaws of the school for guidance. If there were a procedure in place to handle the specific situation that is before me, I would be bound by the bylaws to follow that procedure. If no procedure were in place, then an executive session at a board meeting would be necessary to address my concerns. If the particular situation was one that seemed like it was likely to occur again at some point in the future, I would ask my fellow board members to consider amending the bylaws if necessary. The bottom line is that every board member must have the interests of the students at the forefront, and it would be important to ensure that if a board member has placed some other interest ahead of the interests of the student that they should no longer be involved with the board.

### **Educational Philosophy**

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

The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School's mission is to educate children to become good world citizens who are well-educated, effective leaders in whatever they do in life. A student who is educated in this school will have all of the tools necessary to use her or his innate talents and personality to their maximum potential.

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

The educational program of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School is known as an Individual Achievement Plan (hereinafter "IAP"). Each student is given the opportunity to achieve goals. In a traditional school setting, benchmarks are reached the student is passed on to the next grade. At MVCCS, once a goal is reached, the student will not rest on her or his laurels, but rather continue progressing towards their next goal.

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 that a successful charter school needs to be adaptive to the needs of those whom are served by it. While sound fiscal oversight will always be important, I believe that it will be of the utmost importance in the very beginning when the “brick and mortar” tasks are being handled. Additionally, a successful charter school will need to fulfill all aspects of its mission and vision. The school would fail if it did not deliver on the promises that it made to the students and parents, the promises that brought them into the fold to begin with. Lastly, a well-run institution is similar to a child, advancing with time and practice. Accentuate the positives, continue to do what works, stop doing what doesn’t and learn from your mistakes.

### **Other**

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

A Chart School board member is responsible for providing oversight into the operations of the school. This oversight is not in the day-to-day operations of the school, but rather it is to ensure that those who are responsible for the day-to-day operations are performing their tasks appropriately. It is our responsibility to the students to educate them in the best manner possible. It is also our responsibility to the taxpayers to ensure that their dollars are not being spent inappropriately or ineffectively.

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 hereby swear and affirm that I have read and understand the charter school application, Charter School Board’s by-laws and all proposed procedures.

23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

One of the issues that is so prominent in the Utica area is that a great many of the students come from homes in which English is not the primary language. My understanding is that there is over 26 different languages spoken at Thomas R. Proctor High School. Couple that with the vast number of economically disadvantaged families, and it can make the early educational years extremely difficult for many children in our community. This school will be equipped to ensure that these students are not discouraged in school due to the fact that they cannot understand the language. Many of those from outside the Utica area have little or no awareness of this situation. Our school is founded by and under the leadership of a group of dedicated people with intimate local knowledge. It takes a village to educate a child. We know that our area is so very unique, and that the obstacles and barriers that would be faced by our students and our school can be overcome by the efforts of those of us who are invested in the overall success and well being of the local community.

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# Gustave J. DeTraglia III

## Objective

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To serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School.

## Experience

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June, 2002-current                      Law Offices of Gustave J. DeTraglia Jr., Esq.                      Utica, NY

### ***Associate***

- Provide representation to clients in a broad range of legal areas
- Research legal issues and prepare pleadings, briefs and memorandums
- Assist in law firm management on both a substantive and administrative level

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January-May, 2002                      Wattstein and Wattstein, P.C.                      Bristol, CT

### ***Law Student Clerk***

- Interviewed clients and developed responses to discovery demands in personal injury litigation
- Negotiated calendar deadlines with opposing counsel and the Connecticut State Judiciary
- Assisted senior attorneys with investigations and other matters related to litigation

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Summer 1998, 1999                      F.X. Matt Brewing Co.                      Utica, NY

### ***Tour Guide/Trolley Driver***

- Gave tours of an industrial brewing and bottling facility
- Helped manage a tour center and tavern, including inventory, retail sales, and event planning
- Drove a trolley/bus to transport tours; possess a CDL Class C license with passenger endorsement

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Summers 1995-1997                      Town of New Hartford Parks Dept.                      New Hartford, NY

### ***Laborer***

- Carried out park maintenance functions including grounds keeping, janitorial, and security
- Operated heavy equipment and performed some excavation and construction duties
- Assisted with civic events throughout the Town of New Hartford

## Education

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2000-2002

Quinnipiac University School of Law

Hamden, CT

### ***Juris Doctorate***

- Chaired committee responsible for redrafting the student government Constitution
- 

1995-1999

Hobart College

Geneva, NY

### ***B.A.-Political Science***

## References

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References are available on request.



## **School Trustee Background Information**

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

**Name:** Kimberly A. Fiato

**Charter School Name:** Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Charter School Address:** TBD, Utica, NY

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. I first became aware of the charter school through a fellow church member. It immediately drew my interest. I was invited to attend a founders’ group meeting, where I learned more about this charter school initiative. I continued to participate in the

meetings and provide suggestions and technical support. As result, I was asked to become a board of trustee member; I gratefully accepted.

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. I firmly believe in the ideals, values, and purpose of a charter school. MVCCS, in particular aims to fill an academic void that exists within our community through a unique and innovative educational experience; one that cannot be matched by the traditional public schools.

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 came to know the other board members by working with them as a

member of the MVCCS Founding Group. My relationship with each of them is purely professional and I consider them to be colleagues.

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. As soon as I encounter a possible conflict of interest, I would notify the Board immediately. I would also request that we meet to further discuss the matter, how it may conflict with the members' board role, and take the appropriate steps to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interests.

### **Educational Philosophy**

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. The Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (MVCCS) mission is to serve students from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, as well as students with different learning needs. MVCSS will embrace innovative, rigorous curriculum to prepare students to think critically, problem-solve effectively, and live responsibly in a global community.
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. The educational program consists of a variety of innovative teaching methods, such as place-based learning, individualized achievement plans, and, leadership programs, that will build from students' strengths to maximize student achievement. Other key elements of the educational program will not only prepare students to meet academic standards required by the Common Core Standards and the New York State Curriculum Guidelines, but teach students responsibility, citizenship and contribution.
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. Successful charter schools possess many key characteristics. The following is a list of attributes that I believe enables charter schools to be successful:

- **A strong founding group.** Charter schools are often created by thoughtful community members, concerned parents, dedicated teachers, university educators, and political and business people who bring together the knowledge, skills and insight that drive success.
- **A powerful mission.** A clear, focused mission is at the heart of a successful charter school. A shared educational philosophy that guides decision-making at every level is also paramount.
- **An innovative school program.** Effective charter schools leverage their freedom to experiment and be creative in terms of scheduling, curriculum, organization and instruction. They are often infused with the spirit of innovation. For example, innovation may take the shape of a longer school day, a novel teaching pedagogy or a unique scheduling configuration. While these practices may already exist, the original ways that schools combine them often results in a school culture and operational structure that sets them apart from their counterparts.
- **A solid partnership with parents and community.** A shared educational vision creates a strong sense of community. Charter schools tend to be small, which allows for closeness and cohesiveness not possible in larger schools. A family-like feel is intentional, part of the school design that fosters commitment on the part of the teachers, parents, community members, administrators, and students.
- **Accountability driven by governance.** An innovative governance model is a key characteristic of charter schools. Charter schools utilize a governing board of trustees that is responsible for school performance, policy-making and oversight. Board members are stakeholders not only attuned to the school's mission, but also intimately familiar with the school's daily operations.

### Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. The role of a public charter school board member is to carry out the wishes of its owner, which involves ensuring:

- Learning and school achievement.
- Proper management and accountability for school funds.
- Lawful and fair school policies that provide appropriate protection for everyone involved with the school.

Board members must also know how to:

- Determine if the school is on course academically and how to make needed improvements
- Lead through the use of a strategic plan
- Avoid conflict and/or handle conflict that arises

Lastly, board members are responsible for their own training and professional development, as well as those of new members.

8. 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.
  
9. 23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.  N/A

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

## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Kimberly A. Fiato (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.

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Signature

Date



7/12/12

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*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:** [REDACTED]

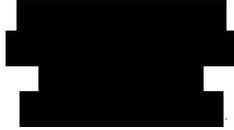
**Business Address:** [REDACTED]

**E-Mail Address:** [REDACTED]

**Home Telephone:** [REDACTED]

**Home Address:** [REDACTED]

**KIMBERLY A. FIATO, PhD**



## **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

### **Doctor of Philosophy, Organization and Management, specialization in Information Technology Management**

Capella University, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2012

Dissertation: Enhancing Electronic Medical Records: Peer Support Interventions Influencing Nurses' Acceptance and Use

### **Master of Science, Management Information Systems**

Bowie State University, Bowie, Maryland, 2003

Thesis: Microsoft.NET: The Computing Platform of the Future

### **Bachelor of Arts, Business Administration, Computer Information Systems**

Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida, 2000

### **Associate in Applied Science, Instructor of Technology and Military Science**

Community College of the Air Force, Montgomery, Alabama, 2004

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **Adjunct Online Instructor** 2011-present

Mohawk Valley Community College, Utica-Rome, New York

Courses teaching: *Computer Science, Computer Information Systems*

- Develops formal and online course content for granted funded Community Education programs
- Researches emerging information security technologies and developments in support of curriculum development objectives
- Utilizes a variety of assessment and measurement strategies to provide students with timely, constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement
- Seizes professional development opportunities to expand instructor knowledge and keep pace with industry trends

### **Adjunct Online Instructor** 2006-2007

Grantham University, Kansas City, Missouri

Courses taught: *Programming Essentials and Database Concepts*

- Taught online courses to diverse adult populations
- Developed visual teaching aids and integrated technology into curriculum to support and advance learning objectives

### **Air Force Instructor 2004-2006**

Community College of the Air Force, Kising Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Germany

- Taught college-level management courses to midlevel managers
- Courses taught:
  - Leadership
  - Organizational management
  - Team Development
  - Diversity
- Worked with students one-on-one to enhance learning
- Received consistently high student evaluation marks (4.5+ on 5.0 scale)

*Kising Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Kapaun Air Station, Germany*

*2005-2006*

### **Superintendent, Leadership Division**

- Managed development and modification of leadership curriculum consisting of 18 lessons
- Addressed students' concerns pertaining to curriculum
- Performed instructor evaluations
- Developed in-service training to ensure instructor training goals were met
- Emceed graduation ceremonies

## **WORK HISTORY**

*Air Force Logistics Management Agency, Maxwell-Gunter Air Base, AL*

*2006-2008*

### **Superintendent, Integrated Logistics Application Development**

Retired from active duty military in February 2009 with 20 consecutive years of honorable service. Managed the development, implementation, and maintenance of integrated logistics application systems. Advised developers to ensure access, data and application security requirements were met. Led and directed IT Operations improvement process teams and research projects in support of \$1B ERP project. Participated in Supply Chain Management and process reengineering workshops. Languages/programs used: Oracle9i, Oracle9i Application Server, PLSQL, MS Visio and Office 2007.

*US Air Forces in Europe, Regional Supply, Sembach, Germany*

*2000-2004*

### **Systems Integration Supervisor**

Appointed information assurance officer. Monitored enterprise compliance with information assurance policies, identified application security requirements and ensured information assurance training goals were met. Responsible for the design, planning, and coordination of work teams for all database and Internet projects on Windows NT/2000 platforms. Managed the business continuity plan for the unit Oracle8i Database Server. Devised and conducted Oracle SQL, SQL\*Plus, WebDB and FORMS training for newly assigned team members.

**Languages/programs used:** SQL\*Plus, SQL, Java, Visual Basic, HTML, JavaScript, MS Access and Office 2000.

*Air Combat Command, Regional Supply, Langley Air Base, VA*

*1998-2000*

### **Internet/Application Developer**

Developed and deployed client/server applications on Windows NT platform. Designed secure Active Server Pages for a web-based reports builder providing users global on-demand access to critical logistics data. Built SQL Server data transfer scripts to import supply data files from UNISYS mainframe which effectively eliminated 300 printed reports monthly. Authored comprehensive help files and program documentation.

**Languages/programs used:** Visual Basic, VBScript, JavaScript, HTML, SQL and MS Access.

*Air Combat Command, 1st Supply, Langley Air Base, VA*

*1996-1998*

**Supply Automated Data Systems Scheduler**

Planned and scheduled daily computer job runs for the base supply UNISYS 1100-60 mainframe. Monitored the security, health and processing efficiency of the mainframe. Diagnosed and resolved supply database record errors, maintained a 99% error-free database and reduced terminal response time from 10.4 to 2.1 seconds. Ensured processing and distribution of 342 supply management reports monthly. Trained new employees.

**Languages/programs Used:** Query Language Processor, Supply Users Report Generator, and QBasic.

**PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH**

Fiato, Kimberly A. (2007). AFSO21: a case study in process improvement, *Air Force Journal of Logistics*, 31(3), pp. 30-37.

**CERTIFICATIONS**

CompTIA Security+, 2011

CompTIA Strata IT Fundamentals, 2011

<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:**   Joanne Joseph, PhD          

**Charter School Name:**           Mohawk Valley Community Charter School          

**Charter School Address:**               Utica, New York          

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.):

          School 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.

**I was introduced to the charter school by one of the lead applicants, B. Ann Maher. Ms. Maher solicited my participation and interest in the idea of the charter school through a mutual colleague.**

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

**I offered to assist the charter school initiative as a board member because I am strongly committed to the social-emotional development of school-aged children. I have consulted with public schools throughout my entire professional career and have provided teacher trainings and workshops on a number of different areas related to child development and education. My own children benefited from an early start in a charter-like school setting. They benefited tremendously from the environment provided by a small school setting and I am therefore committed to making this a reality for other children as well.**

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 Colleen Cavallo, whose husband is my colleague at SUNY-IT and with whom I have shared family events and professional collaborations on services for families.**

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:

**I know Ann Maher, who introduced me to the other Founding Group members who have prepared this application for the Mohawk Valley Community Charter School.**

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.

**The following are the steps I would take to address a self-interest problem on the part of a board member:**

**Step 1: I would express my concerns with the individual or individuals involved privately first. If the issue is not resolved, then I would proceed to step number 2.**

**Step 2: I would raise the issue, in an executive session with the entire board for an open discussion and resolution. The resolution should then be implemented and discussed in an open session of the board.**

## **Educational Philosophy**

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

**The mission of the proposed charter school is to educate a diverse group of students from K-5 utilizing a curriculum that is holistic in orientation, rigorous in content, and flexibly creative in venue. The goal is to socialize children who are socially-emotionally mature, academically well rounded, and able to think globally, critically and creatively.**

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

**The educational program for the charter school will utilized an individualized achievement plan for students. The educational components of the program include:**

- 1. Math, Science, Language Arts, Foreign Language Technology and Engineering.**
- 2. Affective Areas including respect for diversity, self-control, responsibility and resiliency.**
- 3. Promotion of critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity.**

**The program curriculum is designed to be integrative and to make use of real-world experiences and flexible teaching modalities to ensure mastery of common core curriculum and social-emotional development.**

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.

**The characteristics of a successful Charter School include:**

- 1. A committed leader and staff passionate about children and education and well trained in the principles of child development and pedagogy. In addition, the executive director and staff of the school must possess the cognitive flexibility, problem solving and social skills to deal with a diverse student population.**
- 2. A culture characterized by respect, cooperation and accountability including fiscal accountability.**
- 3. A nurturing environment.**
- 4. Clearly defined expectations for students, families, and staff.**

5. **A clearly defined communication mechanism and expectations that keeps all the stakeholders informed as well as providing stakeholders with an opportunity for feedback and suggestions.**
6. **An emphasis on the education of the “whole child.”**
7. **Reasonable but high outcome goals.**
8. **A strategic plan that reflects the mission and vision of the Charter School.**

**The above mentioned characteristics increase the probability of achieving the kinds of outcome goals specified in the mission of the charter school: mainly children who are mastering the common core curriculum and who have developed the social-emotional skills to be resilient in face of adversity, respectful of individual differences, and responsible global citizens.**

**The responsibility of the board is to ensure the success of the school. The steps the board needs to take are as follows:**

1. **Assuring that the executive director and staff have the necessary credentials and characteristics to meet the needs of the school.**
2. **Provide consultation and assistance as requested by the executive director.**
3. **Help establish the goals, objectives, and strategic plan for the school.**
4. **Cooperate with staff on a feasible but rigorous evaluation plan to assess Charter school effectiveness, fiscal responsibility and student learning outcomes.**
5. **Monitor the progress of the school through the strategic plan and evaluation plan.**
6. **Act as a liaison between staff and stakeholders.**
7. **Engage in a board self-evaluation exercise once a year to ensure board integrity and effectiveness.**

## **Other**

21. **Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.**

**Essentially the role of the board member is to provide both assistance and fiscal oversight to the operation of the school by engaging in the activities described in question 20. IT is NOT the role of the board member to micro-manage or passively accept the recommendations of the administrator. The board should always act as an independent agent focused on the mission and vision of the Charter School, fiscal accountability and long-term planning.**

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 so 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, Joanne M. Joseph (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.

Joanne M. Joseph  
Signature

7-12-12  
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: [REDACTED]

Business Address: [REDACTED]

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]

# Joanne M. Joseph, Ph.D.



## Educational History

B.A., Psychology, Canisius College, 1972  
Ph.D., Psychology, SUNY at Albany, 1979

## Professional Training

7/76 - 7/77 Clinical Internship: Greene County Community Mental Health Center, Xenia, Ohio

1/76 - 5/76 Clinical Practicum: Albany Home for Children, Albany, New York

9/72 - 5/76 Research Assistant, Psychology Department: State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York

1/74 - 1/75 Teaching Assistant to Psychology Department: State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York

## Professional Experience

9/81 - present Private practice, Utica, New York. Services provided in the area of individual, family, and group therapy, behavioral medicine, psychological assessment, and consultation.

9/80 - 1986 Assistant Professor of Psychology, SUNY Institute of Technology, Utica, New York. Instructed courses in (see list below):

1986 - present Associate Professor of Psychology, SUNY Institute of Technology, Utica, New York. Instructed courses in:

- Child Development
- Adolescent Development
- Abnormal Psychology
- Treatment of the Exceptional Individual
- Social Psychology
- Health Psychology
- Personality
- Life-Span Development
- Counseling Psychology
- Group Dynamics
- Psychology of Gender
- Advanced Health Psychology
- Educational Psychology

2009 - present Director of Assessment and Coordinator for the Center for Service-Based Learning and Community Engagement.

1998 - present Consultant, SITRIN Rehabilitation Center

5/97 - 1999 Consultant, ODR - Family Life Project. Atlanta, Georgia.

- 9/95 - present Consultant, Faxton Regional Cancer Center, Utica, New York
- 1986 - present Consultant, Primary Project - Mohawk Valley Region
- 8/88 - 8/91 Consultant to Nursing Director, St. Luke's Hospital
- 1986 - 1989 Consultant, New School of Oneida County
- 1986 - 1989 Consultant, MVLDA Social Skills Training Program
- 1982 - 1986 Assistant Adjunct Professor of Psychology, St. Elizabeth Hospital, Utica NY
- 1994 - 1995 Consultant, Waterville Elementary School
- 1991 - 1999 Consultant, HOSPICE, Inc.
- 9/79 - 6/81 Psychologist, Oneida County BOCES, New Hartford NY
- 1) Psychological assessment
  - 2) Counseling services to children involved in the Special Education program
  - 3) Supportive counseling to the parents of the children involved in the Special Education program
  - 4) Supportive counseling to children referred to school psychologist in area district schools
  - 5) Consultation services to teachers and other school based personnel
- 9/79 - 9/80 Lecturer, SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome, Utica, New York. Responsibilities included: instruction of Abnormal, Personality and Exceptional Child courses.
- 7/77 - 7/79 Psychologist/Research Program Evaluation Coordinator, Greene County Mental Health Program, Xenia, Ohio. Responsibilities included:
- 1) Direct treatment services to families, groups and individuals. Treatment services involved agency-based parent education program, family, individual, and group treatment services of residents of Greene County referred for services.
  - 2) Psychological Assessment services to children referred to agency.
  - 3) Design, implementation, and evaluation of social skills training groups for preadolescent youth.
  - 4) Consultations to schools, courts and health-related facilities.
  - 5) Treatment and consultation services to a school-based experimental program for outpatient emotionally disturbed / learning disabled children. Services provided included: group therapy, family therapy, individual therapy, parent education groups for families of the youngsters; and consultation services for principal, mainstream teachers and school psychologist.
  - 6) Consultation and group treatment services to primary and intermediate EMR units. Services provided included a social skills training group and consultation services.
  - 7) Program-Evaluation-Quality Assurance-Research responsibilities. Those responsibilities included: design of a MIS system, design and implementation of an outcome evaluation and client satisfaction studies and the initial design of a quality assurance plan.
  - 8) Supervision and training of MHT and undergraduate interns.
- 9/77 - 6/79 Adjunct Assistant Professor, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. Responsibilities included instruction of Child Development - Human Development, Introductory and Clinical-Abnormal Psychology courses.

6/78 - 6/79	Consultation to Dr. Gary Klein, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Responsibilities included the evaluation of a social skills training group for delinquent youth.
2/78 - 6/78	Consultation to South Community Youth Program, Dayton, Ohio. Responsibilities included consulting services around evaluation of the centers' youth program.
1/76 - 5/76	Lecturer, State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York. Responsibilities included instruction of Child Development course.
9/75 - 1/76	Lecturer, Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, New York. Responsibilities included instruction of a General Psychology course.
9/71 - 8/72	Research Assistant, Psychology Department, Canisius College, Buffalo, New York. Responsibilities included literature research, aiding in research design and analysis, and implementation of research projects.
6/71 - 9/71	Case Worker Apprentice for Erie County Welfare, Buffalo, New York. Responsibilities included: budget analysis, psychological counseling, and the design and implementation of a welfare-attitude survey. Survey was administered to residents of Erie County.
5/69 - 6/71	Administrative Assistant, Financial Aid Office, Canisius College, Buffalo, New York. Responsibilities included: the administration of a work-study program, design and administration of a Griffith Grant program, preparation of federal grants, assessment of financial need, and the administration of minority based financial aid programs.

## Peer Reviewed Papers & Publications

- Joseph, J.M., and Tedeschi, J.T. The least of two evils principle and attributions of responsibility and punishment. Law and Human Behavior, 1987.
- Joseph, J.M., Kane, T.R., and Tedeschi, J.T. Harm-doing behavior and perceived aggression: An application for International Relations, Proceedings, XVIII International Congress of Applied Psychology, Montreal, 1974.
- Joseph, J.M., Kane, T.R., Gaes, G.G., and Tedeschi, J.T. Effects of effort on attributed intent and perceived aggressiveness, Psychological Reports, 1976.
- Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M., and Tedeschi, J.T. Person perception in the Berkowitz Aggression Paradigm. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1976.
- Joseph, J.M., Gaes, G.G., Tedeschi, J.T., Cunningham, M. Impression Management Effects in the Forced Compliance Paradigm. Journal of Social Psychology, 1978.
- Joseph, J.M., Kane, T.R., Nacci, P., Tedeschi, J.T. Adult perception of imitation by children. Journal of Social Psychology, 1978.
- Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M., Tedeschi, J.T. Perceived Freedom, attributions of aggression and responsibility and the assignment of punishment. Journal of Personality, 1979.
- Schwartz, G., Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M., Tedeschi, J.T. The effects of post-transgression remorse on perceived aggression, attribution of intentionality and level of punishment. Human Relations, 1979.
- Stapleton, R.E., Joseph, J.M., Tedeschi, J.T. An empirical re-evaluation of the concept of aggression: Labeling and the competitive reaction time game. Journal of Social Psychology, 1978.
- Joseph, J.M., Efron, B., Rowth, J.M. Differential harm-doing and perceived aggression. Paper read at the 43rd Annual Meeting of Eastern Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., 1973.
- Joseph, J.M., Kane, T.R., Gaes, G.G., and Tedeschi, J.T. Perceived Aggression and Bandura Modeling Paradigm. Paper read at the 44th Annual Meeting of Eastern Psychological Association, Philadelphia, PA, 1974.
- Joseph, J.M., Gaes, G.G., and Tedeschi, J.T. A need for consistency: When Dissonance Fails and Impression Management Succeeds. Paper read at the 83rd Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, Illinois, 1975.
- Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M. Equity versus reinforcement interpretation of attraction. Paper read at the 83rd Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, Illinois, 1975.

- Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M., Gaes, G.G., Quigley, G. Perceived freedom and attributions of responsibility. Paper read at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, New York, New York, 1976.
- Kane, T.R., Joseph, J.M., Quigley, B. The effects of coercive behavior on attributions of responsibility and assignment of retribution. Paper read at the 84th annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, 1977.
- Joseph, J.M., Bankert, E., Dean-Kelly, L. "Psychological Preparation of Hospitalized Patient." Paper presented to New York State Association of Nurses, October, 1984.
- Joseph, J.M., Kelly, A. The Hardy Personality: Overview and Review. Research and Creative Expression, 1990.
- Joseph, J.M. The Resilient Child: Preparing Today's Youth for Tomorrow's World. Insight Books, 1994.
- Joseph, J.M., Resilience and Nonviolence: in V.K. Kool (ed.) Aggression and Nonviolence. University Press, 1994.
- Joseph, J.M., Portrait of a Resilient Child. 1997-1999. Regular column appearing in National Newsletter - Students at Risk. Newsletter distributed to schools and Departments of Education.
- Joseph, J., Thistleton, W., Morell, M, Sunderlin, C., Warmuth, J. Fostering Resiliency and Determining Treatment Modalities for Fibromyalgia Patients. Poster presentation given at *Fibromyalgia Workshop: The Next Advances*. Oregon Health and Science University and National Institute of Health. November 11, 2004.
- Morell, M., Joseph J., Thistleton, W, Warmuth, J. Stalling Fibromyalgia. Advances for Directors in Rehabilitation. May 2006, Vol. 15 (5), p 29-31.
- Warmuth, J. and Joseph, J Effects of a waterfall display on systolic blood pressure for individuals with dementia. HealthCare Design. March 2008.
- Joseph, J. and Murphy, P. Voices of Resilience: Stories from the Mohawk Valley. October 2009 Burns Pub.
- Bankert, E., Joseph, J., & Sellers, K. Chapter: Global initiatives for service-based learning among faculty and students. In *Global Giving Through Teaching: How Nurse Educators are Changing the World*, NLN Foundation and Springer Publishing, 2010.
- Warmuth, J. and Joseph, J. (2009). *Sitrin Model: New paradigms for Long Term Care*. Paper presented at National Conference of Health Care Architects. Florida
- Warmuth, J. and Joseph, J. (2010). *Impact of Environment on Physical and Mental Health*. Paper presented to National Conference for health Care Design.
- Warmuth, J. and Joseph, J. (2010). *The Sitrin Model: Physical and Psychological Impact on Long Term Care Residents*. Paper presented at the national meeting of AJA, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Joseph, J. and Perrone, M. (2010). *Senior Seminar, Upper Division Writing and Service-based Learning: A Pilot Project*. Paper presented to 4<sup>th</sup> Annual SUNY Fredonia Teaching and Learning Conference.
- Delprato, D., Bankert, E., Grust, P. and Joseph, J (2011). *Stress Management for nursing students: Current knowledge and future action*. In *Advances in Medical Education and Practice*.
- Thistleton, W., Wormuth J., Joseph J. (2012) *A Cottage Model for Eldercare*. *Health Environments Research and Design Journal*. Vol 5, No 3 99-114.
- Bankert, E., Laport, A. and Joseph, J . In Kelly, P., Vottero, B, Christie-McAuliffe, C. (Eds.). (In press). *Quality care and patient safety*. Clifton Park, NY: Delmar Cengage Learning.
- Joseph, J and Perrone, M (2011) Conference presentation: *Improving Student performance Through Interdisciplinary Teamwork in Senior Seminar*. NEEAN Fall Forum November 4, 2011.

### **Papers in Progress**

- Joseph, J, Thistleton, W. , Morell, M. and Warmuth, J. Differential patterns of Neurobiofeedback and "Cognitive Fog" for Fibromyalgia: A pilot study
- Joseph, J., Sunderlin, C., and Thistleton, W. A qualitative study of the psychosocial factors associated with fibromyalgia.
- Joseph, J. and Perrone, M. Does service based learning and Yoking composition instruction improve student writing, critical thinking and application skills?: a pilot study.
- Thistleton, W., Warmuth and Joseph: The effects of physical environmental changes on the mental and physical health of long-term care residents.
- Joseph, J., Thistleton, W. and Warmuth J. The influence of personality on job satisfaction for employees undergoing major institutional change.
- Joseph, J. Warmuth, J and Thistleton, W. The effects of physical environment on the perception and behavior of family members of long term care residents.
- Joseph, J., Thistleton, W., Sunderlin, C., Morell, M, and Warmuth, J. Coping and Social Support as Predictors of Adaptation for individuals with Fibromyalgia Syndrome. Under review in *Journal of Rehabilitation Psychology*.

## **Professional Affiliations & Credentials**

Member of the American Psychological Association  
New York State Licensure – January 1981

## **Honors**

Summa Cum Laude - Canisius College, 1972  
Elected to DiGamma Alpha Honor Society, Canisius College, 1971  
Who's Who Among American College Students, 1972  
Outstanding Young Women of American Award, January 1981  
Women's Day Merit Award, March 1986  
Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1991  
Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service, 2007  
Woman of Excellence Award – SUNY-IT Student Association, March 2007  
Robert J. Uplinger Distinguished Service Award, June 2009  
Genesis Award: Outstanding Educator Award, November 2009  
SUNY-IT Award: Outstanding Club Advisor, April 2010.

## **University Service**

Member: College-Wide Assessment Committee, 1991-present  
Member: College-Wide Curriculum Committee, 1990-1998  
Member: Graduate Council, 2002-2005  
Member: Freshmen Core, 2003-2005  
Member: Search Committee, Psychology, 2003-2004  
Member: College-wide Planning and Budget Committee, 2004-2005, 2010-present  
Member: Dean's Search Committee, 2004-2005  
Member: Arts & Sciences Personnel Committee, 2005-2006  
Member: School Personnel Committee, 2005-2006  
Member: School Strategic Planning Committee, 2005-2006  
Member: Chancellor's Award on Teaching and Professional Service Award, 2000-2011.  
Member: Search Committee, Psychology, 2005-2006  
Member: School Governance Committee, 2005-2006  
Member: Technology Committee working on Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, 2005-2006  
Member: Executive Council for Faculty Assembly, 2005-2010  
Chair: Psychology Department, 2006-2009  
Coordinator: Psychology Program, 2010-present.  
Chair: College-Wide Assessment Committee, 2006-2009  
Chair: Institutional Wide Assessment Committee 2009-present  
Member: Strategic Planning Committee  
Member: Shared Services Committee  
Member: Search Committee for Psychology Department  
Member: Committee for Business Department  
Member: Planning and Budget Committee

## **Community Service**

Board Member: HERS, 1986-1992  
Board Member: ABC Group, 1988-present  
Board Member: Faxton Institutional Research Board, 1986-present  
Board Member: Clinton Central School Band Parents, 2000-2004  
Volunteer: Hospice Inc. – called upon to work with difficult families and distressed staff, 1986-present  
Member: Community Task Force at Faxton Regional Cancer Center – planning community events, 2000-04  
Service: psychosocial support to indigent cancer patients and families through the Regional Cancer Center; also provided consultation services to medical personnel working on cancer and radiation floors, 1986-present  
Member: IRB at Hamilton College, 2002-2006  
Board Member: Genesis Task Force, 2005-present  
Member: Genesis Educational Task Force, 2005-2008  
Board Member: Compassion Net Blue Shield Blue Cross, 2003 -2006  
Member: Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Team, Faxton Hospital, 2006-present  
Member: Stop ACE of Oneida County; Chair of Resiliency Sub-committee, present  
Member: Literacy Coalition, present  
Member and Chair: Mentoring Committee, Oneida County CORE, present

<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:** Edna Rivera

**Charter School Name:** Mohawk Valley Community Charter School

**Charter School Address:** 1210 Lincoln Avenue, Utica, New York 13502

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.): parent school board representative

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

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 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 served on several not-for-profit boards: Assembly of Christian Churches Inc., Youth Association (upstate NY) on several occasions as Treasurer, and Substitute Treasurer. I served on the regional level as treasurer and substitute treasurer on different years. On the local board, I was the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary at different times. I also served as treasurer and another year as secretary on the parish board of The Assembly of Christian Churches, 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:

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 any conflict of interest to the board president's attention and ask that it be discussed at a special board meeting to determine if indeed this was an infraction.**

### **Educational Philosophy**

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

**My understanding is to create an environment that allows for all students to become successful global citizens. Each child would be judged on his/or her capabilities and develop life skills to live responsibly.**

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

**Each student will have an individual achievement plan that will be reviewed by parents, teachers and support staff. It will reflect additions or new proposals and goals to allow each child to develop at his/her own pace.**

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.

**The school will need a strong academic environment and a successful marketing program. It will also need a good financial plan and a strong support from parents and community members. It will be the responsibility of the board to oversee that this criteria is met. Board members will have to be on sub-committees and be actively involved to achieve success. The board must also be representative of diverse groups and talents and bring his/her expertise to the table.**

## Other

20. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.

**The board member should be responsible, experienced, be able to solve problems and have strong communication skills. It is of utmost importance that the board member shares the mission and the vision of the charter school.**

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 the charter school application, the by-laws and all proposed policies.

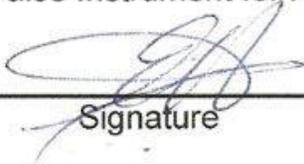
21. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

**While working with this charter school initiative, the collaboration and wealth of knowledge brought to this proposal is outstanding. As a parent, I have been impressed with the enthusiasm and direction of the MVCCS initiative and believe it will benefit the city of Utica and the surrounding area school districts tremendously. Working with younger students is a good way to build a strong foundation for this school.**

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

## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Edna Rivera (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 2/20/2012 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: N/A

Business Address: N/A

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]

**MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**BYLAWS**

(as of July 25, 2012)

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

The name of the Corporation is Mohawk Valley Community Charter School (hereinafter the "School").

**ARTICLE II**

**MEMBERSHIP**

The School has no members. The rights which would otherwise vest in the members vest in the Directors of the School (hereinafter the "Trustees"). Actions which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members or approval by the members require only approval of a majority of all Trustees or approval by the Board of Trustees (hereinafter the "Board").

**ARTICLE III**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

A. **Powers.** The Board shall conduct or direct the affairs of the School and exercise its powers, subject to applicable Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, the School's charter, and these bylaws. The Board may delegate the management of the activities of the School to others, so long as the affairs of the School are managed, and its powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.

Without limiting the generality of the powers hereby granted to the Board, but subject to the same limitations, the Board shall have all the powers enumerated in these Bylaws, and the following specific powers:

1. To elect and remove Trustees;
2. To select and remove Officers, agents and employees of the School; to prescribe powers and duties for them and to fix their compensation;
3. To conduct, manage and control the affairs and activities of the School, and to make rules and regulations;
4. To enter into contracts, leases and other agreements which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary or desirable in obtaining the purposes of promoting the interests of the School;
5. To carry on the business of operating the School and apply any surplus that results from the business activity to any activity in which the School may engage;
6. To act as trustee under any trust incidental to the School's purposes, and to receive, hold, administer, exchange and expend funds and property subject to such a trust;

## Attachment 5b MVCCS Proposed Corporate By-Laws

7. To acquire real or personal property, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise, and to hold, improve, lease, sublease, mortgage, transfer in trust, encumber, convey or otherwise dispose of such property;

8. To borrow money, incur debt, and to execute and deliver promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations and other evidences of debt and securities, subject to the provisions of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and any limitations noted in the By-laws;

9. To lend money received only from private sources and to accept conditional or unconditional promissory notes therefore, whether interest or non-interest bearing, or secured or unsecured; and

10. To indemnify and maintain insurance on behalf of any of its Trustees, Officers, employees or agents for liability asserted against or incurred by such person in such capacity or arising out of such person's status as such, subject to the applicable provisions of the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and the limitations noted in these Bylaws.

B. **Number of Trustees.** The number of Trustees of the School shall not be fewer than five (5) and shall not exceed fifteen (15). The Board shall fix the exact number of Trustees, within these limits, by Board resolution or amendment of the Bylaws.

C. **Election of Trustees.**

1. **Election.** The Board shall elect the Trustees by the vote of a majority of the Trustees then in office, whether or not the number of Trustees in office is sufficient to constitute a quorum, or by the sole remaining Trustee. Trustees-elect assume office subject to approval by the Charter Entity.

2. **Eligibility.** The Board may elect any person who is at least eighteen (18) years old and who, in its discretion, it believes will serve the interests of the School faithfully and effectively.

3. **Interested Persons.** Not more than forty percent (40%) of the persons serving on the Board may be interested persons. An "interested person" is: (1) any person currently being compensated by the School for services rendered to it within the previous 12 months, whether as a full-time or part-time employee, independent contractor or otherwise; or (2) any sister, brother, ancestor, descendant, spouse, domestic partner, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, mother-in-law or father-in-law, cousin or cousin-in-law of any such person.

4. **Term of Office.**

(a) The Trustees elected shall be divided into three classes for the purpose of staggering their terms of office. The Board Executive Committee will assign each founding Board member to a class prior to the first Board meeting. All classes shall be as nearly equal in number as possible. The assignment of any Board member to a particular class does not in any way restrict that Board member from participating fully in all Board activities and from serving additional terms.

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(b) The terms of office of the Trustees initially classified shall be as follows: that of the first class shall expire at the next annual meeting of the Trustees, the second class at the second succeeding annual meeting and the third class at the third succeeding annual meeting. At the end of each Trustees' term, they may serve an additional term if the majority of the board votes in favor. Following the expiration of these designated terms, the term of each Trustee shall continue for three (3) years.

(c) The term of office of a Trustee elected to fill a vacancy in these Bylaws begins on the date of the Trustee's election, and continues: (1) for the balance of the unexpired term in the case of a vacancy created because of the resignation, removal, or death of a Trustee, or (2) for the term specified by the Board in the case of a vacancy resulting from the increase of the number of Trustees authorized.

(d) A Trustee's term of office shall not be shortened by any reduction in the number of Trustees resulting from amendment to the Charter, the Bylaws, or other Board action.

(e) A Trustee's term of office shall not be extended or shortened beyond that for which the Trustee was elected by amendment of the school's charter or the Bylaws or other Board action.

5. **Time of Elections.** The Board shall elect Trustees whose terms begin on July 1st of a given year at the Annual Meeting for that year, or at a Regular Meeting designated for that purpose, or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.

D. **Removal or Suspension of Trustees, Officers and Employees.** The Board may remove or suspend from office by vote of a majority of the entire Board any Trustee, officer or employee engaged under special contract, on examination and due proof of the truth of a written complaint by any Trustee, of misconduct, incapacity or neglect of duty, provided, that at least one week's previous notice of the proposed action shall have been given to the accused and to each Trustee, in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Education Law and the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law.

E. **Resignation by Trustee.** A Trustee may resign by giving written notice to the Board President or Secretary. The resignation is effective upon receipt of such notice, or at any later date specified in the notice. The acceptance of a resignation by the Board President or Secretary shall not be necessary to make it effective, but no resignation shall discharge any accrued obligation or duty of a Trustee. A Trustee's absence from two meetings per school year will be considered a resignation, and his or her seat will be deemed vacant. In the event of extreme extenuating circumstances (e.g., a serious illness, death of immediate family) the board may vote to excuse the trustee's absence thereby allowing the trustee to remain on the board.

F. **Vacancies.** A vacancy is deemed to occur on the effective date of the resignation of a Trustee, upon the removal of a Trustee, upon declaration of vacancy pursuant to these Bylaws, or upon a Trustee's death. A vacancy is also deemed to exist upon the increase by the Board of the authorized number of Trustees.

G. **Compensation of Trustees.** Trustees shall serve without compensation. However, the Board may approve reimbursement of a Trustee's actual and necessary expenses while conducting School business.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**OFFICES**

The School's principal office shall be located at the school operated by the School (the "**School Facility**"), which shall be at such place (address to be determined) as the Board may select from time to time by resolution of a majority of the Board. The Secretary shall note any change in office on the copy of the Bylaws maintained by the Secretary. The School may also have offices at such other places, within the State of New York, as the Board may from time to time determine.

**ARTICLE V**  
**MEETINGS OF THE BOARD**

A. **Place of Meetings.** Board Meetings shall be held at the School Facility or at any other reasonably convenient place as the Board may designate; *provided* that Board meetings shall be scheduled at least monthly at the School Facility.

B. **Annual Meeting.** An Annual Meeting shall be held in the month of July of each year for the purpose of electing Trustees, making and receiving reports on corporate affairs, and transacting such other business as comes before the meeting.

C. **Frequency of Meetings.** A minimum of twelve (12) shall be scheduled each year on dates determined by the Board; *provided* that Board meetings shall be scheduled at least monthly at the School Facility.

D. **Special Meetings.** A Special Meeting shall be held at any time called by the President, or written demand of not less than one half of the entire Board.

E. **Adjournment.** A majority of the Trustees present at a meeting, whether or not a quorum, may adjourn the meeting to another time and place.

F. **Notice to Trustees.** Notices to Trustees of Board Meetings shall be given as follows:

1. If the Board fixes the dates of regular meetings (which may include the Annual Meeting) for the year, then such meetings may be held without further notice of time and place. In the event that the date of an Annual Meeting or regular meeting is changed (or a regular meeting is added), written notice of the new meeting date (or the date of the new regular meeting) will be provided at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

2. Special Meetings shall be held upon reasonable notice, at least 48 hours, if practicable.

3. Notices will be deemed given when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the recipient at the address shown for the recipient in the School's records, first-class postage prepaid; when personally delivered in writing to the recipient; or when faxed, e-mailed, or communicated orally, in person or by telephone, to the Trustee or to a person whom it is reasonably believed will communicate it promptly to the Trustee.

G. **Waiver of Notice.** Notice of a meeting need not be given to a Trustee who signs a waiver of notice or written consent to holding the meeting or an approval of the minutes of the meeting, whether before or after the meeting, or attends the meeting without protest prior to the meeting or at its

commencement, of the lack of notice. The Secretary shall incorporate all such waivers, consents and approvals into the minutes of the meeting.

H. **Public Notice.** Public notice of all Board meetings and of all meetings of Committees shall be given in accordance with the requirements of the Article 7 of the Public Officers Law (the “**Open Meetings Law**”).

## **ARTICLE VI** **ACTION BY THE BOARD**

A. **Quorum.** Unless a greater proportion is required by law, a majority of the entire Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business or of any specified item of business.

B. **Action by the Board.**

1. **Actions Taken at Board Meetings.** Any business may be transacted and any corporate action may be taken at any annual, regular or special meeting of the Board at which a quorum is present, whether such business or proposed action be stated in the notice of such meeting or not, unless special notice of such business or proposed action is required by law or by these bylaws. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by these Bylaws, the vote of a majority of the Board present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is present at such time, shall be the act of the Board. If at any meeting of the Board there shall be less than a quorum present, the Trustees present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum is obtained.

2. **Board Participation by Other Means.** In all events, a quorum of Trustees must be present to lawfully conduct a Board meeting. To the extent permitted by the Open Meetings Law, Trustees participating by means video-conferencing may be counted toward achieving a quorum. Once a quorum is present, additional Trustees may participate in a Board meeting through conference telephone or similar communication equipment, *provided* that all Trustees participating in such meeting can hear one another. Trustees shall not be entitled to vote unless they attend the meeting in person or, to the extent permitted by the Open Meetings Law, by live video-conferencing. Trustees participating by means of video-conferencing shall do so from a site at which the public may attend, listen and observe. All meetings of the Board are subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Law.

C. **Committees.**

1. **Appointment of Committees.** The Board may create committees of the Board (each, a “Committee”) for any purpose, and the President of the Board shall appoint members to and designate the chairs of such Committees, subject to the approval of the Board. A Committee will consist of not fewer than three Trustees (or not fewer than five Trustees in the case of the Executive Committee), who shall be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Board.

2. **Standing Committees.** The Board shall have three standing Committees: an Executive Committee chaired by the President, a Finance Committee chaired by the Treasurer and an Education and Accountability Committee whose chair shall be appointed by the President of the board. Additional Committee members shall be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Board. The responsibilities of committee members will be as follows:

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(a) The *Executive Committee* of the Board sets policy agenda for the full Board of Trustees. It includes the Board's President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and one other member who will be appointed at the first meeting of the Board.

(b) The *Academic Accountability Committee* monitors the overall academic performance of the school, reviews assessment data, and works with school staff to present academic data to the Board. They also monitor progress toward meeting interim and five year charter goals.

(c) The *Finance Committee* oversees current and long-term financial position; undertake the responsibility of approving and monitoring the annual budget through periodic and financial reports, select the auditor

3. **Authority of Committees.** The Board may delegate to a Committee any of the authority of the Board, except with respect to:

(a) The election of Trustees;

(b) Filling vacancies on the Board or any Committee which has the authority of the Board;

(c) The amendment or repeal of Bylaws or the adoption of new Bylaws; and

(d) The appointment of other Committees, or the members of the Committees.

4. **Procedures of Committees.** The Board may prescribe the manner in which the proceedings of any Committee are to be conducted. In the absence of such prescription, a Committee may prescribe the manner of conducting its proceedings, subject to the provisions of these Bylaws and the Open Meetings Law with respect to the calling of meetings.

### D. **Standard of Care.**

1. **Performance of Duties.** Each Trustee shall perform all duties of a Trustee, including duties on any Committee, in good faith and with that degree of diligence, care and skill, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinary prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.

2. **Reliance on Others.** In performing the duties of a Trustee, a Trustee shall be entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, presented or prepared by:

(a) One or more Officers or employees of the School whom the Trustee believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;

(b) Legal counsel, public accountants or other persons as to matters that the Trustee believes are within that person's professional or expert competence; or

(c) A Committee on which the Trustee does not serve, duly designated in accordance with a provision of the School's Charter or Bylaws, as to matters within its designated authority, *provided* the Trustee believes the Committee merits confidence and

the Trustee acts in good faith, and with that degree of care specified in Paragraph D.1., and after reasonable inquiry when the need is indicated by the circumstances, and without knowledge that would cause such reliance to be unwarranted.

3. **Investments.** In investing and dealing with all assets held by the School for investment, the Board shall exercise the standard of care described above in Paragraph D.1., and shall consider among other relevant considerations the long and short term needs of the School in carrying out its purposes, including its present and anticipated financial requirements. The Board may delegate its investment powers to others, *provided* that those powers are exercised within the ultimate direction of the Board.

E. **Rights of Inspection.** Every Trustee has the right to inspect and copy all books, records and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the School, *provided* that such inspection is conducted at a reasonable time after reasonable notice, and *provided* that such right of inspection and copying is subject to the obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the reviewed information, in addition to any obligations imposed by any applicable federal, state or local law.

F. **Participation in Discussions and Voting.** Every Trustee has the right to participate in the discussion and vote on all issues before the Board or any Committee, except that any Trustee shall be excused from the discussion and vote on any matter involving: (a) a conflict of interest for such Trustee (even if such conflict of interest does not constitute a prohibited transaction under applicable law); (b) indemnification of that Trustee uniquely; or (c) any other matter at the discretion of a majority of the Trustees then present.

G. **Duty to Maintain Board Confidences.** Every Trustee has a duty to maintain the confidentiality of all Board actions which are not required by law to be open to the public, including discussions and votes which take place at any Executive Sessions of the Board. Any Trustee violating this confidence may be removed from the Board.

## **ARTICLE VII** **OFFICERS**

A. **Officers.** The Officers of the School consist of a President (hereinafter the "President"), Vice President (hereinafter the "Vice President"), a Secretary and a Treasurer, and one other Board member who will be appointed at the first meeting of the Board.

1. **President.** Subject to Board control, the President has general supervision, direction and control of the affairs of the School, and such other powers and duties as the Board and these bylaws may prescribe. If present, the President shall preside at Board meetings.

2. **Vice President.** If the President is absent or disabled, the Vice President shall perform all the President's duties and, when so acting, shall have all the President's powers and be subject to the same restrictions. The Vice President shall have other such powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.

3. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall: (a) keep or cause to be kept, at the School's principal office, or such other place as the Board may direct, a book of minutes of all meetings of the Board and Committees, noting the time and place of the meeting, whether it was regular or special (and if special, how authorized), the notice given, the names of those present, and the proceedings; (b) make such minutes available publicly no later than two weeks following each meeting, in accordance with the Open Meetings Law (c) keep or cause to be kept a copy of the

School's Charter and Bylaws, with amendments; (d) keep or cause to be kept a copy of the School's incorporation and tax status filings and documentation; (e) give or cause to be given notice of the Board and Committee meetings as required by the Bylaws; and (f) have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.

4. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall: (a) keep or cause to be kept adequate and correct accounts of the School's properties, receipts and disbursements; (b) make the books of account available at all times for inspection by any Trustee; (c) deposit or cause to be deposited the School's monies and other valuables in the School's name and to its credit, with the depositories the Board designates; (d) disburse or cause to be disbursed the School's funds as the Board directs; (e) render or cause to be rendered to the President and the Board, as requested but no less frequently than once every fiscal year, an account of the School's financial transactions and financial condition; (f) prepare or cause to be prepared any reports on financial issues required by any loan agreement; (g) chair the Finance Committee; and (h) have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.

**B. Election, Eligibility and Term of Office.**

1. **Election.** The Board shall elect the Officers annually at the Annual Meeting or a Regular Meeting designated for that purpose or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose, except that Officers appointed to fill vacancies shall be elected as vacancies occur.

2. **Eligibility.** A Trustee may hold any number of offices, except that neither the Secretary nor Treasurer may serve concurrently as the President.

3. **Term of Office.** Each Officer serves at the pleasure of the Board, holding office until resignation, removal or disqualification from service, or until his or her successor is elected. An officer may serve consecutive terms in a particular office if he/she is re-elected to that office at the end of each term by a majority vote of the Board.

C. **Removal and Resignation.** The Board may remove any Officer, either with or without cause, at any time. Such removal shall not prejudice the Officer's rights, if any, under an employment contract. Any Officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the School, the resignation taking effect upon receipt of the notice or at a later date specified in the notice.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**NO LIABILITY OF TRUSTEES; INDEMNIFICATION; INSURANCE**

A. **No Liability of Trustees.** The Trustees shall not be personally liable for the School's debts, liabilities or other obligations to the extent permissible under applicable law.

B. **Indemnification.** The School shall (in the case of Trustees and Officers) and may (in the case of employees and agents), to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party or witness to any action, investigation or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she (or his or her testator) is or was a Trustee, officer, employee or agent of the School, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees. No indemnification may be made to or on behalf of any person if (a) his or her acts were committed in bad faith, or were the result of his or her deliberate dishonesty and were material to such action or proceeding, or (b) he or she personally gained a financial profit or other advantage to which he or she was not legally entitled in the transaction or matter in which indemnification is sought.

C. **Insurance.** The School shall have the power to purchase and maintain all insurance policies deemed to be in the best interest of the School, including insurance to indemnify the School for any obligation which it incurs as a result of its indemnification of Trustees, Officers, employees or agents, or to indemnify such persons in instances in which they may be so indemnified.

## **ARTICLE IX** **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

A. **Code of Ethics.** The Board shall approve a Code of Ethics applicable to Trustees, officers and employees of the School, compliant with the General Municipal Law, which may be amended from time to time by the Board.

B. **Conflict of Interest.** Any Trustee, Officer, or Committee member having an interest in a contract, other transaction or program presented to or discussed by the Board or Committee for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt, full and frank disclosure of his or her interest to the Board or Committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include all relevant and material facts known to such person about the contract or transaction that may reasonably be construed to be adverse to the School's interest. The body to which such disclosure is made shall thereupon determine, by majority vote, whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is deemed to exist, such person shall not vote on, nor use his or her personal influence on, nor be present during the discussion or deliberations with respect to, such contract or transaction (other than to present factual information or to respond to questions prior to the discussion). The minutes of the meeting shall reflect proceedings, including the disclosure made, the vote thereon and, where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation. The Board may adopt formal policies requiring:

1. Regular annual statements from Trustees, Officers and key employees to disclose existing and potential conflicts of interest; and
2. Corrective and disciplinary actions with respect to transgressions of such policies.

For the purpose of this section, a person shall be deemed to have an "interest" in a contract or other transaction if he or she is the party (or one of the parties) contracting or dealing with the School, or is a director, trustee or officer of, or has a significant financial or influential interest in the entity contracting or dealing with the School. These provisions will be consistent with the General Municipal Law.

## **ARTICLE X** **OTHER PROVISIONS**

A. **Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the School begins on July 1 of each year and ends June 30.

B. **Execution of Instruments.** Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Board may adopt a resolution authorizing any Officer or agent of the School to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of the School. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no Officer, agent or employee shall have any power to bind the School by any contract or engagement, to pledge the School's credit, or to render it liable monetarily for any purpose or any amount.

C. **Checks and Notes.** Except as otherwise specifically provided by Board resolution, checks, drafts, promissory notes, orders for the payment of money, and other evidence of indebtedness of the School with a value of equal to or less than \$10,000 shall be approved by the Chancellor and signed by the Chancellor. Checks in excess of \$10,000 will require the second signature of a designated and approved signatory: Board President or Treasurer. All checks shall be generated by the Office Manager and reviewed monthly by the Board. Voided checks will be retained to ensure proper maintenance of account records.

D. **Construction and Definitions.** Unless the context otherwise requires, the general provisions, rules of construction, and definitions contained in the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and the Education Law shall govern the construction of these Bylaws. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, words in these Bylaws shall be read as the masculine or feminine gender, and as the singular or plural, as the context requires, and the word “person” includes both a School and a natural person. The captions and headings in these Bylaws are for reference and convenience only and are not intended to limit or define the scope or effect of any provisions.

E. **Interpretation of Charter.** To the extent of any conflict between any provision of these by-laws and the Open Meetings Law, the Open Meetings Law will control. Whenever any provision of the Bylaws is in conflict with the provisions of the Charter, the provisions of the Charter shall control.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**AMENDMENT**

A majority of the Trustees may adopt, amend or repeal these Bylaws, subject to approval by the Charter Entity, where applicable.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**REFERENCES TO DOCUMENTS**

References in these Bylaws to the certificate of incorporation of the School (the “Charter”), or to any other document, shall include all amendments thereto or changes thereof unless specifically excepted.

**CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY**

The undersigned does hereby certify that the undersigned is the School Administrator of the Charter School, an education Corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York; that the foregoing Bylaws of said Corporation were duly and regularly adopted as such by the Board of Trustees of said Corporation; and that the above and foregoing Bylaws are now in full force and effect.

\_\_\_\_\_, School Administrator

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT 5c: Code of Ethics for MVCCS

### PROPOSED CODE OF ETHICS – Mohawk Valley Community Charter School FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

The Board of Trustees recognizes that sound, ethical standards of conduct serve to increase the effectiveness of school board trustees and their staff as educational leaders in their community. Actions based on an ethical code of conduct promote public confidence and the attainment of school goals. The Board also recognizes its obligation under the General Municipal Law to adopt a code of ethics consistent with the provisions of the General Municipal Law, setting forth the standards of conduct required of all school trustees, officers and employees.

Therefore, every officer and employee of the school, whether paid or unpaid, including Board Trustees, shall adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. *Gifts:* An officer or employee shall not directly or indirectly solicit any gifts; nor shall an officer or employee accept or receive any single gift having a value of \$75 or more, or gifts from the same source having a cumulative value of \$75 or more over a twelve-month period, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, if it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him or her in the performance of his or her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his or her part.

However, the Board welcomes and encourages the writing of letters or notes expressing gratitude or appreciation to staff members. Gifts from children that are principally sentimental in nature and of insignificant financial value may be accepted in the spirit in which they are given.

2. *Confidential information:* An officer or employee shall not disclose confidential information acquired by him or her in the course of his or her official duties or use such information to further his or her own personal interest. In addition, he/she shall not disclose information regarding any matters discussed in an executive session of the Board, whether such information is deemed confidential or not.
3. *Representation before the Board:* An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school board.
4. *Representation before the Board for a contingent fee:* An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school board, whereby the compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by the school with respect to such matter, provided that this paragraph shall not prohibit the fixing at any time of fees based upon the reasonable value of the services rendered.
5. *Disclosure of interest in matters before the Board:* A member of the Board of Trustees and any officer or employee of the school, whether paid or unpaid, who participates in the discussion or gives official opinion to the Board on any matter before the Board shall publicly disclose on the official record the nature and extent of any direct or indirect financial or other private interest he

## ATTACHMENT 5c: Code of Ethics for MVCCS

or she has in such matter. The term “interest” means a pecuniary or material benefit accruing to an officer or employee.

6. *Investments in conflict with official duties:* An officer or employee shall not invest or hold any investment directly in any financial, business, commercial or other private transaction that creates a conflict with his or her official duties.
7. *Private employment:* An officer or employee shall not engage in, solicit, negotiate for or promise to accept private employment when that employment or service creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of his or her official duties.
8. *Future employment:* An officer or employee shall not, after the termination of service or employment with the Board, appear before the Board or any panel or committee of the Board, in relation to any case, proceeding, or application in which he or she personally participated during the period of his or her service or employment or that was under his or her active consideration. This shall not bar or prevent the timely filing by a present or former officer or employee of any claim, account, demand or suit against the district on his or her own behalf or on behalf of any member of his or her family arising out of any personal injury or property damage or for any lawful benefit authorized or permitted by law.

### *Distribution of Code of Ethics*

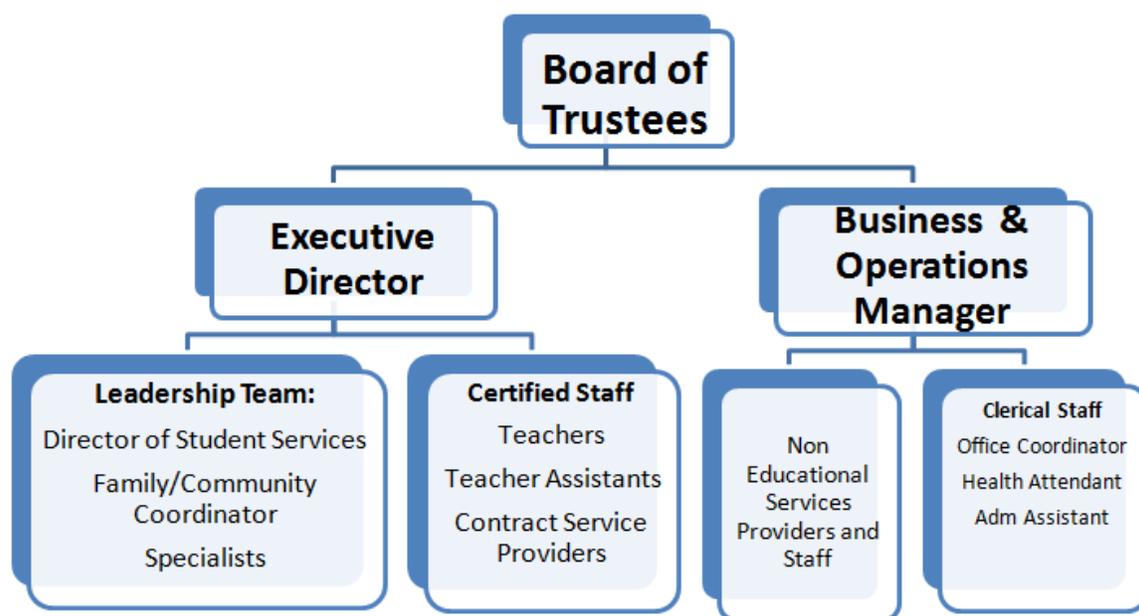
The School Administrator shall cause a copy of this Code of Ethics to be distributed annually to every officer and employee of the school. Each officer and employee elected or appointed thereafter shall be furnished a copy before entering upon the duties of his or her office or employment.

### *Penalties*

In addition to any penalty contained in any other provision of law, any person who shall knowingly and intentionally violate any of the provisions of the Board’s code of ethics may be fined, suspended or removed from office or employment, as the case may be, in the manner provided by law.

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### Section 1: Organizational Chart



### Section 2: Staffing Plan

Title	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Executive Director	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Executive Director	0	0	0	0	1
Director of Student Services	1	1	1	1	1
Business and Operations Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Family and Community Specialist	1	1	1	1	1
Office Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Adm Assistant	1	1	1	1	1
Health and Student Support Attendant	1	1	1	1	1
Teachers-Regular	6	9	12	15	18
Teaching Assistants	6	9	12	15	18
Teachers - Special Education	1	2	2	3	3
Literacy Teacher / RTI Specialist	1	1	1	1	1
ELL/LEP Specialist	1	2	2	2	2
Art/Music Specialist*	1	1	2	2	2
Physical Ed/Wellness Specialist*	1	1	2	2	2
Library/Media Specialist	0	0	1	1	1
Speech and Language Pathologist*	0	0	1	1	1
Occupational Therapist*	0	0	.5	1	1
Physical Therapist*	0	0	.5	1	1
Social Worker	0	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>59</b>

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### Section 3:

#### **MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOLTEACHER and STAFF RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

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1. Determining Staffing Needs
  - The Executive Director will determine the staffing needs.
  - This will be based on present teacher evaluations, school growth, program enhancement, and conversations with staff and the Board of Trustees
2. Advertising
  - The Executive Director may visit recruitment fairs both in and out of local area
  - Openings may be posted on school webpage and other media outlets
  - Advertisements may be placed in local newspapers, with contact information listed.
3. Collecting Resumes
  - The applicants are asked to provide a phone number where they can be reached during the day or early evenings.
  - The candidates are asked for a minimum of three (3) references to be included with their resumes.
  - The Executive Director reviews the incoming resumes and selects candidates for interviews based on his/her understanding of the applicants' credentials and their certifications.
4. Preparation for Interviewing
  - An interviewing committee will be established which will include 3-4 teachers and the Executive Director.
  - The interviewing committee will develop questions based on instruction, culture, and classroom management.
  - Philosophy may be included in the questions that are developed for the interview process.
5. Interviewing Process
  - A preliminary phone interview may be conducted to better define the candidates' previous experience in the classroom, understanding of the New York State Education requirements, and their reasons for applying for a position with MVCCS.
  - Upon completion of the phone interviews, the candidates who were most qualified are called to come in for a formal interview with the interviewing committee. They are informed that they will be required to teach a sample lesson.
  - A date will be decided with each candidate for the on-site formal interview.
  - MVCCS will provide a school tour for the candidate on the day of the formal interview.
  - The interviewing committee will probe for examples about classroom discipline systems and any school/education systems with which the candidate is familiar.
  - The interviewing committee will create real scenarios about learning, discipline, and school culture for the candidate to expand upon.
  - The questions will be phrased so that they can describe and provide examples.
  - Each candidate will be required to teach a sample lesson.

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### 6. Reviewing the Sample Lessons

The interviewing committee will:

- Review the sample lesson and articulate overall impressions as a team.
- Discuss the management skills portrayed by the candidate.
- Discuss the structure of the lesson and the candidate's ability to engage students and communicate content.

### 7. Choosing the Top Educators

- The interviewing committee will select as a team the most qualified applicants and make recommendations to the Executive Director.
- The Executive Director and the Board of Trustees will make the final selection of candidate(s) to be hired.
- The Executive Director will make job offers to the selected candidates, (s) which includes the salary for the position.
- The Leadership Team (ED and BFO) will discuss the hiring process, benefits, dress code, school vacations, insurance, and salary with potential employees.
- Upon acceptance of the offered position, the new employee will be provided a school calendar and the necessary employment documents from the school Business & Operations Manager (some of this may be mailed).
- The new employee will be informed of professional development expectations, including training dates.

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## Section 4: Job Descriptions

### Key Position Descriptions

#### Executive Director

The Executive Director (ED) is responsible for developing the vision, adhering to policies, achieving goals, and assisting the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its responsibilities, and serves as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the Board. S/he will be responsible for providing strategic and instructional leadership, including management of the day-to-day operations of the school. This includes managing the policies, regulations, and procedures to ensure that all students are supervised in a learning environment that meets the approved curricula and mission of the school. Achieving academic excellence requires that the Executive Director work collaboratively to direct and nurture all members of the school staff hired by the Board of Trustees, and to communicate effectively with parents. Inherent in the position are the responsibilities for scheduling, curriculum development, extracurricular activities, personnel management, emergency procedures, and school culture. One of the Lead Applicants is the proposed Executive Director.

#### *Roles and Responsibilities*

- Responsible for the leadership, strategic vision, and growth of MVCCS
- Hire school staff
- Direct and supervise enrollment
- Maintain the integrity of the mission, KDE and school culture
- Ensure the proper use of student data to drive and improve instruction

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

- Work with DSS, Leadership Team, and BOM to provide professional development for the staff, complete program evaluations and develop improvement plans
- Handle discipline matters with students with sensitivity to the children's needs
- Direct and oversee financial and budgetary planning and business operations
- Prepare and implement a responsible budget with the Business and Operations Manager
- Make formal reports to the Board of Trustees
- Work closely with parents and the community at large to obtain community support
- Work with the Board of Trustees to ensure legal compliance of the school
- Supervise the effective and efficient implementation of the educational and instructional programs in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations
- Observe and evaluate staff annually in accordance with law and established procedures
- Set goals for self-improvement; carry out individual improvement plan
- Maintain a high level of competence in the field of education, remaining current in issues related to areas of responsibility
- Maintain a high level of personal integrity and a strong work ethic
- Develop and implement marketing plan to recruit students to the school
- Oversee the school admissions process, ensuring compliance with the state charter law and school contract

### *Expectations of the Executive Director*

- Be accountable for students' overall academic performance
- Manage school revenues and expenses to stay within agreed upon budget
- Be available to parents, students and staff
- Maintain work hours extending beyond school hours for other duties, such as staff meetings, etc
- Participate in MVCCS and individual professional development
- Develop and participate in events aimed at promoting MVCCS
- Report routinely to the Board

### *Experience Requirements*

- Documented experience with our key-design elements
- Demonstrated effective leadership skills
- Proven management and team building skills
- Experience managing budgets, creating and implementing policies
- Excellent interpersonal communication and writing skills
- Progressive understanding and working knowledge of educational best-practices
- Experience working in both education and not-for-profit sector

### *Education and Qualification Requirements*

- Master's Degree, or higher degree, in Education or related field
- Demonstrated passion for improving urban schools and driving education reform
- Demonstrated effective leadership skills, including proven management and team building skills
- Experience with tracking and reporting mandated information
- Excellent interpersonal communication and writing skills
- Progressive understanding and working knowledge of educational best-practices
- Bilingual and bi-literate (in any of the possible 44 languages spoken in Utica) highly desirable

### **Assistant Executive Director**

The Assistant Executive Director will be responsible for providing strategic and instructional leadership, working with the ED to oversee management of the day-to-day operations of the school. Inherent in the position are the responsibilities for scheduling, curriculum development, extracurricular activities, personnel management, emergency procedures, and school culture.

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

- Work in partnership with the Executive Director to assist in all leadership responsibilities
- Provides strategic leadership for school improvement and development
- Ensures high standards of achievement for all students in terms of both academic performance and responsibility for behavior
- Ensures an orderly, motivational and inspirational culture and a strong school community where teaching, learning, and healthy relationships can thrive
- Ensures responsive and effective systems and management of people and systems such that all students, parents, teachers, and staff are well supported
- Coach and mentor staff
- Maintain a high level of personal integrity and a strong work ethic
- Maintain visibility with students, teachers, parents, and the Board
- Assume responsibilities as assigned by the Executive Director

### *Expectations of the Assistant Executive Director*

- Be accountable for reporting students' overall academic performance to Executive Director
- Be accountable for reporting teachers' performance to Executive Director
- Manage curriculum and instruction expenses to stay within agreed upon budget
- Be available to parents, students and staff
- Maintain work hours extending beyond school hours for other duties, such as staff meetings, etc
- Participate in MVCCS and individual professional development
- Participate in events aimed at promoting MVCCS
- Report routinely to Executive Director

### *Experience Requirements*

- Documented experience with our key-design elements
- Demonstrated effective leadership skills and ability to work as a team member
- Proven management and team building skills
- Experience with tracking and reporting mandated information
- Excellent interpersonal communication and writing skills
- Progressive understanding and working knowledge of educational best-practices

### *Education and Qualification Requirements*

- Master's Degree, or higher degree, in Education or related field
- Knowledge of and experience in using student assessment data in instruction
- Experience working with academic and operational staff and with diverse populations of students, parents and families
- Ability to work with nonprofit organizations and relevant government agencies
- Experience in curriculum design and/or education research
- Agreement with and commitment to philosophy of the charter school
- Bilingual and bi-literate (in any of the possible 44 languages spoken in Utica) highly desirable
- Minimum of 3 years working in a school environment as a teacher or administrator preferred

### **Director of Special Services**

The **Director of Special Services** will assist in all student service needs, including completion of the initial intake/assessment of students, helping to ensure the implementation of KDE's as they pertain to each of the target population as well as regular education students, and coordinating group and individual student programs that lead to high student achievement. The DSS will work with the Executive Director

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

to act as the liaison between MVCCS and each student's district of residence in regard to Special Education and 504 needs.

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

- Oversee a Response to Intervention (RTI) program of responsive support in English and math for students who are below expected levels in these subjects
- Oversee a strong and responsive special education programming to ensure success in school for students with special needs, including compliance with special education laws
- Collaborate with staff to complete initial incoming assessments for students
- Write fact sheets summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of each student
- Attend CSE meetings with families
- Assign case managers to oversee implementation of student's IEPs
- Assist with goal setting for the PFEs and monitor PFEs
- Provide IEP counseling, completing
- Provide crisis intervention
- Develop behavior intervention plans
- Lead the Response to Intervention and/or child study teams and other related meetings
- Assist with teacher training and professional development
- Be an active member of the School Leadership Team to support all elements of Student Services, Business, School-Parent/Community Involvement
- Assist with reauthorization, mandated reporting, fielding parent phone calls, student recruitment, facilitating parental/community involvement and help to collaborate with local school districts.
- Professional Growth
  - Set goals for self-improvement; carries out individual improvement plan
  - Maintain a high level of competence in the field of education, remaining current in issues related to areas of responsibility
  - Maintain a high level of personal integrity and a strong work ethic
- Maintain visibility with students, teachers, parents, and the Board
- Assume other responsibilities as assigned by the Executive Director

### *Education and Qualification Requirements*

- Master's Degree in School Psychology, or degree in or related field
- Knowledge of and experience in using student assessment data in instruction
- Experience working with academic and operational staff and with diverse populations of students, parents and families
- Understanding of relevant laws and regulations and experience in legal/regulatory compliance
- Ability to work with nonprofit organizations and relevant government agencies
- Agreement with and commitment to philosophy of the charter school
- Commitment to accountability, including a rigorous student testing regimen
- Experience or familiarity with data management and presentation and commitment to achieving for students academic goals
- Bilingual and bi-literate (in any of the possible 44 languages spoken in Utica) highly desirable

### **Business and Operations Manager**

The **Business and Operations Manager (BOM)** works in partnership with the Executive Director in all aspects of school operation including school financial stability, safety, staff planning, salary administration, and resolution of Human Resources related issues. The tasks of the Business & Operations Manager include but are not limited to the following:

### *Roles & Responsibilities*

- Assist Executive Director in development of the school annual budget

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- Manage all financial transactions, including but not limited to: claiming of public revenue, expenditures, procurement, record keeping, reporting, and auditing
- Manage all administrative functions, including payroll services, fringe benefit services
- Prepare and maintain a variety of records, including income and expense statements, bookkeeping ledgers, payroll, bank accounts, payable invoices, fixed assets
- Maintain relationships with the schools' audit firm, insurance broker, attorney, and other vendors
- Work collaboratively with the school's grant writer and other staff
- Functions as the MVCCS Human Resources Administrator
- Collect any and all financial data required for the preparation of reports to the CIC, Board Members, chartering entity, NYS Education Department and other appropriate bodies
- Prepare monthly and quarterly financial statements, such as cash flow statements, balance sheets, fiscal condition reports, profit/loss statements
- Maintain appropriate audit trails
- Prepare and maintain a forecast model to anticipate over-and-under budget activities
- Prepare summary analysis of monthly financial reports
- Reconcile the bank accounts each month
- Record and track income and expenses related to all contracts and grants
- Prepare vendor checks
- Coordinate student transportation
- Oversee the school's food service programs
- Oversee all facility, school operations and maintenance needs
- Interface and review contracts with contractors in preparation for submission to the Board of Trustees for approval
- Serve as the school's safety officer
- Provide overall school support in the absence of the school CIC
- All other duties as assigned

### *Education and Qualification Requirements*

- Significant leadership experience in the financial management of a school
- Experience in a start-up enterprise
- College degree in related field or equivalent experience
- Agreement with and commitment to philosophy of the charter school

### **Family and Community Coordinator**

The Family and Community Coordinator (FCC) will serve as a liaison between the school, families, and community. The Coordinator also works closely with the School Leadership Team to support the needs of homeless students, and manage other student issues with confidentiality. The Counselor is expected to implement the MVCCS Key Design Elements with fidelity and integrity.

### *Roles & Responsibilities*

- Make home visits to families
- Understand the unique needs of each family, in regard to ethnicity, income, and social needs
- Serve as an advocate for students and families
- Collaborate with service agencies and public school districts on behalf of students and families
- Organize various community service projects and special events for students
- Create and implement strategies to detect and help homeless families of MVCCS students
- Collaborate and/or coordinate school-wide initiatives that support family involvement
- Assist school staff when needed to aid students with academic or behavioral issues
- Apply for grants that become available throughout the year
- All other duties as assigned

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- An undergraduate degree, or higher, in Child Life, Social Work, or related experience
- Demonstrated experience or interest in working with families and community agencies
- Excellent communication skills; demonstrates flexibility and a sense of humor
- Demonstrated ability to work well with parents
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member

### **Regular Education Teacher and Content Specialists**

Each teacher provides a positive and supportive environment for student learning and achievement. Each classroom teacher is expected to implement the MVCCS Key Design Elements with fidelity and integrity. Teachers described here include classroom teachers, physical educators, fine arts teachers, and other specialists.

### Roles & Responsibilities

- Obtain ongoing professional development to aid in student enrichment in the subject area they are teaching
- Develop lesson plans that ensure the attainment of state learning standards and the additional specific grade-by-grade learning standards as set forth in the charter
- Coordinate lesson plans with other teachers to maximize possibilities for teaching similar topics in the same general time frame, thus reinforcing student knowledge on an interdisciplinary basis
- Coordinate student activities with teachers in the special areas
- Collaborate and coordinate services for Students with Disabilities and ELL students
- Provide direct and indirect instruction as necessary; differentiate instruction to meet students needs
- Engage in long- and short-term planning addressing individual needs of students
- Prepare students adequately for all required assessments
- Evaluate student's progress at intervals that meet the student IEP requirements
- Monitor and report the progress of students to the School Leadership Team;
- Participate in data analysis, discussion, and Response to Intervention planning
- Prepare individual student achievement reports for parents
- Provide an inviting, exciting, innovative learning environment
- Practice effective and appropriate classroom management
- Serve as advisors to students
- Engage in data discussions to analyze student performance, assess group and individual mastery, and adapt instruction/curriculum to address needs
- Perform other duties as deemed appropriate by the School Leadership Team.

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- If not covered by any of the exemptions provided under New York's charter-school law, possess any required state teaching certification and meet any other applicable credentialing requirements including the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended
- An undergraduate or graduate degree in the subject they will teach, or direct subject-area teaching experience
- Demonstrated expertise in the subject area they will teach as evidenced by personal skills and knowledge
- Teaching experience in a public or private school, preferably in an urban setting
- Demonstrated experience working with young children
- Excellent communication skills
- Demonstrated ability to engage the interest of young children
- Flexibility and a sense of humor
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse children, including those with special needs
- Demonstrated ability to work well with parents

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- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member
- Demonstrated ability to evaluate tests and measurements of achievement and to use assessment data to drive instructional decisions
- Demonstrated willingness to be held accountable for student results

### **Special Education Teacher**

MVCCS Special Education Teacher(s) will provide direction in the day-to-day educational planning for students with special needs. Each special education teacher is expected to implement the MVCCS Key Design Elements with fidelity and integrity. Special educators will assume leadership roles in the implementation of RTI and 504 student planning and implementation.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Provide an inviting, exciting, innovative learning environment
- Establish and maintain classroom management procedures
- Provide direct and indirect instruction; Schedule student services
- Complete short and long term planning addressing the individual needs of the students
- Evaluate student's progress
- Effectively communicate with teachers, parents, and school staff to facilitate the IEP (Individualized Education Plans) process
- Act as an effective professional liaison between school and home when necessary
- Provide assessments and data reports for students as required by NYSED
- Have understanding of federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding special education
- Insure compliance with laws and regulations as stated above, including local district policies
- Oversee the completion of forms and reports to government agencies
- Attend and participate in meetings as needed to support the education of every student
- Attend professional development events regarding special education
- Collaborate with colleagues serving special education students to insure coordinated service delivery
- Insure all paperwork, evaluations and RTI (Response to Intervention) data is organized and forwarded to the school districts for recommendations for referrals
- Maintain secure files on special education students.
- Inform professional and paraprofessional staff about IEP services and management needs
- Help develop FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessments) and BIP (Behavior Intervention Plans)
- Coordinate testing modifications for special education students
- Produce and insure compliance on 504 plans
- Procure assistive technology materials as necessary for teaching special education students
- Assist in other administrative or student services as assigned or required

### **Education and Qualification Requirements**

- Current Special Education NYS certification
- 2 years experience in special education functions
- Ability to communicate and work effectively with parents
- Ability to adapt to individual's specific needs
- Ability to utilize varied teaching methodologies to accommodate student's unique learning styles
- Ability to evaluate tests and measures of achievement
- Excellent organizational skills
- Ability to communicate and interact effectively with other staff

### **Special Education Teacher/Coordinator**

One Special Education Teacher may serve as a Coordinator for Services, working with the Leadership Team to collaborate with district Committees on Special Education and design services for students through Individualized Education Plans.

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### **Teacher Assistant**

The Teacher Assistant supports the classroom teacher and grade level team in all aspects of teaching, planning, and student activities. Each teacher assistant is expected to implement the MVCCS Key Design Elements with fidelity and integrity.

#### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Demonstrate an ability to relate to young students
- Work with teachers to address the individual needs of the students
- Use materials effectively and keep lessons focused on the objective
- Keep students on task and provide feedback about performance
- Provide an inviting, exciting, and innovative learning environment
- Maintain attendance and homeroom records and all other records as assigned
- Serve as advisors to students
- Accompany students to specials classes, lunch, recess and to the playground when necessary
- Substitute for the homeroom teacher in his/her absence
- Prepare and execute a program of activities for weekly EA Activities times
- All other duties as assigned

#### **Education and Qualification Requirements**

- Teaching Assistant license preferred
- Willingness to complete the required curriculum for Educational Assistant licensing
- Minimum of 2 years experience as an aide or assistant in a classroom setting
- Demonstrated ability to communicate and work effectively with parents and staff
- Demonstrated ability to provide tutoring services
- Ability to adapt to constantly changing needs

### **School /Home Counselor/Homeless Liaison**

The School Counselor provides counseling services, supports behavioral plans, communicates with families, assists classroom teachers, provides character education classroom lessons, and strengthens the school's culture. The Counselor also works closely with the School Leadership Team to support the needs of homeless students, and manage other student issues with confidentiality. The Counselor is expected to implement the MVCCS Key Design Elements with fidelity and integrity.

#### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Provide group and/or individual and crisis counseling for students
- Educate students in classrooms on OPM elements, character education and other related topics
- Create and modify Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Plans for students
- Assist in assessing student academic/behavioral needs as an Instructional Support Team member
- Organize various community service projects and special events for students
- Collaborate to develop plans for school improvement with school leadership team
- Create and implement strategies to detect and help homeless families of students attending the charter school
- Collaborate and/or coordinate school-wide initiatives that support academic success for students
- Assist classroom teacher when needed to aid students with academic or behavioral issues
- Advocate for students at CSE (Committee on Special Education) meetings.
- Aid in creating and implementing IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) and 504 Plans for applicable students
- Apply for grants that become available throughout the year
- All other duties as assigned

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- If not covered by any of the exemptions provided under New York’s charter-school law, possess any required state teaching certification and meet any other applicable credentialing requirements including the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended
- An undergraduate or graduate degree in counseling or social work
- Counseling experience in a public or private school, preferably in an urban setting
- Demonstrated experience working with and engaging the interest of young children
- Excellent communication skills; demonstrates flexibility and a sense of humor
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse children, including those with special needs
- Demonstrated ability to work well with parents
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member

### Office Manager

The Office Manager is responsible for the daily tasks of running a fast-paced, professional school office. These tasks include, but are not limited to, greeting guests, maintaining schedules, filing materials, ordering supplies, supporting key staff, keeping records, and maintaining and updating databases. The Office Manager understands and supports all aspects of the charter school.

### Roles & Responsibilities

- Welcome parents, children, and guests to the school
- Answer telephones and direct phone calls
- Order and maintain office supplies; Process incoming and outgoing mail
- Manage the document needs of the school and keep up-to-date files
- Maintain an informational database that supports school operations
- Maintain student records in accordance with state and federal regulations
- Request and/or send records requests to schools or agencies or student guardian(s)
- Oversee transportation needs; communicate as necessary with transportation providers
- Provide information and respond to parents’ requests and concerns as appropriate
- Post information as necessary
- Attend staff meetings and evening events when appropriate
- Perform other duties as requested and/or required for the smooth operation of the school

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- Associates degree and 2 years related administrative experience
- Excellent organizational, communication, and interpersonal skills
- Flexibility and positive attitude
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member
- Competent with technology.

### Health Office Attendant/Student Supervision

The Health Office Attendant is responsible for the daily tasks of maintaining the health office. These tasks include, but are not limited to assisting the district nurse with gathering of all necessary medical data as mandated by SED, providing basic first aid in the absence of the district nurse, assisting students with general hygiene issues, supervising students, maintaining records files per the district nurses instructions, filing materials, ordering supplies, supporting key staff, and maintaining and updating databases as necessary, interfacing with parents when and if necessary to forward important information to the district nurse and if applicable, notify teaching staff about specific medical needs per the direction of the district nurse. The Health Office Attendant understands and supports all aspects of the charter school.

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### Roles & Responsibilities

- Works closely with the district nurse to administer support to students and keep up-to-date files
- Assist the office manager to maintain an informational database that supports school operations
- Assist with parental or student issues in the absence of the office manager
- Maintain student records in accordance with state and federal regulations
- Receive Training in Basic First Aid and CPR
- Handle student matters with sensitivity to the children's needs
- Provide supervision for students as needed in individual or small group settings
- Provide information and respond to parents' requests and concerns as appropriate
- Post information as necessary or as directed
- Attend staff meetings and evening events when appropriate
- Assist the Business & Operations Manager with FRPL applications and transportation applications.
- Perform other duties as requested and/or required for the smooth operation of the school

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- Appropriate training to meet the needs of the position
- Excellent organizational, communication, and interpersonal skills
- Flexibility and positive attitude
- Demonstrate the ability to implement the Key Design Elements of the Charter School with fidelity and integrity.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member
- Competent with technology.

### **Social Worker**

The Social Worker provides counseling services, supports behavioral plans, communicates with families, assists classroom teachers, provides character education classroom lessons, and strengthens the school's culture.

### Roles & Responsibilities

- Provide group and/or individual and crisis counseling for students
- Educate students in classrooms on OPM elements, character education and other related topics
- Create and modify Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Plans for students
- Assist in assessing student academic/behavioral needs as an Instructional Support Team member
- Organize various community service projects and special events for students
- Collaborate to develop plans for school improvement with school leadership team
- Create and implement strategies to detect and help homeless families of students attending the charter school
- Collaborate and/or coordinate school-wide initiatives that support academic success for students
- Assist classroom teacher when needed to aid students with academic or behavioral issues
- Advocate for students at CSE (Committee on Special Education) meetings.
- Aid in creating and implementing IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) and 504 Plans for applicable students
- Apply for grants that become available throughout the year
- All other duties as assigned

### Education and Qualification Requirements

- If not covered by any of the exemptions provided under New York's charter-school law, possess any required state teaching certification and meet any other applicable credentialing requirements including the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended
- An undergraduate or graduate degree in counseling or social work

## Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

- Counseling experience in a public or private school, preferably in an urban setting
- Demonstrated experience working with and engaging the interest of young children
- Excellent communication skills; demonstrates flexibility and a sense of humor
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse children, including those with special needs
- Demonstrated ability to work well with parents
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team mem

### **Section 5: EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS AND LICENSED TEACHING ASSISTANTS AT MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL**

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Teachers and licensed teaching assistants are employed by MVCCS on an “at will” basis. As such, the following items apply to the employment of teachers and licensed teaching assistants:

- Teachers and licensed teaching assistants do not have contracts that begin and end.
- A teacher’s and teaching assistant’s employment continues until either we (the employer) terminate it, or they resign. Thus, if we have hired a teacher, that teacher is employed by us until they are terminated. Evaluation of performance will be conducted annually.
- Once a teacher or licensed teaching assistant has been employed for one (1) academic year and an offer to teach for an additional year is not given, their employment will be terminated.
- Teachers and licensed teaching assistants are not “offered a job” each year because they are already employed; they are offered a position because they performed at a satisfactory level the previous year.
- Teachers and licensed teaching assistants are asked each year to indicate whether or not they intend to continue teaching in the fall only for the purpose of MVCCS yearly budgeting.

“At will” employment implies that an employee can be terminated for any or no reason, at any time. However, we cannot do so in an arbitrary manner that would cause a perception of discrimination or termination for an illegal reason. All terminations are reviewed by the legal department, and all terminations are carefully reviewed by the MVCCS Board of Trustees. The atmosphere of frequent employment lawsuits in the U.S. means that we can terminate for any reason, but it may not be prudent to do so. To avoid liability, it’s important to review terminations carefully.

**ISSUANCE OF STATEMENTS OF INTENT FOR CONTINUED TEACHER EMPLOYMENT**

Statements of Intent are to be treated in the following manner:

- They are issued only to classroom teachers and licensed teaching assistants.
- Teachers and licensed teaching assistants who have already given a written statement indicating they are resigning do not receive a Statement of Intent.
- Teachers or licensed teaching assistants who are being involuntarily terminated as indicated above do not receive a Statement of Intent.
- Statements of Intent go out to continuing teachers and licensed teaching assistants only after teachers or licensed teaching assistants who are being involuntarily terminated have received notification of this action.
- Payroll/Status Change Forms may be sent by the School Leader to Human Resources with the returned/signed teacher and licensed teaching assistant Statements of Intent to make an indication of when salary changes will take effect and what those salary changes will be.

**ISSUANCE OF PAYROLL/STATUS CHANGE FORMS**

Payroll/Status Change Forms are to be treated in the following manner:

- They are issued to all employees to let them know whenever their payroll is going to be affected by a change which can be salary, benefits, or legally defined salary deductions.
- They are completed and given to Human Resources with signed teachers and licensed teaching assistants Statements of Intent or generated on an as needed basis for items related to the above criteria.
- They are completed for all academic and other non-teaching staff when changes to their salary become known as noted above.
- They are completed for staff who are resigning or being terminated to indicate their last payroll date.

**B. Ann Maher**

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<p><b>SUMMARY</b></p>	<p>Dedicated and resourceful veteran educator committed to leadership in school reform and non-profit endeavors. Over thirty years experience as public educator in New York and Connecticut, with proven ability in all facets of teaching and administration. Invested in using vision, communication skills, and collaboration to create positive community change and global learning for all students.</p>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL WORK HISTORY</b></p>	<p>PROJECT MANAGER for SUNY-IT Research Foundation May 2012-Present <i>Developing a Trans-Generational Mentoring Project</i></p> <hr/> <p>FAMILY ADVOCATE/HOME VISITOR for MVCAA 2011-2012 <i>Working with children and families in the Early Head Start and Head Start Programs of the Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency</i></p> <hr/> <p>SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR/ WCV Central School District 2008-2010 <i>Principal – West Canada Valley Elementary School in Newport, New York</i></p> <hr/> <p>SUBSTITUTE TEACHER in Region 10 and Canton CSD, Connecticut 2007-2008 <i>Per diem/short term teaching allowed me to renew teaching skills, expand secondary experience and create dialogue with students and staff</i></p> <hr/> <p>SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR/ Bristol City Schools 1998-2006 <i>Principal - Mountain View Elementary School in Bristol, Connecticut Central Office Experience in Curriculum, Standards-Based Learning, and Data-Driven Decision Making</i></p> <hr/> <p>SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR/ Southern Cayuga Central School 1992-1998 <i>Principal - Emily Howland Elementary School in Aurora, New York Grants Coordinator (1996-1998) District Technology Chair</i></p> <hr/> <p>TEACHER/PENN YAN CENTRAL SCHOOL Penn Yan, New York <i>Teaching experience at primary and intermediate levels Developed, implemented and taught district program for gifted education School leader in technology planning, implementation, and integration</i></p>
<p><b>BUSINESS EXPERIENCE</b></p>	<p>CO-OWNER/OPERATOR, Kenyon Meadows Dairy Farm 1978-1992 Himrod, New York <i>Successful family dairy farm enterprise of 260 acres and 120 head of cattle. Involved in all facets of business ownership and operation.</i></p>
<p><b>EDUCATION and CERTIFICATION</b></p>	<p>SUNY-Brockport Brockport, New York 1971-1988</p> <p>Nazareth College, Rochester, New York</p> <p>Keuka College, Penn Yan, New York</p> <hr/> <p>School District Administrator (SDA), New York State – Permanent</p> <p>N-6 Public School Teacher, New York State – Permanent</p>

<p><b>SUPERVISORY STRENGTHS</b></p>	<p>Understanding and promoting twenty-first century educational change                  Using technology as an instructional, data, and communication tool                  Promoting shared leadership and consensus decision-making                  Providing sound fiscal management, creative use of grant funding                  Increasing community awareness and parent involvement                  Able to connect pedagogy and practicality</p>
<p><b>CURRICULUM and MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE</b></p>	<p>Grant Acquisition: Writing, Implementation and Administration                  Technology Use: Training, Integration and Effective Use                  Differentiated Instruction, Gifted Education, Response to Intervention                  Critical and Creative Thinking/ Bloom’s taxonomy                  Creation and Implementation of Accountability Strategies                  Personalized Learning, Character Education and Conflict Resolution                  Unification of Regular and Special Education, Inclusive Practice                  Parent Involvement and Shared Decision Making (Site-Based Management)</p>
<p><b>TRAINING</b></p>	<p>Performance Assessment: Design and Implementation                  Special Education Administration                  Early Intervention and Differentiation of Instruction                  Supervision and Evaluation                  Data-Driven Decision Making – District and Building Level</p>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL WORK</b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.teacherandlearner.org">www.teacherandlearner.org</a>                  Exploration of Twenty-First Century Educational Practice                  Workshop Presentations for Technology, Character Education, Family Issues                  Awarded New York State Enhanced Learning Technology Grant - 1998                  Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) Fellow – 2001</p>
<p><b>AFFILIATIONS</b></p>	<p>Kuyahora Valley Rotary Club                  Association for Curriculum and Development                  Mohawk Valley Charter School Initiative                  Church/Community Volunteer</p>
<p><b>REFERENCES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUNY-IT</p> <p>██████████ ██████████ ██████████                  ██████████ ██████████ ██████████</p> <p>██████████ ██████████ ██████████                  ██████████ ██████████ ██████████</p> <p>██████████ ██████████ ██████████                  ██████████ ██████████ ██████████</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Other references available by request</i></p>	