

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**A. Mission and Vision Statement:** The Harlem Preparatory Charter School for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (HPCS) will prepare the next generation of engineers and applied scientists for a challenging college education. By providing a robust active-learning, inquiry-based, and college-bound educational experience, HPCS students will embrace higher education, become leaders in their communities, attain their career of choice, and remain inquisitive, life-long learners.

**B. Key Design Elements:** Based on the founders experience as a planning team member and her subsequent fellowship at Columbia Secondary School for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, HPCS will implement an electives liberal arts curriculum model and a variety of other successful processes and activities, focusing on:

1. Ongoing collaboration between teachers, parents, other community stakeholders and college-level partnerships. Intelligent use of community resources creates an outstanding school;<sup>1</sup>
2. Implementation of robust, national and state standards-aligned courses based upon the International Baccalaureate (IB) integrative and interactive curriculum framework. The IB seeks to foster positive attitudes and a love of learning in both teachers and students;
3. The infusion of STEM as a coordinated, thematic strategy involving collaboration between different departments. STEM will provide our students with significant efficacy across the curriculum, and also will provide for them distinctly realizable higher education and career opportunities. (The U.S. will need 400,000 graduates with STEM backgrounds by 2015);<sup>2</sup>
4. Adherence to the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) methodology, which incorporates multiple intelligences and varied assessments;
5. Data Analysis, Performance Review and Modification as a continuous cycle of improvement for both students and school utilizing the dynamic Response to Intervention (RTI) system. NY State ELA and Math tests, the New York Regents Exam, in-house assessments, and IB-validated comprehensive exams for students, as well as evaluation processes for faculty and staff, will be included;<sup>3</sup>
6. Partnerships with area universities:<sup>4</sup> A challenging collegiate environment supports intellectual risk taking, creativity, and dedication to the pursuit of both personal and academic excellence;
7. Inclusion, collaboration and support for Special Education and English Language Learners students.<sup>5</sup>

## C. Founding Group Capacity

**Milagros Diana Garcia**, lead applicant and founder of this proposed charter school, has an Ed., MA., in Educational Leadership from Columbia University Teacher's College, possesses acute knowledge of educational methodologies and curriculum development and has experience with student performance data analysis, team building, leadership, effective staff development planning, staff evaluation, school budget analysis, and creation of positive and effective learning environments. Working in the New York Public Schools system for five years, she has visited more than 200 schools as part of her research for HPCS, and currently serves as Academic Chair at Merrick Academy Charter School.

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<sup>1</sup> See Section III for a Discussion of Partnerships with Area Universities.

<sup>2</sup> See Section III for full explanation of components 2, 3, and 4.

<sup>3</sup> See Section III, d & e for further details on assessment tools and improvement processes.

<sup>4</sup> Preliminary discussions thus far indicate commitments for various levels of participation from area institutions of higher education including, but not limited to, Columbia University and City College.

<sup>5</sup> See Section III School Design for a full description of HPCS program for Special Ed and ELL students.

**Alexander Mathew Tisch, Esq.**, degreed from George Washington University and St. John University School of Law, is a long-term attorney in Manhattan, and has served on Manhattan Community Board 8, as a 73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly Democratic District Leader, and as president of the Lexington Democratic Club.

**Hon. John Joseph Kelley**, an attorney with 23 years of public/private sector experience, a three-time elected Town Justice, a six-year member of the New York State Attorney Grievance Committee, former Board Member of the Livingston County Fire Advisory Board, former president of Livingston County Bar Association and the Livonia Rotary Club. He has developed curriculum for Monroe Community College and taught Junior Achievement to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders for six years.

**Bryan Simms**, with degrees in Public Policy and Business Administration from Norfolk Academy, Duke University and the University of Virginia's Darden School, comes equipped with a 15-year Wall Street career, as a private banker specializing in capital expansion/portfolio management, including oversight of client assets in excess of \$2-billion dollars, and as a consulting expert to Fortune Small Business Magazine. He was recognized in the National Black MBA Association's "Top 50 Under 50" list.

**Kathleen O'Halleran**, with advanced degrees and teaching in Sustainability Education, brings knowledge and experience applying the academic, social and affective components needed for a robust educational program. A Secondary Education Program Director for Northwestern Oklahoma State University, she also has worked in assessment at the national level, serving a NCATE Board Examiner and a NCSS Program Reviewer. She served as a consultant for United Nations subcommittees, including the UNDP, UNECOSOC, and the UN-sponsored International Network for Education in Emergencies.

**Dr. Carlos Pagan**, possessing a degree from Teachers College, Columbia University, is Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of New Mexico. He has founded and directed two International Baccalaureate charter schools successfully through approval and implementation. His research interests include charter schools, performance based compensation, and school turnaround.

**Dr. Edmund W. Gordon** is the Richard March Hoe Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the John M. Musser Professor of Emeritus of Psychology at Yale University. He is widely known for his research on diverse human characteristics and pedagogy, and the education of low status populations. He is interested in the career development of black men who have become high achievers after overcoming enormous odds against success. His current study group on the Correlates of High Academic Achievement is investigating, through several projects, personal, ecological, and institutional factors that are associated with high levels of academic achievement in a variety of ethnic minority students.

The **Education Advisory Committee** includes curriculum development and academic support specialists:

**Dr. Sherrish Holloman**, Ed.D, Teachers College, Columbia University, has worked with the National Academy for Excellent Teaching (NAFET), and provides professional development support to small schools in the South Bronx. She has strong experience working in curriculum development, leadership development, and strategic planning with Principals. Actively involved with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC), she was a member of the first cohort of school-based staff developers.

**Dr. Monica A. White**, Ed.D, Teachers College, Columbia University, is Executive Director of Academic Support for District 79, New York City Department of Education, Alternative Schools and Programs, and adjunct instructor at Teachers College, Columbia University in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, with 10 years experience working with special needs children. She will serve on HPCS's Education Advisory Committee.

## II. Student Population

### A. Student Enrollment

HPCS will admit 125 new students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Each subsequent year, it will add another 125 6<sup>th</sup> grade students as the previous classes matriculate. Ninth graders will be added beginning in 2014-15. The school will reach full capacity of 764 students by the start of the 2017-18 school years. By limiting the initial entry point to 6<sup>th</sup> grade, HPCS will be able to foster a strong, vertically aligned program for its existing students before adding a cohort of new 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 2014-15.

#### Projected Enrollment: Harlem Preparatory Charter School for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Grades	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
6	125	125	125	125	125	125	125
7		112	112	112	112	112	112
8			100	100	100	100	100
9				125	125	125	125
10					112	112	112
11						100	100
12							90
Total	125	237	337	462	574	674	764

*Projected Student Population Chart for HPCS allows for a natural attrition rate of 10%.*

HPCS's school structure will consist of small, individualized, 25-student classrooms. This small school setting will allow students at HPCS to immerse themselves in learning core competency skills, such as critical thinking, analytical reasoning, written communication and problem solving that will characterize the mission of HPCS and the high-expectations structure of the IB-based curriculum.

We, at HPCS, especially plan to close the achievement gap for at risk by starting our program in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade (Middle School Level) and continuing until 12<sup>th</sup> grade, maintaining a small-classroom environment.

HPCS students will seamlessly matriculate from middle to secondary education. Through this continuity, we will provide the needed structural, social and emotional attachments in the school community that will help students to stay in school.<sup>6</sup>

In accepting new 9<sup>th</sup> graders into the program in 2014, after we have carefully built up our cohort and created a strong educational culture, the school will be able to more effectively intercede and support these new secondary level students during what statistics also demonstrate are notoriously pivotal, and often final, stages in their academic careers.

Finally, by maintaining small class sizes in a small school community, we also will ensure that all students receive the academic, social and emotional attention that they require in the classroom. We will assure that academic pace is sustainable, and that students and teachers are well-familiarized with each other so that the culture of our school is continually reinforced and supported by all.

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<sup>6</sup>Lehr, C.A., Johnson, D.R., Bremer, C.D., Cosio, A., & Thompson, M. *Essential Tools: Increasing Rates of School Completion: Moving from Policy and Research to Practice*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (2004), pp 31-60.

## B. Target Populations

HPCS will locate its facility between East and West Harlem, and, more specifically, will serve students residing in the Harlem Community School Districts 3 and 4.

*Identifying Minority Populations:* These neighborhoods comprise large populations of African-Americans and Latino-Americans that primarily reside in East Harlem, where both language and poverty represent significant barriers to a complete, quality education. In District 3, 78% of the students are of minority status, including 32% Black or African American, and 37% Hispanic or Latino. In District 4, 98% of the students are of minority status, including 30% African American and 62% are Hispanic or Latino.<sup>7</sup>

*Identifying Student Populations and Economic Risk:* In addition to high populations of minorities in our target population within Harlem Community School Districts 3 and 4, a significant portion of students also are at economic risk, having a high risk for dropping out of school (based upon statistics provided by the New York State Education Department). According to *The New York State District Report Card: Accountability and Overview Report 2008-09*: New York City Geographic District 3, approximately 48% of the students are eligible for free lunch, and another 8% receive reduce-priced lunch. In Geographic District 4, 77% of the students are eligible for free lunch and another 5% received reduce price lunch.<sup>8</sup>

*Identifying Language Barriers and Special Needs:* Other barriers noted in these Harlem Community School Districts include Limited Language Proficiency (LLP). In District 3, 10% of the students fall into this category, while in District 4, 13% are classified as LLP. Addressing English Language Learner (ELL) students, supporting students at risk for dropping out of school, and meeting the needs of Students with Disabilities (SWD) are specific goals for HPCS. Statistics culled from the New York City Department of Education indicate that between 15-18% of students in these Harlem neighborhoods are students with disabilities, on Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).<sup>9</sup>

HPCS will use the **Universal Design for Learning** (UDL) approach to serve our target population. The UDL is valuable and effective methodology that is inclusively applicable to students of all classifications. UDL provides a set of curriculum development principles that offers all students equal opportunities for learning. According to the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), “UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone-not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted” for individual needs with methodologies that utilize multiple means of representation, expression and engagement.<sup>10</sup> Tapping the tenets of neuroscience, UDL allows flexibility in its recognition of the multiple means of learning. It simultaneously acknowledges that each student distinctively organizes their varied skills, needs and interests into a unique, operational learning “fingerprint” that is shaped and activated through three key domains: the recognition network (the “what” of learning); the strategic network (the “how” of learning) and the affective network (the “why” of learning).<sup>11</sup> The pedagogical methodologies associated with UDL will be categorically utilized in every HPCS classroom for all

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<sup>7</sup>New York State District Report Card: District 3: Accountability and Overview Report 2008-09: New York City Geographic District #3 (New York: 2009), p. 3. Taken from <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2009/44/AOR-2009-310300010000.pdf>; The New York State District Report Card: Accountability and Overview Report 2008-09: New York City Geographic District #4, p. 3. Taken from <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2009/37/AOR-2009-310400010000.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>Educational Impact Statement Proposed Temporary Grade Expansion of Harlem Success Academy 1 in M149/M207 for 2011-2012, (New York City DOE). Taken from [http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/964086CE-D82A-4480-8E77-C5516251AA56/94721/EIS\\_HSA2.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/964086CE-D82A-4480-8E77-C5516251AA56/94721/EIS_HSA2.pdf), 2010, p. 8.

<sup>10</sup>Author unknown. “What is UDL?” (About UDL: Center for Applied Special Technology, 2010), Taken from <http://www.cast.org/udl/index.html>, para. 2.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid*, para. 3-4.

students.<sup>12</sup> UDL will be helpful to students who have chronically endured low achievement, students who are ELL, and students with disabilities by providing alternate modes of presentation in subject matter by permitting students to respond according to their preferred cognitive and motor strategies; and to engage with learning in the mode of presentation and expression that best fits their skills, needs and interests.<sup>13</sup>

HPCS's **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** program will raise the achievement potential of our target student populations, especially in the areas of Math and Science. HPCS will integrate the thematic strands of the STEM program. In addition to their pervasive application throughout all subject areas, utilizing STEM comprehensively across the curriculum aligns with all New York State Learning Standards for Math, Science and Technology, and for Career Development and Occupational Studies.<sup>14</sup> According to the SETDA, with this approach:

On a given school day, students benefiting from an education that integrates STEM into the learning process may 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, use handheld devices to collect and analyze data to solve real-world environmental problems, or use sophisticated technology to understand the connections between music and mathematics.<sup>15</sup>

Providing students in the Harlem neighborhoods with a sound, richly integrative background in STEM will provide our students with significant efficacy across the curriculum, and will also offer them distinctly realizable higher education and career opportunities: 400,000 graduates with STEM backgrounds will be required in the U.S. by 2015, to date most students in the majority of the nation's school districts do not have access to STEM school options, including (at this writing) those within the Harlem area.<sup>16</sup>

HPCS will use the **International Baccalaureate Curriculum Design** to meet achievement standards. The IB curriculum design provides multiple points of access and engagement for teachers, administrators, and students that address academic achievement, ELL, special needs and other barriers for our target population. HPCS implementation of the IB curriculum model provides an integrative and comprehensive design across subject areas that will provide inclusion and adaptation for multiple levels of learning, continuity between middle and high school programs that will provide for ease of academic transition for our students, and key principles that shape and support the whole learner. These goals will help support a positive and sustaining school culture. The fluidity of the curricula framework and the interrelatedness of the subject areas are emphasized through fundamental concepts that tie subject areas together. The IB framework is flexible and addresses the achievement gaps seen in our target population. For example, student schedules will have blocks of time set aside to meet one-on-one with faculty to establish special education accommodations that support all academically struggling students and/or students who need extra help with literacy and language learning.<sup>17</sup>

As soon as its charter is approved, HPCS will apply for formal certification as an IB World School, and will adopt IB's world-renowned Middle Years Program (ages 11-16) and Diploma Program (ages 17-19).

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<sup>12</sup> David H. Rose & Anne Meyer (2002). *Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning* (ASCD), Taken from <http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/tes/chapter1.cfm>, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> See Section III for more information on how HPCS will implement UDL into its school design.

<sup>14</sup> *Learning Standards for New York State*. (New York State Department of Education, 2010), pp. 1-3. Taken from <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/pub/standards.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> SETDA, p. 2, Taken from <http://www.setda.org>.

<sup>16</sup> See Section III for more information on how STEM will be infused and integrated throughout HPCS' school design.

<sup>17</sup> See Section III for more detail on how IB's curriculum design will be implemented into HPCS's school design.

The International Baccalaureate organization, established in 1968, is a non-profit, international educational foundation headquartered in Switzerland. Pertinent to the target population for HPCS is IB's curriculum framework and external assessments.

HPCS target population also includes **Students with Disabilities**. The school will utilize the centralized Response to Intervention (RTI) system for purposes of collecting, monitoring and analyzing all student progress.<sup>18</sup> The RTI program represents a harmonious fit for HPCS because of its focus on culturally responsive, evidence-based support across the system. Information compiled for each student will be helpful in screening, in progress monitoring, in providing for multi-level support to thwart academic or behavioral problems, and to govern decision-making. The integrative, robust RTI system allows teachers, staff, instructional advisors, and when applicable, the special education coordinator and special education teacher, to access and update student files with respect to progress in courses, internal and external assessments, and interventions.<sup>19</sup> This process will help HPCS assess the status, monitor the growth and target the most appropriate strategies and interventions for our ELL students, and for students with disabilities, in particular.

Based upon the findings of initial entry-level assessments, or if a student fails to respond to intervention, the student may have a learning disability or other disability that requires further evaluation. Progress monitoring and other data collected over the course of the provided intervention will be examined during the evaluation process, along with data from appropriately selected measures (*e.g.*, tests of cognition, language, perception, and social skills). In this way, our implemented RTI framework will contribute to the process of disability identification, and also will reduce inappropriate identification of students who might appear to have a disability because of inappropriate or insufficient instruction. Whether a student enters with an IEP or 504 Plan, is referred for evaluation by a parent, or through the RTI system, HPCS is committed to providing timely and appropriate accommodation.

New York State Education Law 2853(4) places CSE responsibility for charter school students on the school district of residence. Thus, based upon the recommendations of the CSE, with the consent of legal guardians and after following the procedural safeguards embedded in the RTI system, the Special Education Coordinator will initiate a written request for an initial evaluation to determine the eligibility of the student for special education and/or related services to the chair of District Committee on Special Education (CSE).

The student's legal guardians/parents will receive a copy of the written request to the District CSE, along with the Parent's Rights procedural safeguards notice stipulated by federal IDEA requirements. The official CSE request will explain the need for an evaluation by providing a detailed accounting of: (a) the rationale for the referral, including a list of all applicable assessments, records and reports; (b) a listing and explanation of the interventions and pre-referral processes that have already taken place; (c) a description/chronology of family/guardian involvement through our pre-referral, RTI process; and (d) any pre-referral data or documentation gathered during the pre-referral process of the need for evaluation. Whether referred by a parent for an Identification Meeting or through RTI, or in the event a student arrives at HPCS with an IEP or 504 Plan, our Special Education Coordinator will insure that all services are made available. With respect to pending requests to the District CSE for special education services eligibility evaluations, HPCS will provide such services as appropriate and in compliance with IDEA 34, CFR 300 and New York State Education Law sections 2853(4) and 2856(1).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See Section III for more information.

<sup>19</sup> See Section III for more information.

<sup>20</sup> Education Law § 2853(4) requires that charter school students receive special education services in accordance with the IEP recommended by the CSE or subcommittee on special education of the school district of residence. Under Education Law §

Once a student's IEP is in place, all of the student's general education teachers will be provided the appropriate and relevant IEP stipulations/sections so that all accommodations, modifications and appropriate goals can be monitored and managed effectively and in compliance with the law. All teachers will work with the Special Education Coordinator and any outside consultants as required, and will take part in training and/or professional development needed to assure IEP compliance. Also, as needed, HPCS will contract with qualified outside service providers if on-site strategies and interventions are needed in, but not available through, our in-house support team. Such services may include, but are not limited to, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychiatric counseling or other services indicated in students' IEPs.<sup>21</sup> HPCS will assure that all special education services provided in the fulfillment of students' IEPs are through providers that are appropriately certified, licensed and trained, and that these providers are monitored and held accountable to the HPCS's School Director and the Special Education Coordinator. A special education classroom and resource room will be available on site at HPCS in our Academic Success Center. It will be accessible to those students with disabilities whose IEPs require pull-out therapies or instructional sessions.<sup>22</sup>

Through the RTI system, each student with an IEP or 504 Plan in place will be monitored by HPCS's Assessment Coordinator, Special Education Coordinator and Faculty Advisor to assure that the IEP is being followed by all of the student's teachers and to evaluate the student's progress in each subject area. The Faculty Advisor, the Special Education Coordinator and teachers will input assessment data and progress information into the RTI system each quarter to determine student progress. Beyond the overarching RTI process, IEPs will be reviewed annually by the Special Education Coordinator and, if a determination is made that an IEP needs revision, the Special Education Coordinator will initiate a referral for evaluation to the Child Study Team (CST). These processes will help to assure that the re-evaluations conducted once every three years have up-to-date information and ensure continued monitoring and support of students' progress. HPCS will remain steadfast in its committed adherence to all relevant federal and New York state laws governing the right to a free, safe and inclusive school environment and the least restrictive education possible.<sup>23</sup>

HPCS target population also includes **English Language Learners** (ELL):

*Identifying ELL Learners:* The college-bound, rigorous, active learning based program at HPCS, and our mission to provide an educational experience that focuses on intellectual, social and affective development of all our students, necessitates fluent literacy for all students cross all domains—listening, speaking, reading and writing. Based upon NYSESLAT assessment outcomes for our target population of 43% for Middle Level entry students and 47% for entry-level Diploma students, and considering that at

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2851(2)(s), the charter of each charter school must describe the methods and strategies for serving students with disabilities, which must be in compliance with all Federal laws and regulations relating to special education. See *Charter Schools and Special Education*. (NYSDOE: 2010). Taken from <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/specialed.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Under Education Law § 2853(4)(a), the charter school has the option of providing the special education programs directly or by contract, or arranging to have such services provided by the school district. See *Charter Schools and Special Education*. (NYSDOE: 2010). Taken from <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/specialed.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Under New York Law § 2853(4)(a), if the student's IEP recommends a self-contained special education class, resource room or other services that can be delivered at the charter school and would enable the student to participate in the charter school's programs and services for some portion of the school day, the charter school is required to implement the IEP and arrange to have such services provided to the student.

<sup>23</sup> See *Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)*, 20 U.S. Code 1400; *IDEA* Amendments 61(d)(3); PL 105-17; encompassing the following provisions: CFR 34 § 300.220 (Child Find Provision); CFR 34 § 300.504 (*Referral and Prior Notice*); CFR 34 § 300.500 (*Informed Consent*); CFR 34 § 300.532 (*Evaluation*); PL 94-142 (*Least Restrictive Environment*); *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990*, U.S. Code 42 § 12101, *et seq*; Family Education Rights Privacy Act (*FERPA*) of 1974 U.S. Code. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99; *Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975* PL 92-142; *Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, 504 U.S. Code § 794; New York State Education Law §§ 2851(2), 2853 (4), and 2856 (1).

least one out of every ten of our students will require ELL services, HPCS has identified English fluency as a priority goal for our school.

HPCS will identify ELL students during outreach in our recruitment processes and during registration, utilizing the *Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ)*. The purpose for using this questionnaire is to identify the language(s) spoken in the home and whether the student should be assessed for ESL services. Regardless of race, ethnicity, or language, every parent/legal guardian will complete the HLQ at the time of registration. Our school registrar will ensure that HLQs are completed during enrollment. Data from the HLQ will be entered into the RTI system and the original questionnaire will be placed in the student's cumulative and confidential file. A copy of all student HLQs that indicate a language other than English is spoken in the home will be provided to our ESL coordinator within five school days of a student's enrollment.

The results from the review and the decision of whether to proceed with screening will be documented on the student's HLQ and on a designated ESL tab in the RTI system. It is recognized that a student who is not identified through the *HLQ* may be identified as not achieving at the grade level of their peers. A student experiencing academic difficulties may self-refer or be referred by one of our teachers, a specialist, and/or a parent. If a HPCS teacher suspects a student's academic difficulty may be due to a second language influence, the teacher first will communicate with the parent(s)/guardian to discuss the student's learning problem(s) and gather information on whether there may be a second language influence. If there is an indication of a second language influence possibly affecting the student's performance, the teacher will consult with the ESL coordinator regarding the student's academic performance. The teacher will complete and submit an ELL Referral form, with student work samples attached, to the ESL coordinator.

The second step in the identification process will be to conduct a review of the student's records to determine whether formal assessment is required. The ESL coordinator will complete a review of the student's academic records and meet with the appropriate general education teacher(s) to report the results of the review within five school days of receiving the HLQ of a potential ELL. If the referral process identified the student, the ESL coordinator will make every effort to obtain a completed HLQ and then conduct a review of records. This will include an analysis of school records and report cards, the results of formal standardized tests, and when considered necessary, conducting interviews with parents/legal guardians, students and previous teachers, if available.

Based upon the outcome of this screening review, and within 10 days of initial enrollment, eligible students will be administered the Language Assessment Batter Revised (LAB-R) to determine their level of English proficiency. As noted by the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE), the LAB-R reflects "the current diagnostic trends in determining if a student is in need of Bilingual Education or English as a Second Language services."<sup>24</sup> Students scoring at or below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on the LAB-R will be considered Limited English Proficient (LEP) and will be eligible for ESL services. To assess overall academic performance apart from proficiency in English, ELL students will be assessed in both their native languages and in English, as recommended by the NYC DOE.<sup>25</sup>

The combination of language proficiency assessment, teacher judgment and other performance indicators assessed by our ESL coordinator will provide a more valid and reliable indication of our students'

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<sup>24</sup> Klein, Joel. "Administration of the Language Assessment Batter-Revised and the Spanish LAB for General and Special Education Students." (*New York City Department of Education Assessment Memorandum #2: New York City*), Sept 3, 2008. Retrieved from URL: [http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos\\_0809/2008-09\\_memo\\_02.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos_0809/2008-09_memo_02.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

language skills and the appropriate interventions, which will range from (a) bilingual services, (b) monolingual services with ESL, or (c) monolingual services without ESL.<sup>26</sup> We believe that, in order to gain a comprehensive account of a student's language proficiency, the involvement of parents, students, and teachers is essential. Where English proficiency is limited in the homes of our students, communication with parents/legal guardians will be provided in their native language.

Serving ELL Learners:

To best meet the needs of our ELL students, HPCS will provide a system for rapid English fluency within the first year of school. Toward that end, we will implement a Structured English Immersion (SEI) model that has achieved better outcomes for the development of English proficiency and support of academic achievement than traditional bilingual programs in both charter and public schools around the country, and specifically in Arizona, California and New Mexico.<sup>27</sup> In New York City, Bronx Prep, Democracy Prep, and KIPP Infinity also have reported favorable outcomes with SEI, which provides an inclusive model of instruction for ELL students. While ELL students will be mainstreamed into their subject classes, SEI will provide them with a continual focus on building English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Through the SEI model, specialized curriculum materials, additional time, multiple forms of assessments, tutoring, in-class interpreters and one-on-one bilingual coaching will be provided as needed.

This commitment includes adherence to the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, and specifically Sections 3115(g), 3122(a)(3)(f), 3211(b), and 3302(a-f) concerning use of Title III funds, adequate yearly progress, parental notification, outreach and participation, and barring use of surnames as criteria for inclusion in ESL programs. All other ELL-pertinent laws will be honored at HPCS, including the 1974 Equal Education Opportunity Act, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Executive Order 13166 (2000) providing equal access for ELLs, as well as legal precedents which include *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) (same does not mean equal); and *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981) (three-pronged standard for equal access). In meeting these legal commitments, HPCS prohibits the discrimination or exclusion of students based upon limited English proficiency and pledges inclusion for all ELL students in both curricular and extra-curricular programs and activities, that students in the ELL Program will receive the appropriate services distinctly designed for our ESL Program, and that students who qualify for both ELL and Special Education services will receive the full benefit of each of these distinct services.<sup>28</sup>

The progress of each student identified as an ELL learner will be monitored and evaluated as part of the HPCS RTI system. This dynamic tool also will be utilized to measure the effectiveness of our overall ESL Program by using subject-driven assessments, internal measurements (that are criterion-referenced, longitudinal, norm and non-norm reference), and annual, externally driven assessments through the IB curriculum framework and the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).

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<sup>26</sup> Klein, Joel. "Administration of the Language Assessment Batter-Revised and the Spanish LAB for General and Special Education Students." (*New York City Department of Education Assessment Memorandum #2: New York City*), Sept 3, 2008. Taken from [http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos\\_0809/2008-09\\_memo\\_02.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos_0809/2008-09_memo_02.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> Clark, Kevin. *The Case for Structured English Immersion: Three States and Many School Districts are Finding that Emphasizing English Language Instruction Offers ELLs an Accelerated Path to Success.* (*Educational Leadership*, Apr 2009), pp. 42-46. Taken from <http://sde.state.nm.us/QualityAssuranceSystemsIntegration/dl09%20ELL%20Summit/The%20Case%20for%20Structured%20English%20Immersion.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Klein, Joel. "Administration of the Language Assessment Batter-Revised and the Spanish LAB for General and Special Education Students." (*New York City Department of Education Assessment Memorandum #2: New York City*), Sept 3, 2008. Retrieved from URL: [http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos\\_0809/2008-09\\_memo\\_02.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos_0809/2008-09_memo_02.pdf).

Annually, these results will be utilized (a) to make any needed improvements or modifications to our SEI Program, and (b) to determine the ELL student's level of proficiency and whether ELL students need to continue receiving ESL services.

### **C. Recruitment of Target Population:**

HPCS will involve all stakeholders throughout our student recruitment processes. HPCS is committed to reaching out to critical student populations in our target area, including minorities, ELLs, students with disabilities, the economically disadvantaged, and other hard to reach student populations.

While HPCS will be open to all New York City students, one of its goals will be to enroll a student body that represents the Community School Districts 3 and 4 and, therefore, to recruit student applicants who meet or exceed these districts' demographic statistical averages, especially for the targeted population sectors. Toward that end, our recruitment strategies will incorporate the following key components:

1. Provide marketing materials in English and Spanish detailing our Special Education and ESL services, including appropriate translation services for parents;
2. In our marketing materials, promote our (a) extended day, extended school year curriculum and extra-curricular activities, (b) STEM conceptual framework and its relevancy to higher education and career planning, and (c) Academic Success Center, our partnerships with area universities, and our college preparatory school culture;
3. Create and maintain a school website, blog and *Facebook* page for HPCS as well as network and/or share links online with various community forums and agencies;
4. Create monthly newsletter available online and in print that highlights our faculty, staff, administrators, students, programs, and progress. We will circulate our newsletter to those who sign up at any and all events or online to receive updates, and will also circulate our newsletters at agencies, organizations and business establishments that agree to accept them;
5. Create, and distribute flyers in English and Spanish about our school and upcoming registration events or informational meetings on an ongoing basis. Local establishments, organizations and social services agencies will be asked to post our flyers in a prominent place;
6. Provide a Spanish interpreter at all recruitment and outreach activities and informational meetings in our targeted communities;
7. Meet with the Committees on Special Education (CSE) for CSDs 3 and 4 to discuss community needs, provide information about our school and provide additional points of access and information by asking that our recruitment materials be circulated to families served by these offices;
8. Continue to meet with and build relationships with school guidance counselors, teachers, special education coordinators, ESL professionals, and PTAs at CSD 3 and 4 elementary schools to promote HPCS for students who will be entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade;
9. Organize and host informational meetings and presentations at area churches, libraries, and organizations in Districts 3 and 4; and
10. Coordinate press coverage and advertising of recruitment and enrollment kick-off events with area radio, television and print media.

Two years of preliminary research has been conducted in the targeted Harlem communities and in meetings with various stakeholders to identify how best to reach their populations and meet their needs. HPCS is confident that it will fulfill the school's commitment to a culturally-responsive program that embraces a continuous cycle of improved outcomes for students through the programs, people and passion we bring to teaching and learning.

### III. School Design

*Design, Frameworks and Conceptual Methodologies:* HPCS is committed to aiding in the success of students in Harlem Community Districts 3 and 4. The school will achieve this through a robust, multi-dimensional point of access and engagement, made possible through a commitment to the precepts of the “No Excuses” approach to rigorous college preparation, extended learning time, the systematic use of data, safe and supportive school environment and exemplary teaching. As discussed in Section II, this approach will be greatly supported by the following key components:

1. The infusion of the STEM conceptual framework throughout all subjects in our program;
2. Universal Design for Learning pedagogical methodologies incorporating multiple intelligences and varied assessments utilized throughout our school, to provide an inclusive and integrative learning process; and
3. The implementation and continual application of the Response to Intervention (RTI), which will provide seamless and integrated data collection, assessment and analysis for monitoring, intervention, evaluation and decision-making for improvement of both school and program.

All of these measures are designed to close achievement gaps and promote academic, social and affective excellence for our students; however, at the heart of our program rests our commitment to exemplary instruction as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. The HPCS curriculum will emphasize all areas of a classic liberal arts education as an education that teaches children “*how to think*” not “*what to think*.” We believe the liberal arts education must prepare children for life. Pending charter approval, we immediately will apply for IB certification. IB will form our curriculum design and provide the curriculum framework for both our Middle Years Program (Grades 5-10) and our Diploma Program (Grades 11-12).

The IB Program presently works with 3,102 schools in 140 countries and serves almost 1 million students, including a primary, middle and high school programs. The IB Middle Years Program provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and to become critical and reflective thinkers.

*The Middle Years Program* utilized at HPCS will consist of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction that provide a framework for learning within and across the subjects. Middle Years Subject areas include: (1) Language A (English); (2) Language B (a second language); (3) Humanities including courses such as geography; history; economics; politics; civics; sociology; anthropology; and psychology; (4) Sciences; (5) Mathematics; (6) Arts; (7) Physical Education; and (8) Technology. As the capstone experience, students will create a personal project to demonstrate their learning.

The fluidity of the Middle Years curricular framework and the interrelatedness of the subjects are emphasized in this academic curricula model, and there also are five key areas of interaction across the curriculum: (1) Health and Social Education; (2) Community and Service; (3) Human Ingenuity; (4) Approaches to Learning; and (5) Environment are also addressed naturally through each of these distinct disciplines. Finally, the fundamental concepts of intercultural awareness, holistic learning and communication are embedded in the philosophy of the IB Middle Years program to comprehensively reinforce support the curriculum. Flexibility built into the IB Middle Years curriculum allows for other subjects to be included as deemed necessary by a school to meet target population needs, as well as national or state requirements.

*The Diploma Program* (Grades 11-12) is designed as an academically rigorous and balanced college preparatory program that prepares students for success in higher education and beyond. The Diploma Program includes six academic areas and three core requirements. Over the course of the two-year

program, students study six subjects chosen from the six subject groups; follow a theory of knowledge (TOK) course; participate in creativity, action, and service (CAS); and complete a capstone research essay as their final project. In terms of rigor, students select three of the six subjects at standard level (courses representing 150 teaching hours), and the remaining three subjects at an advanced level (courses representing 240 teaching hours).

Both the Middle Years Program and the Diploma Program will require teachers at HPCS to become concerned with the total experience of the student at school. Organizing a well-rounded experience for our students will involve team planning across subjects on the part of teachers, as well as discussion of, and reflection on, the curriculum and learning activities from the point of view of the student. Student feedback mechanisms will be embedded in this process, through an end of year “School Town Hall” meeting, and feedback also will be collected through end-of-semester course evaluations that all students will complete. We will input data into the RTI system for analysis, decision-making, and any required modifications.

Overall, HPCS will couple these components into a cohesive school program that can be measured against the following achievement goals and benchmarks:

- a. *Increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics:*

#### Reading and Language Arts:

The IB curriculum design for both the Middle Years and the Diploma Program specifically targets Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics. IB’s Middle Years “Language A” program courses include the study of the instrumental function of a language where listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing skills are emphasized, and literature, which encompasses a variety of periods and genres. IB’s Diploma “Language A” program courses include the study of literature, including selections of world literature. Through the broad range of texts studied in “Language A” courses, students grow in their learning to appreciate a language’s complexities and subtleties in various contexts. A specific aim is to engender a lifelong interest in literature and a love for the elegance and richness of human expression.

Also, UDL strategies will be horizontally and vertically aligned with curriculum and pedagogical practices to enable students to maximize multiple learning modes. Teachers will utilize varied assessments, and reading and writing across the curriculum will reinforce concepts and strategies for course learning in Reading/Language Arts, while categorically reducing achievement gaps and improving student achievement.

In addition, systematically utilizing the Responses to Intervention system to monitor student progress will allow Reading/Language Arts teachers to effectively strategize individual learning and to provide extended learning time where and when appropriate. Collaboration made possible through RTI will allow teachers across the curriculum to reinforce Reading/Language Arts learning targets, further minimizing achievement gaps and fragmented learning.

HPCS annual Summer Institute for Writing and Thinking program will reinforce our reading and language arts program. This program is modeled after Columbia University Core program and Bard College. Each day in July, our students will participate in reading and college writing activities involving reading literary works from American and British writers. The curriculum will follow New York State’s common core standards and English Language Arts standards. Small class sizes will allow for greater emphasis on synthesizing ideas and shared perspectives to ensure that oral and communicative skills are developed and that diverse ideas are respected. Through this program, students will develop critical

reading skills through an appreciation for reading comprehension that furthers their speaking, listening, writing, critical reflection, and social skills. Beyond Reading/Language Arts, this program will foster a wide range of academic skills for students. By employing the Socratic Method this program will foster skills for students in critical thinking, creativity in analysis, conflict resolution, and team-building.<sup>29</sup>

### Mathematics

Our IB-based Middle Years Mathematics Curriculum is designed to provide students with an appreciation of the usefulness and power of the subject. A key aspect of this is building students' awareness that mathematics is a universal language with diverse applications. The Middle Years Program promotes an understanding of how cultural, societal and historical influences from a variety of cultures have shaped mathematical thought. At HPCS we will develop schemes of work for our students according to a framework that includes five branches of mathematics: (1) numbers; (2) algebra; (3) geometry and trigonometry; (4) statistics and probability; and (5) discrete mathematics. Aims and objectives include: (a) understanding mathematical reasoning and processes; (b) the ability to apply mathematics and to evaluate the significance of results; (c) the ability to develop strategies for problems in which solutions are not obvious; and (d) the acquisition of mathematical intuition.

Our IB-based Diploma Program Mathematics Curriculum is designed to accommodate the range of needs, interests and abilities of students, and also to fulfill the requirements of various university and/or career aspirations. Students in the IB Diploma Program must study at least one course in mathematics. Four courses in mathematics are available to meet the needs of all students: (1) mathematical studies standard level; (2) mathematics intermediate; (3) mathematics higher level (advanced); and (4) mathematics highest (master) level. The aims of these courses are to enable students to: (a) develop mathematical knowledge, concepts and principles; (b) develop logical, critical and creative thinking; and (c) employ and refine their powers of abstraction and generalization. In these courses, students are also encouraged to appreciate the international dimensions of mathematics and the multiplicity of its cultural and historical perspectives.

Applying math learning through STEM is an additional strategy in our Program that will increase student achievement and decrease achievement gaps. HPCS teachers will develop real-world innovative math projects that utilize hands-on, inquiry based strategies. Students will learn basic foundations of how math is utilized to solve societal problems, and understand how and why things operate the way they do.<sup>30</sup> Throughout this process, using a classroom project approach, students will be constantly engaging in logical reasoning skills and higher order thinking that are at the root of math. This problem-based learning model provides an environment where mathematical learning is student-centered and encourages students to find unknown information.<sup>31</sup>

- b. Increase high school graduation rates and focus on serving at-risk high school student populations (including re-enrolled drop-outs and those below grade level)*

**The International Baccalaureate (IB) program model** supports HPCS's commitment to address high dropout rates noted in our target population in two critical ways: (1) by providing sustained learning and a sustained school culture; and (2) by extending of the conventional middle school program from three

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<sup>29</sup> Copeland, Matt. *Socratic Circles in Middle and High School*. Stenhouse Publishers. 2005. P.11-21.

<sup>30</sup> Capraro, Robert and Slough, Scott. *Project-Based Learning An Integrated Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Approach*. 2008 Sense Publisher, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, p. 61.

years (grades 6-8) to five years (grades 6-10), and shortening of the conventional high school program from four years (grades 9-12) to two years (grades 11-12).

This approach has been tried and tested in schools with high-risk populations that successfully provide critical support to students at vulnerable transition points in their lives.<sup>32</sup> By providing continuity from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, HPCS will develop strong bonds with students that they will know on a first-name basis, and the students will be forming lifelong bonds that will strengthen their resolve to remain in school throughout their high school years.

In addition to these measures, HPCS has designed internal and external support mechanisms to best support our target populations. These include our extended school year and school day, our advisory and student support system and our Academic Support Center on campus; our RTI evaluation and intervention process to monitor, intervene and evaluate the academic achievement and behavioral progress of all students, and to identify and meet the needs of our students with disabilities; faculty and staff specialists. Details on each of these are as follows:

**Extended School Year and School Day:** By extending the school day and the school year and offering the safe and secure school environment that is fostered through the character development components of the IB program and the “No Excuses” model at HPCS, more opportunities throughout the day and throughout the year will be provided for these students to focus upon the academic, social and emotional qualities that support their success today and in the future. These decisions are sustained by research and practices demonstrating that extending school time can be an effective way to support student learning, “particularly (a) for students most at risk of school failure and (b) when considerations are made for how time is used.”<sup>33</sup> The HPCS school day will begin at 7:30 a.m., with an optional breakfast for all students. Classes will begin at 8 a.m., and will last until 4 p.m. Extra-curricular activities will be offered, and students may also stay at school and be supervised in the Academic Success Center until 6 p.m. each day. Year-long school also is provided, with targeted summer enrichment programs to deepen our students’ content knowledge, to build our school community culture, and to provide a continuum of safe and secure support for learning.

**Advisory and Student Support System and Center:** Advisory Support and the Academic Success Center at HPCS will provide a continuity of support for all students through a strong advisory system that will be high structured and tailored to meet each individual student’s academic needs. Each week (or more often if needed), students will meet one-on-one with the same faculty member who will serve as their main advisor throughout their Middle Years Program and then again throughout their Diploma Program at HPCS. Faculty, teachers and students will discuss pertinent concerns and issues relating to the curriculum, independent projects and senior essays, service learning components, and the peer mentoring scholars program that will be housed through the Academic Success Center. (See below for more information). English Language Learners (and Students with Disabilities (SWD) will have additional one-on-one academic support that begins with their academic faculty advisor. (See *ELL Program and Tiered Interventions* sections below for more details).

HPCS intends to partner with the Teachers College and Columbia University for tutoring and mentoring services. HPCS will also reach out to other area universities and educational organizations to assist with tutoring. All of these tutoring partnerships will be evaluated regularly through the RTI system (*see*

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<sup>32</sup>North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2000). *Indicator: Engaging learning environments*. Available online: <http://www.ncrel.org/engage/framework/efp/environ/efpenvin.htm>.

<sup>33</sup>Patali, Erika, Cooper Harris, Ashley Allen. “Extending the School Day or School Year A Systematic Review of Research” (1985–2009), (*Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 80:3), Sept 30, 2010, pp. 401-436.

assessment section below) to determine their effectiveness on student achievement. Resources on these efforts will be based on evaluation results.

**Response to Intervention: Assessments, Data Analysis and Interventions:** To assure academic success and close achievement gaps, HPCS will identify those students who are at risk of academic failure because they perform below grade level. This will be accomplished through implementation of a robust assessment process and program. Upon entry, all students will be administered set of standardized achievement tests (such as TerraNova3) that assesses achievement levels in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, vocabulary, spelling, and other areas. Additional assessments including the DRA2 Developmental Reading Assessment (Grades 4-8) to measure reading and writing comprehension also may be utilized to provide baseline assessments for each student.

HPCS will enter this data into a dynamic, integrative and relational database, utilizing the National Center for Response to Intervention (RTI) program. There are four essential components to RTI that HPCS will embrace and employ: (1) a school-wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing school failure; (2) screening; (3) progress monitoring; and (4) data-based decision making for instruction, movement within the multi-level system, and disability identification (in accordance with federal regulations and New York State law).<sup>34</sup> This centralized RTI system will allow HPCS to see the progress of our students continually through teacher and state-driven assessments, instructional and/or behavioral plans or other interventions and assessments, to compile and track progress for IB certification processes and examination procedures, and to assess the overall effectiveness of our school and our capability to meet standards-aligned learning goals, as data is disaggregated from the subject to the standard and item level. The RTI system employs a system for prevention and intervention that is organized through three progressive levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. While each level can encompass multiple interventions and a variety of assessments, resources, and differentiated instruction, each level also represents a level of student efficacy.<sup>35</sup>

Level 1 (Primary) will incorporate all baseline assessments and relevant interventions, assessments and strategies for each student enrolled. If additional support is required, students will move to level 2 (Secondary). If Level 2 support and interventions insufficient to address students' academic, language or behavioral needs, Level 3 (Tertiary) support will be provided. In addition to Level 1 support, Level 2 support may include the incorporation of connection courses into students' schedules as needed for each nine week period and for the assignment of individual or small group blocks of instructional time in the Academic Success Center of no less than 60 minutes per week on a prescribed basis of interjected support for students that are built in to their nine-week class schedules and rolled in to teacher schedules without resulting in student "pull-outs." When a student is assigned a Level 2 status, HPCS will notify students' legal guardians in writing so they may be apprised of the student's needs and progress, and provide the student with participatory support. Level 3 interventions will transpire and if a student fails to respond with progress to Level 2 strategies and interventions after their first nine weeks in Level 2, and is referred for further evaluation.

At that point, the student will be referred by HPCS's Assessment Coordinator to the Child Study Team (CST) that includes all of the student's teachers, the student's faculty advisor, the school counselor, social worker, special education coordinator, and school director. The student's legal guardians will be notified

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<sup>34</sup>*Essential Components of RTI: A Close Look at Response Intervention.* (National Center for Response to Intervention, Apr 2010), pp 1-2. Taken from [http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiessentialcomponents\\_051310.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiessentialcomponents_051310.pdf).

<sup>35</sup>*Essential Components of RTI: A Close Look at Response Intervention.* (National Center for Response to Intervention, Apr 2010), p. 7. Taken from [http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiessentialcomponents\\_051310.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiessentialcomponents_051310.pdf).

in writing and invited to meet with CST for an initial identification meeting, and every attempt will be made to enable parents to attend this meeting, including phone calls, teleconferencing, and if necessary, rescheduling if they are unable to attend. Following this initial identification meeting, CST will analyze collected and entered into the RTI system and determine whether any other data needs from additional assessments, medical records, or structured observations.

Within 15 days of the identification meeting and based upon all data collected and evaluated, the CST will make a determination for (a) more either frequent or intensive Level 2 support, or (b) the implementation of Level 3 Tertiary strategies. Such strategies may range from intensive, one-on-one depending on individual students needs and requirements necessary to small group push time each week for the student (up to two hours per day), or may involve the implementation of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). At all levels, HPCS will practice fidelity of implementation, with consideration for cultural and linguistic responsiveness and recognition of student strengths and weaknesses.

**Faculty and Staff Expertise:** Another mechanism HPCS will employ to improve high school graduation rates and serving at-risk high school students will come in the form of intervention support, as needed, from teachers experience and in instructing students with learning, language or behavioral difficulties. HPCS will provide students with additional and augmented support through our employment of a licensed school counselor/psychologist, a special education coordinator, an ELL coordinator, a social worker and the school nurse.

- c. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school (if applicable);*

**Program Continuity:** HPSC will support its students during the critical transition phase between middle school and high school, as well as preparation for advancement to higher grade levels, by the continuity provided in the IB Program framework. Specifically, the conventional, three-year-long Middle School program will be replaced for our students with IB's five-year Middle Years Program model in order to (1) stabilize and strengthen the connections students make between their intellectual and social growth, (2) provide continuity as middle school students develop the skills needed to know and understand the world around them, and (3) to reinforce deepen middle level students' sense of community in our school environment as they prepare for young adulthood.

As our program grows, upper level cohorts will become role model mentors to Middle Years students. By the time HPCS's first cohort enter the Diploma Program level, our faculty, staff and administrators who supported their learning for the previous five years, will be deeply aware of their needs and capabilities and well-prepared to address their transitions. The college-bound design of the IB Middle Years Program, and its rigorous curriculum, sets our middle school students' sights beyond the Diploma Program, to higher education.

**Response to Intervention as a Transition Tool:** The RTI system also will be utilized continuously to monitor our Middle Years Program students' academic achievement, as students' teachers input ongoing subject-related assessment data and monitor and assess student progress in their courses, based upon learning goals that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards. The Assessment Coordinator will use RTI to track each student's overall growth every nine weeks. As students prepare to matriculate to the Diploma Program, their achievement levels will be re-assessed.

**Collaborative Pedagogical Models:** The active-inquiry based approach to learning, combined with ongoing utilization of STEM across the curriculum and service learning in the community, also will provide significant opportunities for the development of outside mentor relationships that extend from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. These approaches will stabilize and strengthen our Middle Years students during their

critical transition years. Through our mentor program, we will develop strategic partnerships with corporations, agencies and nonprofit organizations to help furnish our next generation of students with the skills and resources that they will need to successfully excel academically, to provide opportunities for career awareness, to advance their leadership skills, and to emphasize higher education as a priority goal. Research performed on similar programs demonstrate that mentoring programs, service learning and civic engagement create “student stakeholders” in both the school community and communities at large.<sup>36</sup> Each student will complete of 100 hours of civic engagement over the course of their Middle Years Program and then an additional another 100 hours over the course of their Diploma Program.

- d. *Utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical application of concepts:*

HPCS will implement a robust assessment system in order to provide comprehensive measurement of our school’s effectiveness, to gauge our students’ mastery of content, and to identify areas for improvement in curriculum or instruction. Criterion referenced exams will be employed, including the New York State Regents Exam, the SAT and AP Exams, and norms-referenced/value-added computerized tests for Mathematics, Reading, Language Usage, and Science [including the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)]. By utilizing the IB framework and all required state standardized tests, teachers at HPCS will organize continuous, varied and valid assessments that match specific criteria corresponding to the objectives of each subject area, and that are aligned as well to the appropriate competencies found in New York State’s 28 Learning Standards.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout the student’s school experience at HPCS, intensive work using multiple types of assessments will be completed at the end of lessons and units of study for each subject. This will help instill and nurture a strong, college-preparatory, active learning culture, where academic, social and affective growth and achievement is aligned to the principles of learning embedded in our school mission, and as framed within the IB program. Internal assessments will be externally validated. Through IB, a tiered assessment process will be employed to assure viability and integrity of data, to analyze outcomes, and plan improvements. To meet official IB certification requirements, recommendations for improvement and modifications will be reviewed annually and carried out every year.

- e. *Increase implementation of local instructional improvement systems to assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making, and effectiveness:*

Utilizing RTI as its centerpiece, HPCS will comprehensively employ local instructional improvement systems in order to measure and inform instructional practice, decision-making and effectiveness. Multiple RTI components offer strong potential for improving school-wide level outcomes, including: (1) its multi-tiered approach to instruction and intervention; (2) its employment of universal screening and formative assessment data to inform instructional decision-making; and (3) its application-potential for evidence-based practices and decision-making.

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<sup>36</sup> Wells, Carole V., Christy Grabert. “Service-learning and Mentoring: Effective Pedagogical Strategies.” (*College Student Journal*, Dec 2004), p. 573-578.

<sup>37</sup>IB Diploma Program Assessment.(*International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2010). Retrieved from <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/assessment/>; IB Middle Years Program Assessment. (*International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2010), Retrieved from URL: <http://www.ibo.org/myp/assessment/index.cfm>; and *Learning Standards for New York State*. (New York State Department of Education, 2010), pp. 1-3. Retrieved from URL: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/pub/standards.pdf>.

f. *Partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best practices:*

Each year, our senior administration will be required to visit at least four other urban public schools in the Districts that we serve, including two visits within our CSDs and two outside our CSDs. “Pair and Share” visits will be scheduled; however, such visits would be on an individual basis to assure that instructional time is not lost, and outcomes will be shared at weekly departmental Professional Development meetings. We will also maintain an open door policy with personnel from local public schools who wish to visit our school to learn firsthand about our best practices and programs.

g. *Demonstrate the ability to overcome start-up challenges to open a successful school through management and leadership techniques:*

The planning of HPCS has been underway for the past two years. Considerable research and fieldwork has been undertaken over this time period, including visits to approximately 200 public schools in the New York City area and several charter schools. These include North Star Academy Charter School of Network, Harlem Children’s Zone Promise Academy, Harlem Success Academy 3, Bronx Charter School of Excellence, Future Leaders Institute, and International Leadership Charter School. Further research and field work has involved visiting and evaluating other IB World Schools in New York City, including Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy International (KAPPA), Mott Hall Bronx High School, Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change, and Washington Irving High School.

Alongside these processes, the creation of the planning team, founding board of trustees, and team of educational consultants have been a carefully crafted—an ongoing process that has extended over the past four-to-five years. Key HPCS leadership includes nearly a century of instructional, legal, financial and operational experience. (See Section 1 for details). HPCS anticipates the receipt of additional start-up funds from external sources and will aggressively seek out these prospects, including, but not limited to, the Federal Charter Schools Program, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation, the Bloomberg Family Foundation, the Eli & Edythe Broad Foundation, the Druckenmiller Foundation, the Robin Hood Foundation, and Open Society Foundation.

h. *Demonstrate the support of the school district and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district:*

A critical component of HPCS’s long term success is building relationships and collaborating with community-based organizations, area businesses and government agencies. Our mentoring program will build long-term relationships between our students and professionals engaged in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Math. Our service learning community projects will give each student an opportunity to donate 200 hours of community service back to these neighborhoods. We have been establishing contacts with members of Community Education Council District 3, Community Education Council District 4, and Community Board 10, and we will continue to reach out to these organizations for guidance and support. We also are initiating dialogue with the intent of establishing ongoing relationships with other organizations and agencies in the area including: The 116 Street Block Association, Clinton Housing Development, New York City Administration for Children’s Services, the Community League of the Heights, the Ecumenical Community Development Organization, the Manhattan Valley Development Corporation, EL Barrios Operation Fight-Back, Hellgate Management Corporation, and Hope Community Inc., the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, Nuevo EL Barrio Para La Rehab De La Vivienda Y LA Economia, Sinergia, Inc., Strycker’s Bay Neighborhood Council, and West Harlem Group Assistance. Beyond these potential connections, HPCS also has identified after-school, educational programs and youth clubs pertinent to building mutual support in the area, including the East Harlem Tutorial Project, Harlem Center for Education, 100 Black Men Organization, Children’s Aid Society, Harlem IVY, and Upward Fund After School Program-East Harlem. Finally, local churches and

church-based community programs are distinct components of the community culture in the areas we will serve that we will engage in outreach with including Abyssinian Baptist Church, the Riverside Church, Second Canaan Baptist Church, New Hope Baptist Church of Harlem, and the Congregation.

- i. *Provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there are a lack of alternatives:*

Through our curriculum design and integrated programs, we will remedy poor achievement that is due to language, economic, racial, and special needs barriers. According to recent results on the NYSESLAT for English as a Second Language, proficiency rarely occurs, especially in reading and writing, for more than half of all students in these Harlem neighborhoods. This is illustrated in Figure 2:

Language/English Achievement Gaps:

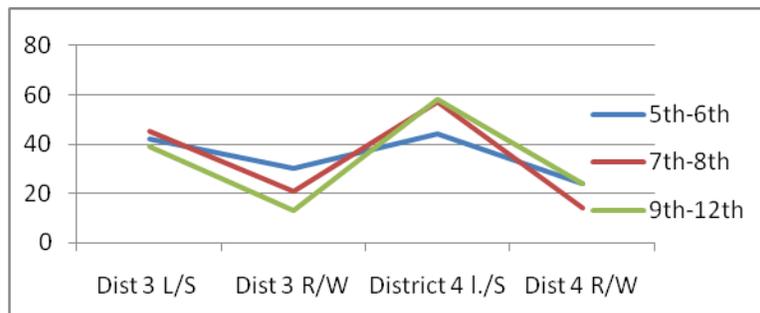


Figure 1 NYSESLAT % Scores by District & Grade Level

Significant gaps exist both between critical transition periods from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school, and between listening and speaking and reading and writing scores.

*Math, Science, Reading and History Achievement Gaps*

According to New York State Testing Program performance measures, District 3 secondary students categorically did not make adequate progress in English Language Arts and Math, and District 3 students with disabilities across all grade levels did not make adequate progress. In District 4, African-American and Limited English Proficiency secondary students did not make adequate progress in English Language Arts, while secondary students with disabilities in District 4 failed to make adequate progress in both English Language Arts and Math. The State Regents Competency tests, as illustrated below, provide data on specific subjects for these specific Harlem neighborhood Community Districts.

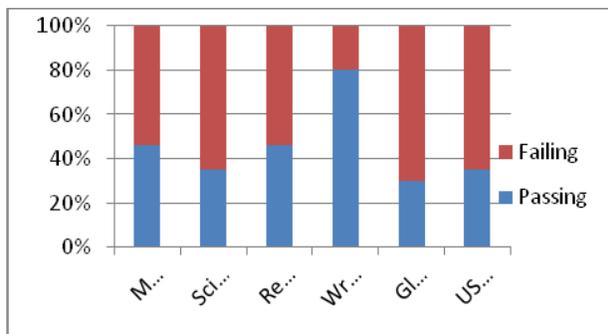


Figure 2 District 3 Regents Exam Competency Scores All Student

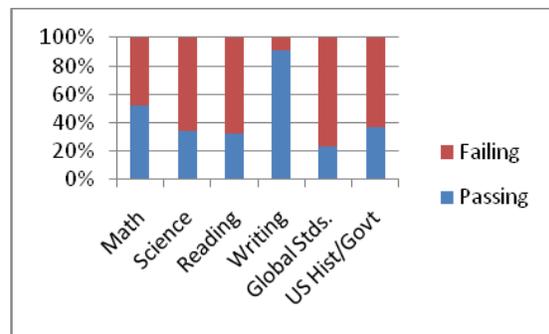


Figure 3 District 4 Regents Exam Competency Scores All Students

Given high dropout rates and poor performances for Districts 3 and 4 on these State achievement exams, particularly in the areas of Math, Science, Reading and Social Studies, the specific populations of African American, Hispanic, ELL, economically disadvantaged, and Special Education at-risk students will encompass priority targeted populations for admission and retention, as well as educational support. HPCS will open with an enrollment plan that anticipates serving an equal or greater proportion of students in all risk categories. This includes a target of meeting or exceeding an ELL population of at least 13% (District 3 and 4 levels range between 10-13%); at least 63% of students qualifying for free lunch (District 3 & 4 levels range between 48-77%); and 7% of students who qualify for reduced cost lunch (District 3 & 4 levels range between 5-8%); and at least 18% of students with disabilities based upon comparable statistics for student populations in the District 3 and 4 middle and high schools.<sup>38</sup> (*See* Section II.C. for more details).

**Strategies for Meeting the Needs of Target Population Students:** HPCS will implement core strategies aimed toward ensuring that all of our students meet or exceed academic standards and expectations at the district, state and national levels through broadly sweeping pedagogical methodologies associated with UDL, conceptual frameworks targeting Science, Technology, Math and Engineering, and the integrated and rigorous curriculum design provided by the IB Program.<sup>39</sup> HPCS's robust educational model serves *all* students. At HPCS, our guiding philosophy will be to diminish barriers while expanding entrée to, and dexterity within, the world of education.

HPCS also anticipates that it will be able to assist with children from the Harlem communities that have entered the foster care system given their increased risk to fall further behind due to the additional trauma of removal from parents.

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<sup>38</sup>*New York State District Report Card: District 3: Accountability and Overview Report 2008-09: New York City Geographic District #3* (New York: 2009), p. 14. Taken from <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2009/44/AOR-2009-310300010000.pdf>; *The New York State District Report Card: Accountability and Overview Report 2008-09: New York City Geographic District 4*, p. 14. Taken from <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2009/37/AOR-2009-310400010000.pdf>, *Educational Impact Statement Proposed Temporary Grade Expansion of Harlem Success Academy 1 in M149/M207 for 2011-2012*, (New York City DOE), Taken from [http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/964086CE-D82A-4480-8E77-C5516251AA56/94721/EIS\\_HSA2.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/964086CE-D82A-4480-8E77-C5516251AA56/94721/EIS_HSA2.pdf), 2010, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> See Section III for more details on these programs.