

APPLICATION SUMMARY	
Charter School Name	Sofara International Charter School (SICS)
Applicant Name(s)	Voyka Soto and Nadhege Ptah
Applicant(s) E-mail Address	[REDACTED]
Applicant(s) Contact Telephone	[REDACTED]
Public Media Contact Name	Nadhege Ptah
Public Media Contact E-mail Address	SofaraInternational@gmail.com
Public Media Contact Telephone	212-591-0299
District of Location	New York City Community School District 5
Opening Date	August 27, 2015 for students
Proposed Charter Term	5 Years
Proposed Management Co, Partners or Replication School Model	Not Applicable
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	350 students in grades K-6
Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	650 students in grades K-12 in future charter terms
Mission Statement	Sofara International Charter School, as a matter of principle, invests in children as our future ensuring every child receives a balanced, high quality education to promote their academic, social, intellectual and emotional growth through the International Baccalaureate continuum of K-12 programs. International-mindedness, effective bilingual communication skills, adaptability and compassionate yet critical thinking are instilled using a rigorous inquiry-led, authentic, whole-child learning environment. Every student will graduate with strong literacy, math and science skills and the ability to be successful in college, career, and real life as future leaders in their community and global society.

Brief Summary - Sofara International Charter School offers an international educational opportunity as provided by the most prestigious private schools for children of diplomats and multinational corporate executives. The difference is that the SICS educational program is available to ALL students, tuition free. SICS seeks to utilize the rigorous, world renown, educational standard set by the International Baccalaureate (IB) continuum of programs that was used as an international benchmark for the creation of the Common Core State Standards. Evidence is seen in the clear alignment of the IB framework and the Common Core State Standards, which are reflected in the expectations set in the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. To ensure high student achievement and program quality SICS will work with the International Baccalaureate Organization as well as two local educational organizations. The Global Language Project will assist with our foreign language program and HYPOTHEkids, a STEM based initiative, will assist with the SICS STEAM program.

The SICS experience takes students on an endless journey of inquiry led experiences utilizing perspective from the IB framework & themes. SICS' begins with grades K-2 in the Primary Years Program (PYP) that uses an approach to teaching and learning where all content is tied together in a web of knowledge. Therefore, there is no isolated subject teaching. As SICS grows past 6th grade in future terms, the Middle Years Program (to 10th grade), Careers Certificate and Diploma Program (grades 11 & 12) will be implemented. IB was established as a means to bring together the best of different education systems worldwide and create a diploma that is universally accepted because of its rigor for entrance to any University. IB seeks to instill habits of mind that make students ready for University, career and real life by embedding academic, social, emotional, and intellectual learning in its framework.

A natural fit to the IB continuum, SICS will utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a "set of principles that provides teachers with a structure to develop their instruction to meet the needs of a diversity of learners."¹ UDL

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

incorporates multiple means of representation of material to students, multiple means of expression and action, and of multiple means of engagement². The aspect of choice embedded in UDL empowers students to find aspects of classroom content that interest them, and to approach learning from a place of strength, supporting Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELLs). To support this mode of learning, a Standards Referenced Grading assessment system to measure what students know and understand is used rather than tainting grades by including percentages for categories such as H.W. completion and tardiness. Habits of mind are measured & worked on through IB embedded holistic measures and SRG supported portfolios.

SICS students will experience inquiry led learning that is also a natural fit with STEAM and which is designed to supplement knowledge acquisition of Science, Technology, Engineering, ART, and Math by providing instruction through hands-on projects that apply what is learned. In addition to fostering passion for the sciences, STEAM instruction is particularly beneficial to SWD and ELLs, our most at-risk students, as the nature of STEAM makes every content area more accessible to students who have not yet developed skills to navigate textbook or classroom based learning³. In addition, the benefits of inquiry-led applied learning is well documented. Inquiry will have every SICS student regularly taking their learning outside the classroom through extensive hands-on opportunities incorporating their community, city and beyond. SICS' environment encourages students to remove the walls of their classroom and look for answers to inquiries on a local and global level with a field study, service as learning, approach where they participate in projects and finding solutions to community problems. Extending the learning experience to the real world brings it into alignment with core content and allows it to be synthesized. Thinking globally, each SICS student will be part of a learning community that encourages foreign language acquisition, and where they will be supported in becoming trilingual and tri-literate. This is an invaluable component of meeting SICS' mission of creating globally competitive students in addition to the understanding that knowing two or more languages is positively associated with intellectual and academic achievement. SICS students will have exposure to a universal world language (French) in a 50/50 content immersion model with other languages available as enrichment.

SICS intends to serve the children of CSD 5 in which a dense urban, racially and ethnically diverse population of lower-middle class families are often academically underserved. This is a high need population of students with 96% of 3rd graders eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch; 16% of 3rd graders are ELLs; and 22.4% of students have disabilities. Many children come from bi-literal families who have exposed their children to two languages since infancy and families with multiple risk factors for academic failure. SICS has a well-devised recruitment and retention plan, ensuring adequate numbers of ELLs are enrolled and it supports its students with strong, research backed academic programs and an organizational structure that builds teacher effectiveness that will in-turn increase student support in learning. With small class sizes, students will be supported by two teachers, one of which will be their intervention specialist and special education and ESL teachers who are themselves supported by an Instructional Coach and an IB Coordinator in an environment of constant collaboration. The instructional staff is then supported by a Director of Teaching & Learning whose main responsibility is to ensure the instructional strength of the school and who, in turn, is supported by an Executive Director with expertise in teaching and learning in the International Baccalaureate.

SICS will institute an extended calendar year allowing for 190 student contact days and more instruction in core classes per week than NYCDOE schools(see II.B.). During February, April and July, SICS will hold intersessions, optional sessions during which students may take classes for remediation or enrichment. The calendar design allows SICS to mitigate knowledge and skill deterioration over breaks⁴.

Sofara International Charter School will be open to ALL students who seek an international education based on the International Baccalaureate continuum of programs, in a multi-lingual setting. SICS will be a classroom based educational program serving grades Kindergarten through sixth grade with a projected enrollment of 350 students by the end of its first charter term (working toward IB PYP authorization by year 2).

² <http://cast.org/udl/index.html>.

³ Cuevas , P., Lee, O., Hart, J., & Deaktor, R. (2005). Improving science inquiry with elementary students of diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 42(3), 337-357.

⁴ <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/summer-and-extended-learning-time/summerlearning/Documents/Making-Summer-Count-How-Summer-Programs-Can-Boost-Childrens-Learning.pdf>

SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page Number
I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment and Community	3
A. Mission Statement and Objects	3
B. Key Design Elements	6
C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention	14
D. Community to be Served	19
E. Public Outreach	22
F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact	24
II. Educational Plan	26
A. Achievement Goals	26
B. School Schedule and Calendar	28
C. Curriculum and Instruction	29
D. Assessment System	34
E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards	35
F. School Culture and Climate	36
G. Special Populations and Related Services	37
III. Organizational and Fiscal Plan	42
A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity	42
B. Board of Trustees and Governance	44
C. Management and Staffing	46
C1. Charter Management Organization	N/A
C2. Partner Organization	N/A
D. Evaluation	50
E. Professional Development	52
F. Facilities	54
G. Insurance	57
H. Health, Food, and Transportation Systems	57
I. Family and Community Involvement	58
J. Financial Management	59
K. Budget and Cash-Flow	60
L. Pre-Opening Plan	62
M. Dissolution Plan	64

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

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

A. *Mission Statement and Objectives* – The following mission will be seen:

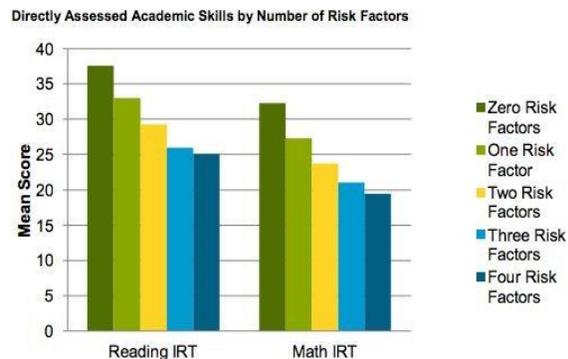
Sofara International Charter School, as a matter of principle, invests in children as our future ensuring every child receives a balanced, high quality education to promote their academic, social, intellectual and emotional growth through the International Baccalaureate continuum of K-12 programs. International-mindedness, effective bilingual communication skills, adaptability and compassionate yet critical thinking are instilled using a rigorous inquiry-led, authentic, whole child learning environment. Every student will graduate with strong literacy, math and science skills and the ability to be successful **in college, career, and real life** as future leaders in their community and global society.

Objectives - SICS' goal is to ensure a high level of academic success for EVERY student through the inquiry-led approach (found in the IB framework) with which students at all learning levels will have the opportunity to find and develop their role in a globally competitive society. As graduates, our students will have acquired a unique skill set that will allow them to succeed in career and higher educational environments. We will:

- Instill universal foundational skills and strategies – meeting students where they are & building up their skills
- Create critical thinkers with depth of knowledge - promote and improve questioning skills and the ability to view the world from a variety of perspectives
- Provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in an authentic manner – real world applied learning
- Grow students socially and emotionally in addition to academically and intellectually – working on habits of mind that include attitudes and attributes
- Produce bilingual, biliterate graduates – giving every student a chance at high achievement and global competitiveness through second language acquisition
- Promote college, career and real life readiness - through holistic teaching and learning, real-world experiences, development of leadership qualities, and exposure to a variety of career paths
- Create skilled team members who can thrive in all situations, including globally
- Graduate every student ready for their chosen path

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

In Communit School District 5 (CSD5), children struggle with numerous risk factors. Current research data indicates SICS can expect students to enroll who have one or more risk factors in their lives that will, in turn, put them in the category of at-risk of academic achievement.¹ As demonstrated in the adjacent chart, the more risk factors students have, the lower their scores in reading and math.² To address this dynamic utilizing the framework of the International Baccalaureate's (IB) Primary Years Program, SICS will be able to wrap students in a learning environment that addresses their social, emotional, intellectual *and* academic growth that allows for the mitigation of the effects of various risk factors with its holistic approach. With SICS' key design elements that all fall within the IB framework SICS can materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2) by:



1. *SICS will improve student learning and achievement* with an extended day and yearly instructional calendar, collaborative teaching teams in each classroom, small class sizes, ELA/Math tutoring sessions, strategic support

¹ The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study commissioned by the US Dept. of Education <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/kindergarten2011.asp>

² *This Is How Behind Low-Income Children Can Be When They Enter Kindergarten*

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/16/kindergarten-risk-factors_n_5589450.html?utm_hp_ref=tw

staffing, a standards referenced grading system (SRG), applied inquiry, and the cross subject (trans-disciplinary) approach to instruction that infuses literacy and math throughout the curriculum. SICS will offer an educational program based on an inquiry-led model that incorporates immersion into exploration and discovery with an emphasis on applied learning opportunities infused across the entire curriculum. With this combination of imbedded features SICS students are consistently challenged to discuss, write, question, reflect, and think critically about the content, themselves, and the world outside their classroom. The International Baccalaureate's (IB) inquiry led framework is a rigorous, internationally recognized, K-12 inquiry approach that will allow SICS to implement its programming and fully engage students. IB students are taught why they should know something and how it connects to all other subjects, particularly ELA and math. Both IB and SRG give students a path to tracking their own achievement and taking ownership of their progress. Given that in the 2012-13 school year 3rd through 8th graders in CSD 5 tested at an average 29% proficiency rate in ELA and 39% proficiency in Mathematics,³ a new approach to teaching and learning is needed.

Improving student learning and achievement will also be developed by ensuring continuity of learning and pedagogy. SICS will be able to create this continuity through the elements of the IB framework while providing students and teachers with a strong curriculum base to draw from. This will include a Program of Inquiry drawing on the resources of Engineering Is Elemental, Singapore Math, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), and Reading A-Z (which provides same text, multi-leveled books in both English and foreign languages). Reading A-Z will be instrumental in promoting achievement among the district's catchment area, in which the dominant foreign language spoken in homes is French⁴ (see I.C. *Meeting Enrollment Rationale*). As an intervention tool, Reading A-Z Headsprout has been proven in case studies to increase literacy rates, reading proficiency, reading comprehension, boost foundational skills & test scores, and increase student engagement & motivation.

2. *SICS will increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on those who are at-risk of academic failure.* SICS teachers will utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL), one of the best methodologies for developing and providing instruction to at-risk students.⁵ Learning opportunities will also manifest in SICS' extended school calendar which minimizes skill and knowledge erosion (the slide effect)⁶ while providing an opportunity for extra academic and enrichment programming. This includes small group tutoring in reading, writing, math, ESL, and foreign language. The SICS foreign language component will not only increase learning opportunities for every student, but will aid in creating stronger well rounded students: which is advantageous for students at-risk of academic failure and with special needs.⁷

In using a holistic approach, SICS will pay attention to the needs of each child. Special attention will be given to addressing the achievement gap often found with males in comparison to females⁸, which manifests across subject areas in varying ways. For this at-risk group, SICS will consider staffing options and special program utilization (see II G.). Built into the IB framework and the SICS standards referenced grading system is ownership of growth by the students developing, with their teacher's guidance, individualized learning plans that can address any area of need.

Whole school access to foreign language and Science Technology Engineering, Art in Engineering, & Mathematics (STEAM) immersion allows every student increased opportunities without discriminating against at-risk students. The use of an inquiry led model that promotes applied learning, through all subjects, makes all learning and content areas accessible, especially to English Language Learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) who may have trouble deciphering the technical language and abstract concepts of traditional subject curricula. The use of real-world provocations to learning will allow all students to have authentic, real-life learning experiences that motivate them to produce, think critically, and inquire further.

³ NorthEast Charter Schools Network <http://www.necharter.org>

⁴ US Census Bureau; 2008-2012 American Community Survey

⁵ US DOE <https://www.osepedeasatwork.org/UDL/intro.asp>

⁶ Reading is Fundamental: Motivating Kids to Read Keeping Kids Off the Summer Slide <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/keeping-kids-off-the-summer-slide.htm>

⁷ Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition

http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/documents/ImmersionResearch_TaraFortune.html

⁸ National Bureau of Economic Research <http://www.nber.org/digest/may06/w11660.html> Nat'l Educ. Longitudinal Study of 1998

3. *SICS will encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods* The SICS teacher support system includes opportunity for inter-visitation and collaboration with other schools to observe and share pedagogical practices. Evidence-based teaching methodologies unified by a common philosophy and which recognize the value of differentiated instruction and applied learning opportunities will be a hallmark at SICS. Through the IB framework of practices and principles of teaching and learning, there is an immediate shift in instructional delivery that allows teachers flexibility to innovate while planning ways of meeting the needs of every student with the use of SRG data. These shifts include involving students in planning for their own learning and assessment, flexibility in creating true depth of knowledge opportunities, and developing creative new ways for students to continuously build on their knowledge base.⁹ SICS teachers will not only have ample cross collaborative time to plan, but will be supported and encouraged in their pedagogy by coaches, an IB Coordinator, and targeted professional development in all areas of the SICS programming including UDL, IB, language acquisition, and applied learning.

The SICS programs in and of themselves require a shift in teaching methodology as well. The IB framework, Gomez 50/50 content immersion, and STEAM each require teachers to keep up with current community, career, and world trends as each program promotes authentic learning in a real-world context that must be applied in real-life. Teachers must plan for lessons that weave concepts through each subject area of student learning (a.k.a transdisciplinary) thereby aiding in focusing on differentiated innovative instructional methodologies. Authentic learning will be an essential element of all units of study as it is utilized as the provocation to Reading, Writing, and Math. Students will utilize their immediate and larger environment (from neighborhood to Harlem to New York City to community of nations) and creative resources to enhance learning and acquire a real world perspective. This also applies to foreign language, which will be taught through the content areas, known to be the most effective way to acquire knowledge while becoming bilingual and biliterate.¹⁰ Teachers will be able to motivate and engage students in learning and themselves be motivated through the PD opportunities that will stretch their understandings and skills.

4. *SICS will provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.* **PARENTS:** A public elementary school with the SICS design does not exist within CSD 5. At SICS, a global perspective, unique combination of programming, true family inclusion, authentic real world learning, and diversity are what will drive choice in education. SICS parents and students will also experience expanded educational opportunities through the collaborations developed with community and international organizations. Our parents will be fully acclimated in IB and encouraged to participate in student life including academics in an environment they feel welcomed in and supported by and in which Staff conduct home visits as a regular part of delivering the SICS educational experience. Through the Family School Association (FSA), parents will help drive collaborative opportunities that include access to technology, life skills workshops, and access to community service information and more (see III I).

STUDENTS: Expanded choice is highlighted in SICS' combination of inquiry-led programming. Currently, STEAM and foreign language acquisition in the community are separate options that our students will have included in academics on a daily basis and in real-life contexts. This is essential considering the high concentration of families living at or below the poverty level. Additionally, while there are several public schools in the Harlem area that now offer foreign language to their students, none are inclusive of an international perspective to teaching and learning that addresses the social, emotional, intellectual, and academic growth of a child. An international perspective will open up the world of opportunities to every SICS student.

With the truly worldwide IB network of schools, SICS will be able to introduce its students and their families to careers, peoples and cultures from Nanjing, China, to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and beyond. SICS will naturally expand on the opportunity for diversity of ethnicities among its student body by creating a true International School. As reported in a recent analysis of demographic data, diversity is flourishing in CSD 5. For example, 31.9% of the African American population under 18 can be further divided into 3 different language groups of African origin: French, English and

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

¹⁰ Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition

http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/documents/ImmersionResearch_TaraFortune.html

Add asterisk for PD section	<p>representation of material to students, ii) multiple means of action and expression, and iii) multiple means of engagement¹⁶. With this design teachers will be trained to:</p> <p>Create engaging lesson plans that include a variety of perspectives;</p> <p>Develop hands-on inquiry learning projects;</p> <p>Plan differentiated hands-on projects that allow SWD and our ELL's to demonstrate knowledge & understanding in a unique manner when needed</p> <p>Participate in on-going, consistent collaboration with fellow teachers on trans-disciplinary opportunities across content areas for both readiness and enrichment of students including SWD and ELL's;</p> <p>Develop engaging real-world connections & fieldtrip/field study opportunities including community service learning;</p> <p>Determine student choices in how to present knowledge;</p> <p>Ensure student access to content with a variety of blended tools.</p> <p>Ensure students are immersed in science, technology, engineering, art in engineering and mathematics research projects tied to their units of study and real-world use and application.*</p> <p>Formulate Instructional Grouping that meets the needs of the students</p> <p>Create Individual Learning Plans</p>
------------------------------------	---

* Both the theme and the central idea will be aligned as fully as possible to the current NYCDOE instructional scope and sequence and NYS Common Core Learning Standards. **Additional information regarding the SICS inquiry-led learning model can be found in Section II.C. of the Educational Plan.

Innovative Programming	Description
Science Technology Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM)	<p>STEAM is a critical element to SICS' inquiry-led learning, the IB approach and meeting its mission. STEAM will be used to complement applied learning in Units of Inquiry by extending critical thinking and knowledge through exploration, discover, experimentation, and play; preparing our graduates for the demands of a high-tech global economy¹⁷. For example:</p> <p>Children may learn to power a generator in a STEAM class by building their own mini turbine to harness wind and explore ideas on how to solve the problem of erosion;</p> <p>A student studying their community may learn to code in STEAM class, creating an app that calculates and analyzes population data showing how many new school seats will be needed in Harlem;</p> <p>Students may design and construct an aesthetically pleasing 3-D community building using Computer Assisted Design (CAD) technology learning the relationships between architecture, the art of building, and engineering.</p> <p>SICS is committed to having a program in place with minimally 4 sessions per week per class for student engagement in STEAM projects. To ensure quality programming and student engagement <u>SICS is partnering with the founder of HYPOTHEkids, a Harlem based STEAM program (see III Education Plan)</u></p>
Foreign Language	<p>In alignment with the IB framework, as a method of closing the achievement gap, and to prepare our students for success in a global society, SICS will offer foreign language. The SICS approach</p>

¹⁶ <http://cast.org/udl/index.html>.

¹⁷ White House Office of Science & Technology Policy

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/initiatives#STEM%20Participation>

	to foreign language involves immersion beginning at Kindergarten in a 50/50 content model.* Known as the most effective method of foreign language acquisition ¹⁸ , SICS students will learn through content rather than as an isolated event allowing them to become truly bilingual <i>and</i> biliterate with strong skills in both languages. Since SICS content is trans-disciplinary, the 50/50 content model will not put at-risk students at further risk, but will actually ensure competency in literacy in both languages. Incorporated into the model are opportunities for applied learning, project based learning, language review & reflection. This model will flow seamlessly with the IB framework. Added support, when needed, is provided through the classroom based bilingual intervention teacher, small group tutoring, ESL, ESOL and FLE (French as a Foreign Language). <u>Additional support will be provided by the Global Language Project (see III <i>Education Plan</i>)</u>
--	--

*Additional Gomez 50/50 content model info is found in Section I B. Success Model and II.C. of the Educational Plan.

Innovative Structures and Systems	Description
Staffing	Each SICS classroom will have two teachers to reduce the teacher: student ratio and allowing deeper differentiation in teaching and learning. One teacher will serve as Lead teacher and the other as intervention specialist. An IB coordinator will be on staff at all times. Fulltime ESL and SpEd coordinator will be on staff. Every teacher will be qualified in their teaching area.
Standards-Referenced Grading (SRG)	To have a true picture of what progress data signifies and promote greater achievement, SICS' will use the Standards Referenced Grading (SRG) system. Aligned with the IB framework, SRG is the best utilization of multiple formative and summative assessment data as it focuses exclusively on student mastery of learning goals measured through the CCLS. Grading student progress against the standards gives a true picture of progress & achievement. Categories in grading such as homework and attendance are not excluded, but presented as a separate grade. With SRG, and in line with IB, students are taught to track their own progress on assessments, empowering them with understanding of, and ownership over, their performance in each content area. With teacher guidance, students keep a portfolio to track their growth and use as a means of building up to student led conferences and goal setting. SRG will clearly show which students need intervention and enrichment allowing Individual Learning Plans to be accurately created.
Extended Learning time and Calendar	<p>SICS' school day and year provides more instruction in core classes per week than does the DOE (see <i>II.B.</i>). In addition to an extended school day, student learning is extended through:</p> <p>Added Days – The SICS calendar consists of 190 days of instruction</p> <p>Summer Academy - Students in need of remediation, are at-risk, did not meet passing scores on State exams or want to avoid the <i>summer slide effect</i>¹⁹, will have the opportunity and be encouraged to attend SICS' Summer Academy in July (see <i>II.B.</i>).</p> <p>School Break Inter-Sessions – To mitigate the back slide in both academics and behavior that takes place over long school breaks, the calendar design allows SICS to mitigate the effects of knowledge and skill loss by offering both readiness and enrichment classes during this time (see <i>II.B.</i>).</p>

¹⁸ Center for Advanced Research On Language Acquisition, University of Maryland
<http://www.carla.umn.edu/conferences/past/immersion/met.html>

¹⁹ Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec11/vol69/num04/Slowing-the-Summer-Slide.aspx>

	SICS will have 3 periods, 3 days per week, set aside for differentiated, small group tutoring in literacy, mathematics and language for all students in need. Tutoring sessions will be used for readiness (at-risk) and enrichment (gifted)
Professional Learning Community	SICS will provide continuous, targeted support and training for its teachers. <i>This will include inter-visitation and collaboration with other schools.</i> Teachers will begin each school year with 10 days of PD before students arrive that covers each of the SICS programs, unit planning, and applied learning opportunities. Teachers will use weekly student early release days for PD in areas of critical need as the priority, have 4 general full-day PD's, and 3 dedicated benchmark data analysis days in the school calendar (see III E.). As part of a well developed IB program of instruction, SICS' weekly schedule will provide teachers minimally with 4 periods per week to collaborate and learn together that is in addition to preparation periods. <u>Critical needs areas for PD includes those related to working with each sub-group of at-risk students and building and creating strong family engagement.</u>
Instructional Coaching	While the Director of Teaching & Learning will provide the instructional leadership of the school and give evaluative feedback to teachers, SICS intends to employ Instructional Coaches who will give developmental, formative feedback. SICS, as part of meeting quality control for the International Baccalaureate Organization will employ an IB Coordinator to coach teachers on the implementation and professional growth of their respective programs of instruction. The coaches will observe every teacher weekly at minimum. To promote high-quality planning, classroom management and delivery of instruction and assessment, coaching will include an active method in which coaches may plan & co-teach, and demo or shadow (with real-time feedback) class lessons. This allows teachers to obtain feedback that immediately improves instruction. Coaches work closely with the Director of Teaching & Learning to develop support plans for developing teachers, and help teachers understand and successfully implement the highly effective techniques of the IB Primary Years Program and Universal Designs for Learning.

Set-Aside Admissions Preference for (see I D for discussion): **CSD 5 is a district designated a failing district. ELA aggregate scores are at 13.34 % and 13.12% on Math. Considering this fact, all students are a priority.** SICS will employ several means to ensure the enrollment of students in CSD 5 in a fair and equitable manner including those who may have special educational needs, be ELLs or are FRLP students. SICS' lottery process will incorporate an admissions preference for these students in order to create and maintain a balance of factors that promote high achievers after the CSP grant is no longer available. To ensure target enrollment of at-risk students during this period and beyond, SICS will continue to develop partnerships with local school service providers, the Counsel on Special Education, community leaders, after-school programs, cultural institutions and Community-Based-Organizations to ensure SICS meets or exceeds its target enrollment of at-risk students. Preferences for "at-risk" students are spelled out in Section I.C., *Application and Attachment 1.*

Teacher Supports

- *Common Planning Time:* See chart above
- *Instructional Coaching:* See chart above
- *Minimal Administrative Duties:* In order to ensure successful implementation of all planning and assessment, teachers will have **minimal administrative duties outside of the classroom.**

Successful Model: The IB was selected in 2011 as one of the sets of standards against which Common Core was measured by education experts to determine its success in meeting its goals²⁰. As a model continuum in the education realm, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) has attained world recognition as a successful, rigorous program of study and continuously monitors its authorized schools worldwide. This approach to teaching and

²⁰ <http://www.ibo.org/iba/commoncore/documents/IBCommonCorePositionStatement.pdf>

learning has been deemed a successful practice by both the US Department of Education as well as NYSED.²¹ To date, IB schools in the U.S. have increased three fold in the last decade with 1,558 authorized schools of which 434 are PYP. Texas State and the city of Chicago are leading the way in utilizing the IB framework to help their students become high achievers now and for the future. Currently, 56% of IB schools in the U.S. are Title 1 and growing.²² The growing success in Title 1 schools, as SICS will be, is because the framework elements are comprehensive and is so highly regarded that it is one option for funding through the US DOE Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002).²³ Inquiry-led learning in the IB is not about students doing science projects but about teaching them to think critically about the world around them. Fortunately, SICS has the direct benefit of having the IBO Manger of Regional Development & Outreach for the Americas on the SICS Advisory Board to provide direct guidance in becoming the first public wall-to-wall- IB World School in our community.

Every IB school is driven by a program of inquiry-led teaching and learning that can be applied in the real world and maintains a focus on a students place within our global society in which they can fully participate, communicate, and thrive. Since IB is a framework, and *not* a curriculum, it allows each school to develop a set of programs to meet the needs of their local or national mandates SICS has developed its set of programs in line with the framework but also to further Education Law §2850(2) and give our students the skills and tools needed for **college, career, and real-life**. Sofara International Charter School has used the International Baccalaureate framework to develop a comprehensive program to meet the needs of the students in the CSD 5 catchment area. Each component or key design, however, is fully embedded and supported within the IB framework and ensures that the SICS mission and goals are attainable (including foreign language). Currently there are no public school models of IB in NYC. An elementary IB school that is inquiry-led while utilizing STEAM projects to increase applied learning in a bilingual **50/50 content** immersion model also currently does not exist in NYC. There *are*, however, two elementary IB schools that can be presented as successes as well as research that demonstrate the benefits of inquiry-led teaching and learning, STEAM and applied learning in the classroom, and bilingualism. One is located in southern Texas and the other in Yonkers, NY.

An IB World School - With a population of K-5 students with many of the same risk factors as those in CSD 5, ***Graciela Garcia Elementary School is an authorized IB World School that utilizes the 50/50 content language immersion model.*** It has been recognized by the Texas State Education Agency as one of its high performing schools of 2013. At Garcia, almost 100% of the students participate in their Free or Reduced Lunch Program, over 13% are categorized as mobile (migrants missing more than six weeks of the school year, 83% are Limited English Proficient (LEP), and 95% are economically disadvantaged.²⁴ Despite these known risk factors, 5th grade students have steadily outperformed their peers on state assessments as seen in the two charts below:²⁵

*Per the Texas Education Agency, no data is available for 2012.

Percentage of 5 th Grade Students Who Met State Standards In Reading								
READING	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2013
GARCIA	81	81	76	83	89	86		89
DISTRICT	88	88	84	84	86	83		83
STATE	89	90	85	90	93	90		87

Percentage of 5 th Grade Students Who Met State Standards In Mathematics								
MATH	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*	2013
GARCIA	86	87	84	86	91	93		90
DISTRICT	91	91	73	88	90	88		83
STATE	90	91	80	91	92	93		88

²¹ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/documents/GCCS.07-14-11.pdf>

²² National Center for Education Statistics Fast Facts. Retrieved 2 April 2012 from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=158>.

²³ <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html>

²⁴ http://garcia.psjaisd.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=133012&type=d&pREC_ID=262212

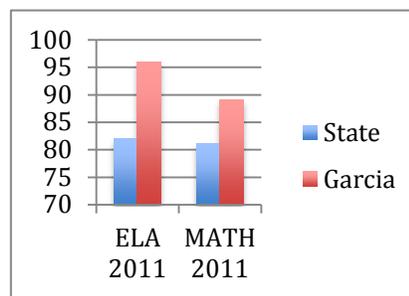
²⁵ Texas Education Agency annual School Report Card

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

Garcia began implementation of the IB framework in 2006 and received authorization as a World School in 2009. Each school year they were able to steadily improve achievement and surpass their district peers by 2010 in both ELA and Math. A closer analysis shows 95% of their LEP population met or exceeded state standards as well as 85% of FRLP students²⁶.

50/50 Content Immersion - Garcia's success is no doubt in part due to a strong comprehensive language immersion program, which is presented through the Gomez 50/50 content model. This model of immersion differs from others in that students do not learn a language in isolation, but through core content and project based work. In this manner, students are continually exposed to the designated language in **authentic, real-world scenarios** and have ample opportunity to communicate and build vocabulary in English and the foreign language fitting perfectly with the IB framework. The Gomez approach of content immersion is also noted by the NYSED as one of its three goals for instructional delivery of modern languages. Of the three NYSED goals, the Gomez model meets all of them, which also include functional communication and developing cultural understanding in addition to content immersion.²⁷ For further understanding of the Gomez 50/50 content model alignment with the IB framework, see section II C. *Education Plan*.

While some fear learning a second language will cause delays in primary language development this is a myth. Studies demonstrate that dual language immersion programs do not cause such interference (Howard & Christian, 1997) and that students in these programs score high in their primary language as measured with a variety of assessments (Christian et al., 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). This is confirmed by an analysis of ELA and Math averages at Garcia in comparison to State achievement averages for 2011 as show in the chart:



A full professional treatise on the benefits of early second language learning and the benefits of being bilingual is available on the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) web site, in Kathleen M. Marcos's report "Second Language Learning: Everyone Can Benefit."²⁸ Research on programs in Fairfax, VA showed that students who had participated for five years in immersion scored as well as, or better than, all comparison groups on achievement tests and that they remained high academic achievers throughout their schooling (Thomas, W. P., V. P. Collier, and M. Abbott. 1993. Additional studies of students from different ethnic groups (Howard, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2005c; Christian et al., 2004), showed students of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian (this group had fewer participants) background all benefited academically, intellectually, and socially from the their dual language program regardless of social class. Benefits were significant across subgroup categories such as language background, socioeconomic status, gender, and students with disabilities. Higher socio-economic status was associated with higher average achievement results in literacy but all groups showed marked gains.

Multiple benefits for acquiring a second language during the primary years include:
•Children have the ability to learn and excel in the pronunciation of a second language (Krashen, et al., 1982)
•Participation in early second language shows positive results in areas of standardized testing (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997). Students who speak a second language score 140+ points higher on the SAT --Reading, Writing and Math ²⁶
•Children who study a second language show greater cognitive development (Hakuta, 1990)
•Second language study has shown to increase listening skills, memory, and a greater understanding of one's own language (Lapkin, et al., 1990)
•Children studying a second language have an improved self-concept and sense of achievement in school (Caine & Caine, 1997)
•Children develop a sense of cultural pluralism, openness and appreciation of other cultures (Met, 1995)

²⁶ Great Schools <http://www.greatschools.org/texas/pharr/9111-Graciela-Garcia-Elementary-School/?tab=test-scores>

²⁷ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/lot/pub/modernl.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.cal.org/earlylang/benefits/marcos.html>

•Bilingual workers earn 5% to 20% more than monolingual workers.²⁹

To develop and maintain a quality immersion program, SICS will work with the New York based **Global Language Project** (GLP). GLP is a not-for-profit whose mission is to help public school children learn a foreign language. Currently, GLP works with:

- **PS 368: Hamilton Heights Elementary** Languages Offered: Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish
Grades Served: K – 5;
- **PS 261: Philip Livingston** Language Offered: Arabic - Grades Served: K - 1
- **Harlem Village Academies K Program/YMCA** Language Offered: Mandarin - Grade Served: K
- **M012: TAG Young Scholars School** Language Offered: Spanish - Grades Served: K - 2
- **PS 85: Judge Charles J. Vallone School** Language Offered: Spanish - Grades Served: K – 1

STEAM Applied Learning

As for the inclusion of science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) in the SICS programming, there is ample research that supports its inclusion in school curriculums. The NYC DOE deems STEM instruction critical to preparing students to be college and career ready and is actively recruiting STEM teaching staff who are being asked to create rigorous, inquiry-based learning experiences.³⁰ Currently New York is behind the curve in student access to applied learning. The benefits are so widely known to be effective that there are entire school districts, such as the Fort Worth Independent School District, in which every school has an applied learning focus. This includes the K-12 continuum of education. Elementary schools in NYC engaging students in STEM education are few in number and are focusing on Lego robotics rather than covering the scope of possibilities within STEAM education as SICS will do. PS 145M (Harlem) and PS 188K (Coney Island) are examples of schools offering Lego Robotics programs. The SICS difference also lies in how it is imbedding STEAM education in the regular inquiry-led curriculum where students learn to apply their knowledge on a daily basis. This difference opens the door to cross-educational sharing of best practices among community schools.

Example: At SICS, if students engaged in an applied lesson related to solving the city's problems with air pollution, the classroom environment would be quite different than the traditional. Students could work in groups and divide up the various tasks that need to be accomplished to solve this real-world issue. Groups of students may be looking through newspapers to gather data related to the local weather, while another group searches the Internet for information on air pollution, as other students collected data about the city's population. By SKYPING or creating an action project, students can then collaborate with students around the city or worldwide on effecting change. These students would simultaneously be engaged in science, mathematics, and reading. They would also be utilizing their technical skills and search skills as well as exercising their skills in social communication. This is the IB trans-disciplinary approach as well as a real-world approach to learning.

At SICS, STEAM will be used to help students turn their inquiries from theory into practice. This project-based applied learning approach has been shown in studies to benefit students and is correlated with higher achievement.³¹ Increased achievement is possible because students are involved in creating and producing a system, event, or service that forces them to draw upon and utilize what they learn in the content areas. NYSED has also recognized the benefits of and need for applied learning which is laid out in their document Career Development & Occupational Studies: Elementary Core Curriculum.³² In this document, NYSED recognizes that applied learning allows teachers to create and deliver powerful classroom lessons that bring student learning into a real-life context. Moreover, research has shown that inquiry led learning requires students to be in control, be responsible for their learning experiences, helps form depth of knowledge, fosters a desire to explore a wider range of issues and problems, and gives students an authentic way to present their knowledge (Grant, M. & Branch, R.M. 2005). Knowledge application is imbedded in the framework (extended with the addition of STEAM) and is directly tied to SICS being

²⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/06/second-language-infographic_n_4136915.html

³⁰ <http://schools.nyc.gov/TeachNYC/nyc/stem>

³¹ Measuring What Counts: Memorization Versus Understanding A discussion on the benefits of applied learning. Eeva Reeder, February 11, 2002. <http://www.edutopia.org/measuring-what-counts-memorization-versus-understanding>

³² <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/cdlearn/documents/CDOS-Elem-CareerandUniversal.pdf>

able to reach and surpass its achievement goals. Spires, et al (2012) found that with authentic learning “knowledge representation is critical to knowledge construction and meaning making” and that students tap into the linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial modes of learning in doing so.

Applied inquiry is also associated with effective teaching and learning. It enhances social skills, builds intrinsic motivation, and incorporates the social and global elements that impact a curriculum such as increasing problem solving ability, and improving communication, organizational and research skills (Kucharski, et al 2005). Additionally, being able to learn through applied inquiry enables students to clearly apply the knowledge gained to new tasks.³³

Finally, in New York there are several independent IB World Schools that may be used as success models including The Dwight School, United Nations International School, Avenues World School, and the International School of Brooklyn. *In the public school domain*, the Brooklyn Prospect Charter School has had success in building an IB program in the upper grades to the point that it is expanding into the lower grades. In the three years of recorded data, students in grades 6-8 scored between 6% and 20% higher than the State average and made Adequate Yearly Progress with each of its student subgroups.³⁴ R. Saragusa Elementary School in Yonkers, NY is another public IB school with growth scores, over its 10 year IB implementation period, that show their students outperform their peers on State exams. A look at their 4th grade data shows that between 2000 and 2010 students achieving level 3 & 4 pass rates on State reading exams went from an average of 35% to 68% while the number of students at level 1 average rate decreased significantly going from 11% to 5%.³⁵ The SICS team is deeply aware that models of success do not guarantee success in and of themselves and that there must be continuous attention to its implementation strategies. With strategic analysis, strategic planning, and strategic partnerships, SICS will be able to design, implement and deliver a strong academic program that **will materially further the objectives of Education Law §2850(2) in Community School District 5.**

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

The SICS’ school organizational structure is designed to maximize support for teachers, maximize support of the implementation of the **IB** program, and maximize the growth and achievement of its students. The proposed Executive Director (ED) will report to the Board of Trustees (Board), and will oversee the school and program development as a whole. The ED manages the Director of Teaching & Learning (DOTL), and the Director of Operations (DOO). The ED will also serve as the chief liaison between the school and its external stakeholders, such as parents, community leaders, and the authorizer, ensuring compliance needs are met, collaborating on the development and implementation of strategic plans and goals, and overseeing the overall Program of Inquiry. This will allow the DOTL to focus on overseeing day-to-day instruction, data analysis, school culture, instruction, observing and coaching teachers, developing curriculum, and planning professional development. The IB Primary Years Program, as required by the International Baccalaureate Organization, will be managed by an IB Coordinator whose responsibility it will be to set up, run, and coach teachers through the IB program.

SICS’ Lead Applicant and Executive Director is uniquely qualified to operate a high performing charter school. Voyka Soto is a resident, parent, and educator in CSD 5 who has more than 15 years experience working with high needs-populations in general and special education both domestically and internationally. She holds an M.A. in International Curriculum and Instruction through the Foreign Affairs Spouses Teacher Training program sponsored by the State Department. Additionally, Ms. Soto holds a teaching and learning Certification from the International Baccalaureate Organization making her distinctively skilled to grow a wall-to-wall IB school. She has experience developing and organizing new international schools for special needs students, strategic planning for the reorganizing and restructuring of schools through systemic reform, and assisting in developing alignment plans for accreditation

³³ Howard-Jones, P., Taylor, J. & Sutton, L. (2002). [The Effect of Play on the Creativity of Young Children During Subsequent Activity](#). *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 172(4), 323-328. This study investigated whether the experience of unstructured play in a preceding task may influence the creativity of young children in subsequent activity. The results upheld the hypothesis.

³⁴ NYSED DATA <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?year=2013&instid=800000063976>

³⁵ <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000034777&year=2010>

including the European Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

SICS’ founders have presented a conservative enrollment plan to ensure proper growth *and* implementation of both its programs and the school structure. Conservative initial enrollment allows controlled, in-depth, school-wide programming and disaggregated student growth analysis to take place on a

Enrollment Plan - proposed charter term includes 10% attrition in years 3-5						
Grades	Ages	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
K	4-6	50	50	50	50	50
1	5-7	50	50	50	50	50
2	6 – 8	50	50	50	50	50
3	7 – 9		45	45	45	45
4	8 – 10			41	41	41
5	9 – 11				37	37
6	10 – 12					33
Total		150	200/195	250/236	300/273	350/306
At-Risk Targets		Range between State Calculator and CSD 5 Averages				
FRLP		86.6	87.3	88.2	88.8	89.4
SWD		18.2	18.4	18.6	18.8	19.0
ELL		11.0	12.0	12.9	13.4	13.8

consistent basis to the benefit of our community children. This analysis is driven by the school’s instructional design that dictates teachers be well-trained and highly effective in methodologies of Universal Designs for Learning, the IB framework methodologies, and each of the curriculum resource programs. In particular, SICS will carefully monitor the intricacies of the foreign language program and the **IB** Program of Inquiry, ensuring efficacy with the use of a data analysis team and the **ManageBac** data management system before any request for expansion of grades. As a school opening in IB Candidate status, and our desire to implement high quality education, it is imperative that we maintain instructional integrity and have both teachers and students make a shift from traditional teaching and learning to applied inquiry. SICS’ class size is small enough to create focused differentiated and individualized instruction while being large enough to sustain the social needs of a growing population in CSD 5 and its surrounding areas.³⁶

Growth Plan: A maximum of 25 students per class and 2 classes per grade will be enrolled in K-2 in year one. SICS may request during this charter term to increase enrollment in grades K and 1 from two classes per grade to three. Overall, year one will see enrollment of 150 students with the addition of 50 Kindergarten students for each successive year for a total of 350 students in year 5 in grades K-6. Throughout the charter term SICS will backfill any seats vacated through attrition only in grades K and 1, in line with current research based best practices for second language acquisition.³⁷ SICS will *not* backfill from grades 2-6 unless a student has the foreign language competency at or near his/her grade level group. If the student has this competency they will be enrolled regardless of other factors such as English literacy competency or SWD designation for which students may receive academic intervention services. In addition, attrition in grades 3-6 may be made up by adding more K students or classes. This can be done without effecting our small class size ratio as SICS will have two teachers per class.

When SICS applies to extend its grade level enrollment in subsequent charter terms, measures and programming will be implemented to allow for backfill in grade 6 and beyond. There would be a shift to the IB Middle Years Program and presenting second language acquisition through Language A and Language B classes. An attrition rate of 10% each year, beginning with second grade (non backfilled grades) in year two, of the charter term is accounted for in the chart above.

Waiver: SICS does not need to acquire a collective bargaining waiver as enrollment will be below 250 students in the first two years of operation.

Meeting Enrollment Targets Established by the Board of Regents³⁸

Rationale

DEMOGRAPHICS - Analysis of the community shows that CSD 5 hosts an average 12% SWD population that in reality is as high as 22% in some schools. There is an average 10% ELL and a more than 86% FRLP student

³⁶ <http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Demographics/2012-2021GrierPartnershipReport.pdf>

³⁷ www.globallanguageproject.org

³⁸ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

population that SICS will need to be ready to enroll³⁹. Of this ELL population, SICS anticipates enrolling ELL students that also have IEP's at the average Citywide rate of about 21% with the largest ELL numbers in grades K and 1.⁴⁰

As discussed in section I A., the number of risk factors a student has is directly correlated with a student's achievement. SICS will enroll a diverse population such as K-2 students in low performing schools looking for a new choice. Also, there is one sub-group of students in CSD 5 that has several risk factors that SICS will address holistically. These are Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) who are at-risk students that: come from homes where languages other than English are spoken; have missed at least two years of schooling compared to peers; function at least two years below grade level in reading and mathematics; and may be pre-literate in their first language.⁴¹ According to DOE data, district 5 SIFE students come from homes where Spanish, French, Arabic, Fulani, Wolof and Bengali are spoken. The SICS foreign language program is one in which students are strengthened in literacy through its content immersion model as well as supported with strong academic intervention, ESL/ESOL programs and the IB trans-disciplinary/cross content approach (see II C. *Education Plan*) making SICS well suited to service these families.

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

GRASSROOTS: In addition to understanding our target demographic data, grassroots engagement of families has given SICS invaluable information. Through the regular community recruitment that has already begun at the grassroots level, SICS can anticipate enrollment of at-risk ELL, FRLP, and SWD students including those undesignated and with families who do not have a cultural understanding or acceptance of a child with a disability. In speaking with other Charter School Heads, Head Start Directors, and staff at family daycare centers who represent over 500 CSD5 students and their families, we learned that connecting directly to parents and creating a personalized relationship is key to recruitment and retention. This was described as crucial, particularly for families of at-risk students. This was confirmed at each of the 10 events in the past 12 months (3 townhalls, 4 education based community events attended, and 3 sponsored events) at which SICS had the opportunity to listen to parents on a personal level. SICS found parents receptive to information on best practices for at-risk students and eager to hear how they will manifest at SICS.

Open discussion has already begun and will continue, through the lens of educating parents on what works in promoting high achievement for their at-risk students in a supportive, inquiry-led, applied learning environment. Emphasis was and will continue to be the benefits of applied learning to at-risk students. These benefits are particularly true for the SWD population⁴² and were one of the drivers behind the decision in choosing IB and STEAM for the CSD 5 children. SICS anticipates, based on parent information and descriptions of most prevalent conditions provided by the National Center for Learning Disabilities, that students with cognitive delays, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia, some auditory processing disorders, ADHD, and some autism spectrum disorders may enroll. SICS' key designs enable us to comprehensively service these students and move them academically. Additionally, this information was used to design a plan for continued outreach to families such as holding regular Town Halls, targeted workshops, and open-houses (see below and III I, *Family and Community Involvement*).

Recruitment & Retention Plan

By working with community Head Starts programs, including Abyssinian Development Corp. Daycare and Shugah Baybees Developmental Center, SICS will work to enroll FRLP and identified SWD students. SICS understands

³⁹ <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000047161&year=2012>

⁴⁰ http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FD5EB945-5C27-44F8-BE4BE4C65D7176F8/0/2013DemographicReport_june2013_revised.pdf

⁴¹ http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FD5EB945-5C27-44F8-BE4BE4C65D7176F8/0/2013DemographicReport_june2013_revised.pdf

⁴² Trundle, 2008 <http://static.nsta.org/files/PB216X-7.pdf>

it will be enrolling a variety of Students With Disabilities and is prepared to service them (see I D). Working with the Harlem4Kids network of 2000+ Harlem based families, SICS will reach a variety of students including those at-risk. SICS will ask the 22 organizations that gave formal letters of support to share with their members and customers enrollment information. SICS will create an enrollment marketing pack for this purpose. SICS will also use its 800+ email list-serve of supports to disseminate enrollment information and timelines.

ELL students from the large francophone community in CSD 5⁴³ and SWD families will be invited to School based information forums to address their specific questions. SICS will employ grassroots recruitment throughout the immediate area to reach FRLP families in addition to the outreach listed below. Flyers will be posted and hand distributed at local meeting designations such as libraries, parks, heavily populated subway and bus stations, and public-housing complexes.

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

<i>To recruit ELLs:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recruitment & application materials will have SICS enrollment information printed in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Fulani, and Wolof.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will advertise in local & foreign language newspapers, TV and radio stations, including Radio Africa, <i>Al-Hoda</i> (Arabic-language daily), and <i>El Diario La Prensa</i> (Spanish-language daily).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will conduct continued outreach with the Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CELL) to share ideas & resources for recruitment as well as leave applications and enrollment materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with cultural organizations including the 2000+ member Senegalese Association of New York, the Malian Association, the Morija French Speaking Church, Little Africa, East Harlem Bilingual Head Start and others that may have SIFE children to hold collaborative recruitment presentations and help give out enrollment material.
<i>To recruit FRLP students:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using DOE approved vendor Vanguard Direct Strategic Marketing, SICS will reach the wider community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with local public assistance providers, community churches, food banks, and local food markets to assist us in identifying families to receive applications and/or attend presentations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will outreach at local free health care providers and academic programs (including working with Physicians First & The Reading Team to provide SICS recruitment material to their families)
<i>To recruit SWD:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will meet with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for CSD 5 to inform them of the SICS mission, provide promotional material, and provide dates for SICS recruitment events for parents that include clear information of the correlated benefits of learning disabilities and inquiry-led applied learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SICS will conduct pre-enrollment community information sessions for parents of students with disabilities.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will continue to cultivate relationships with SpEd coordinators of pre-K and early childhood developmental programs to hold recruitment presentations, school tours, and targeted workshops.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All incoming Kindergarten and Grade 1 students</i> will be screened by the F & P assessment and students falling below the designated point of entrance at grade level will be referred to the Special Education Coordinator and teacher to begin a plan of intervention. Or enrichment as needed.
<i>To recruit students whose families may be less informed about available options:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will work with pre-school and daycare school leaders, parent coordinators, PTA leaders, and guidance counselors, promoting SICS as a unique educational experience throughout all terms of its growth. SICS will hold informational sessions for parents several times in the year at pre-schools and daycares, or for multiple schools at once.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will continue to cultivate relationships with on-the-ground Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that serve students who would be eligible to attend SICS, or their parents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICS will conduct outreach at local community centers such as The Children's Aid Society and public school Principals

⁴³ US Census Bureau; 2008-2012 American Community Survey

who may suggest students in need of a new environment for readiness or enrichment

- SICS will hold information sessions, arrange presentations at local non public school, and make announcements at meetings of the Community Board and CEC 5. Outreach sessions will be publicized using flyers, advertisements, social media, and contact with community organizations.

- Families will be encouraged to visit SICS, talk to instructional, executive and other staff, visit classes and meet currently enrolled students.

Retention: Through the IB holistic approach to teaching and learning, SICS looks to meet the needs of its students and **NOT** counsel them out. SICS will not discriminate based on economic, ethnic, or cognitive status and looks forward to working with the at-risk population in its district. Through its home visits, workshops, enrollment applications, parent handbooks, on-going parental feedback, email blasts, school website, and school events, SICS will ensure:

- all parents are informed of the FRLP program at the beginning of each school year.
- appropriate staff will be made available if any parents need assistance with paperwork, understanding the FRLP program, or translation
- SWD will be closely monitored and given the support and services they need and deserve.

The SICS model and daily practices will actively engage and support learning for all students. SICS will:

- Create a **transitional inclusion plan** (see *II.G.*) to closely monitor student progress
- Offer intervention to students not identified but in need of specialized services (*II.G.*)
- Have a full-time ESL teacher to service ELLs and monitor their progress
- Provide targeted interventions and intensive parent engagement for all students at-risk academically, no matter their background (see *II.G. / III.I. and Budget Attachment 9*)
- Support students with collaborative teaching teams and fulltime specialists that are part of a school-based support team (see II G. ***Students At-Risk of Academic Failure***)
- Implement training and coaching of students, particularly males, through identified research based program and organizations such as MAN UP⁴⁴, which is a SICS supporter.
- Through **IB**, students will have a holistic growth experience with its focus on skills, Attributes and Attitudes
- Develop strong structures to support family and parent engagement including a Family School Association (FSA) and consistent continuous teacher-school-parent communication.

Throughout the **IB** framework students will work on developing a core set of attributes and attitudes that cannot be separated from academic and intellectual growth. In doing so, students and families will feel welcome and included within the school community leading to increased rates of student retention.

Community Support and Interest – (see Attachment 2) Community School District 5 is an environment that produces students that drop out of school at a rate above 20% and where students, particularly those with special needs, do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP).⁴⁵ Only 13% of the District’s **3rd graders** score proficient in ELA while 73% of ELL and 82% of SWD scored level 1. It is these statistical realities that continue the parent drive for innovative choices in their children’s education.

Sofara International Charter School has received, and continues to receive, enthusiastic encouragement from community parents that span the educational continuum of public, private, independent and home-schooled children. This support has come in the form of: 227 Sofara facebook page likes; 127 digital signatures & comments; the 20+ parent attendance at each of SICS’ 3 townhalls; additional outreach in and outside of the community on behalf of Sofara; in-kind service support including food for events & clerical work; lobbying additional groups and organizations; and giving letters of support. For Example, the Harlem4Kids parent group, which has over 2000 parent members, is whom Sofara received its first endorsement from. Based on their feedback, community parents have been most excited about the prospect of having an educational program that considers the future trends, includes foreign language and has the reputation of being a rigorous, quality school choice. In NYC, parents are increasingly requesting foreign language

⁴⁴ <http://manupcampaign.org>

⁴⁵ <http://data.nysed.gov/specialed/index.php?instid=800000047161&year=20122013>

as is evident through the increasing numbers of bilingual public school programs and waitlists at Harlem based bilingual schools. Examples include **PS 368 in Harlem offering** Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish and **Harlem Village Academies offering** Mandarin. French dual language programs currently rank 3rd in popularity behind Spanish and Chinese.⁴⁶

Community advocates, leaders, and educators have also shown support of the opening of SICS and its IB programming through letters of support and mentoring, and co-sponsoring events. As part of a grassroots public outreach plan, SICS has spoken directly with many families at community events and has collected over 800 signatures of support on a community petition. The signatures represent families from the 5 boroughs. Of them, 350+ signatures are from families based in District 5 with approximately 120 signatures coming from Francophone ELL households. The majority of all other signatures come from surrounding districts 7, 4, 6 and 3 (CSD 7 the South Bronx).

As we know from compiled figures,⁴⁷ Harlem, the South Bronx, and Central Brooklyn make up 50% of applications for charter school seats. For the 2013-2014 school year, Manhattan received 16,994 applications for the limited 5,575 available charter seats. Harlem alone received 7,631 applications for its 2,858 charter seats. A look at the Central Harlem estimates for the 2014-2015 school year shows:

1,806 seats in CSD 5 with 4,637 applications – 2831 seats need
839 seats in CSD 3 with 4,749 applications – 3910 seats need

These estimates leave 6741 potential applicants for Sofara international Charter School demonstrating a parent demand that SICS can help to meet. In addition, the figures in the South Bronx, from which SICS has received parent interest, are proportionately even higher. There were 11,569 applications for the mere 2,849 charter seats in those districts leaving an additional 8720 potential families SICS can serve. Also, according to the NYC district Demographic Snapshot, there is historically a gap of approximately 300 seats between Pre-K enrollment and available Kindergarten seats. SICS would certainly help meet this need. It is reasonable to estimate that 1/8 (100) of the parents signing the SICS support petition and a portion of the CSD francophone and SIFE families will apply for a seat at Sofara International Charter school. Francophone and SIFE families represent over 4450 households in CSD 5 alone.⁴⁸

At this point, SICS has not encountered opposition. Congressman Charles Rangel whose district covers parts of Manhattan and the Bronx, Councilmember Inez Dickens who has helped charters on different matters, and Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez from East Harlem have also given letters of support. In our numerous discussions with Senator Bill Perkins and his Chief of Staff, they expressed support for the SICS grassroots efforts and have been pleased with SICS' proactive community outreach. SICS' team members have spoken with every political decision maker from District Leaders and Community Board members to State and Federal representatives in and outside of our districts. In many cases, community residents and elected officials that are generally opposed to charter schools have told us that they like the SICS school design and are willing to collaborate once SICS is authorized. Further evidence of support is in *Attachment 2*.

Ensuring Access: SICS' Executive Director and Director of Operations will monitor the enrollment student categories to ensure a balance of representation of subgroups and targets are met. SICS is committed to ensuring access for all students including those with physical disabilities. The privately held building SICS has identified for its incubation space is already wheelchair accessible with a specialized lift in addition to having an elevator. SICS, if need be, will arrange for ramps, move or arrange classrooms, or provide paraprofessionals to accommodate student access.

Adequate Enrollment At all recruitment events described above, SICS will provide students and families with an opportunity to fill out an application for the lottery. Applications will also be available on the school's website and in hard copy at the school. Translators and foreign language applications will be provided when needed. SICS will leave copies of applications in all locations described above. Once applications are submitted and the lottery is held, SICS will mail an enrollment packet (see *II.L.*) to each admitted student. SICS will call all accepted students and notify them of mandatory enrollment sessions, which will be held on multiple days and at multiple times of day. If any student declines his or her spot, SICS will call students who are on the waiting list. The Board will monitor enrollment targets

⁴⁶ <http://frenchmorning.com/en/2014/02/15/non-franco-parents-value-quality-continuity-french-bilingual-schools/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/Lottery2014FinalReport.pdf>

⁴⁸ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

closely as the school year approaches. SICS will back fill in grades K & 1 with some exceptions in grades 2-6. SICS' Admission Policy and Procedures in Attachment 1 provides specifics regarding the application, admissions and enrollment process, the backfill strategy, and a plan for a public lottery.

D. Community to be Served

Value of the School in CSD 5: SICS' mission is aligned with the 2014 District Statement of Needs for Community Boards 9, 10 and 11, which are each part of CSD 5. The Community Boards stated an increased need for foreign language education, an increased STEM focus in schools, programs that widen the scope of international and collegiate opportunities, and to build skills in youth that offset the cycle of poverty⁴⁹. SICS' is ready to fulfill these needs and has designed its key elements to meet community needs rather than trying to find students to meet the school's design.

While there are many schools serving SICS' CSD 5 families, none offer the combination of an inquiry-led educational experience parents have told us they wanted on comment cards during outreach & Town Hall meetings. The general parent sentiment has been, **“This school would be a dream come true for parents & children in CSD 5. I hope that this gets off the ground sooner than later!”**⁵⁰ While the current charter schools are adding value to CSD 5, their approaches to teaching and learning are not that different from the general public schools while the SICS approach *will encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods*. The idea of applied learning through inquiry has struck a chord with parents as have the benefits of learning a foreign language within a global perspective. To meet their needs, parents would have to enroll their children in the United Nations International School, The Dwight School or another private school, which would cost approximately \$40,000 per year in tuition and fees. To ensure a consistent STEAM education, parents would then have to enroll their children in an afterschool enrichment program. The combination of inquiry led IB, foreign language, daily STEAM instruction, and applied learning all in a continuum of learning would be an immense value to CSD5 children, especially the ELL, SIFE, and SWD populations, by providing parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system. By allowing SICS to grow and flourish, we will fill a void and need expressed by the community while offering children an experience that will raise achievement and, so far, has only been available to select private school families.

Value to School Community: CSD 5 and surrounding general public and charter public schools can look forward to sharing in collaborative projects and learning experiences, which SICS will build up as a hallmark of an IB school. SICS will invite schools for inter-visitations, workshops, networking sessions, and opportunities for student driven community learning and action collaboratives.

Proposed Population SICS Would Serve: SICS will serve all children in CSD 5 and will target those in low performing schools and/or categorized as ELL and SIFE. As previously stated, CSD 5 is an environment that produces students that drop out of school at a rate above 20% and where students, particularly those with special needs, do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP).⁵¹ Only 13% of the District's 3rd graders scored proficient in ELA while 73% of ELL and 82% of SWD scored at level 1. Hispanic students make up 40% of the population, 53% are African-American with several ethnic subgroups, 3% are Asian or Asian-American, 1% are American Indian or Alaska Native, and 3% are White.⁵² Of this population, 33.8% of residents are foreign-born, 45.4% have a female head-of-household with related children under 18 and 38.7% are at or below the poverty level. Of the population under 18, 31.9% are Black or African American and can be further divided into 3 different language groups of African origin: French, English and Arabic.⁵³ Furthermore, most students fall into high need subgroups, for example: 96% of 3rd graders are FRLP; 16% are ELLS; and 22.4% are students with disabilities.⁵⁴

The most recent data available on student exams indicate that most students entering SICS will be performing

⁴⁹ www.nyc.gov/html/mancb10/html/about/needs.shtm, wwwcb11m.org/node/5

⁵⁰ Helen Narina Schmidt – CSD 5 parent via online petition comment section

⁵¹ <http://data.nysed.gov/specialed/index.php?instid=800000047161&year=20122013>

⁵² <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=800000047161&year=2013&createreport=1&enrollment=1&avgclasssize=1&freelunch=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1&elemSci=1>

⁵³ US Census Bureau; 2008-2012 American Community Survey

⁵⁴ These are the overall percentages for the district; for budgeting purposes, however, SICS has used the lower “effective target” number provided by the Regents, in order to create the most conservative budget possible.

below grade level, which is not surprising considering many are SIFE students. The table below shows academic performance in 2012-2013 of 3rd graders in CSD 5, with specific attention to at-risk populations:

Population	ELA			Math		
	% scoring proficient (Level 1)	% scoring proficient (Level 3)	% scoring advanced (Level 4)	% scoring proficient (Level 1)	% scoring proficient (Level 3)	% scoring advanced (Level 4)
Overall	56%	13%	1%	25%	29%	1%
FRLP	57%	12%	1%	26	36%	3%
SWD	82%	4%	0%	50%	10%	0%
ELL	73%	5%	0%	39%	13%	0%

Given the lack of academic preparation as demonstrated through the breakdown in the above chart, many students are being underserved and do not see education as a pathway to success. According to the 2012 American Community Survey conducted by the Census Bureau, we can see the results of a lack of preparedness. Data shows that there has been a critical decline in High School graduation rates and a critical incline in student dropouts. CSD 5's largest zip code catchment area of 10027 has seen its 18 to 24 year old population drop out of school at a rate of 79%⁵⁵. To break the cycle of poverty and disillusionment, we *must* provide a rigorous, 21st century academic program of preparation beginning in elementary school.

Rationale for Selecting the Community and Capacity to Serve It

Reason for Selecting this Community: Each member of the Sofara International Charter School founding team is *invested* in the Harlem community as parents, grandparents, residents, educators, and/or merchants and has a vested interest in creating an educational renaissance for our children. The team is clear on the educational issues and concerns in the community and have the skill set and network to ensure SICS is fully supported in creating a thriving school community. In addition to meeting the Community Boards' needs as presented in their annual statements, SICS' founding team is committed to creating an academically rigorous school targeting the underserved children in our district, each of whom is at-risk and struggles through risk factors to participate in educational opportunities their dynamic city offers.

The founders have experienced first hand the turmoil and struggles of finding free, quality public education that meets the needs of and expectations for their children. The statistics are telling us that traditional pedagogical methodology is not suited for a District in crisis and "In Need of Improvement." Through extensive research and school visitations, the SICS team *designed a school that will increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on those who are at-risk of academic failure.*

As vested community residents, the SICS founding team examined current elementary school performance data in the district and was dismayed by the actual statistics, which show a cycle of failure to educate our children taking place. An example can be seen in one of the districts lowest performing schools, P.S. 194, where AYP was not reached for *any* of the student sub groups neither in ELA nor math in the past three year reporting period as shown in this chart⁵⁶:

	Overall Progress Report Grade	Progress Report Subcategories			Percent (%) Proficient	
		Student Progress	Student Performance	School Environment	Math	ELA
2013 ⁵⁷	F	C	F	F	1.0%	1.0%
2012	B	B	F	C	29.3%	14.3%
2011	D	C	F	F	16.0%	17.4%

Additional data analysis suggests a tragic educational dynamic effecting teachers too. In the 2011-2012 school year teacher turnover reached 7 of 30 teachers. In order to serve this population where:

- 85% of 3rd graders scored a level 1 on state ELA exams;
- 0% scored at level 3 or 4 on state ELA exams;

⁵⁵ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_5YR_S1501

⁵⁶ <http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=800000047142&year=2013&createreport=1&enrollment=1&staffcounts=1&38ELA=1&38MATH=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1>

⁵⁷ <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/839763DC-7FCC-489A-8CC0-3F8C02DD1402/0/ConsultationtoCommunity05M194.pdf>

- 81% of 3rd graders scored at level 1 in Math;
- 99% of students are FRLP, 22% SWD, and 16% ELL
- 3% scored at level 3 in math; and

unique, targeted programming and teacher support must be implemented for success to flourish.⁵⁸

It is this pattern of statistical data throughout the district that has moved this grassroots founding team to commit itself to improving student achievement and innovating education with sound, rigorous academic opportunities. This includes a well developed teacher support system, highly qualified teachers, mother tongue bilingual teachers, intervention specialist team teachers, flexibility through applied learning, self-advocacy through SRG and portfolios, opportunity for additional tutoring, real-life learning in context, gender validation, and extensive family engagement and support to begin with.

Capacity to Serve this Community: SICS founding team brings over **four decades of combined experience working with high need students** in New York and internationally. They have worked at length with FRLP students, SWD, and ELLs. SICS' founding team is highly qualified to serve this community and deeply committed to doing so (see *III.A.*).

Voyka Soto is an experienced international educator certified by the International Baccalaureate Organization in Teaching & Learning, has worked on new school start up, accreditation, and systemic reform during her lengthy career, and has served the at-risk population her entire career as an educator. Janeat Brown brings the frontline knowledge or new program implementation and IB implementation as a teacher in an IB magnet school. Dr. Monica White the current, Network Innovation Manager at the NYCDOE, has worked tirelessly for the advancement of education as Adjunct Instructor/College Lecturer/Instructor Teachers College at Columbia University, Executive Director of Academic Support, District 79 in NYC, School Redesign Coach at Institute for Student Achievement, Curriculum Coordinator at Summer Principals Academy Teachers College, and Literacy Consultant at Secondary Literacy Institute among other things. Each of these experiences gives SICS a unique standing and perspective in the charter school realm. Kevin V.G. Wells, Esq. is a strategist, experienced Corporate Social Responsibility attorney and multi-cultural expert with several well-known diversity/ inclusion initiatives, including with the NYCDOE, utilizing sustainable practices that will help SICS create short and long term growth and sustainability goals as an international school (in addition to being a licensed Special Education teacher). Millicent Redick has strong organizational and political ties in the community enabling SICS to acquire support in a multitude of ways to bring programs online for our students in addition to being a CPA who will help keep SICS fiscally sound. Thomas Bretz, in addition to his extensive financial and government compliance expertise, has co-founded an educational enrichment program that seeks to raise achievement levels for underperforming students while Holley Drakeford, who is a member of Community Board 11's Land Use Committee, has extensive experience in facilities management helping SICS meet the demands of a growing public school.

SICS is a grassroots endeavor to bring quality education to Harlem. The founders and founding Trustees all have deep connections to the Harlem community and have a well rounded skill set to ensure SICS' success. Moreover, SICS' school design was created specifically with CSD 5 in mind. Several of SICS' key design elements will directly support students in areas of greatest need.

Student Challenge	SICS Design Element that meets Student Needs
Students at low rates of proficiency in ELA. (ELL & SIFE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA Common Core standards are integrated throughout curriculum (see <i>II.C.</i>) and reinforced through Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) • Learning through real-world motivational provocations. • Differentiation through UDL, tutoring sessions, 1:1 pull-out, and full time intervention specialists in each class • ESL/ESOL specialist(s) and Literacy Specialist provide small group or individualized instructional support for all students with literacy gaps. • Students' initial instructional grouping will be based on diagnostic test scores, allowing ELA and writing classes to proceed at appropriate pace and level of rigor. • Student presentations and demonstrations to enhance listening and speaking.
Students at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' initial instructional grouping will be based on diagnostic test scores, allowing math classes to proceed

⁵⁸<http://data.nysed.gov/reportcard.php?instid=800000047142&year=2013&createreport=1&attendance=1&teacherqual=1&teacherturnover=1&elemELA=1&elemMATH=1>

low rates of proficiency in Math and Science.	at appropriate pace and level of rigor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEAM provides exposure to sciences <i>and</i> applied learning which are particularly beneficial for SWD and ELLs by allowing them to view math and science in a differentiated manner • Routine supplemental authentic, real world experiences for students who struggle to meet standards that allows for greater direct, hands-on learning.
Multiple risk factors	ADDITIONALLY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extended calendar that represents additional learning time • Push in specialists and small group tutoring for guidance and remediation • Differentiation through blended tools enhances time with content & gives new approach to mastery of material • Fully developed PD plan to support teachers assessment & instructional delivery • IB and SRG support student ability to self monitor needs and progress • Applied learning brings content into focus strengthening understandings • Trans-disciplinary approach ties all content together in a web of knowledge • A rich language based environment promotes critical thinking and discussion around

Expanding Educational Options within the District: ALL of SICS’ key design elements, such as the trans-disciplinary approach to instructional delivery, incorporating daily STEAM, being inquiry driven, providing authentic applied learning experiences, being community service oriented, including the habit-of-mind skills, attitudes & attributes, promoting a dual language program, providing intersession opportunities, maintaining a global perspective, and providing the continuity of rigor through the IB programs are *ALL* unique to the district. These features are particularly important given the needs of the incoming population. We know of no other school in the district that employs SRG, nor does any other school utilize an academic/effort grade system like the one SICS will implement. Finally, no other school offers SICS’ competitive outcome of allowing students the ability to thrive in any situation using the IB foundational skills, whether that be domestically or internationally, as leaders in a global society. While some schools use some of the design elements, we know of no school that incorporates all of the elements within SICS’ unique structure and personnel requirements.

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

Community residents opposed to charter co-location, including parents on the Community Education Council and Community Boards, were pleased about the academic program and even more enthused that SICS has private space located for incubation, which will allow students to thrive in their own special environment.

E. Public Outreach

Means of Outreach: SICS has been engaged in an intense grassroots effort of community outreach to inform CSD 5, and Harlem at large, about Sofara International Charter School. We sought to secure the public’s input and comments regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students and our design to meet those needs. In all outreach, SICS not only informed the community about the school but provided our website, email, phone number, flyers, and invitations to community meetings with stakeholders. *Attachment 2* provides detailed evidence of the public review process. SICS provided information about its intended location, the target population, a description of the educational program offered and other pertinent information using the following:

- Presentations at open public meetings
- Engagement of elected officials at all levels
- Outreach to community organizations
- Grassroots outreach
- Outreach to CEC 5, education leaders with expertise in the public or charter school world, including school leaders, charter school trustees, school founders, and those with other areas of expertise.

- A facebook page, and website, www.Sofarainternational.org, gives or contains information about the school and offers avenues for public comment by phone, email, or on the website.
- Holding Town Hall meetings with community stakeholders at a local business, for which there was sufficient public notice.
- Engaging local area press and list-serve

Portion of Community outreach (not all inclusive): Soliciting Community Input.

Outreach Activity	Date & Location	Community Comment/Input Rcvd.
Town Hall meetings Public Outreach	Neighborhood parents meet-up April 2013 Shugah Baybees Dev. Ctr. - August 2013 Maysles Cinema – Jan 2013 Parents groups - several CUNY Radio 90.3 Harlem Talk News Journal Advertisement	- Want inclusion of African based languages and high level of “quality” - STEAM classes not just for afterschool - We want progressive education model - Full language immersion would be too much, strong English is needed
Sponsored Events	First Jr. Lego League - Cooper Hewitt Museum Sabree Educational Services Sept. 2013 Kinetic Art Exhibit – Feb 2014 Kwanzaa Celebration, Dec. 2013	- What will you do for our boys? - Our kids need more exposure and time with engineering - We have to catch students early for intervention
Superintendent, CEC 5 & meetings CB 10, 11, & 9	- Continuous CEC & District 5 offices CEC 5 monthly meetings	-Include new programs, curriculum and practices than available now - Don’t co-locate
Meetings with Political Leaders Local State Federal	Various locations/Ongoing & Continuous Congressman Charles Rangel & Chief of Staff Geoffrey Eaton Senator Bill Perkins & Chief Of Staff Cordel Cleare Councilwoman Inez Dickens Assemblyman Keith Wright Assemblyman Roberto Rodriguez William Allen District Leader Westchester Democratic Club	<u>Assemblyman Keith Wright</u> - consider the impact and effect of co-locating <u>Cordell Cleare, COS, Senator Bill Perkins</u> – maintain strong cultural relevancies in the curriculum and provocations - foreign language is key
Meetings with Educational Orgs. in Harlem Charter School Leaders & Trustees	- Continuous Harlem Hebrew Academy, Future Leaders Institute, Harlem Children’s Zone, Global Community Charter School, MESA, North East Charter School Network, The Reading Team	Include after school component; include non academic opportunities during inter-sessions
Cultural	- Continuous Senegalese Assoc. of - November 2013 + Malian Association - Dec 2013, Feb 2014 The Schomberg Center Jan 2014 Mortija French Church – April 2014	French & Arabic languages are needed and continuous family input with communication from school
Business	Continuous Harlem Commonwealth Council City National Bank & others	Letters of Support received - Strong sense of economics is needed for students to remain successful

Solicitation of Community and Public Input or Comment: At all public in-person presentations, SICS representatives provided time for and received public comment and feedback through discussion and feedback cards. The public was also invited to comment on the school’s website through its petition link, or send emails to info@Sofarainternational.org. All SICS materials included the website, e-mail and phone number.

Response to Comments Received from the Community: The applicant group carefully considered community feedback in its school design as summarized in the chart above and incorporating the elements. The IB inquiry model, foreign language and STEAM components were all direct requests from parents and the Community Boards in CSD 5 as well as SICS' plan for interactive parent workshops, school break Intersessions and more.

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

Informing Students in the Community & Providing Equal Opportunity to Attend SICS: Once SICS is authorized, our founders will continue outreach for the purposes of recruitment. This includes outreach to every pre-school and daycare in the district, as well as to parents and families -particularly the 800+ families that signed our community petition. We will utilize our community and professional network to reach out to service providers helping at-risk children, organizations aiding immigrant families, and faith-based organizations. We will continue our grassroots work of flyering at libraries, parks, major subway stations, public housing complexes, and local businesses.

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

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Programmatic Impact: We believe SICS will serve the needs of the CSD 5 community in a variety of ways. The high standards and expectations of academic excellence through the IB framework will serve as a beacon or magnet for recruiting and retaining CSD5 students and attracting others into the district. This opens the opportunity for SICS to work with Harlem based schools to Market the school choices available in the district and draw in more students and families to create a positive programmatic impact. In addition, SICS would be meeting the requested needs of the community as seen through our outreach activities and the existing charter school application : seat ratio. SICS' Year 1 enrollment would constitute approximately 1% of the 12,607 NYCDOE public school children in the 24 elementary schools of CSD 5. Therefore SICS will not have a negative programmatic impact. In Year 5, at the expected full enrollment of 350 students, SICS student would reflect approximately 2.5%, assuming no overall CSD 5 increase in elementary school enrollment.

With respect to non-public, independent and parochial schools, SICS is not anticipated to have a great programmatic or financial effect on these institutions, but may enroll a percentage from such schools throughout the City. SICS expects that many of its students will come from low-income families that would not have had the means to pay for tuition-based private schools. Of the parochial schools in the district, SICS' impact on them is expected to be minimal as they have different themes that parents seek out.

Fiscal Impact: SICS will have minimal fiscal impact on DOE public schools. For purposes of this analysis, SICS expects the DOE will transfer \$13,877 annually for each child enrolled during the **2015-2016** school year. This figure, along with the "District Budget" (inclusive of DOE programmatic expenditures & exclusive of pension or debt service costs), is based on assumptions provided in guidance from the DOE. Even when SICS assumes an increase in per-pupil funding to \$14,027 in years 2-5, and leaving flat the DOE total budget, the SICS impact is negligible. In the first year (2015-2016) of the charter enrollment of 150 students has a financial impact of only 0.00012% of the total \$20.6 billion DOE budget. In subsequent years, the financial impact remains minimal. By operational Year 5, \$5,304,142 will be transferred from the NYC School District to SICS which represents 0.00026% of the NYC School District's overall budget.

PART II: EDUCATIONAL PLAN

Rationale

Sofara International Charter School is in a unique position. With experienced IB educators on its founding team and the International Baccalaureate Organization Regional Manager sitting on its Advisory Board, SICS will open in Candidate Status⁵⁹ with the IBO. SICS' students will be fully serviced in a language immersion, applied learning, inquiry-led approach to teaching and learning beginning with the Primary Years Program and growing into an International Baccalaureate World School. Imbedded in the IB framework are all of the key design elements found herein. Through IB we understand that our community's children can learn in an innovative setting, they can learn a foreign language, and they can learn to apply their knowledge in the real-world while actually interacting and exploring the world beyond their neighborhood. SICS' IB classrooms will be ones in which students are encouraged to ask questions and stretch their thinking while being taught the skills to use the answers they find in a variety of matters.

In addition to the IBO's support, SICS will be supported through the Global Language Project and the founders of HYPOTHEkids to ensure curriculum and program quality, rigor, and efficacy. **Global Language Project** is an innovative educational movement seeking to equip disadvantaged public-school students with the skills to compete in a globalized world and work force. Through GLP's free and comprehensive language training program, elementary school students achieve proficiency in foreign language. The curriculum emphasizes research backed experiential learning and was created by leading educational professionals around the country.⁶⁰ **HYPOTHEkids**, a 501c3 organization, is a K-12 STEM education initiative of Harlem Biospace, the co-working lab space for NYC's leading biotech startup companies, it seeks to leverage this great resource to help develop and inspire a new generation of scientists, engineers and technology entrepreneurs. HYPOTHEkids develops students' science and engineering abilities through in-school and afterschool lab hours, summer programs, and a girls' science club.⁶¹ With these three supporters, strategic planning, and targeted supportive staffing, SICS will deliver a well-rounded, rigorous, CCLS aligned program of inquiry in CSD 5.

In the IB Primary Years Program (PYP) the inquiry-led approach is a **trans-disciplinary** instructional model that allows learning to transcend the confines of the subject areas and connect to what is real in the world. The student learning environment therefore is **coherent because authentic teaching and learning takes place through a web of knowledge, as opposed to compartmentalized, disconnected teaching and learning experiences that are the norm in a traditional classroom.** This environment fosters in students an awareness of the relevance of the acquired knowledge to their reality and they are encouraged to respond with a high level of engagement.⁶² In preparing our students for the global society they will live in, using inquiry-led learning will help them become more creative, more positive and more independent⁶³. This is true for all students, including those with special needs who require more individual attention during the process. Other academic research shows that inquiry-led learning improves student achievement.⁶⁴ While still other studies demonstrate IB student ELA test scores in grades 3-5 are statistically significantly higher than peer scores as seen in a South Carolina study of 16 district schools that did not offer the PYP (Jordan 2009). Furthermore, PYP teachers also reap benefits. In a Texas case study, teachers were found to have improved professional practice, instructional focus on higher-level thinking, cultural awareness, and the relevance of student learning as positive ramifications of the implementation of the PYP (Stillisano, et al 2010).

PYP students, as is developmentally appropriate, are in a constant state of questioning and are supported with resources and an environment conducive to inquiry. This can be seen, for example, in teacher facilitated Socratic seminar discussions and the set up of the school library as a lab. A school library-media program that is properly equipped and staffed can make a difference in terms of measurable gains in student achievement. School library factors alone can account for improvements of 2% to 9% in student achievement⁶⁵. Success with inquiry-led learning often

⁵⁹ There are 4 phases in the process to becoming an authorized IB World School. 1) The school must be operational for two years 2) Administrators attend IBO exploratory workshops. 3) IBO candidate status is the program implementation phase and includes IBO consultations & quality reviews) 4) authorization

⁶⁰ http://www.globallanguageproject.org/about_mission.php

⁶¹ <http://hypothekids.org>

⁶² www.ic.edu.lb/aboutic/basis-for-practice.pdf

⁶³ <http://www.tojet.net/articles/v11i1/1111.pdf>

⁶⁴ <http://education.alberta.ca/media/6563150/30213.pdf>

⁶⁵ Focus on Inquiry: **A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-based Learning**
http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/focusoninquiry.pdf

requires a change in school culture just as SICS is attempting to do with its educational program design. Studies investigating the implementation of inquiry-led science education, inquiry-led information literacy programs and other inquiry-based educational innovations have resulted in guidelines for building a culture of inquiry⁶⁶. These guidelines are all evident in the **IB** educational program model as the instructional model represents a broad range of instructional possibilities including **Open Inquiry, Guided Inquiry, and Structured inquiry**.

The Benefits of Bilingualism: Second language acquisition is an essential component of the IB continuum. It is through second languages that students can truly communicate and be a part of a global society. Reaching children early is essential to language acquisition in any language. While many schools offer a second language in Middle School studies show learning languages at earlier ages and over longer periods of time supports second-language acquisition (Tochon, 2009). According to a meta-analysis of 63 studies, bilingualism produces a range of benefits, including increased ability to control attention and keep information in memory, better awareness of language structure and vocabulary, and improved skills in creative thinking and problem solving (Adesope, Lavin, Thompson, and Ungerleider, 2010). Bilingual students also attain higher levels of achievement on standardized tests in reading, writing, social studies, and math, and report higher levels of self-confidence (Tochon, 2009). Students in "50-50" language-immersion schools, in which students spend half of their day learning in a nonnative language, perform as well as, or better than, students in monolingual schools on standardized tests, and these benefits extend to English-language learners as well as native English speakers (Gómez, Freeman, and Freeman, 2005; Palmer, 2009; Thomas and Collier, 2002).

Each of these research-based design elements will ensure SICS attains its goals and fulfills its mission in working with the children in its community.

A. Achievement Goals

SICS has the following goals for its Educational Program during its first charter term

1. Students will be proficient readers, writers, listeners, and speakers of both English and a foreign language. (bilingual & biliterate)
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of mathematics including application, practical and conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem solving.
3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in the understanding and application of technology and scientific reasoning.
4. Students will understand and be able to critically analyze local, global and U.S. issues, history and geography and their impact on human existence at their developmentally appropriate level.
5. As mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act 28, SICS students will make adequate yearly progress.
6. Students will demonstrate the acquisition of foundational academic, social, intellectual and emotional preparedness for college, career, and real life.
7. At-risk populations will be fully supported in becoming high achiever

⁶⁶ <http://www.terc.edu/staff/238.html>, p://comminfo.rutgers.edu/~kuhlthau/publications.htm

	NCLB	SICS Student Achievement Goals
Mandated	School is deemed in good standing under the State's NCLB accountability system: it has not met the criteria to be identified as a Focus School or as a local assistance school	Each year the school will earn a score at or above the 75th percentile of all schools on the section "Performance" of the citywide Progress Report.
		75% of 3rd-6th enrolled at the school on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA, Math and Science exams
		75% of grade level cohorts will perform at grade level on Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) benchmark assessment system. Grades K-3
		Each year, at least 75% of graders 3-6 will perform at grade level on TerraNova Common Core assessments
Value Added / Growth		For operational years 2 through 5, grade-level cohorts of the same students (i.e. students who are in the school for two years in a row) will reduce by one-fourth the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA & Math exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam
		For school years in which the number of students scoring above proficiency in a grade level cohort exceed 75% on the previous year's ELA & Math exam, the school is expected to demonstrate growth (above 75 percent) in the current year
		For students who remained in school for the entire year, they will show the indicated growth on F&P or TerraNova CC between September and June of each school year
School Based / IB		F&P assessment between September and June of each school year: Grades K-1: 3 levels, Grades 2-3: 2 levels, Grades 4-6: 1 level. TerraNova CC: grades 3-7 three to five percent on CC standards
		At least 90% of students in grades 3-6 will perform at or above Level 3 on a school designed IB based rubric that measures autonomy and self-direction in the fulfillment of their Individual Work Plans
		At least 90% of students in grades 3-6 will perform at or above Level 3 in a school designed IB based rubric measuring critical thinking and problem solving in their end-of unit products and artifacts
	All students will know how to access information and use technology to learn & communicate as evidenced by the successful completion, in grade 5/6, of an IB Exhibition project that demonstrates a depth of knowledge and the use of a wide range of skills at level 3 according to a IB based school-designed rubric	

Foreign language achievement goals at SICS will be used to evaluate our students' attainment of *minimum* foreign language achievement according to our expected opening enrollment grades.

American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines⁶⁷ were used to set achievement goals. Goals are novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished, which are developmentally appropriate. Students will have foreign language support to achieve these goals through ESL, ESOL, & FLE classes in addition to reinforcement in the all English content classes. The following chart is a sample of minimum delineated grade goals:

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

⁶⁷ <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>

End of Grade 3	2 consecutive years	Letter formation	75% write all letters of alphabet
		SOPA	90% Novice-high level oral skills: intermediate-low. Listening
		Letter-vowel blending	90% decode letter-vowel combinations in print
		Reading	90% Novice-mid level
		Letter formation	90% write all letters of alphabet

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

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

SICS is providing an extended year academic program that includes Summer Academy (July), Summer Sofari(end of August), and vacation Intersessions. Instructional days follow the NYC DOE student holiday calendar. SICS students will receive the benefit of 60 additional minutes of instructional time in comparison to students attending general public schools 4 days per week. The SICS school schedule maximizes student learning time while supporting student and teacher needs. Over the course of a year, SICS’ students will have had additional 10 instructional school days *exclusive* of Intersession days. SICS’ calendar design allows for **mitigating the adverse effects of knowledge and skill loss over extended breaks often referred to as the “slide” effect.**

<u><i>Student-Teacher Work Day/Week Assumptions:</i></u>	
• Student school day 7:30am-4:15 pm	• Students arrive to eat breakfast at 7:30am
• Voluntary after school program 4:15 – 6:00pm.	• Class and morning routine begins 8:00am
• Early release Fridays will be at 3:05 pm to accommodate teacher PD	
• Students will eat breakfast, lunch and healthy snacks at school.	
*Students in grades K-6 will experience a trans-disciplinary day of learning that may blur the lines of traditional class periods and timelines.	
• Students will have 90-120 mins. of learning through Literacy & 60-120 mins. of Math daily	
• Students will have Science and/or Social Studies lessons daily as part of the IB themed inquiry led learning for an average of 90 minutes per day	
• Students will have Visual/performance Arts twice weekly for a minimum of 90 mins p.w.	
• Students will have P.E. minimally four times per week with a specialist teacher (to include Health and nutrition studies) for a minimum of 225 mins. per week	
• Students will have a recess and/or structured play period daily for 30 mins.	
<u><i>Teacher Work Day/Week Assumptions:</i></u>	
• Teacher school day will be 7:55am - 4:50pm daily	
• Teacher responsibilities after 4:15pm dismissal may include tutoring, professional development, family meetings, grade-level planning, data analysis or other meetings	
• Teachers have 3 co-planning preps in additional to a daily preparation period	
• Teachers will have an uninterrupted 50 min. lunch period daily	
• Teachers will have a staff meeting, PD , or be involved in a workshop every Friday, 3:15 - 4:50pm	

Each day, students will have choose-act-reflect (CAR) time where a variety of student on student and teacher on student mentoring and character building will be fostered; this is to promote natural inquiry as well as life skills such as socializing, creativity, leadership, collaboration, and communicating with others. Teachers may use this time to mentor students who need extra help with core academic subjects with **supplementary tutorial mini lessons.**

Intersessions: In February, April and July, SICS will hold Intersessions to run 3-7 days. During these times, voluntary programming will be offered. Programming may incorporate academic remediation, enrichment, community service opportunities, or academic related fieldtrips. Teachers will staff one Intersession per year in addition to add-on teachers and volunteers. Intersession classes will be small intimate groups, creative, and fun, allowing for higher levels

of student engagement and understanding. Students who are academically at-risk will be encouraged to attend but all students will be able to participate in the Intersessions as well as *Summer Academy* which represents SICS' summer school program. Summer Academy, starting the first week of July, will give priority to students who are both at-risk and have not met the Level 3 standard set for NYS yearly exams. Instructors who are teaching at the Summer Academy will be intervention specialists. Summer Academy will be three hours long, and focus on strengthening student skills based on their needs.

Planning and Professional Development: Teachers will have minimally three co-planning prep periods per week and 90minutes on Fridays for collaborative staff meetings, PD, workshops, and common planning following early release. Four full day PDs are built into the calendar, as are 3 data analysis days. Teachers will undergo extensive **IB** and UDL training and PD and be supported in everyway possible to create success among the student body. Staff will be coached through a nurturing and empowering method that mirrors the expected student environment (PD see III.E).

Instructional Grouping: An array of instructional grouping scenarios will be used at SICS and will be based on student need and instructional purpose. For example, students may be grouped for intervention services homogenously, grouped heterogeneously for peer led learning and mentoring, or grouped for project work based on student driven inquires. Additionally, students will participate in regular small group and 1:1 instruction. This may include push-in and pull out groups for intervention **or** enrichment. If deemed needed, the **half class model** will be used as a regular part of intervention & instruction where half the students from two separate classes go to their specialty class while the other half remain with their classroom teacher(s). This effectively turns a class of 25 into 12 with 6 students for each of the two classroom teachers, allowing for more individualized student attention.

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

C. Curriculum and Instruction

Ensuring Alignment with NYS Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS): SICS' Program Of Inquiry and instructional model will be aligned to the NYS CCLS as well as the NYC scope and sequence. The **IB** continuum of programs are so rigorous and well developed that they already have within them a high level of expectations and standards in alignment with CCLS. Recently, the International Baccalaureate Organization commissioned multiple studies to educators who are well versed in both the **IB** continuum and the CCLS. One study examined the structure of the two and found that the curriculum frameworks of the **IB** support the implementation of the CCLS. The following chart is a small sample of highly visible alignments of the taught & assessed curriculums of IB within CCLS⁶⁸.

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

⁶⁸ <http://www.ibo.org>: connection IB to the Core

The SICS **Program of Inquiry (POI)** will be unique to our school but aligned with the NYC scope and sequence to ease the transition for NYC students who enroll or are discharged. Working with the highly experienced HYPOTHEkids founder, Erika Gillette, the SICS Executive Director will create the initial vertically and horizontally aligned Program of Inquiry. Using **ManageBac**, a program designed to help IB schools organize and analyze data, units of inquiry will be built. The IBO's Online Curriculum Center (OCC) will be used to aid in this process as it has units submitted from authorized IB schools and a plethora of related documents.

Through continuous and collaborative feedback, coaching, and PD, staff will understand how the standards are aligned within the Common Core, with rigorous content, and application of knowledge through higher-order skills as presented through the IB continuum. Teachers will receive training directly from IB instructional leaders adept at Common Core. The Program of Inquiry alignment will allow for easy entry from or departure to another school by our students. All refinements will be guided by the CCLS and will be reviewed by the ED and Board's Education Committee.

IB Curriculum Model –The SICS **Program of Inquiry (POI)** will consist of units of inquiry based on the perspectives of the 6 IB themes and driven by a central idea in each unit. Each unit, taught through science and social studies, includes teacher questions to be answered, called lines of inquiry, and leaves time for students driven questions to be researched. As trans-disciplinary learning takes place students will use the central idea to explore concepts in every content area from that same starting point but from different perspectives. For example, a class exploring marine life in their foreign language immersion inquiry class will:

- do extensive research in and reading of *non fiction* texts in both languages,
- read *fictional* stories with marine animal characters while exploring the craft of personification
- compare and contrast the settings across genres in English literacy
- attend several expeditions with both their foreign and English language teachers (i.e. beach, conservation center, aquarium, Central Park pond, fish market).
- further extend their learning by writing a scientific report on marine life or ecosystems and
- explore charting, graphing, calculating, or defining ratios of marine life in math and
- experience new related activities in PE such as trying to run as fast as fish swim.
- in art, students may then create a marine habitat tri-orama, and use marine sounds to create a digital music piece or
- learn how dams are used to generate electricity in STEAM class.

Student led *lines of inquiries* are anticipated along the lines of exploring what fish in other areas or countries look like and asking: Where are the worlds largest dams?; What happens to marine life when dams are created?; or How does salt water become fresh water? **The following chart is an example of how single subjects become trans-disciplinary:**

ORGANIZATION OF SUBJECT TIME DURING UNITS		
	Trans-disciplinary theme: How we organize ourselves	
	Unit title: The marketplace	
	Length of unit: 4 weeks	
	Stand-alone teaching time	Unit of Inquiry teaching time
Language		
Mathematics		
Science		
Social Studies		
Arts		
PSPE		

Proposed Curriculum: *In the classroom*

Teaching about and through the subject areas is done when it enhances the trans-disciplinary model, but not when the integration results in teaching and learning that is contrived and superficial⁶⁹.

Science and Social Studies – Science and Social Studies are the subjects through which all inquiry springs from and SICS' Program Of Inquiry is created. In combination with the IB themes, students explore the world, conduct

experiments, draw inspiration, and involve themselves in the community. At SICS, this means science and social studies

⁶⁹ Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education 2009: 57

are also a critical catalyst to **accelerating reading comprehension through non-fiction text**. Students are taught to draw upon numerous resources for first hand knowledge acquisition such as non-fiction texts, interviews, and experiences rather than textbooks. It is from science and social studies that discovery and hands-on applied learning is launched and driven by teacher and student lines of inquiry. At SICS the 6 IB themes will be merged into units of study that incorporates the NYC Science and Social Studies scope and sequences. An example would be:

Sample Second Grade IB/NYC Unit of Study Alignment						
IB Theme	How the World Works	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	Who We Are	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
NYC Unit	Sci. Unit 1 Earth Materials	S.S. Unit 1 Our Community's Geography	S.S. Unit 3 Urban Suburban and Rural Communities	S.S Unit 2 NY Over Time	S.S Unit 4 Rights, Rules and Responsibilities	Sci. Unit 3 Planet Diversity
Duration	5 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks

Students will **constructively form connections to build learning** upon content in their core Math and Science classes. They will collaborate with partners and small groups going through the extended process of inquiry in response to a complex question, problem, or challenge they, or their teacher, have created. For example, in Kindergarten teachers may ask; *How Do Neighborhoods Meet Our Needs?* As a result, in addition to reading, writing, visiting and researching about the neighborhood, students will draw upon their mathematical understandings to create a scaled model of an item that demonstrates “meets our needs” such as a replica of a local park. In the upper grades, a particular inquiry may involve repairing a broken sidewalk in their community. Using math and science skills students would learn about the chemical composition of cement and utilize understanding in mathematics to then measure out, mix, pour, and level their new sidewalk. Students may then design or replicate their own machine that would help solve the problem. In approaching learning from this perspective, SICS is emphasizing the engineering and technology components of **STEAM** education that are often overlooked according to the Next Generation Science Standards.⁷⁰

STEAM Library Lab: SICS will offer a full STEAM library lab class where inquiry flourishes through applied learning. This time is devoted to furthering inquiry through literary and technological means. Students, with access to a wealth of primary resources, will be able to research a host of topics *and* experiment with their understandings including constructing & building. SICS’ STEAM Library Lab changes the mold of a quiet place to read into an interactive inquiry & research space. Library is exciting as students become independent researchers and begin to recognize their ability to choose their own inquiries. Learning activities tied to the classroom curriculum help students learn about research tools and become adept at investigating their own interests. Soon the connection between inquiry, their own interests, and the library labs’ resources is evident. It is here that students research, draft and build their **STEAM** projects. STEAM teachers will be aided in applied learning development by **HYPOTHEkids** and the use of **Engineering Is Elemental (EiE)**, a STEM curriculum designed by the Museum of Science, Boston.

EiE is a research based, field-tested STEM curriculum that aligns with the scope of topics to be covered in elementary school. It was developed using the principals of Understanding by Design, which promotes authentic learning. The IBO uses a modified form of the UbD™ template for the Primary Years Program in addition to New York and Texas writing their curriculum guide to Social Studies using UbD™ ideas and terms.⁷¹ EiE covers an array of engineering sectors with its units, such as environmental, mechanical, acoustical, materials, and chemical, through which each student is exposed to the career possibilities within that field. EiE has also created lessons that appeal to girls and an urban school environment. An added bonus to EiE is that the learning creates depth of knowledge with

⁷⁰ *Standards for Engineering, Technology, and the Application of Science.*

http://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/ngss/files/Standards%20for%20Engineering%20Technology%20and%20the%20Applications%20of%20Science%20May%20Draft%20FINAL_0.pdf

⁷¹ <http://www.authenticeducation.org/ubd/ubd.lasso> Authentic Education is a New Jersey Registered Professional Development Service Provider with over 20 years of experience in school reform at the national level.

inexpensive materials and free teacher resources including⁷²:

- How-to Videos – practical prep tips for each EiE lesson
- Classroom Videos – watch experienced teachers facilitate each lesson in a real classroom!
- Extension Lessons – created by teachers to link EiE with other classroom subjects
 - Graphics – posters and presentations

This will allow school funds to be conserved. Most importantly, “Engineering is Elementary provides curricula that teachers can use to work toward the goals set by the Next Generation Science Standards.”⁷³

English Language Arts – Though engaged in trans-disciplinary learning in the PYP, SICS’ students are scheduled for the inclusion of 90-120 minutes of literacy instruction. The CCLS-aligned POI will emphasize explicit instruction that addresses conventions of grammar, usage, mechanics of academic language, and writing processes through the use of engaging text and interactive technology. This allows teachers to gather formative SRG data from virtual assessments that correspond to concepts covered in the text and allow for individualized instruction. SICS will supplement the curriculum and focus on increasing text complexity, student exposure to expository and informational texts, and expanding students’ academic vocabulary—key components of the CCLS for literacy. Using SRG to assess students’ abilities and guide instruction, teachers administer ongoing reading diagnostic assessments that identify each student’s independent reading level and comprehension skills, as well as weekly writing diagnostics that assess student proficiency in narrative, expository, and informational compositions. Communal writing processes and collaborative discussions that push students to analyze and draw inferences from texts ensure that students work toward mastery of the college readiness speaking and listening skills of the CCLS while building awareness of social justice and self-advocacy.

Direct reading and writing skill instruction will be delivered through the incorporation of **Core Knowledge Language Arts program (CKLA)**, which was developed to help student exceed Common Core Learning Standards. CKLA was chosen as a companion to the IB framework because it uses the element of play through centers for learning and creates a cross content web of knowledge. This interconnected, exploratory methodology follows the SICS philosophy and is backed by sound research.⁷⁴ In addition, CKLA focuses on critical foundational skills which promotes the SICS goals. The Skills strand teaches reading and writing in tandem so that, for example, blended sounds learned in reading are immediately applied in practice to their spelling in writing. For grades K-3 there are two components to foundational skills. One is skills and the other listening and learning in which oral language, vocabulary, and background knowledge sufficient to understand what is decoded.⁷⁵ CKLA will blend well with the trans-disciplinary model that promotes a richness of vocabulary as it also includes important historical and scientific events, ideas, and people in its material. Beginning in 4th grade, CKLA will reinforce the IB methodology of reflection and critical thinking about ones own work. CKLA allows students to use these same steps as they move flexibly back and forth between components of the writing process that mimics what mature and experienced writers do.

Mathematics: Part of SICS’ vision is to instill a lifelong passion for mathematics in our students. SICS will achieve this with a rigorous core mathematics program that fosters the college readiness skills of forming conjectures and drawing real-world connections to content. SICS will emphasize problem solving as it relates to the world around us and how using math is valuable within everyday life to have students improve their ability to communicate math thinking both verbally, as well as in writing. SICS will utilize *Primary Mathematics Common Core* developed by Singapore Math to supplement student inquiry work, a key resource in the development of the CCLS⁷⁶. This type of resource is essential in achieving the SICS goals and mission. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) exam, a test of creative problem-solving skills shows that the U.S. still ranks far behind other industrialized countries in math performance. Of the 34 countries that participated in PISA testing in 2012, the U.S. had 1,273 students in 162 schools

⁷² <http://www.eie.org/eie-curriculum/eie-curriculum-components>

⁷³ <http://discovermagazine.com/2013/dec/15-e-is-for-engineering#.UwZzZvldXh4> DECEMBER 2013 ISSUE Discovery Magazine: Teaching Kids to Think Like Engineers, By Breanna Draxler, Tuesday, November 05, 2013

⁷⁴ <http://www.coreknowledge.org/research>

⁷⁵ <http://www.coreknowledge.org/ckla-k3>

⁷⁶ <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/frequently-asked-questions/>

participate in the exam. Just over one-quarter (26%) of 15-year-olds in the United States do not reach the PISA baseline Level 2 of mathematics proficiency, at which level students begin to demonstrate the skills that will enable them to participate effectively and productively in life.⁷⁷ More than one in six students (18.2%) in the US did not reach the baseline level of proficiency in problem solving. At best, they are only able to solve very simple problems that do not require thinking ahead and that are provided in familiar settings (Level 1 tasks).⁷⁸ In CSD 5, 18.2% is increased five fold as our community children are not reaching proficiency on State exams at an alarming rate.

Singapore Math has a consistent and strong emphasis on problem solving and model drawing, which is a perfect fit to the SICS mission and philosophy. Students focus on in-depth understanding of the essential math in the NTCM Curriculum Focal Points (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics), the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, and the CCLS. Teachers will adapt the curriculum if needed to meet the IB structured learning concepts translating them to learning goals measured through SRG, which builds investment in the mastery of mathematical concepts. In doing so, SICS enables **STEAM** projects to flourish.

Foreign Language: Learning a second language not only has cognitive and academic benefits, it also supports a greater sense of openness to -- and appreciation for -- other cultures and improves opportunities for cross-cultural friendships and employment (Tochon, 2009). The benefits of a multi-lingual education with regards to thinking skills, cultural diversity, and global understanding have been clearly delineated and established by research (Singleton, 1998; Harley, 1986, Long, 1990; Hakuta, 1998). Beginning in Kindergarten SICS' students will experience the French language in a 50/50 **content** immersion model in which teachers work together as a teaching team. They will jointly plan the weekly instruction and share and implement teaching concepts based on the IB PYP methodology. The French language instruction and the English language instruction will rotate a.m./p.m. SICS' will utilize the *Gomez Content 50/50*⁷⁹ program which is a unique model that divides language of instruction by content area as well as by time and is especially well suited for areas with high numbers of ELLs. The underlying premise for this program model is that subject-area instruction in only one language is needed for consistency of vocabulary and conceptual development of that subject in the same language. Using one language for each subject area allows teachers to develop conceptual and linguistic connections. The Gomez model also incorporates 'language of the day', applied learning time and reflective vocabulary review that strengthens student literacy capabilities. This will allow SICS to build literacy skills evenly in both languages, particularly when coupled with the trans-disciplinary approach in which knowledge acquisition takes the form of a web. What is learned in the foreign language is reinforced in English and vice versa.

At SICS, students will spend half of their day learning in French and half of the day learning in English. In all grades students will learn social studies and science while immersed in their second language. Because social studies and science will fuel their inquiry-led learning, they can be communicated more readily through hands-on activities, which help students in developing language proficiency and conceptual understanding. Hands-on activities have been shown to promote science learning at all levels (Bredderman, 1983). Importantly, language-immersion classes will be supported with interns from the Amity Institute⁸⁰ who are native speakers of the immersion language and who can share knowledge of cultural traditions that support students' understanding of global perspectives. Full-time, native-speaking teachers in immersion classrooms play an important role in the success of the international school model, particularly in the younger grades.

D. Assessment System

Supervised by the **Director of Teaching and Learning (DOTL)** and managed by the **Data Analysis Team**, SICS will utilize the **ManageBac** data management system to store, manage, and examine trends in performance in aggregate and disaggregated data groups. This system is designed to manage both IB specific requirements and standard school items including attendance, standards and testing data. The DOTL will use assessments to design, review, and

⁷⁷ <http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/PISA-2012-results-US.pdf>

⁷⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/PISA-2012-PS-results-eng-USA.pdf> PISA offers insights for education policy and practice, and helps monitor trends in students' acquisition of knowledge and skills across countries and in different demographic subgroups within each country.

⁷⁹ http://www.utb.edu/vpaa/coe/Documents/CI%20Yvonne%20Freeman%20Documents/YFreeman20Dual_2005.pdf

⁸⁰ Amity Institute's Educational Internship Program provides future educators from other countries the opportunity to gain teaching skills under the direct supervision of a certified teacher in an American classroom. www.amity.org

revise curriculum, evaluate teachers and instructional methods, track various cohorts, and make decisions about PD and assess its efficacy (see *III.D.* and *III.E.*). Students, teachers, Administrators, parents, and the **Board** will all have the needed access to assessment data that will be used to inform decisions about student promotion, strategic planning & budgeting, and determine school progress towards student achievement goals.

As with all IB schools, SICS will develop a comprehensive assessment policy that begins with the collection of baseline data from diagnostic testing, naturalistic observation, home visits, IEP's, and any prior school documentation on each child compiled during Summer Safari (the time set aside on the calendar in August). From there, **teachers** devise initial individual learning plans. SICS' teachers will use assessment data in a variety of ways to revise pacing, differentiate lessons, remediate skills or content, group students, select students for interventions, assess professional growth and progress, teach students to self-monitor and communicate with students, parents, and families. Assessment is continuous and ongoing in the classroom, quarterly with diagnostic tools, as prescribed in learning plans through RTI and in IEP's, and yearly with state exams.

Assessment Tools:

- *Fountas & Pinnell* – to determine literacy competency in grades K-2, the F & P will be utilized as the ELA quarterly assessment. This provides teachers with diagnostic information that informs their grouping of students in guided instruction.
- *TerraNova Common Core* – to determine benchmark competency in meeting state standards in grades 3-6 bi-annually for ELA and Math
- *NYSITELL & NYSESLAT* - to determine eligibility as ELL and English Language Learner proficiency in the English language
- *SOPA* – to determine student competency in second language acquisition in alignment with American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards
- *Reading A-Z Headsprout* - when used as an intervention tool during RTI
- *Singapore Math* – to determine student performance on critical thinking and applied problem solving, the anchor assessment system will be used for unit work
- Portfolios - to promote self-awareness, self-advocacy, and ownership of learning, students will create a standards referenced, goal driven, true picture of their progress with the collection of artifacts.
- Holistic IB Rubrics – to accompany the SRG system, students will use holistic rubrics to guide their growth in the IB Attitudes, Skills and Attributes such as, communication skills, cooperative behaviors, and responsibility, tolerance, and risk-taking. These rubrics will measure progress in habits of mind.⁸¹

Standards Referenced Grading (SRG): SICS will use mastery of standards to drive all elements of instruction including planning, classroom instruction, assessment, and data analysis. SRG, an assessment system currently being implemented at several charter schools, will ensure that SICS will build a rich **culture of data**. SICS' teachers will continuously utilize high-quality, **standards-aligned formative assessments**, to gain accurate student profiles. **Students**, meanwhile, build investment and self-advocacy by monitoring their own performance and growth within each standard and identify opportunities for improvement as they keep a portfolio of their growth and work with teachers' guidance to create Individual Learning Plans. The SRG system aligns with SICS' mission of growth and self-advocacy in that students' report card grades reflect their most recent scores of mastery within each learning goal instead of the average of all scores, a method traditionally used in most schools. SRG also allows improved communication with parents in terms they can understand.

To give a true picture of student progress toward meeting CCLS, categories such as attendance and homework submission are graded separately. These types of categories are covered through the holistic design found in the IB Attitudes, Skills, and Learner Profile Attribute goals and worked on through holistic rubrics, teacher student conferencing and portfolio work. Required portfolio items will include: an artifact from each unit of inquiry by the student along with reflections about the choice, one writing and one math sample at the discretion of the teacher with

⁸¹ <http://www.habitsofmind.org/node/713>

reflection along with one sample from foreign language art, and P.E. All students will be assessed in STEAM using a SICS developed benchmark rubric aligned with the NYS Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). STEAM Assessment focuses on the learning process and final demonstration of learning by each student. These *Authentic assessments* in applied inquiry will play a major role in student assessment. Teachers will assess the many ways students make use of their experiences through authentic assessment, which is vital for SWD and ELL students. Rubrics, exemplars, anecdotal records, checklists, continuums, and portfolios will be used to record students' responses and performances as a means of **authentic summative assessment** from end of unit culminating tasks.

Using SRG, the Common Core Learning Standards are broken down into individual **learning goals**, and mastery of the learning goal itself is graded as a Level 3. Mastery of a higher-level learning goal results in a grade of Level 4, and mastery of a lower-level learning goal results in a Level 2. Students who can reach Level 2 only with teacher help are graded as Level 1 and a student who cannot reach Level 2 even when a teacher helps her is given a Level 0. Therefore, a first grade student who has a CCLS aligned goal to Identify the main topic and retell 3 key details of a text and has reached that goal independently would receive a level 3 and levels 4 or 2 according to above. Students will have multiple goals beginning with baseline ELA and Math data and spreading during the school year to all content areas using the CCLS.

SICS teachers will continuously examine and improve their practices to actively involve students in **inquiry-led instruction** and differentiation of instruction to meet individual student needs. A variety of authentic assessment strategies such as student presentations, portfolios, written tests, projects, student-led conferences, interviews and demonstrations, are employed to find out not only if students learned what they were expected to learn from the written curriculum but also what actual learning took place. Teachers *and* students use the results of assessments to set goals for further learning and to think of ways to improve their teaching and learning strategies. Assessment has a positive connotation as it focuses on what a learner can do currently instead of what they can't do.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Achievement & Support: SICS believes a school should hold high expectations for students with multiple supports and opportunities for them to meet these expectations. These supports will come in the form of rigorous instruction accompanied throughout by focused monitoring and clear and timely feedback. Students who are at risk academically will receive constant attention and intervention, including frequent communication with their families (see *II.G.* and *III.I.*). In alignment with SICS' mission, SRG empowers students to take ownership over their own academic performance and track their growth in real-time. For students to build investment in their education during the school year, they must understand education is equivalent to empowerment.

Promotion – Using a Standards Referenced Grading system SICS will have a clear picture of a students achievement level toward making progress in meeting the Common Core Learning Standards. Taking into consideration the range of ages and of developmental levels within a grade, students in K-2 will need to achieve Benchmarks At Grade Level on *Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System* and a level 2 on New York State ELA and Math exams in grades 3-6 to be promoted. Students and teachers may also use student portfolios to demonstrate proficiency in meeting standards, which is anticipated for SWD, ELL's, students not meeting level 2, and parents who opt out of testing. The SRG levels, again, are developed through testing as well the intense portfolio work that has occurred. Students will have ample opportunity, and in flexible ways, to demonstrate their skills and knowledge toward meeting standards.

Meeting the benchmark testing criteria above means that students by years end will know and be able to do what is expected at their grade level in ELA and math in accordance with NYS Common Core Learning Standards. Students with Disabilities will be promoted in accordance with the criteria set in their IEP.

In addition to ELA and Math, SICS students will need to meet Next Generation Science Standards in their science inquiry and STEAM work. The NGSS will be part of the SRG system and portfolio work that students prepare. Students will need to meet benchmark standards aligned to their units of study. SICS will not consider foreign language acquisition in promotional criteria. Instead, intervention services will be provided to students during the year as well as in Summer Academy. To ensure students and parents understand where they stand in relation to the

standards families will receive three written reports on the students' progress in time for individual parent-teacher conferences held three times a year. SICS' highly nurturing environment, individualized instruction, system of continuous ongoing assessment and timely intervention, and extra time and supports are all designed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire grade level skills. For this reason, SICS expects that all of its students will achieve academic success each year.

Retention: SICS clearly understands the **developmental needs** of children within the range of ages at each grade level. When, in the extreme case, there is a student who is deemed to be incapable of dealing with the demands of the next grade, there will be an initial conversation with family in January, and a second conversation in March about the possibility of retention. All students who are candidates for retention will have a Learning Plan that will include all possible resources including that of a formal evaluation and modified promotional criteria. In all cases of students with IEPs, the promotional standards contained therein will be followed. If a SICS student must be retained, then the classroom teacher, DOTL, and family will meet to discuss how the upcoming year will offer the student different and sufficient supports to ensure the student's success. All ELL's who have been enrolled in an English Language School System less than 2 years will not be held to promotional standards⁸²

F. School Culture and Climate

SICS will create a stable, responsive, nurturing environment that supports students, and therefore their parents, as they prepare for life beyond school and give them a secure platform from which to take risks in their learning and development. The IB framework is the springboard for this secure platform as its holistic approach is pervasive throughout the curriculum, behaviors, and interactions of the school community. Inquiry on an international level where students are purposefully engaging in their learning in preparation for a global 21st century will be clearly evident. University, career, and real-life preparation will manifest in all that we do.

Creating a welcoming, respectful, and trusting school enables all stakeholders to work together to best serve students. The Family School Association will be integral for parent incorporation. SICS will have an active, engaging environment that promotes self-worth, appreciation and respect of all students. They will feel wanted and therefore want to thrive. SICS will establish a mentoring program, such as with ManUp, that creates an additional source of modeled behaviors and appreciation for positive human interaction (particularly with boys), incorporate a daily Choose-Act-Reflect time, maintain a weekly school rally at Assembly, and more. Students will have a true internationally-minded IB, holistic experience from day one that is inclusive and supportive of its families ensuring their needs are met through services and training. The SICS Community Outreach Organizer will take the lead in working with families, particularly those in crisis. Additionally, teachers will be supported in their efforts to support their students to every extent possible. (see *Attachment 4*).

In addition to the social emotional climate, SICS will foster the academic and intellectual climate of the school around inquiry. SICS students, staff, and visitors will have all their senses engaged when in the building and a clear presence of inquiry, critical thinking and collaboration will be evident. Engineering projects, artwork, functional labs, inquiry spaces, and Socratic seminars will be some of the many hallmarks of the climate and culture of the school.

Discipline policy: SICS' discipline policy is based on the philosophy that prevention is better than cure, that the most effective way to manage inappropriate behavior is through its logical consequences rather than the imposition of arbitrary punishments, that conflicts are a natural part of all human relationships, that children learn and need to be taught appropriate behavior, and promoting self-awareness and self-reflection. SICS will utilize the concepts found in the IB where: **Attitudes** are modeled, taught and expected; and **Learner Profile Attributes (LPA)** will be infused throughout the units of study as part of the curriculum.⁸³ Additionally, SICS will ensure that the physical environment, as a factor related to learning positive behaviors and reducing the level of aggressive behaviors, will be examined⁸⁴. When teacher interventions are insufficient to produce reasonable change, the teacher will involve families in designing

⁸² <http://docs.nycenet.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-24/A-501.pdf>

⁸³ Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education

⁸⁴ Kellam, S., Rebok, G., Ialongo, N. and Mayer I., (1994). The course and malleability of aggressive behavior from early first grade into middle school: Results of a developmental epidemiologically-based prevention trial. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 35(2). 259-281

home supports for behavioral change, in conferences that may include a social worker or guidance counselor. Students may be evaluated for a Functional Behavior Plan by the school intervention team. If there are incidents of a nature that require a higher level of response, SICS will follow the NYCDOE hierarchy for levels of infractions and responses and abide by all applicable rules, regulations and laws which govern the school and such incidences. *Attachment 4* details the process of response for both general and special education students.

Due process will be followed for all disciplinary actions. Every mediation, intervention, and support available will be utilized to mitigate, alleviate, and redirect negative behaviors as part of a student behavioral plan. **SWD** will receive appropriate consideration and support to the extent possible. All school staff will meet to collaborate on any student whose behavior is deemed in-crisis. SICS will follow all local, State and Federal laws that may apply to special incidences. SICS will track student behavior and incidences as a proactive measure to ensure the climate of the environment is maintained. Teachers will maintain anecdotal while administrators maintain incident reports. These reports will be analyzed for patterns and trends in order to create needed adjustments in policies and procedures.

G. *Special Student Populations and Related Services*

SICS is committed to recruiting, enrolling and retaining SWD, ELLs, and FRLP students comparable to populations in CSD 5. Throughout the holistic tenets of the IB continuum, special student populations are supported and nurtured into strong learners. The IB supports the premise that schools should be organized in such a way that student diversity of all kinds can be included as a resource, seeing individual differences not as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for enriched learning. Diversity is a positive resource with regard to what it means to be internationally minded and inter-culturally aware.⁸⁵ Within the IB it is expected that special populations are included in all aspects of a school and SICS intends to follow that understanding. This will be done through the use of both natural and intentional differentiation in curriculum and assessment.

In conjunction with the imbedded supports within the IB Primary Years Program such as cultural responsiveness, and the addition of **three tutorial sessions per week** and an extended instructional calendar, SICS will support its special student populations in the following ways:

1) Teacher Supports - SICS has developed an extensive plan for supporting its teachers to master curriculum and instructional delivery methodologies. Teachers, similar to students, will have individual goal plans to continuously improve professionally so as to be able to deliver highly effective lessons and support to our students. This will be possible through the Marzano support based teacher evaluation system (see III D. ***Evaluation of Teaching***), targeted professional development, instructional coaches, specialists, and an IB coordinator. **PD:** Supplementary to school-wide PD at SICS, teachers will receive ongoing consultation and instructional support from the SpEd Instructor, IB Coordinator, DOTL, Board members, or other experts on relevant SpEd topics and interventions. The purpose of this is to inform teachers of current laws SpEd requirements, and increase the range of implemented supports in the classroom to maximize access to the general education curriculum. School staff will attend training and technical assistance seminars including those sponsored by the State Education Department.

2) Differentiation- At SICS, as an **IB** school, differentiation will be a long-term whole-school strategy that enables the community to maintain the momentum to transform traditional teaching and learning habits, develop classroom relationships and expectations, and address suitable patterns of assessment that reflect the shift in thinking.⁸⁶ **The combination of inquiry led, applied teaching and learning** will provide opportunities for focused instructional support and a continuously consistent way of acquiring knowledge that is natural for ALL students, allowing them to explore and make sense of concepts in different ways. Applied instruction has been shown to be particularly beneficial to ELLs and other students who may not yet have mastered the English language in any manner.⁸⁷ However, this same type of differentiation allows students who need enrichment to thrive as well. Instruction through **applied inquiry** serves **advanced or gifted** students by allowing them to get pieces of enrichment based on how far they can

⁸⁵ Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programs

⁸⁶ Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programs

⁸⁷ Cuevas, P., Lee, O., Hart, J., & Deaktor, R. (2005). Improving science inquiry with elementary students of diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 42(3), 337-357.

independently stretch their critical thinking and project work in addition to what their SICS teacher will facilitate. Gifted students will also benefit from enrichment during tutorials and Intersessions. Students will have the benefit of focused differentiated teacher groups and collaborative peer groups as they move through their inquiry.

3) Individual Learning Plans - Every SICS student will be supported by the development of **individual learning plans** that will clearly map out for them the goals to reach in the road to successfully meeting benchmarks and standards. Teachers will develop kid friendly rubrics to accompany their goal to facilitate student understanding. Students with an IEP will also have an individual goal plan in their hand rather than an IEP in the draw. SWD will know where they are academically, where they need to be, and how to get there.

4) Staffing – SICS has committed to ensuring there is a dedicated **SpEd Coordinator, Social Worker, and ESL teacher** on staff fulltime to support students with push in and pull out services, as determined by student need or goal plan. These specialists will also support teachers in helping students’ progress through coaching and professional development. Paid with state and federal SpEd funding and the district paying for the services it provides, Special Education staff will also be responsible for managing IEP record-keeping, ensuring compliance with all IEP requirements and regulations, managing the review and referral process, ensuring provision of services as mandated on student IEPs, progress monitoring, and submitting annually all required reports in compliance with 34 CFR §300.750. The DOTL and ED will help to oversee this process. Additionally, each classroom will have a teaching team of which one will be an **Intervention Specialist**. Their primary responsibility on the team is to ensure students’ needs are met, appropriate differentiation is taking place, targeted small group work is regularly implemented, data-driven decisions are made within lessons. Any student in need may also be assigned a paraprofessional. SICS will hire appropriately certified special education staff, and may contract with certified or licensed individuals and/or organizations to provide services. SICS will employ one full-time SPED Instructor in its first two years (who will also perform the duties of SpEd Coordinator), and will hire a SpEd Coordinator in Year 3 if deemed needed and adjust its staffing plans accordingly to enrollment needs.

5) Identification & Monitoring – SICS will begin in the Admissions phase to identify students who are at-risk or are in need of special support services. SICS will use a Home Language survey and ask for voluntary disclosures and obtain student school records immediately. Also, Summer Safari, the 10 days of class before the regular September start date, will be used to conduct baseline assessments on students to identify those in need of support services whether that be for readiness, enrichment, therapeutic, or IEP’s. Staff will use diagnostic tools, observation, home visits and the review of existing IEP, 504 or Behavior plans. Monitoring will take place at several levels by the SpEd Coordinator under the **Student Support Team and a Transitional Inclusion Plan**. This model of “Flexible Programming” aligns with the DOE’s Special Education Reform⁸⁸. Students identified as at-risk will be referred to the SpEd Coordinator who will be in charge of ensuring the coordination of services and needs are in place and functioning for each student and collaborates with all stakeholders. In addition, there will be opportunities at several other stop points to monitor students including the classroom intervention specialist, Data Analysis Team, Instructional Coaches, the Social Worker, and the family. Monitoring will also take place through academic intervention and the SICS Response To Intervention (RTI) protocols.

Response to Intervention (RTI): Students who, despite the school-wide strategies described above, are struggling to achieve learning standards in ELA or mathematics, and do not have a current IEP are eligible for Academic Intervention Services (AIS). AIS may be provided indirectly, (consulting with teachers to provide supports and interventions in the classroom), or directly (providing intensive, small group instruction in a separate location). RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction with multiple tiers of support and intervention to ensure the academic success of all SICS students, and to identify students potentially at risk of academic difficulty. SICS will institute the New York State RTI protocol based on a three-tier model, which identifies and supports all struggling students including SWD.⁸⁹

6) Curriculum - Students At-Risk of Academic Failure: Each curriculum support program chosen was done so for its ability to address the needs of at-risk students. The IB framework provides the holistic backdrop in

⁸⁸ <http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/flexible-programming-guide.pdf>.

⁸⁹ <http://www.nysrti.org>

which to flourish and the other key design elements provide the pathways (see I B.). Utilizing hands-on, real-world, applied learning experiences through the subject areas with IB, in foreign language, STEAM instruction, CKLA (a comprehensive literacy program) and Singapore math, at-risk students are given more opportunities to synthesize what they are learning. *In particular, Universal Designs for Learning (UDL)*, as discussed in *II.C.*, will be employed by teachers. UDL strategies in unit and lesson planning are research-based methodologies embedded within the IB programs. The multiple means of engagement, presentation, and assessment embedded in UDL makes it a natural and understandable instructional delivery mode for content thereby making it more accessible for students across the academic spectrum, including at-risk students. For students who are not progressing in foundational literacy skills, SICS will utilize **Reading A-Z** as part of a curriculum academic intervention.

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

8) Foreign Language Support Programs will address the needs of all students, regardless of their language proficiency levels. SICS will administer the **New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)** to identify and the NYSESLAT to track progress for children whose first language is not English. A student who scores below the designated proficiency level is eligible for ELL services. The Global Language Project will guide SICS in the assessment process and analysis of SOPA for foreign language competency. SICS anticipates high enrollment of SIFE students from west African francophone countries where French, Fulani, Wolof, and Arabic are spoken with many families already speaking a combination of these languages at home and students with other home languages. Therefore SICS will offer the following combination of services to meet the needs of its special populations:

a) The Gomez 50/50 model already has imbedded within its structure time for reflective vocabulary work in which teachers will give direct instruction through mini-lessons on vocabulary and grammar. These 15 minute lessons will be everyday at the end of students immersion inquiry block. In addition, through **Gomez and IB**, English literacy skills are reinforced by students being able to work on a theme across all the content areas. What they learn about in French class is also taught in their English class allowing vocabulary and concept reinforcement. This extends to each content area creating a strong web of knowledge and language acquisition.

b) Reading A-Z – SICS will utilize the foreign language same text/multi level books provided by Reading A-Z. This will allow students, regardless of reading level to fully participate in lessons and acquire content. Reading A-Z will allow us to support Anglophone, francophone and ELL students with content picture books, vocabulary books, language skills, and language proficiency alignment. For ELL students in the upper grades with no English, Reading A-Z will support instruction with books that target phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and high frequency words to compliment work done through **CKLA**. Reading A-Z has been proven in case studies to be an effective intervention tool.⁹⁰

c) ESL or FLE (French as a foreign language) classes, depending on need. It is important to note that ESL and FLE classes are created to teach children fluency skills in English and foreign language (French). ELLs will not need ESL teacher support in French class since French is taught by the French teacher solely in the French language. There is no need for an ESL instructor to support instruction just as there is no French language teacher present in the English classroom to support English speaking students because all children are learning a second language. **SICS teachers will use, when needed, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to give students access to the core curriculum and ensure instructional materials are matched with student needs. This applies to ESL and FLE instruction.**

ESL services will be provided as needed and in the least restrictive environment either with a push-in model or the use of Sheltered English Immersion strategies for those needing more support. SICS will provide all needed staff and appropriate curricular materials to enable students to achieve proficiency in English. Efforts will be made to give

⁹⁰ <http://www.headsprout.com/main/ViewPage/name/efficacy-research/>

every SICS' ELL student access to native language resources (e.g., native language libraries), or to provide parents with materials in their native language and ensure our curriculum and environment are culturally responsive. History and culture will be infused throughout its curriculum (see *II.C.*). NYSED publications, "The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for ESL and A Resource Guide for All Teachers", will be extensively used in the school's ESL program as well. ELLs will also benefit from attending **Intersessions** (see *II.B.*), where classroom instruction is small, supportive, structured and rigorous. ELL students will not be excluded from any day school or after school activities due to language barriers.

FLE will be offered in 2 ways. One will be through push-in differentiated grouping during immersion class time and the other during scheduled tutorial time. As with ESL, FLE instruction may be offered through pull-out sheltered instruction (SIOP) as well as through center and project work. Students will have additional study guides provided and support with Reading A-Z leveled material. Students requiring both **SPED** services for overall academic achievement or who will require both ESL/FLE services as well as special education support will have a targeted individual learning plan set in the IEP and receive services that support their individual growth needs.

Evaluation of Programs for All Special Populations: SICS' Achievement Goals specifically include the success of at-risk populations (*I.A.*). SICS will engage in a consistent process for the evaluation of its programs and services for all students, including those programs and services specifically for its special populations. SICS' SRG system allows the **Data Analysis Team, and teachers** to pinpoint student performance towards each learning goal, disaggregate the data for specific subgroups, and make adjustments and revisit goals accordingly. For SWD and ELLs, SICS will use this information to determine student progress against not only IEP goals or level of English language acquisition, but against SICS' overall accountability goals. The SpEd Coordinator will provide a report to the DOTL in 8-week cycles on the progress of SWD. Similarly, the ELL Specialist(s) will provide a report to the DOTL in the same cycle on the progress of ELLs. SICS will evaluate the progress of ELLs through data from the NYSESLAT; from teacher observations, from student performance on exams, standardized tests, and on standards-referenced learning goals; and from observations of ELL participation in school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other aspects of the school community. If sufficient success is not demonstrated in these areas, and if ELL students are not shedding their ELL status, SICS will make modifications to the ELL program as needed. In creating IEPs for ELLs, attention will be given to three primary issues affecting success: identified disability, acquisition of English skills, and cultural background of the child.

Qualifications of those Providing the Services: SICS will hire a full-time, certified ELL Specialist in year 1, and will hire an additional ELL Specialist in Year 3 if deemed needed. SICS will include training on instruction of ELLs as a standard part of the annual PD plan. The program will enhance staff appreciation for the ELLs' native language and culture, as is standard through the IB continuum; provide information on the techniques, methods, and strategies appropriate for instructional and support services for ELLs; and introduce techniques to improve communication with parents of ELLs. PD will also address the needs of ELLs by emphasizing differentiation and ongoing assessment of work. SICS will receive programming, curriculum, assessment, PD and parent training from the **Global Language Project** to strengthen how we service our students. Finally, all students will have additional support, intervention, and enrichment through partnering with community organizations and programs. This would include the guidance from programs such as ManUp, The Reading Team, The Math Clinic (a Singapore Math based enrichment program), and HYPOTHEkids.

Students With Disabilities: SICS will abide by applicable provisions of IDEA and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ensuring that IEP Record Keeping and data regarding SWD is retained and kept confidential, including having procedures for keeping files in a secure and locked location with limited access (electronic copies will be password-protected). SICS will provide all teachers who teach SWD with access to that student's IEP, and will provide teachers with sufficient time to review IEPs, but will ensure that privacy controls are strictly enforced. Compliance with Applicable Laws, Rules and Regulations will be abided by in every aspect including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). SICS will keep accurate and up-to-date information about its special education students. In accordance with 34 CFR §300.750,

SICS will submit an annual report to the NYSED detailing the number of SWD it serves, the nature of each student's disability, and each student's educational placement and setting. Regarding reports that are the responsibility of the district of residence, the school will make needed data available to the district in a timely manner. SICS will comply with 8 NYCRR §119.3, as amended, which details requirements for the "Charter School Report Card" and includes information relating to SWD. In compliance with 34 CFR §300.750, the school will submit all mandated annual reports by the required dates. Consistent with applicable law, SICS will work with Local Education Agency (LEA) school districts to ensure that all SWD who qualify under the IDEA will receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE); are appropriately evaluated; are provided with an IEP; and have access to appropriate procedures and mechanisms, along with their parents, to resolve any disagreements related to the school's or school district's provision of FAPE.

Participation in General Education Classroom: Research overwhelmingly demonstrates the benefits for all students of inclusive education.⁹¹ SICS will provide SWD students with a FAPE in the least restrictive environment appropriate for their needs. Parents will be informed of how their children are progressing on annual IEP goals and in the general curriculum. SWD will receive the same notices concerning school-sponsored programs, activities, and services as other students. SICS will provide all Testing Accommodations and assessment requirements mandated by a student's IEP and conduct necessary diagnostic testing and evaluation to secure appropriate accommodations for both classroom and standardized tests.

Process and Procedures for Specialized Instruction Consistent with IEP: In addition to core content teachers, SICS will hire sufficient special education teachers to provide the instruction required by students' IEPs and provide resource room or self-contained services as needed. In addition to the classroom teacher, special education staff will be trained to specifically align student needs with specific elements within the IB program of instruction to ensure these students are fully included by both the IB & SpEd Coordinators. All teachers of SWD will be provided access to a copy of the student's IEP and corresponding information and be informed of confidentiality guidelines governing appropriate storage and sharing of them. SICS will ensure that the special education programs and services will be provided directly to the student during school hours. SICS intends to provide the following services that may be required by a student's IEP: Resource Room, Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), or Self-Contained instruction. In the event a student's disability proves so severe as to preclude transition to an inclusive environment, SICS will work with the family and the CSE to find other ways to meet the mandates of the IEP. *SICS will have a full-time Social Worker in year 1 and a counselor beginning in year 2 for those students whose IEP mandates counseling.* SICS will outsource related services such as speech language pathology and audiologist services; psychological services; and physical and occupational therapy. If SICS is unable to provide services in accordance with the student's IEP, it will rely on the school district of the student's residence to provide services.

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

Additional Consideration Following implementation of the full RTI plan and thorough internal analysis, SICS will initiate a referral for students suspected of having a disability to the CSE Chairperson :

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

⁹¹ http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/0B3B6CCB-1B14-4228-8771-9400045B7E94/0/NCIE_Research_on_Inclusiive_Education.pdf.

forwarded to the CSE.

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

SICS will comply with its obligations under the Child Find requirements of IDEA including 34 CFR § 300.125, and will provide notification to parents of referral including notifying them prior to providing a child’s name to a CSE for potential evaluation. SICS will not convene its own CSE, make evaluations, create IEPs, reevaluate or revise existing IEPs or conduct due process hearings as these responsibilities belong solely to the CSE of the student’s district of residence. The SpEd Coordinator will also meet with the CSE for the purposes of declassification of SWD students.

PART III: ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

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

Name	Current Employment	Relevant Experience/Qualifications and Role on Founding Group	Proposed Role in School
Dr. Monica White	NYCDOE Office of Innovation	20 years experience in teaching & learning, leadership, strategic management in schools & educational programs; Charter school Trustee experience. Harlem parent & resident	Trustee
Nadhege Ptah	Sofara Founder	Teaching Artist Consultant / Drama Therapist – M.S. in Psychology, experience teaching, working and studying in the performing arts. Strong history of community activism. Charter Board experience & SICS planning and development. Harlem parent & resident	Parent & Community Outreach Organizer
Janeat Brown	NYC DOE	Educator - 10 years experience managing successful, innovative curriculum for general and SpEd students. Experienced in IB PYP teaching and learning and curriculum development. CSD 5 parent	Trustee
Millicent Redick	Self-employed	CPA – extensive experience working with non-profit entities and Board membership. Excellent skill set in developing and organizing financial systems. CSD5 resident and grandparent	Trustee
Voyka Soto	Sofara Founder	CSD5 parent. Educator: expertise in General and Special education, K-8 curriculum and instruction development. International Educ: new school, program, & accreditation devel. IB certification in Teaching & Learning , M.S. in International Curr. & Instruction	Executive Director
Kevin Wells, Esq.	Consultant	An attorney with a rare combination of entrepreneurial, legal, managerial, operational and diversity/inclusion acumen. A business and sustainability strategist. CSR expert and SME Mentor. CSD 5 resident and parent	Trustee
Thomas Bretz	Retired	Former Wall Street Executive in the areas of Operations and Financial Management. Expertise in government regulatory and compliance processes & procedures reporting. Adept at budgetary planning. Co-founder of educational non-profit. CSD 5 parent	Trustee
Holley Drakeford	Giscombe Realty Group	Expertise in commercial real estate development, finance, and facilities management. Experienced in risk management, administrative management and contract negotiations. Community Board 11 member.	Trustee
Carol Anelas	Home-land Security	Emergency Management planner – Expertise in planning, facilities, budgeting, operations and compliance. Experience working with governments and educational offices and organizations.	Director of Operations

Applicant Group Qualification

Lead Applicant Qualifications: Voyka Soto is a CSD5 parent and resident who, as an educator, has worked her entire career with high-needs populations. She has held both general and special education positions and certifications in K-12 schools where she has served on many committees including the Magnet Leadership Team and School Leadership Team. As an overseas Educator, Ms. Soto worked in the Middle East to plan, start and assist to accredit special needs programs and to plan and start new schools. With a Masters in International Curriculum & Instruction through the State Department Sponsored Foreign Affairs Teacher Training Program, Ms. Soto went on to earn certification in Teaching and Learning from the International Baccalaureate Organization. Additionally, Ms. Soto has also served on a local Charter School Board and its sub-committees.

Founding team qualifications: Co-Lead Applicant- Nadhege Ptah is a parent, resident and community organizer in Harlem. Mrs. Ptah has extensive experience working with children through the performing arts as a teaching artist consultant and drama therapist. Her artistic and psychological training has yielded opportunities in consulting throughout New York City schools where she assisted teachers in approaching innovative ways to teach children the freedom to express through dance and drama; techniques in conflict resolution; leadership training; and parent workshops in stress management. In addition, Ms. Ptah has worked on many community outreach projects in the realm of education, children's issues, and social justice. Ms. Ptah has served on the executive committee of a PTO as well as serving as Parent Representative at the Charter School Board level.

Ms. Carol Anelas, as Director of Operations, brings with her over 15 years of solid experience in, but not limited to management of operations including vetting candidates, payroll, facility needs planning, emergency planning and management, records management, procurement, budgeting, and public outreach. Ms. Anelas also has successful experience in meeting deadlines, fiscal management and meeting compliance guidelines and timelines.

In addition to the qualifications described above, the founding team has over four decades of combined experience working in schools. Ms. Brown, a CSD 5 parent, brings knowledge and experience in the IB PYP program while Dr. White works at the NYC DOE Office of Innovation and has Charter School Board experience. Ms. Redick, a CPA, has worked on NYC Community Boards 4 and 10 in addition to years of experience holding positions on several CBO Boards. She also has extensive financial management experience. Mr. Bretz is meticulous at financial and government compliance, Mr. Wells, an attorney, has a unique acumen that offers support in new business start-up as well as fundraising, while Mr. Drakeford brings his extensive knowledge of CSD 5 commercial property and their owners and his knowledge of real estate trends in CSD 5 as he sits on the Land use committee of CB 11 (See *Attachment 5(A)*). Each member of the team was carefully chosen for their specific expertise as well as their commitment to the community and the Sofara International Charter School mission as an innovative concept in seeing our children as our future.

Proposal Development: As a grassroots movement, Sofara International Charter School was initiated by a group of community parents who were dissatisfied with the choices and quality of educational programs in the District. Voyka Soto is the primary author of the proposal through the brainstorming and concept development with Nadhege Ptah and other community parents who made school visits, researched educational programs and best practices and participated in meeting several times per week and communicating multiple times daily, by phone and email. Industry professionals were sought out to advise on the process, all of whom did so without compensation providing Charter school insight, sample documents, agency referrals, and guidance on academic programs and support needs. Soto and Ptah formed a team. They met with members of the founding team frequently throughout the drafting process, and communicated with team members at least weekly via phone or email. Founding team members accompanied Soto and Ptah to public meetings, conducted outreach on behalf of the school, shared research and expertise that informed the school design and attended the National Charter School Conferences to gain knowledge and insight of best practices. Each founding member reviewed the Letter of Intent and mission statement, suggesting changes and improvements as necessary. Founding team members reviewed sections of the application relevant to their expertise and provided feedback. The full founding team met as needed before the application was submitted, and will continue to convene throughout the remainder of the application phase.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

Proposed Board of Trustees

Name	Voting (Y/N)	Position on the Board*	Relevant Experience/Skills and Role on Founding Group	Length of Initial Term
Monica White	Y	Trustee	Education	5 year renewable
Janeat Brown	Y	Trustee	Education	2 year renewable
Millicent Redick	Y	Trustee	Finance	5 year renewable
Kevin V.G. Wells	Y	Trustee	Legal	3 year renewable
Holley Drakeford	Y	Trustee	Facilities	3 year renewable
Thomas Bretz	Y	Trustee	Compliance	2 year renewable
Parent Representative	Y	Trustee	Reserved	1 year renewable per parent elections

*Trustee positions will be determined at first meeting of the full Board when formally constituted. Terms of service are staggered to allow for stabilization of the Board with renewals in accordance to by-laws. In addition, recruitment of members will be active and ongoing.

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

Per the SICS by-laws in *Attachment 5(B)*, the Board will be composed of a

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

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

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

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

determining annual priorities, formulating major policy, overseeing SICS' compliance with relevant laws and regulations, and raising funds to support SICS' growth.

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

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

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

- **The Executive Committee**, chaired by the Board Chair, will facilitate effective decision-making by the board and is responsible for: a) planning board meeting agendas; b) making decisions on behalf of the full board; and c) serving as a communication link with other board members.
- **The Finance Committee**, chaired by the Treasurer, coordinates the board's financial oversight responsibilities. The Finance Committee is responsible for developing SICS' annual budgets in conjunction with the short- and long-term plans. Additional responsibilities include oversight of the school's auditing, facilities and financial management initiatives. The Finance committee is chaired by the Treasurer with involvement of the ED and contracted accountant.
- **The Education Committee** works to ensure the school is meeting its accountability goals related to student achievement, helps ensure the academic quality and credibility of the school as an academic institution and supports the ED in the maintenance, promotion and improvement of the academic standards set forth in the charter. The primary responsibilities of the Education Committee include: a) advising the board on the core values and activities of scholarship that define the School's core activities of teaching and learning; b) recommending to the board the adoption of academic policies consistent with the School's vision, mission and strategic plan; c) adopting procedures of board-approved academic policies; d) protecting and enhancing the quality of the School's academic programs at all levels; e) advising the board on the academic aspects of the overall strategic direction of the School; and f) working in conjunction with the ED to monitor and advance the quality of all academic activities.
- **The Compliance Committee** oversees all academic, fiscal, and programmatic audits of the school. It ensures that

SICS is prepared for all audits, and that the school is in ongoing compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, as well as directives from SICS' authorizer. It supports the ED, the DOTL, and the DOO in ensuring SICS' compliance as described above. The Compliance Committee investigates any complaints made against the school and takes appropriate action.

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

Board Recruitment, Selection and Development: The Board is cognizant of the need to continually recruit new members. The Board will create a Board Development Committee to engage in prospecting, contacting, recruiting, orienting, supporting, training, and evaluating Board members. The Board Development Committee will ensure that the Board constitution reflects and strengthens its relationship with the community served by the school and has been allotted an annual budget for this purpose.

C. Management and Staffing

Description of Organizational Structure: (see *Attachment 8a* – job descriptions) SICS believes that the best way to support instructional excellence is to define clear staff responsibilities and reporting structures, empowering each individual to fulfill his or her duties. SICS has avoided split roles and job descriptions so that each staff member has a clear understanding of his or her responsibilities.

The **Executive Director (ED)** reports to the Board and is responsible for the overall realization of the vision and mission, management of the school, implementing and tracking goals set through strategic plans, growth of IB programs, and the Program of Inquiry design. The ED is the public face of the school, and is responsible for managing all relationships with the community, parents, the authorizer, and for all operations, fundraising and development. The ED manages the Director(s) of Teaching & Learning (DOTL), Director Of Operations (DOO), Community Outreach Organizer (COO) and in Years 1 and 2, the Contracted Accountant (see *III.J*). In Year 2 the ED manages the Development Associate (DA) and Business Manager (BM) in Year 3. The ED will recruit and replace all staff, subject to strong consideration of DOTL recommendations for recruiting & replacing instructional staff.

The **DOTL** reports to the ED and is the instructional leader of the school ensuring each program is fully implemented and students are being serviced. The DOTL supervises and evaluates all instructional and program staff including teachers, counselors, Coaches and IB Coordinators. The DOTL ensures that the educational program is meeting the goals of the charter by coordinating the educational programs, professional development, POI unit design and implementation, and staff accountability.

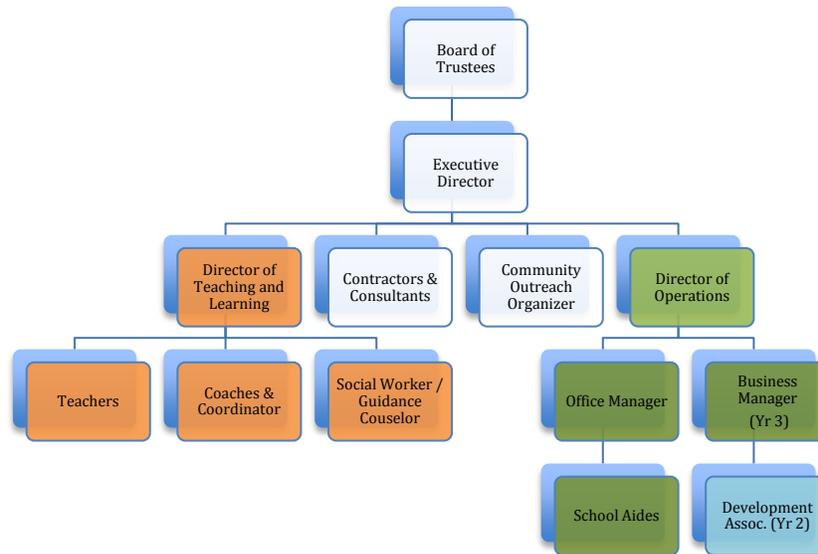
The **DOO** is responsible for ensuring the effective management of the non-instructional functions of the school. The DOO manages admissions, facilities, student records, food services, the generation of required reports, and other operational and compliance responsibilities. In Year 3, a Business Manager (BM) will be hired under the direction of the DOO to assume the responsibilities performed by the contracted business management firm in Years 1&2. The DOO will supervise and evaluate non-instructional, non-program staff, including the Office Manager (OM) who then manages the School Aides. The Development Associated in Year 2 also falls under the management of the DOO.

Instructional Coaches and IB Coordinators specifically and intentionally *do not* have a supervisory role. They will provide coaching and instructional support to teachers. The presence of a dedicated staff member who is in a non-evaluative role will allow teachers to feel more comfortable exchanging feedback about their own growth areas⁹². The Instructional Coaches and IB Coordinator will coordinate authentic learning opportunities, observe teachers, ensure curriculum and IB alignment, aid in the creation of units of study, review lesson plans, demo lessons, model & co-teach, conduct PD, and hold pre/post-observation conferences. These roles are active, hands-on classroom support

⁹² Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Excellent Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

roles immersed in classroom instruction.

Organizational chart:



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

Number FTE in Position					
Grades Served	Year 1 Grades K-2	Year 2 Grades K-3	Year 3 Grades K-4	Year 4 Grades K-5	Year 5 Grades K-6
Enrollment	150	200	250	300	350
Executive Director	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Teaching & Learning	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Ops	1	1	1	1	1
Development Assoc.	0	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	0	0	1	1	1
Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
School Aide	1	1	2	2	2
Comm. Outreach Organizer	1	1	1	1	1
IB Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Instructional Coach	1	1	1	2	2
Bilingual Teachers	6	8	10	12	14
General Teachers	6	8	10	12	14
Grades Served	Year 1 Grades K-2	Year 2 Grades K-3	Year 3 Grades K-4	Year 4 Grades K-5	Year 5 Grades K-6
Enrollment	150	200	250	300	350
Foreign Lang. Specialist (FLE)	1	1	1	2	2
ESL teacher	1	1	1	2	2
SpEd staff	1	1	2	2	2
P.E. teachers	1	1	1	2	2
Social Worker	1	1	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1	1	1
STEAM teacher	1	1	1	2	2
Guidance Counselor	0	1	1	1	1

Total Number of FTE	27	33	41	49	53
----------------------------	----	----	----	----	----

SICS' staffing structure over five years is aligned with the educational and operational model delineated in this charter application. The above staffing chart includes the necessary administrative and instructional staff contemplated in the operational and academic program for general education students, SWD, FRLP students and ELLs. It takes into consideration the needs of SICS' projected student enrollment and growth plan and the fiscal impact thereof. Staffing for these populations is based on projected enrollments supplied by guidance from New York State Enrollment Targets calculator. Each staff member is accounted for in the budget (see *Attachment 9*). SICS' staffing plan is aligned with the school's mission and contemplates the educational preparedness that most incoming students will have. This includes, for example, **beginning in Year 1 with two teachers per class where one serves as the intervention specialist**, hiring a full-time certified ESL & FLE Specialists in Year 1 & 4, increasing SpEd teachers, and adding instructional coaches to support teachers. SICS begins Year 1 with a 8:1 student teacher ratio and a 9:1 in year 5 thereby giving our students the consistent support and attention they will require. This staffing ratio also supports the intricacies of the trans-disciplinary instructional delivery model and the IB requirement of having an IB coordinator on staff. In Summation, SICS has identified consistent applied learning, literacy & language, and mathematical skills as three areas of need (see *I.D.*)

Hiring/Personnel Policies: For more information on SICS' hiring & personnel policies see *Attachment 8.A*.

Substitutes: In all years, SICS has enough full-time staff that it will not need to contract with a substitute teacher agency. Teachers or administrators will provide coverage if a teacher is absent or needs to attend external PD or IEP conferences (see *II.G.*). However, when the need arises such as extended absence or , SICS will first pull from a compiled list of local area per diem educators. If needed, SICS will contract with an educational temp. service provider.

School Leadership: SICS' school leaders will be the Executive Director, who is identified as being the author of this proposal, and the Director of Teaching & Learning, who has not been identified (See *Attachment 8(B)*). The SICS founding team, upon authorization, will begin the search for a Director of Teaching & Learning that has a proven track record of coaching and inspiring teachers to perform at their best. SICS will search using its network of educators, Department Heads of NY based Universities, through the IBO network, NYC based job fairs and general advertisements in local papers.

Recruitment of effective teachers: SICS is committed to recruiting high quality teachers and will look to recruit teachers who can actualize our mission and help our students meet their goals. SICS will recruit teachers that are certified in the areas of special education, ESL or TESOL, bilingual French, IB Primary Years, science, and who share the SICS philosophy of teaching and learning. Ideally, teachers would have a combination of these skills or certifications to best meet the needs of the staffing plan teachers have already begun to submit resumes). SICS' first priority is to hire **bilingual and IB experienced** teachers, which SICS is particularly well situated to recruit as the Executive Director brings with her an extensive network of International educators that reaches worldwide. SICS, as a recipient of advisory support from the International Baccalaureate Organization, will also have access to their recruitment network. Additionally, SICS will work with the **Global Language Project** to identify **bilingual** candidates and **HYPOTHEkids** to identify **science/STEAM** experienced monolingual teachers. If after all attempts to recruit using the measures described above and below suitable staff has not been found, SICS will utilized Search Associates, an educational recruitment firm with candidates from across the US and worldwide.

SICS will recruit teachers who are excited to work in a high-performing urban school where a premium is put on instruction and the growth of the whole child. SICS will establish a diverse applicant pool by including recruitment through Teach for America, the ACTFL list service, listings in local and international newspapers, online teacher career sites (such as *TieOnline.com*), reach out to alumni and career services offices of graduate programs, network with professional associations, and attend hiring and teacher recruitment fairs that service international educators. We will also utilize the personal networks of SICS staff and Board members.

SICS will also promote diversity in its applicant pool by advertising positions in targeted media, such as ethnic or non-English newspapers, networking with local community organizations that serve culturally diverse populations, and participating in minority recruitment events. SICS will comply with all federal, state and local laws and requirements regarding the hiring of staff, and will not discriminate in hiring, employment, contracting or retention for reasons of

race, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other reasons prohibited by local, state or federal law. To ensure that SICS' instructional staff remains highly qualified, SICS will contract with the New York City Charter School Center for teacher certification services. If a teacher is uncertified or considered "highly qualified" under NCLB, they must meet one or more of the criteria listed in section 2854(3) (a-1) of Education Law

Retention of effective teachers: SICS is committed to retaining successful teachers and keeping them in the classroom where their instructional talents can be maximized. SICS will support its teachers in the same holistic manner in which its students are supported which includes opportunities for open reflective dialogue for example at designated staff meetings. SICS has built several mechanisms for retention of high-quality teachers into its school design. Some of these mechanisms are echoed by findings of the TeachPlus Working Group on Public Charter Schools, a consortium of teachers from across the country researching the issue of teacher retention.⁹³ SICS will provide:

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

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

Minimal Extra Duties: SICS believes that the vast majority of teacher time should be used for planning, instruction, assessment, and feedback. Specifically, they will not be asked to commit to after school clubs, or perform other tasks such as hallway supervision, lunch duty or detention monitoring.

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

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

Fair Compensation: SICS' average starting teacher salary is \$62,000. This is nearly 10% higher than the DOE salary for a sixth year teacher with a Master's Degree⁹⁴. SICS anticipates that this starting salary will allow it to be a competitive candidate for the services of experienced, educated teachers who wish to teach in New York City. SICS may explore the addition of a bonus structure in alignment with budgetary constraints in the future. SICS will offer a standard 3% raise each year for all teachers. Additionally, SICS will match up to 3% of an employee's contribution to their retirement plan for employees who have been with SICS for more than one year. Lastly, SICS will provide \$1,000 stipends for teaching during Intersession.

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

⁹³ http://www.teachplus.org/uploads/Documents/1340224253_WhyAreMyTeachersLeaving062012.pdf.

⁹⁴ <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/72DE1FF1-EDFC-40D7-9D61-831014B39D1E/0/TeacherSalarySchedule20083.pdf>.

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

Use of Student Assessment Data to Drive Key Decisions Aimed at Recruitment, Retention, Evaluation and Support of Staff and Leadership: SICS will comply with the reporting requirements of the Teacher-Student Data Linkage (TSDL). For further information on how student data will drive key decisions related to staff and leadership, see III.D.

D. Evaluation

Programmatic Audit: SICS will submit to NYSED an Annual Report by August 1 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. SICS expects to undergo programmatic audits related to federal entitlement and competitive public grants it receives, including but not limited to Consolidated Title Funds and CSP grant funds.

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

Evaluation of the Assessment System: SRG will be evaluated for: 1) its consistency in implementation and 2) its impact on student achievement compared with control schools that use traditional grading systems (see II.D.). Research demonstrates that if SRG is implemented to its fullest integrity, it should require that teachers spend **only a marginal amount of additional prep and grading time at the beginning of the year, with time ultimately saved overall**⁹⁵. The Director of Teaching & Learning will evaluate the degree of consistency in which SICS teachers utilize SRG by monitoring activity on **ManageBac** and analyzing student data using the tool. Teachers identified as needing additional support with implementing SRG will be provided coaching sessions held by the DOTL or Instructional Coach, coupled with action plans that detail clear steps that must be taken in order to expeditiously implement SRG. Beginning in year 2 with 3rd grade students, comparisons of student performance on exams and TerraNova assessments with other high-performing schools using traditional grading will be a summative indicator of the effectiveness of SRG. In the event that student assessment data demonstrates that SRG is ineffective with closing the achievement gap, the Board will determine corrective actions necessary, which may include, but is not limited to, structural changes to the grading system.

Evaluation of Teaching: SICS will utilize multiple measures of effectiveness to inform teachers of their annual effectiveness and make staffing decisions. While the actual evaluation process tools will be developed during the start-up period, SICS subscribes to a general framework of teacher evaluation, *The Art and Science of Teaching*⁹⁶ (the Framework) and *Effective Supervision: Supporting the Art and Science of Teaching*⁹⁷. SICS will adopt the Framework for teacher

⁹⁵ Marzano, R. (2010). *Formative Assessment & Standards-Based Grading*. Bloomington: Marzano Research Library.

⁹⁶ Marzano, R. (2007). *The Art and Science of Teaching*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

⁹⁷ Marzano, R. (2011). *Effective Supervision: Supporting the Art and Science of Teaching*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

evaluation at the school. The Framework is aligned to SICS' mission and is an approved rubric for teacher evaluation designed by Robert Marzano, the leading expert on SRG. Through SICS' instructional coaching model (see *III.E.*), teachers receive frequent, consistent, non-evaluative feedback through weekly informal observations from the IB Coordinator or Instructional Coach and, beginning in Year 3, the DOTL. This formative data will be used to guide improvement of teachers' instructional and planning practices leading up to **three formal evaluations by the DOTL** each school year, at the conclusion of each trimester.

Individual student-level and class-level assessment data from internal and external sources will be utilized to evaluate teacher performance. This includes diagnostic assessment data. In addition to monitoring student data through **ManageBac** on an ongoing basis, **summative data from interim benchmark assessments will provide additional data points for teacher evaluation.** SICS will also comply with reporting procedures of the NYSED's Teacher-Student Data Linkage initiative, which will use student exam scores to link student growth data to individual teachers. The DOTL will utilize data to celebrate student performance and encourage sharing of best practices for effective teachers and take swift action to mobilize instructional coaching support for teachers whose data indicates lack of sufficient student growth. In the event that student data indicates regression of learning in an individual teacher's class, despite the above supports, the teacher will be placed on an improvement plan and notify the teacher that next steps may include a recommendation for termination. Ultimately, teachers' annual renewal of their position will be based on multiple measures that include performance on formal observations, student growth as measured by school-wide IB summative tasks and student end-of-year exam or F & P mastery level results.

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

The Instructional Coach and IB Coordinator will create a PGP in collaboration with the DOTL to be regularly reviewed. In addition, the DOTL will evaluate the Instructional Coaches using designated metrics of teachers' progress towards growth goals aligned to the Framework (see *III.E.*). Additionally, the IB Coordinators will be evaluated using designated metrics of teachers' progress towards growth goals aligned to the IB program of instruction. During the school's start-up period, the ED will work with the Board and, if necessary, outside consultants to design evaluation processes and tools that utilize data-driven measures and clear rubrics to assess the performance of all non-instructional staff. Aspects of Bambrick-Santoyo's *Leverage Leadership*⁹⁸ will be employed in the evaluation of staff in leadership positions.

Operational and Fiscal Health: The Board is committed to ensuring it holds itself and the administration accountable for the operational and fiscal health and viability of the organization, including sound budgeting practices. The Board's work to develop a budget will begin each January. The ED, DOO, and the contracted accountant (BM beginning Year 3) will prepare annual operating and capital budgets, cash flow projections, and profit and loss statements after working together to identify and prioritize needs. 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 by the Board Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will present the budget to the full Board of Trustees for approval by May. The adopted budget totals will be overseen by the ED and DOO and will be used to prepare budget information to actual reports. The contracted accountant/BM will be responsible for preparing monthly budget presentations, including updated annual budget information, monthly budget information, monthly actual against budget, and projected year end against budgeted year end. The ED and contracted accountant will review these presentations with the Board Treasurer prior to each Board meeting. All material deviations will be documented and

⁹⁸ Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Excellent Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

explained by the ED and DOTL. Any expected deviations in a budget category of more than \$5,000 and +/-10% of the budget amount will be considered material. If necessary the Finance Committee will bring the deviation to the Board's attention to consider any impact that deviation may have on the school's cash flow and financial position. Section III.J. provides details on the process for independent fiscal audits—an integral part of the process to verify the school's fiscal soundness.

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

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

E. Professional Development

SICS believes that teacher quality and effectiveness is the critical lever to high student achievement. As such, SICS will invest heavily in developing high-performing, effective teachers. Teachers at SICS will benefit from a vast array of PD resources, including trainings, tools for improvement, and opportunities for collaboration and communication in all areas of its program offerings. Instructional staff will need PD in many areas and have the time imbedded and spread throughout the annual calendar. These areas include the IB framework, the Primary Years Program, applied teaching and learning, UDL & lesson plan development, 50/50 content immersion, CKLA, and Singapore Math. The IBO, Global Language Project, HYPOTHEkids, CKLA and Singapore Math trainers will provide pre-opening training to staff.

International Baccalaureate – All SICS staff will go through an IBO conducted training before the opening of school in August of 2015. The ED and DOTL will receive PD in IB administration and the IB Coordinator, if needed, will receive PD specific to the coordination of programming. General staff will have training in the foundational tenets of the continuum of programs conducted by the Executive Director while instructional staff will receive additional PD on unit planning and all facets of instructional delivery from the IBO trainers.

High-quality, Comprehensive Professional Development: *Summer Institute:* There will be a scope and sequence for PD delivered throughout the year on Fridays, but a particular focus will be placed on **Summer Institute.** Summer Institute begins seven days prior to the start of **Summer Safari**, and continues throughout Summer Safari after students leave their half-day classes (see II.B. and Attachment 3B). Summer Institute will be used to introduce new staff and reinforce to returning staff SICS' mission, personnel and student policies, curriculum, instructional methods, and assessments. SICS' teachers will have an opportunity to take ownership of the Program Of Inquiry by reviewing and revising it as well as adding current authentic experiences. The ongoing lesson plan feedback system, coaching model, and the Framework (see III.D) will be introduced. Training for the faculty will be provided by the DOTL, ED, and the Instructional Coach(es). Special education specialists will be consulted to train teachers in **UDL and RTI models**, including identification of struggling students, assessment of struggling students, academic interventions, and

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

Summer Institute will also place a heavy focus on infusing the culture of data into instruction. Teachers will be thoroughly trained on the vision behind **SRG** and how it should be implemented in order to best build student investment and achievement of learning goals. Teachers will be trained on and given ample time during Summer Institute to apply practice to linking formative and summative assessments to SRG. Technology training will also be provided, which includes **how to effectively use ManageBac to provide timely feedback, monitor student achievement, and drive instruction.** Also imperative to adult culture are team-building exercises that will be incorporated into the Summer Institute to familiarize staff with one another, start to develop an understanding of each other's work styles, and instill in the teachers a feel for what they should instill in the school community. Teachers will explore the community they will serve and together create a culture of support and consistency. Throughout the year faculty and staff will attend additional **IB** trainings specific to their individual needs.

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

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

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

2) Shared Practice: Another mechanism that will tailor support to individual teacher needs by adding an element of choice is the implementation of professional learning communities through the form of **Critical Friends Groups (CFG)** in the second trimester. By creating a safe environment for constructive feedback and critique, group members in CFGs work collaboratively to improve practice⁹⁹ in one of the above seven areas covered in ongoing weekly PD. The goal and purpose of CFGs will be to develop a community of practice and allow teachers of varying experience levels to share professional knowledge. Teachers will also have the opportunity to use weekly PD time to plan with grade and/or department -level teams using SRG data. Other opportunities will be created for teachers to

⁹⁹ <http://www.nsrharmony.org/faq.html>

share practices with colleagues in other schools. This will be done through shared PD workshops & trainings as well as through inter-visitations.

3) Individual Enrichment Opportunities: SICS teachers and administration will be encouraged to partake in enrichment opportunities, such as courses, trainings, and conferences that will continually reinvigorate their joy and passion for teaching as a craft. Specific examples include IB trainings, courses through Relay Graduate School of Education, trainings and conferences offered by institutions such as Harvard Graduate School of Education, NYC Charter School Center, Center for Educational Innovation-Public Educ. Assoc., Building Excellent Schools, Uncommon Schools network and the International Baccalaureate certification affiliated Universities. Teachers are provided leadership stipends to build scalable skills, such as curriculum development and providing observation feedback (see *III.C.*), through coaching and mentorship of leadership and administrative staff. When possible, the school will provide coverage for teachers to visit highly successful schools, particularly in the STEAM and IB fields. Teachers also have the opportunity to apply for Travel Fellowships (see *III.C.*) to diversify their curriculum and pedagogy. Following the teacher's participation in the opportunity they will turn-key with fellow staff. Teachers will also be provided and encouraged to seek out content-specific PD through organizations such as NCTM, the National Science Teachers Association, and Reading Taxonomy trainings by Uncommon Schools. The DOTL and ED will work with leadership consultants to ensure efficiency in the school model and streamlined communication channels between all stakeholders. The DOTL and ED will also be provided guidance and support by the Advisory Board and other professionals in SICS' network.

Retention of Excellent Teachers: SICS' professional environment will motivate and actively retain excellent teachers through a host of opportunities that cater to individual learning styles. Beyond the described PD, school leadership will promote positive staff and school culture through staff-appreciation initiatives over the school year, thereby further promoting staff retention. Such events or acts of appreciation may include: weekly breakfasts, gift certificates and discounts to local venues, social gatherings, kudos during a faculty meetings, and short written notes of recognition from leadership team members. Events such as these will help to make SICS an environment in which people enjoy working and feel supported as they strive to improve their craft. If deemed needed and fiscally responsible, SICS will consider implementing a teacher bonus structure.

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

F. Facilities

SICS intends to be sited in a private facility which it has located within CSD 5. As a contingency, SICS has located 2 additional spaces that may be used for its incubation period. Additionally, SICS will work with the NYCDOE as per newly announced guidelines to secure a viable space if they so deny the scouted private spaces already located (see below).

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

Year	Grade / Student Enrollment	Classrooms	Communal Space	Offices & Storage
2015-16	K-2 - 150	6	Science lab; STEAM Library Lab; artist room; gym; auditorium; Teacher lounge Yr3 - 2 science labs; Yr4-2 STEAM Lib. Labs	-Main Office -Service Provider Room -3 Admin. Offices -IB/coach space -2 Operations offices
2016-17	K-3 - 200	8		
2017-18	K-4 - 250	10		
2018-19	K-5 - 300	12		
2019-20	K-6 - 350	14		
All student facility needs will increase in accordance with any mandates and needs				

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

Facility Contingencies In Consideration
of Recent NYS Edicts

Rationale:

The NYC allocations for private facility funding of new charter schools would allot SICS additional funds worth 20% of per pupil general education revenue towards facility use¹⁰⁰. Currently, the process is still under review within the NYC DOE and SICS cannot determine at this time possible final outcomes.

Meeting the Needs of Students and the Community

We expect to work closely with the DOE during the pre-opening period, when they have up to date information on space utilization in CSD 5 and in accordance with their timeline for determining public school sites beginning Fall 2015. If SICS is to occupy part of a district school building, we will allow enough time in our facilities completion schedule for the Panel for Educational Policy to hold a hearing on notice, as required, prior to occupancy. The Board of Trustees would ensure that whatever space SICS occupies will align with SICS’ program needs and does not interfere with SICS mission.

Intended Option

Currently SICS has identified a privately held building that is a former adult learning center as a viable location to site our school. Located on the eastern edge of CSD 5 (CB11) bordering CSD 4, this building is already configured and outfitted as a school with offices, approximately 7 classrooms per floor, large common areas that can be used as gym/auditorium space, conference rooms and lounges, and school grade bathrooms and water fountains. The building is more than sufficient for a two-year incubation period with an **as of yet un-negotiated** asking price of \$32 per square foot and the right of first refusal for additional tenants.

SICS would initially occupy the first 2 floors of the 5 floor handicap access equipped building. Real Estate in the area surrounding the building ranges from \$21 to \$45 per square foot making the \$32 per square feet reasonable. The 20% facility allocation represents \$416,310 in Year 1 and \$561,010 in Year 2 of the incubation period. SICS has estimated first year annual rent at \$384,000 based on our student needs. This former school space has remained empty for 3 years due to the expense of retrofitting the building for a new, non-school purpose and the landlord has priced this space attractively. This building

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/newlaw>

also has the possibility of becoming a permanent location for SICS as there is a total of 35,000 sf of space when all 5 floors are calculated together. At our Year 5 maximum enrollment of 350 students, we would still only occupy 4 floors of space estimated at 28,000 sf. And SICS would only pay for space utilized.

SICS' Board Facilities Committee will do its due diligence in planning and further searching for a space best suited for the growth of the school. This includes:

- Documenting and cataloguing all as-built plans and equipment for mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural, sustainability, technological, and security systems and warranties.
- Conducting a third-party architect/engineer review of building construction to determine any defects.
- Identifying, establishing, and implementing maintenance and preventive maintenance policies and procedures
- Managing post-construction punch lists.

Build out – The building is currently configured as a school and as such requires minimal reconfiguration. In the pre-opening phase, SICS would need to install sinks in the designated classrooms and science lab and expand 4 existing classroom configurations to open the space for the STEAM Library Labs. As per the walk through with the landlord, this would not require the removal of any load-bearing walls. Flooring in the common multi-use space will be updated. SICS has reserved \$25,000 in pre-opening funds for build out use and associated fees. SICS will seek donated architectural services from local firms and seek competitive bid services from NY Charter School Center approved facility service providers. If needed, additional funds (\$15,000) are set aside in Year 1 budget to be used for build-out, if necessary.

Contingency (additional space)

In addition to our *Intended Option* primary location, SICS has located 2 other potential buildings. Located in central Harlem, the Al Hambra is a 45,000 s.f. six-story building with 5 empty floors with kitchen facilities on the main floor. This facility would require retrofitting at an estimated \$80,000 per floor cost to the school. The building, in general, is also a viable space to meet the growth needs over the charter term. While this is the more expensive option in terms of initial financial outlays, there is a potential financial savings associated with not having to relocate to another space. The SICS Board has three possible means to financing the renovation amount in excess of budgetary allocations that include one or a combination of the following:

- Negotiating with the landlord for concessions or to complete some or all of the work and any portion committed by SICS would be portioned as a monthly increase in lease fee until paid;
- Work with our bank and/or charter school facility finance company to secure funding to be repaid over an extended period.
- Seek grants and fundraising avenues for part or all of the funds

In addition to the Al Hambra, SICS has located a smaller building on the southern end of CSD 5, sharing a border with CSD 3. This two-story building houses a rehabilitation center that is currently being vacated and would offer approximately 14,000 sf. This would allow SICS to incubate in Year 1 and possibly Year 2 with planned spacing and/or student enrollment adjustments. This space would also require reconfiguration at an approximate \$35,000 per floor. This cost would also be financed through the methods mentioned above.

SICS continues to consult with our local Council members, local development organizations, and Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) to seek alternative viable space. This

includes conversations on possibly co-locating with an existing charter school. Expanding the search, SICS will seek input from recommended vendors of NYC Charter School Center, NYS Charter Schools Association and the Catholic Arch Diocese of Manhattan. SICS has ensured that the budget is conservative enough to sustain siting in a private facility and has included janitorial, security, and capital improvement /maintenance expenditures.

G. Insurance

SICS will carry insurance that includes adequate insurance coverage for liability, property loss and personal injury to students. SICS has consulted with the insurance broker Austin & Co. which has provided SICS with a quote for insurance that includes Business Personal Property (\$250K), Business Income (\$750K), General Liability (\$3M), Abuse & Molestation (\$3M) Employee Benefits Liability (\$3M), and Personal Injury of Students (\$1M). The particulars of the proposal are provided in the Austin & Co. estimate, to be made available upon request, and are reflected in the budget. SICS retains sufficient cash reserves to obtain additional insurance if necessary. SICS will also seek additional quotes during the pre- opening period to obtain the most updated coverage and cost. SICS will hold Directors and Officers coverage for the Board beginning in the pre- opening period. SICS has budgeted \$30,000 for insurance premiums, rising \$5,000 annually through year 5.

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

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

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

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

Transportation Services: The NYCDOE is responsible for providing transportation services to SICS’ students who will receive the same transportation services as other NYC public school students. Eligibility for yellow school busing and half-fare or full-fare Metrocards is determined and provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). The NYCDOE determines the eligibility for transportation based on age, distance from the school, and needs of students with disabilities. SICS will provide eligible service as confirmed by OPT. On days when the regular NYCDOE public schools are not in session, SICS will purchase and provide Metrocards to students. Funds have been allocated to this transportation need in our budget projections and will be an annual budgetary item of the school,

taking into account that schools can request Metrocards through OPT that covers the majority of the summer diagnostic sessions. Special education student eligibility will be determined by the student's IEP. Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws. SICS' students will receive transportation services for which they are eligible under Education Law § 2853(4)(b) and § 3635. If a student is not eligible for transportation services, it will be the responsibility of parents.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Means of Engagement: SICS will employ several means to engage parents. These range from an elected position on the SICS Board to classroom engagement. Beginning in April of the pre-opening period and through the end of the first trimester, SICS staff will conduct **individual home visits** with the family of every student. SICS will prioritize home visits for ELLs, all of which will take place before the first day of instruction. Home visits will be used to gather data, clarify expectations for students, parents, and SICS staff, and build relationships. The **Community Outreach Organizer (COO)** (see *II.C.*) will facilitate family engagement through continuous planning and development of appropriate interactions.

In addition to Parent-Teacher Conferences each trimester (see *II.B.*), SICS will hold **monthly parent workshops or events**. Workshops will be **centered around student learning and will allow for parent interaction**. For example, parents may meet to share ideas for supporting student completion of homework, even when the parent may not be familiar with the content area or fluent in English. Workshops will also be conducted for targeted parent needs on a wide range of topics such as housing and job interviewing. All workshops will be facilitated by a SICS staff member or parent. Additionally, parents will receive monthly phone updates from their child's teacher. In cases where a student is academically at-risk and the parent does not attend Parent-Teacher Conferences, SICS will schedule an individual case conference with the parent at another time.

As discussed in *II.F.*, positive reinforcement is a critical part of SICS' culture. Teachers will be required to minimally make two positive parent contacts per week and encouraged to make more. SICS will provide positive reinforcement for parents in the form of events such as recognition breakfasts for parents whose children have perfect attendance and punctuality. Micro-surveys will be conducted at regular intervals based off the DOE Parent Satisfaction Survey, and SICS will ensure that parents have ample opportunity to complete the actual DOE survey. SICS will adjust its strategies for parent engagement in part based on the results of these surveys.

When SICS students enter 6th grade, SICS will deeply involve parents in the development of their child's post-secondary plan. SICS' counselor will hold specific workshops on the academic opportunities and even the University application process, financial aid, and the transition to higher education. The counselors will hold individual conferences with each parent and child, starting in 6th grade. These supports will help mitigate some of the challenges that first-generation students have in completing college¹⁰¹.

Community Involvement in Planning, Implementation and Design: Throughout the planning and application phase, SICS has reached out to community parents and specifically requested their input, using that feedback to inform the application. SICS has spoken with parents both formally, at community forums and town halls, as well as informally while handing out flyers or doing grassroots outreach. SICS intends to continually engage organizations through the start-up, opening and operation of the school (see *I.E.*). Parents and the community will be a critical part of SICS' plans to implement its school design. Once the school year begins, SICS will support the creation and ongoing administration of a voluntary FSA (see *III.B.*), which will advise and support the school. The FSA will elect the parent representative to the Board of Trustees. SICS will support the FSA in the following ways:

- The COO will help organize and coordinate FSA meetings, workshops, and events.
- SICS will make meeting space available at the school for the FSA to conduct its business.
- SICS will support and encourage communication between the FSA and the school's overall parent body, individual parents, the Board, the ED, the DOTL, instructional staff and the public.

Separate from parent workshops, SICS will also hold regular breakfasts, lunches or coffees with the DOTL and/or ED. These will be informal opportunities for parents to meet the school leaders, ask questions, and provide feedback for purposes of planning, implementation, and program design. SICS will evaluate its effectiveness in incorporating parent

¹⁰¹ <http://faculty.soe.syr.edu/vtinto/Files/Moving%20Beyond%20Access.pdf>.

feedback through its scores on the DOE parent satisfaction survey, which is part of the school's overall evaluation (see III.D).

Evidence that Anticipated Partnerships are Achievable: Several of the parent engagement strategies described above have a history of success. The Executive Director has employed home visits and positive phone calls in their practice. Others, such as workshops specifically centered around student learning and parent interaction, derive from research cited in *Beyond the Bake Sale*¹⁰². In all cases, SICS believes meaningful, targeted, and sincere parent engagement will increase parent involvement in the school. As a grassroots endeavor, SICS has found warm welcome in CSD 5 both from individual parents and from CBOs that represent parents, youth, and families. We have had numerous meetings with community leaders who are interested in and supportive of the school (see *Attachment 2*). SICS' presentations have been warmly received, both by community organizers and individual parents we have spoken with. SICS will operate from a strong base of support in its development of community partnerships and parent involvement. Partnerships have already been developed within the community, which is partially evident by the attached letters of support.

J. **Financial Management**

The Executive Director 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 Finance Committee. The ED will be supported in implementing all financial matters by the DOO, Operations staff, and a **contracted accountant**. In Year 3, a Business Manager (BM) will be brought on in place of the contracted accountant. For purposes of clarity, the remainder of this application will reference the BM, since it will become the permanent model in Year 3 and beyond. The BM, with oversight from the ED, will prepare the financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Such financial statements will be prepared for each fiscal year and will include a statement of financial position, a statement of activities, a statement of cash flows, a schedule of functional expenses, and notes to the financial statements.

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

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

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

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

Fiscal policies and procedures will be ratified by the SICS' board and adopted by the school no later than January 2015 (see III.L).

Student Records: The DOO, with oversight from the ED, will manage student information, be responsible

¹⁰² Henderson, Anne T. et al, *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. The New Press. New York. 2007.

for tracking enrollment and attendance, maintaining school lunch program records, including student eligibility and other data to ensure accurate billing and reimbursements. The DOO will work closely with the ED, who will serve as the School's Title I Coordinator, to ensure all data relevant to Title I services is collected and maintained to ensure accuracy in program reporting and reimbursement. SICS will have a robust student information system through **ManageBac** that will be utilized by the DOO to store, analyze and produce needed reports on all relevant student data. The DOO will be responsible for the protection of student records under the supervision of the ED. With regard to the special education program and IEPs, the DOTL will be responsible for maintaining and securing all records, as well as submitting all required reporting on SWD and services provided to the appropriate agencies including necessary reporting for special education reimbursement through the DOE invoicing portal. SICS understands its obligations to comply with FERPA and will follow all appropriate procedures to comply fully with the NYS Freedom of Information law (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law).

K. Budget and Cash Flow

SICS' start-up budget and cash flow, first-year budget and cash flow plan, and five-year budget and cash flow plan all use conservative assumptions (see *Attachment 9*). In the pre-opening period SICS' staff includes only the ED, DOTL, and COO acting as independent contractors awarded a stipend. Throughout the 5 year chartering period SICS will be extremely conservative in revenue assumptions to ensure all operating expenses are covered. SICS expects to be solvent by year three, if not sooner with anticipated grant funding. SICS has over budgeted on potential expenditures and under estimated on revenue and has considered the effects of delays in disbursement of federal funds. To be sure all obligations are met in a timely manner, SICS will work with its bank to open a line of credit.

The Budgets Reflect the Following Conservative Revenue Assumptions:
• SICS' per pupil funding conservatively assumes \$13,527 in Year 1 and remains flat in Years 2-5
• To use a more updated, accurate CSD 5 profile, unadjusted target rates for SWD were obtained from the NYS Enrollment Targets Calculator, combined NYS data reports for 2012-13 ¹⁰³ and available open data from public schools
FRLP and ELLs percentages are based on the effective target rates from the NYS Enrollment Targets Calculator.
• Of the SWD, SICS assumed that 69% would receive less than 20% services (no funding), 3.7% would receive between 20% and 60% services, (\$10,390 per pupil) and 26.4% would receive greater than 60% services (\$19,049 per pupil). These assumptions were based on the percentages in grades K-8 in CSD 5, provided to us by the DOE Office of Special Education and NYC averages for 2012-13 SpEd School District data profile. SICS also assumes funding for Special Education under IDEA. (under estimated revenue)
• SICS assumes it will receive non-competitive start-up funding from DYCD. SICS anticipates not receiving funds until the final quarter of Year 1. SICS' cash flow projections allow for this delay.
• SICS assumes it will receive flat funding for NYSTL, NYSSL and NYSLIB.
• Based on the Enrollment Target Calculator, SICS assumes that 86.6% of the student population will be FRLP in Year 1. Therefore, SICS assumes it will qualify for Title I and Title II funding. Funding assumptions of \$585 and \$60 respectively per FRLP were based on the publicly available funding data for other charter schools in the district. SICS will file all forms in a timely fashion to ensure disbursement by the end of the fiscal year.
• For Title III funding, SICS assumes a funding rate of \$143 per ELL based on publicly available funding data for other charter schools in the district.
• While SICS 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 operation. (under estimated revenue)
• SICS intends to aggressively seek private funding from foundations and individuals. For example, SICS has interviewed with the Walton Family Foundation. A brief examination of the database at the Foundation Center ¹⁰⁴ shows dozens of private foundations and corporate entities seeking to fund K-12 STEAM education. For revenue

¹⁰³ <http://data.nysed.gov/specialed/index.php?instid=800000048663&year=20122013>

¹⁰⁴ <http://foundationcenter.org/newyork/>.

purposes SICS has assumed only \$30,000 in fundraising during each of the following: pre-opening phase, Year 1 and Year 2 of operation. These are based on estimates in the SICS fundraising plan at the grassroots level. (under estimated revenue)

- In Year 2, SICS will bring on a full-time Development Associate. With more time and resources to devote to private fundraising, SICS anticipates being able to raise more money privately in Years 3, 4, and 5. This is reflected in SICS' revenue projections. At no point does SICS' fundraising projection exceed 4.2% of its total revenue, meaning SICS will maintain a significant budget surplus even without raising private money. (under estimated revenue)

The Budget Reflects the Following Conservative Expense Assumptions:

- During the start-up period, in order to ensure comfortable solvency, the ED, DOTL and COO will defer their stipends until anticipated CSP funding is disbursed. SICS will file all appropriate forms in a timely manner to ensure funding disbursement as soon as possible.

- SICS 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, SWD, FRLP students, ELLs and other students at risk (see Staffing Table in *III.C.*) Salaries for teachers and staff are competitive, and anticipate a standard 3% annual raise. Salaries for the ED, DOTL, and DOO start lower than DOE salaries for similar positions, but grow at a rate of 5%, and by Year 5 are competitive with DOE salaries¹⁰⁵

- SICS will provide medical and dental insurance. SICS assumes 70% of employees will receive individual medical coverage and another 15% of employees will receive spouse or family medical coverage. SICS assumes 85% of employees will receive dental coverage. Employees will bear the cost of adding additional dependents to their dental plans. Medical and dental plan assumptions are based on the plans utilized by other charter schools.

- HRA cost of \$100 per full time employee per year is based on similar costs at other charter schools.

- SICS will enroll employees in a 403b retirement plan and will match employee contributions up to 3% of their salary starting in Year 2; SICS assumes 60% of employees will participate.

- SICS has accounted for facility build out expenses of \$25,000 in the pre-opening phase.

- The line “Payroll Taxes” has been broken down into separate line items for Social Security, Medicare, SUTA, FUTA, MTA Tax and Worker’s Comp

- As described in *II.B.*, SICS will operate a year-round calendar with an optional “Intersession” in February, April and July. SICS will require all instructors to staff Intersession on a rotating basis and has budgeted \$1,000 per instructional staff who are assigned.

- The line item “Office Expenses” contain additional costs in Years 4 and 5 for grades 5 & 6 associated with College Bound activities.

- SICS will seek to develop leadership from within (see *III.C.*). We have budgeted \$5,000 leadership development stipends per 20% of the instructional staff each year starting in year 2 to incentivize participation and teacher retention.

- The budget line “STEAM Supplies” reflects the unique funding needs of STEAM curriculum, materials and equipment. SICS has budgeted \$25,000 per year. (over estimated)

- Line items for staff furniture, classroom furniture, technology, SWD specific materials and STEAM supplies include funding to replace or upgrade items. SICS has separated out costs of staff furniture and classroom furniture. An additional \$3000 set aside for SWD material increases 5% per year plus \$8000 for assisted technology. (over estimated)

- SICS has received a written estimate for the Insurance coverage (see *III.G.*), which forms the basis of our insurance assumptions.

- The line “Staff Development” includes training for IB, CKLA, Singapore Math and Teacher Certification Services.

- The line “Parent Engagement” includes costs of parent meetings, breakfasts with the DOTL, and other parent events

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.csa-nyc.org/sites/default/files/Salary%20Schedule.PDF>.

at \$1000 per class per year.
• The line “Building Rent/Lease.” was allocated for the private facility located, but depends on final determination of the NYCDOE. Rent was estimated based on Comp Sheet from the building owner.
• The line “Repairs & Maintenance” includes pre-opening phase build out and general repairs & capital improvement costs of existing spaces in Years 1 – 5. To ensure conservative cash flow enhancements in Year 1 will be scheduled after Winter Break. Cost estimates are based on guidance from current educational leaders.
Line 140 “Other” in Year 1 includes the cost of Candidate fees for the International Baccalaureate Org.

In each of the five operational years beyond the start-up period, the SICS budget reflects very conservative assumptions. Most revenue projections remain flat while most expenses—including personnel costs, which are by far the largest expense—increase. The budget is aligned with our charter application and considers our backfill policy. We have incorporated all possible costs contemplated by our educational, fiscal and operational program. In the Year 1 budget, all revenues and expenses have been allocated to each of the main categories and subcategories using general assumptions based on the expected student demographic and the expected percentage of time that administrators, instructional and non-instructional staff would devote to these areas. In certain instances, SICS assumed that for school operation costs that would benefit all students a certain percentage was allocated to general education and special education students. 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 SICS will have the background based on operational experience to prepare budgets that reflect these programmatic allocations.

L. *Pre-Opening Plan*

Activity	Start Date	End Date	Responsibility	Notes
Management				
File for 501(c)(3) status for school and state tax exemptions status	Start paperwork before authorized; Submit when authorized	See Notes	ED, Board, Pro-Bono Legal Counsel	SICS will develop relationships with existing 501(c)(3) organizations to receive private contributions on SICS’ behalf.
Identify areas of need for Board and recruit members	Ongoing	Ongoing	ED, DOTL, Board	
Elect Board officers, ratify By-Laws, establish committees & membership	At first Board Meeting	At first Board Meeting	Board	The first Board meeting will take place within one month of authorization.
Officially Vet & Hire DOTL Officially hire ED by Jan. 1	Upon approval	August 2014	Board	Both DOTL & ED will begin part-time on 1/1/2015; ED will begin full-time on 3/1 DOTL and ED will officially be hired May 1, 2015.
Further develop, refine, and adopt by Board action, school’s	Upon Charter Approval	August 2015	Board, ED, DOTL	Fiscal policy will be in place by end of January, 2015 (see III.J.) Distribute to stakeholders and school’s website
Submit application to IBO for Candidate status	August 2015	September 2015	ED / DOTL	To be done in consultation with IBO
Financial				
Research and apply for competitive public funding, private grants & fundraising	Research has Already begun	Ongoing	ED, Board	Initial focus: CSP, STEAM, local government i.e. DYCD,
Develop & approve final Year 1 budget.	April 2015	June 2015	ED, DOTL, Board	Make hiring adjustments, i.e. add Special Education staff.
Apply for Consolidated Title I	July 2015	August 2015	ED, DOO	

Funds				
Operations				
Establish checking account with financial institution	Upon approval of charter	January 2015	ED or Board Treasurer	
Develop and finalize employee benefit package	Upon approval of charter	February 2015	Board	
Contract to audit web systems and budget	January 2015	March 2015	ED, Board Treasurer	Financial systems audit completed in January;
Establish all relevant financial systems,	January 2015	March 2015	ED, Board Treasurer, Contractor	Payroll, billing, other disbursements as per internal controls
Student/family outreach and marketing	December 2014	April 2015	ED, DOTL	
Recruit and hire all administrative, support, and instructional staff for first year of operations	December 2014	June 2015	ED, DOTL	Ensure signed hiring letters of all staff by 7/1/2015. With background & Fingerprinting completed and confirmed.
Research and contract for Student Information System	January 2015	June 2015	ED, DOTL	
Purchase & accept delivery of all furniture, equipment, & technology for operations	January 2015	July 2015	ED, DOTL, DOO	Acceptance of delivery will depend on when SICS staff is allowed access to facility.
Secure Facility, Renovation: Identify needs, secure contractor, create time line	Ongoing	May 2015	ED, DOTL	Work with the DOE to identify a facility and prepare for PEP if needed.
Apply for extended use facility permits if needed	Ongoing	June 2015	ED, DOO	Apply for extended use permits upon securing facility
Conduct lottery, generate acceptance & waitlist	April 2015	April 2015	ED, DOTL	
Send out acceptance packages with forms: registration, emergency contact, Home Language Survey, FRLP, test data Release, Media Release, Medical, & other	April 2015	Ongoing	ED, DOTL	Start with completion of lottery and continuing through the school year as families decline acceptance or withdraw their child from school.
Request and secure student records from sending schools, including IEPs	April 2015	Ongoing	ED, DOTL, DOO	This will be ongoing, as students may be accepted off the waitlist.
Arrange utility accounts	June 2015	July 2015	ED	Phone, internet, electric
Communicate with NYCDOE on transportation and food	July 2015	August 2015	DOO	
Arrange for AED/CPR training of staff	July 2015	August 2015	DOO	
Create class rosters and	August 2015	August 2015	ED, DOTL, DOO	Disseminate to teachers, students and families
Instructional				
Apply for IB staff PD	March 2015	April 2015	ED / DOTL	In consultation with IBO
Planning academic program development of assessment protocol, POI & curriculum	January 2015	August 2015	DOTL	With Global Language & HYPOTHEkids
Participate in trainings, visit high-performing schools	January 2015	June 2015	DOTL	STEM/STEAM, IB, MESA, Avenues World School

Develop agendas & plans for Summer Institute training & first year PD	March 2015	July 2015	DOTL, ED	IB, Singapore Math, CKLA
Conduct Home Visits	April 2015	November 2015	ED, DOTL, teachers	ELLs home visits completed by first day of instruction.
Create/obtain diagnostic assessment materials	July 2015	August 2015	DOTL, ED	Include preliminary plan for Summer Safari Program
Finalize Special Education policies and procedures,	July 2015	August 2015	ED, DOTL, SPED teacher	Include record keeping, pre-referral and referral process

M. Dissolution Plan

In the event of closure or dissolution of SICS, the Board shall delegate to the ED and the DOTL the responsibility to manage the dissolution process in accordance with Education Law §2851(2)(t). This process shall include notification to parents of children enrolled. A list of SICS students will be sent to the local district. SICS shall transfer student records to the student's school district of residence, and the parents shall be notified of the transfer of records. The remaining assets of Sofara International Charter School, after satisfaction of outstanding debts pursuant to Education § 220, shall be transferred to another charter school within the school district where SICS is located or, if no such charter school exists, directly to the NYCDOE. SICS has ensured in its budget plan that it will segregate a fund of \$75,000 to be used in the event of the dissolution of the charter. The school has allocated \$25,000 per year for the first three years to maintain this fund; these funds would be used to pay for legal and audit expenses that would be associated with the dissolution. The dissolution process would begin with a meeting of the leadership team that will include at least the Board Chair, the Board Treasurer, ED, and its legal counsel. In order to develop a plan and timeline that will be used to guide the dissolution process. The ED and the Board Chair would meet with representatives from the NYSED Office of Charter Schools or other appropriate staff to review and discuss the dissolution plan and timeline. The outcome of this meeting would be a final dissolution plan and timeline that would be used to manage the dissolution process. SICS ensures compliance with all applicable requirements of §219 and §220 of NYS Education Law. Employees will be notified in a timely manner and encouraged to see Unemployment Insurance benefits.

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

Attachment 1. Admissions Policy and Procedure
Sofara International Charter School

Sofara International Charter School shall not discriminate against any student based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or on any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school. SICS shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the school shall ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and § 2854(2) of the New York Education Law, governing admission to a charter school. New students will be admitted each year without regard to prior measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, or any above-mentioned basis that would be unlawful for a public school.

In its first year of operation, SICS will accept applications for admission grades K-2 of which 150 will be accepted. SICS will add one grade each year, until it reaches 6th grade. In years 2-5, SICS will accept 50 new Kindergarten grade students. SICS will replace K and 1st graders lost to attrition, but generally will not replace students from 2nd grade up in this charter term. However, if SICS determines its programs and design will properly serve additional students above this grade, they have the foreign language capacity, and admitting those students is otherwise consistent with achieving the school's mission, SICS may elect to admit new students to grades 2-6. SICS will also backfill in grads K & 1 from the wait list for attrition in grades 2-6 using the above criteria and, if needed, creating an additional K or 1 class. Beginning in the second charter term, SICS will admit students in grades K, 1, and 6.

Admissions at any time would be on a non-discriminatory basis, in accordance with the other provisions of this Policy and in compliance with applicable laws, and would be subject to space availability. In this event, such information will be included in the application and lottery materials and the Charter Office at the NYSED will be notified. Considering the attrition assumption in *I.C.*, SICS will reach capacity of approximately 350 students by the fifth year of operation in this charter term. Should the school experience higher attrition than anticipated, SICS may enroll additional students to the extent supported by the school's maximum capacity.

Application Process, Publicity, and Outreach: Each year SICS will hold tours and information sessions to inform the families of prospective students and community members about its program. Information sessions may be held at the school itself, at local daycares and developmental centers, or at local organizations that serve young school aged children and/or their parents. SICS will schedule information sessions beginning during the autumn prior to the first day of the subject school year and will hold as many of them throughout the autumn, winter and spring as the Board considers appropriate to meet SICS' target enrollment, as well as to ensure sufficient numbers of ELLs. While SICS will give first preference to students in CSD 5, SICS will also conduct outreach in neighboring school districts. SICS will implement these measures with consideration to parents of children with special needs and ELLs.

Outreach sessions for students will be publicized using flyers, signage at the school and contact with community organizations. For school years following the first, families will be

encouraged to visit the school, talk to instructional, executive and other staff, visit classes and meet currently enrolled students.

SICS will undertake all measures to recruit student applicants and will provide translation services and foreign language applications, if necessary, for all promotional materials and any person-to-person interaction requiring an English translation. Given the proposed location of SICS and the surrounding demographics, the application will be available in English, French, Spanish, and other available languages as well as other languages if the demographics of the neighborhood change. For any parent that requests assistance in completing the application, multi-lingual staff may assist. If translation services are required and multi-lingual staff is unavailable, we will hire translators during the admission period.

Families interested in enrolling a child at SICS will be required to submit an application and asked to attend an IB information session. Applications will be made available at parent information sessions and for pick up at the school and on SICS' website and may be made available by other means, provided application availability will be non-discriminatory. There will be no fee for making an application nor will there be any tuition charged for attending the school beyond fees permitted to be charged by public schools. During or before each January of the upcoming academic year, SICS will advertise open registration. Families, if they choose to, may meet with staff and review the expectations of SICS.

Public Lottery

Target "At Risk" Student Population and Lottery Process: SICS is committed to serving CSD 5 and students that are at risk of academic failure. The school applies the following definition to students at risk: *those students who reside in CSD 5 that are SWD & ELL*. At a minimum, a percentage of the seats equal to the enrollment targets set by New York State for that population will be set aside for. However, this set aside will not be in effect while SICS is receiving funds from the CSP grant as per their guidelines. Until the CSP grant is no longer obtainable, any reference herein to preference on the basis of academic status such as ELLs, is not in effect.

Among the information under consideration that would be voluntarily provided to verify ELL status is a copy of past NYSESLAT tests along with the application; such documentation would not be automatically required. Two lotteries will be held. The first lottery will be for students who meet the criteria of at risk as previously stated. If there are less than 17 students (11% of 150) in this pool, all will be accepted. If there are more than 17 students who are at risk according to this measure, a preliminary lottery will be held. The students who are at risk according to SICS' definition but do not receive a seat in the 11% pool will be re-entered into the second lottery and will have another chance to receive a seat in the school. Admission preference shall be granted to applicants in the following manner and in alignment with **Charter School Regulation 119.5 Random Selection Process for Charter School Student Applicants:**

1. Students who live within CSD 5
2. Returning pupils (applicable in Year 2 and beyond, only)
3. The siblings of enrolled pupils
4. SWD & ELLs within CSD 5 (once target enrollment as set by Board of Regents has been reached, these students will be folded into Group 5)

5. SWD & ELLs outside of CSD 5 (once target enrollment as set by Board of Regents has been reached, these students will be folded into Group 7)
6. Students of staff, with priority given to international staff
7. Students who live outside of CSD 5

Lottery Process: In the event that the number of student applicants to SICS exceeds capacity, a random selection lottery will be conducted by an entity unaffiliated with the school. This lottery will be held between April 2 and April 15, subject to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the school, and all applications received on or before April 1 will be entered into the drawing. Letters announcing the date and location of the lottery will be mailed to all applicant families in English, French and Spanish. The date of the lottery will also be listed on the student application.

After a name is drawn from the lottery it will be posted immediately to the school's lottery board, where seats will be reserved for families who qualify for the at risk preference. Following the lottery, letters will be mailed to inform parents/guardians of acceptance or of their number on the waiting list. Parent/guardians of accepted students will be asked to return a postcard stating that they accept their placement.

A waiting list will be maintained of applications that were not selected from the lottery as well as applications submitted throughout the school year. These applications will be placed on the waiting list by the date and time the application is received behind applications placed on the waitlist from the lottery. When space becomes available at the school, applications will be pulled from the waiting list in order and calls made to parents offering admission. The waiting list is subject to the same preferences as the lottery.

Parents will be required to accept placement within 48 hours of the phone call or their space will be forfeited. This waiting list will be the only official, legal document identifying the names of grade eligible students with applications to SICS pending acceptance for the subsequent school year, or when vacancies arise, based upon the order of random selection from the lottery following a recruitment period. The waiting list shall expire annually at the lottery drawing following the next year's enrollment period. However, SICS may send an application or other information directly to families who have previously applied.

Enrollment: All admitted students will receive a SICS enrollment packet within three weeks of the admission lottery. SICS will encourage parents/guardians and students to sit with a school staff member to review the required enrollment papers. Parents whose first language is not English may be provided with a translator upon request. SICS will expect all enrollment packets to be returned to the DOO within four weeks of notification of admission. Students who fail to return completed enrollment packets to the DOO within four weeks of admission will forfeit their place in the school and SICS will replace the seat in accordance with the appropriate wait-list procedures. All students admitted or waitlisted as provided above will be required to submit completed enrollment forms and information by the date specified in the notice of admission or wait listing to convert admission to enrollment. An admitted student will be subject to the forfeiture of his/her right to enroll or remain on the waiting list if such submission is incomplete.

A student who withdraws or is removed from admission or enrollment will not be entitled to reinstatement of a prior situation, but withdrawal or removal will not affect such student's right to re-apply for a later school year, subject to SICS' Admissions Policy and the procedures thereunder, or to be placed on the waitlist in the same manner as a late application. SICS may request that families confirm the enrollment of children enrolled in the school for the upcoming academic year from time to time (whether a new enrollment or the enrollment of a student promoted from an earlier grade at SICS) in order to promote and ensure contemplated enrollment in each grade at the school. The intentional provision of untruthful information at application, admission or enrollment will entitle SICS to permanently exclude the child from the school, even if the student was admitted, enrolled, or permitted to attend.

Student transfer and/or withdrawal procedures: SICS will be a public school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. At any time, a parent or guardian may wish to transfer their child to a different school. A parent or guardian wishing to withdraw his/her child from SICS will be asked to complete a request for student withdrawal form. SICS personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss their reasons for withdrawing from SICS, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that arise from these discussions. Upon request from the new school, SICS will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school. SICS will not impose any arbitrary requirements for application beyond completion of the one page SICS application and a parent orientation to IB. Practices such as requiring parents or guardians to attend an open house, submit to an interview or tour of the school will not be a condition for accepting an application.

**Attachment 2. Samples of Evidence of Community Outreach
Sofara International Charter School**

For the sake of brevity, SICS has not included copies of petition signatures, all email correspondence nor all comment cards. They can, however, be furnished upon request.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH		
WHO	TYPE	RESULTS
FAMILIES	Flyers; town hall; face to face conversations; website; facebook, twitter, list serve announcements; online support petition	*800+ signatures *Feedback to drive design *225+ fb followers *120+ online petition comments and feedback
COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS Educational Cultural Business	Face to face presentations; flyers; co-sponsored events; dissemination of Sofara Executive Summary and marketing material, Radio Interviews	*Charter Schools - developed mentor relationship (MESA, Harlem Hebrew, Neighborhood Charter & FLI CS) * 22 Letters of support from varying sectors (attached)
COMMUNITY LEADERS Elected Officials Community Boards Reps. of CEC for CSD 3&5	Numerous face to face conversations; disseminated Sofara press packets and discussed community needs, Presentations	* Letters of Support from: Congressman Rangel; Councilwoman Dickens Assemblyman Rodriguez
COMMUNITY EVENTS	Co-sponsored community events; attended community events to disseminate information about Sofara *Attended – Community Kwanzaa celebration; Image Nation Marketing for small business; Harlem Arts Salon; Global Community Charter School community gathering; Black Girls Rock Schomburg cultural event, and more	*Co-sponsored: Harlem First Junior Lego League final presentations and Art in Engineering closing gallery event. *Sofara booth/table – Sabree Child Health Fair * Hosted 2 community information events
OTHER	Face to face promotion of the Sofara mission and vision: NYS Democratic Club Gulf Cooperation Council Qatari Ambassador Qatar Foundation Walton Foundation Carnegie Foundation United Nations	Development of ongoing relationship and mentorship ** Letter of Support from the International Baccalaureate Organization * Invitation to apply for Walton Foundation grant



SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

A PROPOSED WALL-TO-WALL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) SCHOOL

Where: Community School District 5

When: Proposed opening in fall of 2015

Serving: All of Harlem and beyond for K-12

Who: Enrolling K-3 in our first year

Why?

- ✓ We deserve the best opportunities for our children.
- ✓ We need a nurturing and empowering environment where kids can grow with stability
- ✓ Quality education in the IB can cost you as much as \$40,000 per year.
- ✓ There are no tuition free schools offering the K-12 IB continuum of programs
- ✓ IB is an internationally recognized standard of education
- ✓ IB will develop skills in our children that will make them globally competitive.
- ✓ **We'll offer Foreign language development in French and Arabic**
- ✓ IB students experience Inquiry driven, project based learning to include Science Technology Engineering Art and Mathematics (**STEAM**)
- ✓ IB students develop well-rounded artistic and athletic abilities
- ✓ No one else offers Blended learning that opens access to academics from any location

Visit us for more information at www.sofarainternational.org
info@sofarainternational.org
Or call our Community Liason at 212-591-0299



SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

A PROPOSED WALL-TO-WALL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) SCHOOL

COMMUNITY EDUCATION MEETING

When: Saturday, August 24, 2013
Where: Shugah Baybees Child Development Center
135W 122nd Street Suite 1
New York, NY 10027
(646)833-7343

Thanks to: Janay Shabazz

COME HEAR MORE ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY SOFARRAH WILL BRING TO OUR COMMUNITY!

1:00p.m. to 2:00p.m.

Program begins at noon. Join an info session on admission to Hunter Elementary School and the Shugah Babees Child Development Center

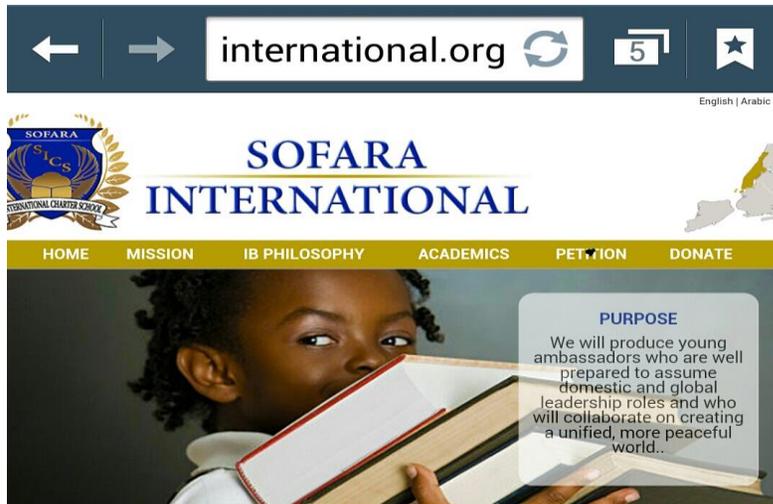
Visit us for more information at www.sofarainternational.org
Or call our Community Liason at 212-591-0299

SICS Flyer

SICS Town Hall announcement



SICS Community event SICS Facebook Page sample



What is SICS?

We are a proposed New York City International Charter School to be founded in CSD 5. Harlem is the center of American Culture with many resources at hand to develop inquiring minds. Come join us on our Expedition and see how FAR your child will go!

What's the difference?

The Goal of the Sofara International Charter School is to infuse, throughout all aspects of the school, the International Baccalaureate philosophy and educational model that has been an academic standard around the world for generations. "The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of in international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right." ~ The IB Mission Statement, IBO.org The International Baccalaureate (IB) educational model, which is normally reserved for private school students, offers exciting possibilities to public school children and would provide a new way of viewing who they are,




SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

VISITING WITH THE CSD 5 COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL



COMMUNITY SOCIAL



HARLEM 411 COMMUNITY RADIO 90.3 INTERVIEW



Community Support for Sofara International Charter School

Dear Community,

Thank you for taking the time to sign our petition of Support. Sofara International Charter School is an amazing opportunity for our children. To bring SICS online, in its proposed location in NYC School District 5, we are asking for community support. To date we have collected over 700 paper signatures of support and we want to collect 200 digital signatures toward meeting our goal of 1000+.

Our Vision is to open a **wall-to-wall International Baccalaureate school** that would serve children from K through 12 in the Harlem community. Our mission is to produce internationally-minded and globally competitive ambassadors that can thrive in a variety of settings. Our languages of choice are French and Arabic.

Please participate in the opening of Sofara International Charter School by signing our community petition of support. For more information about the school, to add comments, or to ask questions, please visit www.sofarainternational.org or email us at info@sofarainternational.org.

Sign this petition
[Sign with Facebook](#) • [Sign with Twitter](#)

NAME
 EMAIL

Comments

COMMENTS

Show my name in the online signature list

SIGN NOW

121 SIGNATURES

DISCUSSION (16) RECENT SIGNATURES (10) PETITION HIGHLIGHTS

most upvotes | most replies | latest

Sing Lathan February 6, 2014 10:47 PM

Alicia Soto January 27, 2014 1:17 AM
 Sofara International would be a great addition this wonderful community that I belong too. It prepare our children for the future and ensure that our children will be leaders in the global community.

Alicia January 27, 2014 12:14 AM
 The languages are a welcome addition and the level of quality is needed!

Paula Redd Rollins January 24, 2014 2:03 AM
 I am happy to lend my support to an impressive organization. Charter school such as this are integral to creating a place that nurtures inner city youth in the formative years in a way that allows them to celebrate the richness of their culture, expand their horizons and plan bright futures.

It is a pleasure to spread the word!

janeat brown January 21, 2014 12:48 AM

SOFARA (SICS) ONLINE PETITION WITH AREA FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Medicare/Medicaid Plans
[hfnycmedicare.org/...](http://hfnycmedicare.org/)
 635 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217, United States
 Have One of Our Knowledgeable

ONL

LETTERS OF SUPPORT Received



International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

29 August 2013

Voyka Soto, Founding Director
Sofara International School
61 West 127th Street
New York, New York 10027

Dear Ms. Soto:

The International Baccalaureate (IB) supports Sofara International School's pursuit to become an IB World School. It is encouraging to know that students in New York City will have the opportunity to experience the full IB continuum of programmes. Our organization will provide the necessary direction and supervision to help Sofara through the authorization process; the timeline and fees guide for authorization are available at: www.ibo.org/iba/become. As you know, the authorization process is designed to support schools in making the decision to become IB World Schools and to fully understand the nature and requirements of our programmes.

We believe that our mission statement best elucidates the nature of this support:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Please note that while this support in no way guarantees authorization to offer our programmes, we look forward to guiding you through the process, which may take as long as three years. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Sincerely,

Michael Leshner
Manager, Regional Development and Outreach
IB Americas

International Baccalaureate Organization
7501 Wisconsin Avenue
Suite 200 West
Bethesda, Maryland, 20814
USA

Tel: +1 301 292 3000
Fax: +1 301 292 3000
E-mail: ibo@ibo.org
Web: www.ibo.org

International Baccalaureate® · Baccalauréat International® · Bachillerato Internacional®

CONGRESSMAN RANGEL LETTER OF SUPPORT

GEORGE H. HENRY
CHIEF OF STAFF

COMMITTEE
WAYS AND MEANS
JOINT COMMITTEE
ON TAXATION



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

February 24, 2014

The Honorable John B. King, Jr. Ed.D.
Commissioner
Department of Education
State of New York
89 Washington Avenue
New York, NY 12234

Dear Commissioner King,

I write in support of the Sofara International Charter School's Application for Charter. It strives for higher quality by teaching in an innovative manner. Their mission is to further international awareness and to instill skills in our children that would allow them to compete on a global level.

Increasing global awareness amongst our children is an admirable mission, for it improves their chances in this global economy. An early start to a top notch education is the surest way we can position the children in my district to excel academically and their "service as learning" program and steam projects will give these students the head start they need. These students would be given the invaluable advantage of having strong early education which then leads to strong higher education. The Sofara International Charter School's effort to involve the community is wonderful and I am sure the community will play a major role in the success of this school as well. I would be proud to have such an ambitious institution in my district.

The future of our city and Great Nation depends on our ability to give young people the opportunity to contribute to the resolve of the challenges that face our local communities. I encourage you to give Sofara International Charter School's application your highest consideration for the aforementioned reasons and overall benefit to the community. Please know that you can continue to count on my strong support in the United States Congress.

Sincerely,

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

CBR/afa/sss

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2354 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-3213
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-4865
FAX: (202) 225-0916

PLEASE RESPOND TO OFFICE CHECKED

DISTRICT OFFICE
163 WEST 125TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10027
TELEPHONE: (212) 663-3900
FAX: (212) 663-4277



ROBERT J. RODRIGUEZ
Assemblyman 68TH District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Labor
Banks
Mental Health
Small Business
Corporations, Authorities & Commissions
Puerto Rican/Hispanic & Asian Legislative
Caucus

February 21, 2014

Ms. Voyka Soto,

I am pleased to submit this letter of support on behalf of the Sofara International Charter School. With your help, we can invest in the future of our students to ensure the growth of this community by nurturing academic growth and social development. SICS will work to achieve its mission by enriching the lives of our students through a developmentally appropriate model of instruction that will help create the future leaders in a globally competitive society.

Sofara International Charter School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school growing from Kindergarten through 12th grade. The first of its kind for public school children in New York State, this school will create a tuition-free, nurturing academic environment focused on the social, international and competitive enrichment of its students. SICS will help to realize its mission by extending their school day time, promoting international-mindedness and establishing a rigorous holistic learning environment developed through the International Baccalaureate continuum of K-12 programs.

By becoming the first wall-to-wall International Baccalaureate school, not only in NYC but in all of NYS to offer both a trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary model that creates a natural fit for inclusion of Science Technology and Engineering Art Mathematics (STEAM), SICS will help instill students with universal foundational skills and strategies. Of the current 24 elementary schools in existence in CSD 5, seven of which are charter, none offer the IB Primary Years Program nor an inquiry based instructional methodology. Additionally, at our current district performance rating of 3 out of 10, it is evident that by investing in the future of our students through this innovative learning approach, we can foster change for the better of our community.

I applaud SICS's innovative approach to help impact student performance in our community and I respectfully urge you to support their goal to enrich the lives of our future global ambassadors.

Thank you for taking this request into consideration. I look forward to encouraging a greater range of accessibility and benefits to facilitate the formation of this program.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Rodriguez
Assembly Member
NYS Assembly District 68

Email Address: rodriguezrj@assembly.state.ny.us
 Albany Office: Room 729, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248, 518-455-4781
 District Office: 55 East 115th Street, New York, New York 10029, 212 828-3953

INEZ E. DICKENS

COUNCIL MEMBER
5TH DISTRICT MANHATTAN

DISTRICT OFFICE
115 WEST 127TH STREET, SUITE 529
NEW YORK, NY 10027
TEL: (212) 678-4505
FAX: (212) 864-4379

CITY HALL OFFICE
290 BROADWAY, SUITE 1912
NEW YORK, NY 10007
TEL: (212) 785-7297
FAX: (212) 405-2333



**THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

CHAIR
LAND USE SUB-COMMITTEE OF
PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS & CONCESSIONS

COMMITTEES
LAND USE
COURTESY & INVESTIGATIONS
RULES, PRIVILEGES & ELECTIONS
SMALL BUSINESS
STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

February 7, 2014

Ms. Voyka Soto, Founder
Sofara International Charter School
61 West 127th Street
New York, NY 10027

Dear Ms. Soto:

I am writing this letter in support of SOFARA International Charter School, as they explore an opportunity to establish a new Charter School in my City Council district.

SOFARA has witnessed struggles many families face in trying to provide a well-rounded learning environment that seeks to bring out only the best in their children. Some of these institutions have traditionally been financially out of reach, have too few available slots, or worse, require burdensome social obstacles.

As a result of this, SOFARA has seen a unique opportunity to provide a much needed and necessary service for an underserved segment of our beloved community. Due to Harlem's ever growing socially diverse population, available quality learning environments have become ever more crucial to sustaining a vibrant neighborhood.

SOFARA's unique approach toward cultivating the whole child in becoming culturally aware and attached to the community in which they live offers a world of opportunities that only seek to improve a community as a whole. As the child's "extended family", SOFARA has created a caring atmosphere of acceptance for the various different cultures that have made Harlem the cultural Mecca it is known for the world over.

SOFARA seeks to broaden the lessons these future leaders learn at home by exposing them to the lifestyles of others. While growing up in such a city like New York can be difficult and at times overwhelming for many children and parents, these trips seek to enhance their sensitivities to the hardships of that others experience. Such lessons teach a greater appreciation for family, for community, for Harlem.

Sincerely,


Inez E. Dickens



September 2, 2013

Nadhege Ptah
Co-Founder
Sofara International School
61 West 127
New York, NY 10027

Dear Mrs. Ptah,

On behalf of Harlem4kids, a parent run not for profit with over 1,800 subscribers to our listserv, I'm pleased to provide this letter of support for Sofara International School.

One of the core values of our organization is enrichment through cultural diversity. As such we strongly believe in Sofara's mission to provide the families of Harlem with additional school choice; especially one that is infused with the International Baccalaureate philosophy and a global language component.

An international school could fundamentally enrich the experience of our local public school students. We trust that Sofara International School's academically challenging environment will produce internationally-minded scholars who are prepared to make a positive impact on our local and global community.

We wish you much success in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lise J. Brown".

Lise J. Brown
President

www.harlem4kids.com



Association des Sénégalais d'Amérique, ASA, Inc.

121 St Nicholas Avenue, New York, NY 10026

Tel: (212) 932-0900 – Fax: (212) 932-0880

Email: general@asa-website.org/www.asa-website.org

Dear Voyka Soto & Nadhege Ptah,

It is with pleasure that I am writing to express my strong support for the establishment of the Sofara International Charter School.

The Senegalese Association in America is a worldwide organization with approximately 6000 members of which about 2500 are active here in New York City. As the {position} of the Senegalese Association in America (ASA), there is a great need for global education that will serve children in the Harlem community with the vision of preparing our children to be internationally-minded and competitive scholars that can use their skills to unite our communities. The French and Arabic languages will further enhance children's abilities to be multi-lingual. The students in New York City should be given the chance to benefit from the educational options offered by Sofara International Charter School.

Our association is committed to improving the quality of life of its members and we believe Sofara shares that mission. New York is home to French speakers from around the world and many of our members are from Senegal, where French is a dominant language. This school will be a great benefit to Senegalese children in our community and children of all origins.

We expect that the school will provide an academically challenging environment for children of our members. Establishment of this school will assist our children to achieve the necessary skills and values to prepare them to become well-educated and true citizens of the world. We are convinced that this school will be very beneficial to the total community.

I wish you every success in founding this charter school.

Sincerely,

The Vice-President

Elhadji Faye

THE Reading Team
LITERACY FOR LIFE

October 3, 2013

Nadhege Ptah
Sofarah International Charter School
253 West 125th Street
New York, NY 10027

Dear Ms. Ptah,

I heartily applaud the work you and Voyka Soto are doing to establish the Sofarah International Charter School in CSD 5 in Harlem.

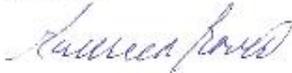
The Reading Team has provided early-literacy services in this district for more than 12 years. We fully understand the regional constraints that threaten academic opportunity for many of its children, some of which include: high levels of poverty and unemployment, inadequate support for a child's early language development, and attendance at low-achieving schools.

Our programs have made significant progress in helping young children to become strong and enthusiastic readers and to achieve academic success. I am confident that Sofarah International will substantially add to the caliber of education in this community. The curriculum seems to offer every student a wealth of tools that he or she needs to succeed.

Moreover, its accent on intercultural collaboration and respect will enhance the future for all of us by preparing students to understand, empathize, and contribute positively to the challenges of our growingly complex world.

Best wishes as you move toward your program opening date of fall 2015. Please let me know how I can be of further support along the way.

Sincerely,



Maureen Rover
President

CC: Voyka Soto



2/24/2014

Mrs. Voyka Soto & Mrs. Nadhege Ptah
Founders
Sofara International Charter School
District 5
New York, New York, 10027

RE: Letter of Support

Dear Mrs. Soto and Mrs. Ptah:

It is with great pride, hope, honor and optimism that I am writing you today in support of your valiant effort to open a school of this caliber in our community, for our district and for our children.

As long-term residents, educators and mothers, you are also aware that despite the number of Charter schools present, our community is still lacking access to a truly world-class education, and the vital critical thinking skills that will allow our children to plot an uncharted future in any field of study, at truly competitive universities, world-wide.

The preponderance of rote memorization to pass tests versus the leveraging of key skills, aligned with innovative, inquiry based teaching methodologies, is the critical difference between the ability to build an inter-connected knowledge base with a vital framework that will lead to many successes, for years to come. Sofara's ability to provide this difference in a 'Wall to Wall' IB curriculum, is also well-beyond what is offered at present. In addition, the bi-lingual, bi-cultural and bi-literate curriculum, employing both the French and Arabic languages native to Harlem, will be an important asset to the self-efficacy of our children, as it reflects the existing cultural fabric of our community.

In closing, the Harlem Junior LEGO League was founded to speak to the deficits of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts + Design and Math) education in Harlem, by people from that same community, and it is wonderful and exciting to see that same sentiment mirrored in yourselves and addressed in your curriculum.

Together we share the objective of nourishing the educational growth of all children in our districts, leveraging STEM education in early-childhood to close the achievement gap as future leaders and scholars in these fields.

I wish you immense success with the opening of this school, and look forward to partnering with you further.

Regards,

April Patrick-Rabiu
Harlem Jr. First Lego League



ABYSSINIAN HEAD START

September 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with tremendous pleasure for me to write this letter of support for the Sofara International Charter School.

As an Education Director for Abyssinian Head Start (AHS), I feel the mission to invest in children, as our future, and ensure their academic success by nurturing their growth and development while promoting international mindedness for success in a global society; is necessary to prepare children to become better world citizen.

I particularly like the International Baccalaureate which will aim to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who will help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. Children need more exposure to the world around them, to help them value and respect other cultures different from their own. I strongly believe that children and families will benefit from the educational option being offered by for the Sofara International Charter School.

Abyssinian Head Start has been committed on establishing a Global Curriculum within our centers and having a school such as the Sofara International Charter School as a school choice once our children live the program will ensure a continuation of what they have learned from AHS.

On behalf of the Abyssinian Head Start, I would once again express our support for the Sofara International Charter School. The leadership has significant educational and school start up capacity and they will be serving an underserved population, deserving of a high quality education as proposed by the Sofara International Charter School.

We wish you every success in founding the school.

Sincerely,

Melodie Delphonse, Education Director

Annie G. Newsome Head Start I, 120 West 138th Street, New York, NY 10030, T: 212.688.8688 F: 212.688.5113
Annie G. Newsome Head Start II, 646 Lenox Avenue, New York, NY 10037, T: 212.688.2330 F: 212.688.3333
Adam Clayton Powell Jr., 25 West 122nd Street, New York, NY 10037, T: 212.684.0250 F: 212.688.5113

ADDITIONAL LETTERS OF SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM:

- 1) The Math Clinic – American Legion
- 2) St.Aloyisus Education Clinic
- 3) Hue-man Books
- 4) Shubah Baybees Developmental Day Care Center
- 5) Harlem Pediatrics
- 6) City National Bank
- 7) Rosie’s Theater Kids
- 8) The Laundromat Project
- 9) ManUp
- 10) Morija French Speaking Church

SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL SAMPLE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

ATTACHMENT 3a

PYP STUDENT WORK WEEK ASSUMPTIONS					
KG1	DUAL LANGUAGE				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-7:55	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
(90 mins)	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry
8:00-10:30	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM
(60 mins)	switch				
10:30-10:50	Teachers Switch/Student Recess				
10:50-11:50	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
(60 mins)	L	U	N	C	H
11:55-12:45	switch				
12:45-1:05	CAR	CAR	CAR	CAR	CAR
1:05-2:05	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA
(60 mins)	P.E.	Art	P.E.	Art	Assembly
2:05-3:05	FLE	P.E.	FLE	FLE	PD Early Release
3:05-4:05	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	PD
4:05-4:15	Tutoring	Tutoring		Tutoring	PD
4:20-4:50					

PYP STUDENT WORK WEEK ASSUMPTIONS					
KG2	DUAL LANGUAGE				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-7:55	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
(60 mins)	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA
8:00-10:00	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
(60 mins)	switch				
10:00-10:25	Teachers Switch/Student Recess				
10:30-11:55	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry	Inquiry
(90 mins)	L	U	N	C	H
11:55-12:45	switch				
12:45-1:05	CAR	CAR	CAR	CAR	CAR
1:05-2:05	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM	STEAM
(60 mins)	FLE	P.E.	FLE	FLE	Assembly
2:05-3:05	P.E.	Art	P.E.	Art	PD Early Release
3:05-4:05	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	PD
4:05-4:15	Tutoring	Tutoring		Tutoring	PD
4:20-4:50					

PYP STUDENT WORK WEEK ASSUMPTIONS 150 minutes of French immersion Inquiry divided into 90 minutes of Science or S.S. daily & 60mins Library Lab STEAM
 70 mins LUNCH- Lunch (50 mins) & Choose Act Reflect (CAR) mentoring (20 mins)
 Language Literacy - 60 minutes of daily ELA and 60 minutes 3 times per week of Foreign Language (FLE)

PYP TEACHER WORK WEEK ASSUMPTION! GRADE K Dual Language TEACHER					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday
7:30-7:55	Greeting Students	Greetings	Greetings	Greetings	Greetings
	Inquiry - KG1	Inquiry KG1	Inquiry - KG1	Inquiry - KG1	Inquiry - KG1
8:00-10:30	STEAM CTT KG1	STEAM KG1	STEAM KG1	STEAM KG1	STEAM KG1
10:30	switch	switch	switch	switch	switch
10:30-11:55	Inquiry - KG2	Inquiry KG2	Inquiry KG2	Inquiry KG2	Inquiry KG2
11:55-12:45	L	U	N	C	H
12:45-1:05	CAR Time	CAR Time	CAR Time	CAR Time	CAR Time
1:05-2:05	STEAM CTT KG2	STEAM KG2	STEAM KG2	STEAM KG2	STEAM KG2
2:05-3:05	Planning & Prep	Planning & Pre	Planning & Prep	Planning & Prep	Assembly
3:05-4:05	Planning & Prep	Planning & Pre	Planning & Prep	Planning & Prep	PD Early Release
4:05-4:15	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	PD
4:20-4:50	Tutoring	Tutoring	Specialty Planning	Tutoring	PD

*Attachment 3b: Proposed First Year Calendar
Sofara International Charter School*

AUGUST					SEPTEMBER				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4	5	6	7		1 SS	2 SS	3 SS	4 SS
10	11	12	13 SI	14 SI	7	8	9	10	11
17 SI	18 SI	19 SI	20 SI	21 SI	14	15	16	17	18
24 SI	25 SI	26 SI	27 SS	28 SS	21	22	23	24	25
31 SS					28	29	30		

OCTOBER					NOVEMBER				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1	2	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20 PD
19 PD	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30	30				

DECEMBER					JANUARY 2016				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	1	2	3	4					1
7	8	9	10	11 A	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29

FEBRUARY					MARCH				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	7	8	9	10	11A
15	16	17	18	19	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	21	22	23	24	25
29 PD					28	29	30	31	

Summer Institute for teachers – professional development and training.
Summer Sofari for students – pre academic session to allow students to be oriented to IB and teachers to assess students
Holiday – those regularly scheduled in the DOE calendar
PD – four full-day professional development days scheduled at key points during the year
A – three full-day data assessment days scheduled at key points during the year to allow teachers to deepen their understanding of their students

APRIL				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29 PD

- First day of school for teachers - Thursday, August 13, 2015 (ten days of pre-opening PD).
- First day of school for students - Thursday, August 27th, 2015.
- The last day of school for students and teachers will be Thursday, June 30th, 2016.
- The school year will be broken into trimesters with 3 marking periods:
- The first marking period ending on or about November 19, 2015.
- The second marking period ending on or about March 15, 2016.
- The third marking period ending on or about June 24, 2016.
- Every student report is distributed to parents at individual parent teacher conferences.

MAY				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

JUNE				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17 A
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

JULY				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Month	Holidays	Student Contact Days
August 2015		3
September 2015	September 7: Labor Day September 14: Rosh Hashanah September 23-24 Yom Kippur	21
October 2015	October 12: Columbus Day	20
November 2015	November 11: Veterans Day November 26-27: Thanksgiving	17
December 2015	December 24-December 31: Winter Break	16
January 2016	January 1: New Year's Day January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day	19
February 2016	February 15-19: mid-Winter break	15
March 2016		22
April 2016	April 14-18, Spring Break	15
May 2016	May 30: Memorial Day	21
June 2016		21
Total		190
Summer Academy		
July 5-August 2, 2016	Student Day runs from 8:30 am-11:30 am Teacher day runs from 8:00 am-12:00 pm	

- Summer School begins on July 5, 2016 and runs through August 2, 2016.

Attachment 4

Sofara International Charter School Disciplinary Policy

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

SICS will follow the NYC DOE discipline code of conduct for levels of infractions and options for intervention. This will be in conjunction with the following, which may be modified from time to time by the Director of Teaching & Learning, Executive Director, or Board of Trustees. School staff will be educated about and trained to implement the policy during the Summer Institute. Newly admitted students will receive a copy of the Disciplinary Policy in their enrollment packet (see *II.F.*).

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Discipline at SICS will be administered by school personnel utilizing consequences described elsewhere in this Policy. **Definitions:** For purposes of this Code:

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

In-School Disciplinary Measures: In-school disciplinary matters will be referred to and administered by the DOTL. In each case, the DOTL will follow the steps listed below.

- The staff member addresses the conduct (including describing the infraction(s) and hearing the student's version of events) and writes up the infraction for the DOTL.
- If necessary, the student is removed from class.
- The DOTL notifies the parents of the offense and describes the consequence to be administered.
- If appropriate, the school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian in order to discuss the infractions and may reduce the penalty based upon mutual understanding reached at the meeting.
- The DOTL may assign one or more In-School Disciplinary measures as a consequence for violating the Code of Conduct as outlines in the adopted NYC DOE discipline code.

Due Process: SICS shall follow due process procedures consistent with *all applicable laws*.

Short-Term Suspensions: Short-term Suspension may be imposed by the DOTL, ED, or the Board. If a student commits an offense that calls for short-term suspension (10 days or less), the following steps are taken:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The student is informed of the accusation against him or her.
- The student is entitled to respond to the accusations against him or her.

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

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

Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion: The DOTL, Executive Director, or Board may impose a long-term suspension. If a student commits an offense that calls for long-term suspension (more than 10 days) or expulsion, the following steps are taken:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
 - The student is informed of the accusations against him or her.
 - Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the DOTL shall verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions.
 - The parent/guardian is notified in writing by SICS. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery to the student's last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a current contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) that resulted in the suspension and indicate that a formal hearing will be held, which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s) if it is known to be other than English. The notice will state that at the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, present and question witnesses, and present evidence.
 - The school will set a hearing date. The student and/or his/her parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the:
 - o accusations and a statement of the evidence
 - o date, time and place of a hearing
 - o notice of the right at the hearing to:
 - o be represented by legal counsel (at the student's/parent's own expense)
 - o present evidence and question witnesses
 - After the DOTL, ED, the Board or a hearing officer designated by either of them hears the case, the DOTL, ED or the Board issues a written decision to be sent to the student, the parent/guardian, the school's Board of Trustees, and the student's permanent record.
 - If a parent or student wishes to appeal a decision, they may do so by notifying the Chair of Board of Trustees in writing within 5 school days of issuance of the written decision.
- The decision to impose a long-term suspension/expulsion upon a student may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the charter school's complaint process, pursuant to Education Law § 2855(4).

Provision of Services During Removal: SICS will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a child who has been suspended. For a student who has been suspended or expelled, alternative instruction will be provided to the extent required by law. The school will provide alternative instruction to students as soon as practicable: in general, no later than the day after the suspension is effective. Such instruction will be at a reasonable location and time of the school's choosing and may include a blended learning model. Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. Except for the brief time it would take for a student to re-enter another public school, SICS does not have to, but may, provide alternative instruction for expelled students.

DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

The school shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons. If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight days, such student will immediately be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

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

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

Also, SICS will ensure that when the suspension or removal of a student with a disability will constitute a disciplinary change of placement, the CSE will be immediately notified so that the CSE can meet its required obligations to:

- 1) Convene a CSE meeting within 10 school days to make a manifestation determination;
- 2) Convene a CSE meeting within 10 business days to develop a plan to conduct a functional behavioral assessment or review an existing functional behavioral assessment or behavioral intervention plan;
- 3) Provide the student's parent with a copy of their procedural due process rights; and
- 4) Work closely with the CSE of the students' district of residence in determining education services or the interim alternative educational setting consistent with the FAPE requirements.

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

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

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

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

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

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability with consideration of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing. If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and school agree otherwise.

Dress Code: SICS requires that all teachers wear “professional attire” and students wear SICS designated uniform attire at all times, with the exception of announced days such as “Casual Fridays,” during which casual professional attire will be permitted. Students out of dress code will not be permitted to attend class. They may either wait in the office for up to an hour until parents have brought appropriate clothes from home, or they will be sent home. If possible, the school will maintain a few items of dress code-appropriate clothing for students. However, it is not the obligation of SICS to supply alternative appropriate clothes for a student who is out of dress code. If a student wears an outfit that is not specifically covered by this dress code but is nevertheless deemed by the DOTL or Executive Director to be “unprofessional,” SICS reserves the right to deem the student out of dress code and administer the above consequences.

Boys: Boys must wear shirts with collars or turtlenecks. Shirts must have sleeves and be tucked in, neatly and completely. Boys must wear full-length pants (not denim, sweatpants, or athletic gear) in good repair. Shoes must have backs, closed toes, and be in good repair. Pants must be worn at the waist with a solid colored belt and may not “sag.” Boys may wear sneakers so long as they are solid black in color. Boys may wear solid sweaters or sweatshirts with no writing on them. Boys may not wear hoodies, hats, scarves, or any other head covering except for religious purposes. Any jewelry must be modest and not over-sized.

Girls: Girls must wear shirts or dresses with sleeves (no sleeveless items such as spaghetti straps or tank tops) and modest necklines. Girls may wear solid blouses or polo shirts. Shirts must fall well below the waistline and midriffs may not be exposed. Skirts and dresses must be knee length. All garments must fit properly without being tight. Girls may wear full-length or calf-length pants (not denim, sweatpants, or athletic gear). Pants must be worn at the waist with a solid colored belt and may not “sag.” Leggings must be worn under a skirt, dress, or pants that comply with SICS’ dress code; they may not be worn on their own. No see-through garments are allowed. Shoes must have low heels, low soles, backs and closed toes. Girls may wear sneakers so long as they are solid black in color. Girls may wear solid sweaters or sweatshirts with no writing on them. Girls may not wear hooded sweatshirts, hats, scarves, or any other head covering except for religious purposes. Any jewelry must be modest and not over-sized.

School Discretionary Clause: Notwithstanding the above language, the DOTL and ED may, at their discretion, deem a student out of dress code if he or she is wearing clothing the DOTL or ED deem “unprofessional.” In this case, the consequences in the disciplinary code would apply.

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Monica White

Charter School Name: Sofarah International Charter School (SICS)

Charter School Address: NYC CSD-Manhattan: CSD 5

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 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 (yes)
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 (yes).
3. Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm. (yes)
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I became aware of the work towards opening SICS when Voyka Soto and myself sat on the board of another charter school together. As the project became more serious I was asked for advice and eventually was asked by the Lead Applicant, Voyka Soto, to serve as a member of the board and share my educational expertise as a founding board member.

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

In knowing Ms. Soto and the work she is doing to open Sofara Internal Charter School, I have gained full confidence in her vision and mission of the School and her ability to fulfill said. As a resident of the community who has very strong ties to the community, I look forward to being able to being a part of bringing SICS to fruition.

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):

Yes, I have previously served on the board of a Harlem based charter school. Currently I sit on the executive board and have sat on the foundation board of Delta Sigma Theta. Additionally, my current position with the NYC DOE office of innovation allows me to bring solid insight and understanding of innovative educational practices to such an enriching school as Sofara International Charter School.

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

8. 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.

If believed that one or more members of the charter school's board were involved in either self-dealing or other forms of conflicts of interest, I would immediately present the matter to them and then to the other members following any procedures laid out in the bylaws or State laws dealing with this matter. I am clear that board members have a fiduciary responsibility to disclose such involvement prior to board involvement. If the inappropriate activity is confirmed, the offending board member will be in breach of duty and may be held personally liable. Based on board by-laws, the targeted member shall be immediately removed. Thinking proactively, I will offer board workshops on this and other issues.

Educational Philosophy

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

It is my understanding that Sofara International Charter School will utilize the continuum of IB programs as a framework to create an inquiry based curriculum to include STEAM and foreign language with the main goal of instilling the skills needed to have its graduates be leaders of their industries, and thus globally competitive. This will be attained by teaching to the whole child with real-world activities and challenges, rather than just their academic growth.

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

There are four main components to Sofara International Charter School's educational programming: IB programs, STEAM, Foreign Language and

Blended opportunities. This programming entails inquiry work that is project based in a trilingual setting that has many opportunities, including those with technology, to differentiate instruction and increase access to academics.

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 charter schools are successful when everyone knows their role and when systems, processes, and procedures are in place at all levels that allow for smooth transitions, organized operations, and clear oversight by the stakeholders. This will be possible by supporting personnel trainings at each level and ensuring board training.

Other

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

A Charter School board member's responsibilities include ensuring that the school as a whole is in good standing and that the academic program is successful and inline with its charter. Board members provide oversight by reviewing school data, including student performance and budgetary reports, reviewing performance and monitoring the strength of the programs. Members collaborate on short and long term strategic plans and fulfillment of said. Additionally, members secure resources and funding according to the needs of the 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 affirm.

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

Presently, I feel confident I can further the mission and vision of the Sofara International Charter School. I am confident I can collaborate with the proposed board and help create an atmosphere of productive, organized oversight.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Monica A. White, Ed.D. (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 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



March 8, 2014

Signature

Date

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

Business Telephone: _____

Business Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Home Address: _____

Monica A. White, Ed.D. 304 W. 117th Street, Apt. 2N New York, New York 10026 · 646-467-4424 (mobile) · maw155@columbia.edu

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Talented educational leader, who has over 20 years of comprehensive experience in teaching, learning, leadership, and strategic management in schools and educational programs:

- Shaping vision for improving student outcomes for students with high needs in the largest U.S. public school system
- Managing district-wide multi-million dollar partnerships, budgets, and resources
- Developing district-wide professional learning options for teachers, school principals, and district network leaders
- Strategizing successful school/program change initiatives
- Designing innovative curriculum and instructional strategies
- Facilitating vendor and partner relationships that lead to innovative instruction
- Published researcher, author, and lecturer at Teachers College Columbia University with technical skills and expertise in research design, methodology, and leadership in school reform and accountability

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education. Teachers College, Columbia University. New York, New York (October, 2006).

· Spencer Foundation. *Research Apprentice.* Awarded Research Fellowship in amount of \$66,000.00

· Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP), Institute for Educational Leadership *Fellow*

Master of Arts in Teaching in Urban Schools. Southern University at New Orleans. New Orleans, LA (May, 2001).

Bachelor of Science in Education. Louisiana State University. Baton Rouge, LA (May, 1992).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

New York City Department of Education, New York (August, 2008-Present).

Current Title: Senior Director of Special Programs. Other positions held: Executive Director of Academic Support for Alternative Schools and Programs (District 79) and Network Innovation Manager (Office of Innovation iCoach).

- Developing new school model using radical innovation practices targeting the use of time and space in schools
- Created the direction for academic reform and shared ambitious vision of a relevant and meaningful curriculum for district serving over 70,000 students who have been underserved in traditional schooling options.
- Led community of teachers and leaders in the implementation of innovative strategies—project-based learning, flexible scheduling, and blended learning—to obtain personalized mastery learning for high school students

Teachers College, Columbia University, Adjunct Lecturer/Curriculum Coordinator/Researcher New York, New York (September, 2002-present). Developed and implemented research on nationwide school reform initiative funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation while teaching graduate level courses at top-ranking graduate school of education on the topics of designing curriculum, principles of teaching and learning, and leadership and accountability.

Institute for Student Achievement and Secondary Literacy Institute, School Redesign Coach and Literacy Consultant, New York, New York (July, 2003 - July, 2008). Facilitated strategic planning

for implementing small learning communities around ISA principles or Secondary Literacy Institute objectives within a large comprehensive high school, a major school reform effort funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

New Orleans Public Schools and Archdiocese of New Orleans. *Title I Coordinator of Instruction and teacher, New Orleans, Louisiana (August, 1992 -July, 2001)*. Managed Title I program for cohort of middle schools developing strategic plans to meet annual yearly progress (AYP) goals.

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

Shipp, D., & White, M. (2009). A new politics of the principalship? Accountability-driven change in New York City. *Peabody Journal of Education, 84*(3), 350-373.

White, M. A. (2004). Paradise lost?: Teachers' perspectives on the use of cultural capital in the segregated schools of New Orleans, Louisiana. In Vincent P. Franklin & Carter Julian Savage (Eds.) *Cultural Capital and Black Education: African American Communities and the Funding of Black Schooling, 1865 to the present*, 143-158.

White-Smith, K. & White, M. (2009). School reform implementation: Its impact on the principalship. *Urban Education, 44*(3), 259-279.

White, M. (2006). A case of New York City high school principals' experiences with multiple accountability pressures and accompanying models for decision-making. Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, United States -- New York. Retrieved March 21, 2011, from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text. (Publication No. AAT 3237103).

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Millicent Redick

Charter School Name: Sofarah International Charter School (SICS)

Charter School Address: NYC CSD-Manhattan: CSD 5

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 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 (yes)
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 (yes).
3. Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm. (yes)
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I was informed of the start-up work on Sofara International Charter School through community residents. I was told that Voyka Soto was actively recruiting for a board member that had a financial background. I gave permission to be contacted and after several conversations and meetings with Ms. Soto and co-founder Nadhege Ptah, I was asked to serve as a prospective board member on the founding team.

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

Professionally, I know I can bring financial oversight to the school since I have experience doing so on other boards as a CPA. However, my main reason for wanting to serve on the board of Sofara International Charter School is that I believe our community really needs a school like Sofara. In working with the cofounders I know they are genuine and capable and I want to help bring the vision to our children.

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

I am a resident of Harlem and a very active part of my community. Over the years I have served on several non-profit boards and community based organizations in Harlem. This includes serving on the board of the Harlem Commonwealth Council., holding the chair at Commonwealth Holdings, and holding the vice-chair at the Harlem Community Development Corp.

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

8. 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.

Following all applicable laws and by-laws of the school I would bring the matter to the attention of the full board. If the matter involved any criminal activity I would bring it to the attention of the appropriate governing authority. Corrective action would be taken and new procedures and processes put in place to deter repeated improprieties.

Educational Philosophy

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

The Sofara International Charter School mission is to expose children not just to American education and experiences but to give them an international perspective and how they fit into an ever-growing global society. The philosophy is to accomplish this by teaching to the academic, intellectual, social and emotional areas of children's development. To help achieve the mission SICS will include studies in areas of industry growth such as STEAM.

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

Sofara International Charter School will use the International Baccalaureate programs, which are designed to be developmentally and age appropriate. Students will learn 50% of the school day in French and learn Arabic in daily classes as a specialty. Students will also work

on STEAM projects aligned to their units of study that create real-world understanding. Students will also have access to technology to help review or further their studies. Everything has been designed based on research in how children learn and to meet achievement goals.

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 are those that have a clear vision and goals toward achieving the mission. SICS will need to ensure that this same clarity is pervasive throughout all areas including the Board operations and oversight procedures. The Board will need to train together, come up with the clear goals and then maintain a respectful tone during deliberations while using the charter as a foundation for decisions. The Board will also have to cultivate and support the relationship of and with the executive management knowing that they are responsible for oversight and not the management of the school.

Other

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

A charter school board member is there to provide oversight for the school and not management. Members are there to maintain the integrity of the charter and any applicable charter or government laws. Board members are also in the role of mentors to executive management when needed and fundraisers for meeting specified school goals.

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.

I affirm.

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

I believe in the mission of the Sofara International Charter School and the founding team and want to bring my expertise in to help meet the needs of our community.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, MILLICENT REDICK (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 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Millicent Redick
Signature _____ Date _____

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

Business Telephone:

Business Address:

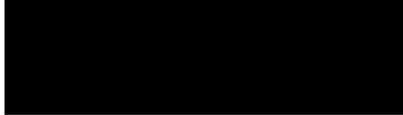
E-Mail Address:

Home Telephone:

Home Address:



Millicent E. Wilkinson-Redick



Senior-Level Organizer- Community Organizer and Outreach Coordinator

Executive Summary

Entrepreneurial CFO-level executive with more than twenty five years of quantifiable achievement in drawing together and galvanizing individuals to solve common problems. Worked directly with community residents to meet shared needs, and create awareness for many projects. Have been involved in nurturing leaders at the local level; educate community residents and families on such issues as: banking, environmental, employment, small business, and political candidates. Developed strategic plans community charrettes for the MTA Mother Clara Hale Depot, Pathmark among the few.

Cross-industry experience creating and increasing productivity, efficiency and profitability. Consistently employ an energized, can-do management style utilizing human resources to obtain real outcomes for many projects in the Harlem community. I have

Organizational abilities, vision, and tenacity. I can blend motivation, leadership, and creative analytical abilities to develop and implement innovative ideas that produce bottom-line results.

Areas of Knowledge And Expertise

- Company Formation / Start-up Consulting
- Business / Enterprise Turnarounds
- Strategic / Creative Marketing / Planning
- Budgeting and Forecasting
- Human Resource Management
- Fund Raising and Grant Writing
- Relationship and Team Building
- Contract Review and Negotiation

Career Profile

Experienced CFO, President, Consultant and entrepreneurial business owner.

Companies have included Camden Empowerment Zone, Commonwealth Holding Company, Corinthian Housing Development Corp, Consortium for Central Harlem Development, Community Association of the East Harlem Triangle, Faze Electric, Powerhouse Consulting Services, Manhattan Borough President Office, City Council of the City of New York, Agenda for Children Tomorrow, George Funaro & Company, Starnes and Tanksley CPA Firm.

Structure innovative programs/ businesses that produce strong and sustainable results.

Consistently revitalize and restructure problem organizations or organizational business entities. Expert in working with large groups of people for a specific outcome.

Directly responsible for multimillion-dollar company growth, contracts and accounts.

Oversee budgets of up to \$20 million and staffs of up to 100 persons. Bid and negotiate million-dollar-plus contracts. Administer intricacies of government regulated programs. Motivate teams to excellence.

**Executive
Highlights**

As CFO was directly responsible for the construction and implementation of a business plan for Corinthian Housing Development Corp., Faze Electric, Powerhouse Consulting Services, George Funaro & Co. that built a profitable \$2 million gross revenue stream from an original \$100 thousand gross, in three years.

As President of Commonwealth Holding Company was involved in the development of surveys and these surveys were utilized by the Northern Manhattan Empowerment Zone to provide investment and banking services in the Harlem Community. Today the banking industry continues to invest in residential housing and businesses today. Completed the negotiations for the first Pathmark and the Magic Johnson Complex in the Harlem community. Work with the West Harlem Environment Action Community and the Harlem River Task Force for the development of the Riverbank State Park and the Harlem River Park. Planning for the Harlem River Park task force to date has been funded more than \$2 million for the development of bike paths, comfort stations, walkways and many other amenities that are environmentally friendly.

As Executive Director for the East Harlem Triangle was involved in the health services for Senior Citizens in East Harlem. Managed construction costing for commercial property built along the 125th corridor and managed the Alice Kornegay senior housing and Project Linkage where on-site medical services were provided to 88 units of assisted living housing for its residents. Provided Human Resource services to handicapped independent living residents of the East Harlem Triangle. Created proposals and received funding for on site programs for these residents.

Education

**Master Of Business Administration in Accounting
Baruch College, New York City**

**Bachelor Business Administration in Finance
Baruch College, New York City**

Certificate of Registered Apartment Management

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Kevin V.G. Wells

Charter School Name: Sofarah International Charter School (SICS)

Charter School Address: NYC CSD-Manhattan: CSD 5

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 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 (yes)
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 (yes).
3. Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm. (yes)
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I was asked by the Lead Applicant, Voyka Soto, to serve as a member of the board and share my legal expertise in an advisory capacity.

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

I strongly believe in the mission of SOFARA International Charter School and have very strong ties to its community. I am a Harlem resident and have personally witnessed the dedication of both its applicants, Voyka Soto and Nadhege Ptah as education advocates and concerned parents.

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 (x). (Include description here):

Though I have not sat on a not-for-profit board, I was a former member of the Department of Education Diversity Leadership Council throughout 2013. Throughout my tenure, I worked closely with senior DOE personnel in addressing issues on engaging community small businesses with the DOE procurement efforts with public and charter schools.

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

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

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

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

(x) This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

(x) 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.

(x) I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

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

(x) No. Yes.

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

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

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

(x) 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.

(x) 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.

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

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a

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

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

(x) None Yes

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

As legal advisor to the board, if I believed that one or more members of the charter school's board were involved in either self-dealing or other forms of conflicts of interest, I would immediately present the matter to them. Board members have a fiduciary responsibility to disclose such involvement prior to board involvement. Upon the confirming such actions, the offending board member will be in breach of duty of care and may be held personally liable in money damages for all pecuniary losses sustained as a result of their misconduct. Also, based on board by-laws, the targeted member shall be immediately removed. These adverse consequences can readily be avoided with advance knowledge of the nature and scope of the fiduciary obligation and forethought by our board members as to the implications of their conduct. I will present frequent board in-services.

Educational Philosophy

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

It is my understanding that Sofara International Charter School will invest all its resources in children and ensure high levels of achievement by nurturing academic growth and social development while promoting and growing international-mindedness towards successful participation as leaders in a globally competitive society. SICS will provide a rigorous, inquiry based, holistic learning environment developed through the International Baccalaureate continuum of K-12 programs

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

Sofara International Charter School will create a diversified, tuition-free International Baccalaureate (IB). The IB curriculum includes: the **Primary Years Program (PYP)** – a 3 dimensional concept based upon a student's natural inquiries to drive learning through trans-disciplinary instruction for ages 3- 12; the **Middle Years Program (MYP)** is an interdisciplinary, developmentally appropriate model of instruction, that incorporates

students' natural inquiries to drive learning for ages 11- 16. Both models create a natural fit for inclusion of Science Technology Engineering Art & Mathematics (STEAM). Just as important, SICS will offer French as a bilingual language within 50/50 immersion program and offer Arabic as a functional language. If authorized SICS will also incorporate the IBCC and the DP programs of the IB.

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 one of the strong characteristics of a successful charter school is its board. Each board member must know their responsibilities and have a strong partnership with the school leader, but know the difference between governance and management. The board and the school personnel must know and understand the complexities and demographics of the community that it serves. Additionally, the Board will need to participate in collaborative training, setting unified policies, and meeting regularly while maintaining open, respectful communication.

Other

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

A Charter School board member's responsibilities include ensuring that the organization remains viable, its academic program is successful and faithful to the terms of its charter. The mission and purpose must also be clearly in focus. Board members are instrumental in selecting the school leader and reviewing his or her performance and monitoring the strength of the programs. Members must also ensure effective organizational planning with measurable goals consistent with the charter accountability plan, while securing adequate resources and approving the annual budget.

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.

I affirm.

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

The Sofara International Charter School proposed board is a very cohesive group comprised of a wealth of individual talents, expertise and experience. More importantly, I have witnessed first-hand the commitment and dedication of each board member in their collective quest to ensure that the Sofara International Charter School and its mission succeeds as fully operational community educational organization.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Kevin V.G. Wells (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 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



Signature

March 7, 2014

Date

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

Business Telephone:

Business Address:

E-Mail Address:

Home Telephone:

Home Address:

Kevin V.G. Wells, Esq.

General Counsel

Ability to build and motivate the Corporate Social Responsibility team of any Fortune 1000 while strategically re-enforcing their respective company brand

Provide strategic legal and operation advice to both NGOs with sustainability missions and non-profit organizations seeking to implement initiatives with international and domestic businesses

Mitigate risk through skilled negotiation

Able to build and motivate diverse teams and drive employee engagement

Business Strategy and Negotiations

Corporate Governance

Vendor Contracts Management

Commercial Real Estate

Environmental Law

Commercial Transactions

Risk Management

Employment Law

CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Recognized by Sustainability leaders; various Corporate Social Responsibility teams; and business journalists for addressing emerging domestic market issues through a uniquely crafted Sustainability Summit showcasing over 100 US vendors with innovative products in the areas of alternative energy and renewable energy
- Directly promoted job creation in targeted US regions by strategically linking multi-national enterprises with prime "green" vendors, which led to a paradigm shift in small business utilization
- Conceived strategy to monetize the process of identifying over 100 diverse small businesses with innovative products and services in the Sustainability area through an interactive online video platform
- Amplified the value of US small business innovation through a crowdsourcing initiative, which facilitated a global "innovative sustainability challenge" to address supply chain efficiency for the Fortune 500
- In response to the 2003 Executive Order 36 promulgated by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, devised an outreach vehicle for the NYC Department of Small Business, the "NYC Fast Track Program", to enable private sector certified small businesses to gain MWBE New York City vendor certifications within 10 days for its public sector contracts, which resulted in a 30% increase of businesses being eligible for NYC contracts
- Devised a similar Fast Track Certification program for the New York State Empire Development procurement program from the lauded NYC Fast Track program, which resulted in 23% more small businesses being eligible for NYS contract opportunities
- Featured speaker for the New York State Bar Association at its Career Development Conference, "Strategies for Success"
- Author: "Matching Suppliers with Global Database" *The Green*, March 2006 Edition, which introduced the need for on-line targeted vendor matching for specific procurement based on Fortune 500 demand
- Reviewed and drafted comment on pending Homeland Security legislation to emergency procurement procedures with small business vendors at the behest of ranking State Senate 2005
- Adjunct Professor, Business Law Executive Leadership Program for Entrepreneurs at Rutgers University (Spring 2004)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

THE COUNCILSM, New York, NY

(NY & NJ Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc.)

2002 – Present

General Counsel

Organization that identifies and certifies viable ethnic businesses [Asian-Indian, Pacific-Islander, Native-American, Hispanic-American or African-American] as minority business enterprises (MBEs) throughout New York and New Jersey as viable for its Fortune 500 corporate membership to diversify their global supply chains.

- Numerous interface with Fortune 500 CSOs, CPOs and Presidents of the Fortune 500 to strategize on value based procurement objectives meshing Sustainability platforms for growth strategies targeting US small business vendors resulting in a 20% increase in utilizing innovative "green" diverse vendors
- Frequent featured speaker on supply chain efficiency with Sustainability, workforce diversity/ inclusion at domestic and international economic forums that has actively engaged Corporate Social Responsibility departments
- Productive restructure of the organization's legal department by coordinating and implementing a cost reduction plan to utilize specialized paralegals in lieu of staff attorneys and leverage business relationships with outside firms without increasing risk saving more than \$300K annually

- Spearhead initiatives with partners in Eastern Europe, India, China, and Africa for procurement opportunities, resulting in larger brand recognition and strategic alliances for US small businesses
- Successful mitigation under a Federal subpoena duces tecum through successful negotiation, averting extensive discovery and costly operations slow-down
- Successful management of expansion program that grew operations from the main Manhattan office and a satellite office in New Jersey to two additional satellite offices in Upstate New York
- Ensure compliance under Sarbanes-Oxley by revising the Whistle Blower Policy and implemented practice to convert all sensitive organization records to digital database to reduce storage and augment the current Document Retention policy
- Effective negotiation on all commercial leases, modifications and terminations, while ensuring compliance with all contractual, financial and occupancy-related lease obligations, which included two organization relocations
- Created and secured the organization brand "The CouncilSM", which initiated the distinction and prominence from the remaining 37 regional councils throughout the US, Canada and Puerto Rico
- Directly addressed and handled workers compensation, employment termination, unemployment hearing preparation/ mediation
- Successful renegotiation of the organization's D&O insurance

NEXTEL TELECOMMUNICATIONS, White Plains, NY

2001 – 2002

Compliance Counsel

A nationwide telecommunications service provider:

- Lead on major commercial licensing agreements and all environmental issues regarding installation of communication towers
- Lead of a 3-member investigative team that assessed and implemented a work-force diversity program

FOJP SERVICE CORPORATION, New York, NY

1999 – 2000

In-house Counsel

A risk management advisory organization servicing the healthcare industry:

- Directly addressed risk assessment and compliance issues for claims underwriting departments
- Coordinated insurance litigation discovery process involving outside counsel

WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER LLP, New York, NY

1997 – 1999

Environmental Counsel

An international law firm specializing in complex litigation and Superfund practice:

- Key drafter on environmental memorandum regarding seepage for \$45.5 million suit
- Defended and took depositions, including prepping expert witnesses, for complex environmental litigation

CONTAINERING INC., New York, NY/ Paris, France

1995 – 1997

Corporate Compliance Counsel

An international manufacturer of storage reservoirs and tanks:

- Provided guidance directly to CEO, foreign counsel, and plant managers on various State and Federal regulatory compliance issues for relocation of storage and conducted on-site audit inspections at facilities

MINERALS TECHNOLOGIES, INC., New York, NY

1993 – 1995

Attorney

An international manufacturer of minerals for the paper and healthcare industries:

- Drafted operational response guidelines to potential environmental compliance issues
- Representative for corporate strategy meetings with the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) to outline environmental and OSHA issues for industry lobbyists

ALLAN KANNER & ASSOCIATES, Philadelphia, PA/ New Orleans, LA

1991 – 1993

Summer Associate/Associate

- Researched and drafted briefs and memorandums for unique plaintiff environmental litigation AV-rated firm

NYC BOARD OF EDUCATION, New York, NY

1985 – 1988

Special Education Teacher

- Taught Emotionally Handicapped and Learning-Disabled children

EDUCATION

Juris Doctorate Widener University School of Law, Wilmington, DE
Bachelor of Arts University of Maryland, College Park, MD

BAR ADMISSIONS

New York State Bar

Federal Court for the Southern District

HONORS

Recipient of *The Barrister's Award of Philadelphia*

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Holley Drakeford

Charter School Name: Sofara International Charter School

Charter School Address: 61 West 126 Street, New York, NY 10027

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 met with Voyka Soto and Nadhege Ptah one afternoon concerning real estate in Harlem. They discussed thier frustration with the educational system in Harlem and how they decided that a wall to wall International Baccalaureate school was badly needed. They then described the goals and concept of the

Sofara International School and I decided it was something I wanted to be a part of.

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. **I felt I could add to the value of my professional experience in business as well as expertise in real estate to assist the school in being successful.**
6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board. **X** This does not apply to me. **X** Yes. (Include description here): **I have advised the New East Harlem Merchants Association in fundraising and community organization matters. I can assist in the areas of real estate and facilities management since I am an licensed Associate Real Estate Broker and a member of two committees with Real Estate Board of New York as well as an experienced facilities manager in the private sector.**
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. **X** 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). **This was a misdemeanor in 1972. Attached are the official documents concerning the case.**

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

8. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.
X This does not apply to me. Yes.
If the answer to this question is yes, please provide an explanation.

Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.
 I / we do not know any such persons. 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 first bring the situation to the Director of the Board and then request the situation be brought up at the next Board meeting for discussion and investigation.

Educational Philosophy

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. Sofara international Charter School will invest in children as our future. Ensuring high levels of achievement by nurturing academic growth and social development while promoting an international mindedness towards successful participation as leaders in a globally competitive society.
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. The educational will insure academic success for all students through the inquiry based approach with which students at all learning levels will have the opportunity to find and develop their role in a globally competitive society instilling universal fundamental skills and strategies, providing developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in an authentic manner, creating critical thinkers with depth of knowledge, growing students socially, emotionally, academically and intellectually while producing bilingual / bi-literate graduates with career readiness due to the development of leadership qualities and becoming skilled team members that can thrive in all situations. Every student will graduate with well rounded skills and strategies ready for high 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.

A successful charter should have cohesive leadership with the same goals and aspirations for the creation, maintenance and future development of the school.

Create and ensure financial stability to sustain the goals of the charter school.

Engage the parents of the students and the community at large to become involved with the charter schools activities and success.

Hire personnel that have a similar vision and feel a responsibility to promote the goals and success of the charter school.

Keep a high level of success in the education and development of the students as responsible young adults.

Other

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

Each board member has expertise in an individual or particular discipline. As in any team each member has to deliver their strength or knowledge in a specific area order to achieve the successful completion of the boards goals. If each board member does their job while working in concert with the other board members then success should follow.

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.

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

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

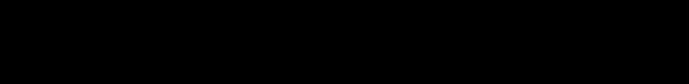
I, Holley Drakeford (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information 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 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

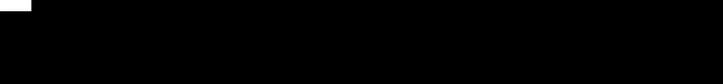

Signature

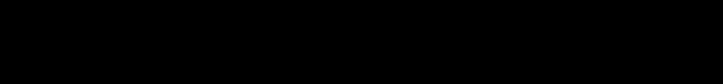
March 10, 2014
Date

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

Business Telephone: 

Business Address: 

E-Mail Address: 

Home Telephone: 

Home Address: 

HOLLEY DRAKEFORD

Executive with proven management skills, cross functional leadership and process improvements.

- Several years of successful management experience in the computer, banking, telecommunications, and energy and retail industries.
- ~~Managed the sales division and overall company operations for PC manufacturer and computer parts distributor.~~
- Planned sales and inventory levels for a national retailer within a 95% confidence level.
- Controlled the distribution of materials locally, nationally and worldwide.
- Created company personnel administration policies and procedures.
- Administrative management functions of personnel recruitment, hiring supervision and evaluation were achieved.

Results orientated leader adapt at motivating highly productive teams, implementing change and improving operational quality. Strong communication, analytical and interpersonal skills.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Giscombe Realty Group, LLC

11/09 – Present

Commercial Real Estate Sales Manager

- Recruit, train and motivate sales associates.
- Prospect clients and exclusive property sales and leasing listings..
- Market and promote the sale or lease of commercial real estate.
- Create proposals to lease or purchase commercial / residential properties.
- Review agreements to make sure they are consistent with proposals.
- Execute lease agreements and contract to purchase agreements.

Hilton New York – Marriott Marquis

2/06 – 3/09

Marketing Representative

- Promote sale of time share opportunities to hotel guests by immediate tours or travel to vacation locations internationally through individual or group presentations about the beneficiaries of world wide vacation ownership.

Accent Energy

5/04 – 1/06

Sales Manager NYC metropolitan area

- Increased sales 100% over previous year.
- Increased sales force from 12 to 45 representatives.
- ~~Recruited, trained and motivated all sales representatives.~~
- ~~Created policies and procedures.~~
- All management responsibilities for the New York City office which included payroll, information distribution,, sales materials and promotions.

PC Ware International Inc. / Star Microsystems

11/89 – 5/04

Director of Operations

- Commercial real estate, finance, development, facilities management.
- Management all warehouse, shipping, receiving, purchasing and operational activities.
- All risk management, contract negotiations carrier and vendor selection
- Legal Liaison. Lawyer selection and primary contact for all legal matters.
- Telecommunications and internet administration.
- Human resource management.

Education – B. A. Luther college – Decorah Iowa

Community Service

- 1) **Community Board 11**
 - a) **Member of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Committee.**
 - b) **Member of the Land Use and Landmarks Committee**
- 2) **New York State Notary Public**

Professional Affiliations

- 1) **The Real Estate Board of New York**
 - a) **Member of the Brokers Agent Rental Committee**
 - b) **Member of the Leasing Brokers Committee**
 - c) **Member of the Uptown Real Estate Brokers Committee.**
- 2) **International Council of Shopping Centers**
 - a) **Member of the Next Generation Group**

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Thomas Bretz

Charter School Name: Sofara International Charter

Charter School Address: Community School District 5

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.): Trustee, Finance and Compliance

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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. attached

Educational Philosophy

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

Other

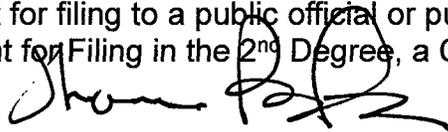
21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. attached
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. attached
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review. not applicable

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Thomas Bretz (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 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Signature



Date 08 March 2014

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

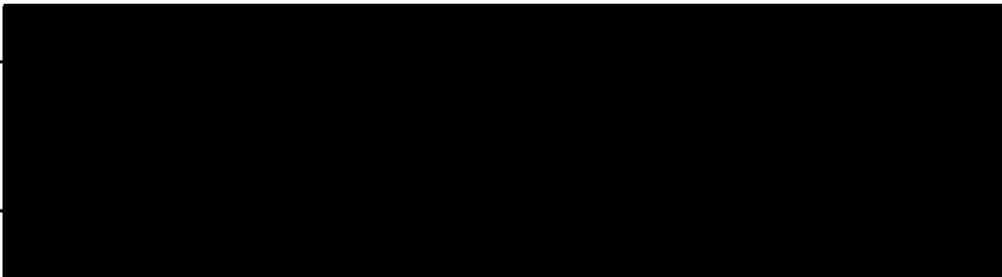
Business Telephone: _____

Business Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Home Address: _____



Prospective Sofara International Charter School Board Member

Background

4. I became aware of the school in conversations with the founding board members last year. We discussed the application process for establishing a charter school in New York City and I helped formulate budget projections used in the application. Thereafter I was asked to serve as a member of the board.
5. I wish to serve on the Sofara Board because I fervently believe in and support the structure, vision and mission of the Sofara International Charter School. I can provide guidance and oversight to help ensure the school strictly adheres to compliance and finance procedures and protocols.

Conflict of Interest

9. I know the founders through our social interaction as parents at a local elementary school. However, I do not know the other proposed members of the Sofara Board of Trustees.
17. If I believed that one or more members of the charter school's board was involved in working for their own benefit or the benefit of their friends and family, I would make an immediate verbal and written report to the Sofara Board of Trustees, and, if warranted, to the school's authorizer and to any other governing or oversight agency.

Educational Philosophy:

18. My understanding of the school's mission and/ or philosophy is that it aspires to develop bilingual/bi-literate global citizens who are well-prepared to assume leadership in an increasingly multi-cultural society. This will be achieved through a rigorous, holistic learning environment developed through the International Baccalaureate continuum of K-12 programs and by attracting a student population from the culturally rich and diverse surrounding community.

19. The educational program of the Sofara International Charter School is based on the precepts and best practices of the International Baccalaureate continuum. It will focus on the development of the whole child as a life-long learner inside the classroom and in the world outside. It will be holistic in addressing student's academic, social and emotional well-being. And it will encourage students to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own learning. The curriculum framework in the first years of the school's operation will feature the concept-based model of instruction that uses a child's natural curiosity to guide instruction as articulated in the IB-Primary Years Programme. As such, this program will offer a uniquely rigorous educational experience for families in Community District Five.
20. The characteristics of a successful charter school revolve around a strong and committed partnership between parents and teachers. Each member of the Board of Trustees ("the Board") must know and carryout their individual responsibilities and the Board, as a whole, must provide vigorous oversight to ensure that sufficient and appropriate educational procedures, protocols, and practices are in place to measure, maintain and improve the educational outcomes of its students and performance of all teachers and staff. In addition, the Board must be mindful to adhere to all federal, state and local administrative guidelines and requirements as well as setting forth clear and achievable goals-including planning and implementing fund-raising strategies-to enhance and assure the long-term prospects of the charter school

Other:

21. The appropriate role of a charter school board member is:
1. To ensure that the school fulfills the mandate of it's charter
 2. To monitor the fiscal integrity of the school
 3. Evaluate and oversee the performance of the principal
 4. To monitor the quality of life and instruction in the school
22. I affirm that I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.

Thomas Bretz

Work Experience

After twenty-two years as a proprietary equity and derivatives trader and also as a Managing Director of Trading Operations, in which I managed the finances and operations on a day-to-day basis of two Wall Street firms, I established, with my eldest son, a not-for-profit tutoring service, Appleseed Workshop, that offers low-cost and often pro bono K-12 instruction in core academic subjects and SSAT, SAT and ACT exams. Our focus is to help students improve grades, raise test scores, develop and improve study and writing skills, and build self-confidence. I also have a tax advisory business for a select number of small business and individual clients.

Co-Founder: Appleseed Workshop, New York

Established in 2010, Appleseed is a not-for-profit after-school academic learning center for economically disadvantaged students in Upper Manhattan. Maintain an academic support team of dedicated Ivy-League student-tutors. It's core commitment is to help students attain their highest level of academic proficiency and excellence.

Managing Director: Bear Stearns, New York.

Responsible for firm's trading floor operations at the American Stock Exchange. Supervised 75 floor brokers, traders and operations personnel. Ensured compliance with all SEC, NASD, NASDAQ and AMEX rules, regulations and data reporting requirements. Performed risk analysis of traders positions (portfolio) on a daily basis.

Director of Operations: Spear, Leeds & Kellogg, New York.

Managed daily operations of Specialist Firm's finance and operations on trading floors in New York, Chicago and California (AMEX, CBOE and PSE.) Directly supervised over 100 equity and index derivative options product traders. Evaluated individual and firm-wide risk parameters on a daily and intra-day basis. Established job performance and productivity (profitability) goals for traders. Managed exchange memberships. Responsible for hiring and firing, when necessary, of trading personnel. Negotiated and managed vendor relationships.

Derivatives Trader, John Mann & Co., New York

Learned to trade equities with AMEX specialist firm as a trading floor clerk. Promoted to Stock Specialist (on-floor trader) within two months. Introduced firm to nascent equity options trading strategies in late 1970's and helped firm expand by securing franchise rights to trade exchange traded options on companies like Gillette, U.S. Steel and in later years, Intel and Microsoft.

Education

Bachelor of Science, Economics and East Asian Studies. Columbia College,
New York, NY

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Janeat Brown

Charter School Name: Sofara International Charter School

Charter School Address: Community School District 5

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.): Trustee Assessment in Education

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 ~~at least~~ eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a ~~charter~~ school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board through Voyka Soto who was promoting the idea of having a charter in Harlem that served students through the IB program. She

was looking for qualified people who have experience with education the IB board. After many months of consulting with Ms. Soto on various parts of the educational plan, she asked that I join the Board as a Trustee.

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

I wish to serve as on the board because it is an exciting opportunity to create an excellent school serving the children of the community. IB is a global standard of excellence and rigor in education. In addition, the programs and languages Sofara will offer makes it a unique and exciting educational environment for students that I would love to help further.

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.
If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

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

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

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

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

No. Yes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

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

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

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

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

I would handle a situation like this by bringing it to the attention of all board members, sitting down and discussing the concern and figuring out a solution that's in the best interest of both the students we serve and the school.

Educational Philosophy

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

My understanding of Sofara's mission is one where students learn from a global aspect, incorporating all academic studies into their inquiries as they investigate their own learning as well as become problem solvers and critical thinkers in a holistic way. Additionally, they will be well rounded in skills including being bilingual thereby making them globally competitive.

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

My understanding of the educational program of Sofara International Charter School is to produce students to become open-minded, global citizens who can look at the world culturally and respectfully as a leader from a critical perspective. Students will have the opportunity to express their interests through a real world hands-on approach to learning as they progress through the IB programs of study.

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 is belief in and understanding of the mission of the school and ensuring its integrity; that all members of the school have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; Trustees attend board meetings and seek improvements to the school and its future; Trustees provide guidance and oversight; trust and respect amongst all members is promoted; and building partnerships with a wide array of organizations.

The specific steps I think the board of the charter school will need to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful are:

- Understanding the value of the school's mission
- Communication among all staff
- Monitoring student performance
- Ongoing professional development
- Managing finances appropriately
- Collaborating on ideas for student achievement

Other

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

My understanding of the appropriate role of a public school charter board member is to work collaboratively with all members to model the mission of the school; helping ensure the school reaches its yearly goals; having trust and holding everyone accountable for their role as well as being a school resource for the schools success.

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.

I affirm.

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

None

Ianeat Brown



PROFILE: New York State certified teacher with a strong background in assessment driven instruction and a documented history of student achievement. Experience with general and special education. Specialized training in Leadership as well as the Primary Years Program of the International Baccalaureate. Completed Principal Internship.

EDUCATION:

Adelphi University, Manhattan, New York, NY

- Masters of Science, Conferred May 2008
Major: Educational Leadership and Technology

Adelphi University, Manhattan, New York, NY

- Masters of Arts, Conferred May 2006
Major: Special Education

State University of New York at New Paltz, New Paltz, NY

- Bachelors of Science, Conferred December 2001
Major: Elementary Education
Minor: Black Studies

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ICT and general education, Elementary Level , NYC DOE 2006 - Present

- Planned and developed weekly instruction that addressed the needs of the students
- Planned and developed general and IB/inquiry based units of study
- Prepare and deliver differentiated tasks and projects for varied student needs
- Incorporate Common Core Learning Standards in daily planning to prepare students for college readiness
- Conduct small group instruction based on individual student needs
- Provide a safe and caring learning environment that promoted student self monitoring and reflection
- Fostered child-centered curriculum and student activities through inquiry based learning
- Supported testing skills to prepare students for state exams including Math, English Language Arts and Science
- Promoted rigorous test taking strategies in preparation for state exams
- Assessed students using formative and summative instruments and data
- Provided a rigorous academic learning experience aligned with state standards to develop reading, writing, and math skills
- Prepared students for entry state exams for third grade
- Achieved outstanding success in strengthening reading and math skills
- Participated in professional development meetings to enhance as an educator
- Created professional ELA and Math portfolios for middle school articulation and interviews

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Teacher, Partners in Reading Fall Program for Teachers, Manhattan, NY (October 2009- May 2012)

- Implement creative reading lesson plans related to program theme
- Track students' progress using 3-Minute Assessment reading program
- Encourage parental involvement to reinforce and enrich classroom learning with Family Literacy Nights
- Cultivate students learning through stimulating educational games and hands on learning activities

Teacher Grade 3, P.S. 165 Brooklyn, New York, NY (Summer 2011)

- Demonstrated success using Balanced Literacy and Mathematics approaches
- Implemented ability to communicate orally and in writing
- Constant assessing students to plan effectively according to varied learning abilities
- Kept track of student progress using progress reports and student attendance

Teacher Grade 8, P.S. 165 Manhattan, New York, NY (Summer 2010)

- Implemented all instructional activities assigned by school-based supervisors
- Maintained student attendance and progress reports
- Used ongoing assessments to plan instruction
- Incorporated Balanced Literacy and Balanced Mathematics learning to enhance the reading and math skills of students to prepare them for state examinations

Principal Internship, Thurgood Marshall Academy, New York, NY (June 2008-Nov.2008)

- Performed formal and informal teacher observations with immediate feedback
- Provided services to students, parents, and teachers concerns

Teacher, Partners in Reading Summer Program for Teachers, Bronx, NY (Summer 2007)

- Implemented daily educational balanced-literacy instruction
- Enhanced students' skills and abilities as readers and writers through meaningful read-alouds and shared readings

Attachment 5(B) Proposed By-Laws

**Sofara International Charter School ("The Corporation")
By-Laws**

ARTICLE I

THE CORPORATION

Section 1.1. Name and Formation. Sofara International Charter School is a non-stock, non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York.

Section 1.2. Purposes. The Corporation is organized and is to be operated exclusively to carry out charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now in effect or as may hereafter be amended (the "Code"), including, without limitation: (a) to operate a public charter school in the City and State of New York (the "School") pursuant to a charter agreement therefore; (b) to exercise all rights and powers conferred by the laws of the State of New York upon non-stock corporations, including, but without limitation thereon, to raise funds, to receive gifts, devises, bequests and contributions, in any form, and to use, apply, invest, and reinvest the principal and/or income there from or distribute the same for the above purposes; and (c) to engage in any other activity that is connected with or in advancement of the foregoing purposes and that is within the definition of charitable and educational for purposes of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code; provided, the powers of the Corporation shall never be inconsistent with the purposes of the Corporation stated above of the Constitution of the United States or the State of New York.

ARTICLE II

OFFICES

Section 2.1. Principal Place of Business. The principal place of business of the Corporation shall be located in the City and State of New York. The Corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of New York, as the Board of Trustees may determine or as the affairs of the Corporation may require from time to time.

Section 2.2. Registered Office and Registered Agent. The Corporation shall have and continuously maintain in the State of New York a registered office and a registered agent whose office is the Corporation's registered office.

ARTICLE III

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 3.1. Powers. The business, affairs and property of the Corporation shall be managed and controlled by the Board of Trustees, and all corporate powers shall be vested in and exercised by the

Board, except as otherwise provided by law, the charter filed to create the Corporation, or these By-Laws.

Section 3.2. Duties. The duties of the Board of Trustees shall be as follows:

- a) to govern and oversee the School for the purpose of achieving its Mission;
- b) to take actions necessary to cause the School corporation to satisfy its obligations under the New York State charter schools act and other applicable laws;
- c) to hire, fire, oversee, and evaluate the Executive Director and guide and support members of the School staff;
- d) to financially manage the School, including: budget development and monitoring, establishing fiscal controls, and causing audits of the School's books and records to be made as required by law and otherwise prudent;
- e) to develop, approve, implement, and monitor achievement of the School's accountability plan as required by law;
- f) to set, implement and enforce, or delegate the implementation and enforcement of, School policies in respect of –
 - i) admissions,
 - ii) curriculum, teaching and learning,
 - iii) employment and other personnel matters,
 - iv) student discipline,
 - v) Special Education,
 - vi) English language education for English language learners,
 - vii) the Code of Ethics and policies governing self-dealing of Trustees, Officers and employees,
 - viii) dress code,
 - ix) transportation,
 - x) student food services,
 - xi) student health services,
 - xii) communication with students' families,
 - xiii) communication with governmental and regulatory agencies,
 - xiv) public relations and outreach, and
 - xv) hearing complaints as required by §2855(4) of the New York charter schools act (the enforcement of which shall not be delegated, notwithstanding the foregoing).

Section 3.3. Performance of Duties. Each Trustee shall perform all duties of a Trustee, including duties on a Board committee, in good faith and with the degree of diligence, care and skill, including reasonable inquiry, an ordinary prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.

Section 3.4. Number. The number of Trustees constituting the initial Board of Trustees shall be five (5). Thereafter the number of Trustees may be changed from time to time by amendment of these By-Laws in compliance with applicable laws, but the School's Board will have a minimum of five members and a maximum of fifteen members.

Section 3.5. Founding trustees will hold staggered terms as presented in the Charter to the authorizer. Upon completion of each staggered term, each Trustee shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until earlier death, resignation or removal. Terms are renewable once unless a) there are no other applicants or b) the Board votes to extend a Trustees terms. No more than 40% of the

persons serving as Trustees at any one time may be officers, directors or employees of a single organization. No more than 49% of the persons serving as Trustees at any one time may be interested persons. An "interested person" is: (1) any person currently being compensated by the Corporation 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 sibling, ancestor, descendant, spouse, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, mother-in-law or father-in-law of any such person.

Section 3.6. Removal. Any Trustee may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the entire Board, but not less than the entire Board, excluding the Trustee who is the subject of the removal action, provided, that at least one week's previous notice of the proposed action have been given to the accused and to each trustee.

Section 3.7. Resignation. Any Trustee may resign at any time by delivering written notice of his or her resignation to the Corporation. At the election of the Corporation made by Board action, the resignation of a Trustee shall be effective upon such notice or upon a later date that is prior to the date of resignation specified in the notice, notwithstanding a resigning Trustee's specification of a different date in his notice. Acceptance of a resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 3.8. Vacancies. Any newly created Trusteeships and any vacancies on the Board of Trustees, arising at any time and from any cause, may be filled at any meeting of the Board by a majority of the Trustees regardless of their number. In accordance with the General Municipal Law, no vacancies will be filled with a person who has an interest in a for-profit contract, unless one or more of the exemptions listed in General Municipal Law 802 are applicable. Trustees so elected shall serve 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 in the case of any other vacancy for the term. To the extent required by law, any Trustee that shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without an excuse accepted as satisfactory by the Board may, at the Board's election, shall be deemed to have resigned, and the vacancy shall be filled.

Section 3.9. Meetings. Meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be subject to requirements of the New York State Open Meetings Law, as applicable and as amended from time to time. Regular meetings of the Trustees will be held at the school facility once it has been identified and the school has taken occupancy of it. Until that time, meetings may be held at such time and place as shall from time to time be determined by the Board, but not fewer than the number of times per year required by applicable laws and regulations. The School will hold a meeting of the Board once per calendar month on dates determined by the Board. Special meetings may be called any time by two or more Trustees together. A majority of the Trustees present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place.

Section 3.10. Notice of Meetings. Notice of the time and place of each regular, special or annual meeting of the Board, and, to the extent reasonably possible a written agenda stating all matters upon which action is proposed to be taken, shall be given to each Trustee by the Board Chairperson by personal delivery, facsimile, or regular mail, postage prepaid, at least 72 hours before the day on which the meeting is to be held; provided however, that notice of a special meeting shall be given by receipted personal or overnight delivery no fewer than seven (7) days prior to the special meeting date. Trustees calling for a special meeting shall specify in reasonable detail matter(s) to be considered at the special meeting. Notice of a meeting need not be given to any Trustee who

submits a signed waiver of notice before or after the meeting or who attends the meeting without protesting prior thereto or at its commencement the lack of notice to him or her. Public notice of meetings shall be given as required by Article 7 of the Public Officers Law. Specifically, the School will post notices in the following media outlets; The Official School's community mailing list, Facebook Page, and the Amsterdam News. The School will also post notices in the main office of the School, as well as on the school's website. Trustees calling for a special meeting shall be responsible for giving all required public notices of the special meeting.

Section 3.11. Executive Session. Upon a majority vote of the entire Board of Trustees on a motion which identifies generally the subject to be considered, the Board may meet in executive session in compliance with Section 105 of the New York State Open Meeting Law, as amended from time to time.

Section 3.12. Videoconferencing and Telephone Conferencing. Videoconferencing may be used to conduct a meeting of the Board of Trustees in compliance with the New York State Open Meetings Law, as amended from time to time. Public notice of a meeting at which a Trustee intends to participate by videoconference shall identify the videoconference locations for the meeting and state that the public has the right to attend the meeting at a videoconference location. Beyond a quorum, other Trustees may participate by telephone conference. The Corporation shall provide an opportunity for the public to hear and participate in the teleconferenced discussion.

3.13. Quorum and Voting. A majority of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business or of any specified item of business. Except as otherwise provided by these By-Laws, the vote of a majority of the Board of Trustees constituting the quorum thereof shall be an act of the Board, except that a vote of three-quarters of the Trustees eligible to vote, if a quorum shall be constituted, shall be required to amend these By-Laws. A Trustee who is also an employee of the Corporation shall not be able to vote in his or her capacity as a Trustee during the pendency of his or her employment.

Section 3.14. Minutes. Minutes taken at all open meetings of the Corporation shall consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions, and any other matter formally voted upon and the vote thereon. Minutes taken at executive sessions shall include any action that is taken by formal vote and provide a record or summary of the final determination of such action, and the date and vote thereon; provided, however, that such summary need not include any matter which is not required to be made public by the New York State Freedom of Information Law. The minutes of meetings and executive sessions shall be available to the public as required by the New York State Open Meetings Law.

Section 3.15. Committees. The Board of Trustees may designate from among its members committees from time to time comprised of a number of committee members as required by applicable law; provided, the Board shall at all times maintain an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, and an Education Committee and a Compliance Committee. All standing committees will have a minimum of three (3) members, except the Executive Committee that will have a minimum of five (5) members. The Board may designate one or more Trustees as alternate members of any committee, who may replace absent or disqualified members at any meeting of the committee. A committee shall appoint its chairperson by action of a majority thereof. Any one or more members of a committee may participate in a meeting of the committee by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons

participating in the meeting can hear each other, provided such meeting and notice thereof comply with applicable requirements of the New York State Open Meetings Law. From time to time a committee may empanel one or more standing or other subcommittees. Committee members shall maintain minutes of each committee meeting and shall file copies of the minutes with the corporate records in compliance with applicable laws. A committee shall have all the powers delegated by the Board except that no committee shall have the power (a) to change the membership of, or to fill vacancies in, the Board or any committee of the Board, (b) to fix the compensation of Trustees for serving on the Board or any committee of the Board if approved, (c) to amend or repeal these By-Laws or adopt any new By-Laws, (d) to amend or repeal any resolution of the Board which by its terms shall not be so amendable to repealable, or (e) to exercise other powers specifically denied the committee by resolution of the Board of Trustees or by law. Each committee and each member of each committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees. A majority of a committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Except as otherwise provided by these By-Laws, the vote of a majority of a committee constituting the quorum thereof shall be an act of the committee.

Section 3.16. Compensation. Persons serving as Trustees or members of a committee shall not receive any salary or compensation for their services as Trustees or committee members. A Trustee or committee member shall be entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred by him or her in carrying out his or her duties as such.

Section 3.17. Right of Inspection. Subject to restrictions imposed by applicable law on access to or the use or dissemination thereof, every Trustee shall have the right to inspect and copy at his expense all books, records and documents of the Corporation and to inspect the physical properties of the Corporation; provided such inspection is conducted at reasonable times upon not less than 10 days' prior written request to the Corporation.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 4.1. Number. The "Officers" of the Corporation shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other Officers, if any, as the Board of Trustees may from time to time elect. The same person may hold any two or more offices; provided, no individual may act in more than one capacity where action of two or more Officers is required; and further provided the Secretary may not be the same person as the Chair.

Section 4.2. Election and Term. All Officers shall be elected by the Trustees from among them and shall hold office for the term of one year or such shorter term as decided by Board action. Each officer shall continue in office until the expiration of his term or his or her death, resignation or removal in accordance with Section 4.3 of these By-Laws.

Section 4.3. Resignation or Removal. Any Officer may be removed, with or without cause, by a majority vote of the entire Board excluding the Trustee who is the subject of the removal action. Any Officer may resign at any time by delivering written notice of his or her resignation to the Corporation. At the election of the Corporation made by Board action, the resignation of a Trustee shall be effective upon such notice or upon a later date prior to the date of resignation specified in the notice, notwithstanding the specification of a later date in the notice. Acceptance of a resignation

shall not be necessary to make it effective. A vacancy in an office shall be filled for the unexpired term by Board action.

Section 4.4. Employees and Other Agents. The Board of Trustees may from time to time hire such employees and appoint such agents on such terms as it deems appropriate from time to time.

Section 4.5. Chair. The Chair shall have the power to sign alone in the name of the Corporation all contracts authorized by the Board of Trustees and to execute and deliver other documents and instruments. The Chair also shall be the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and shall preside at Board meetings in such capacity. The Chair shall also have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time prescribe.

Section 4.6. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall, in the absence or disability of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair. The Vice Chair shall also have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time prescribe.

Section 4.7. Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for the maintenance of an accurate record of all the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Trustees; be responsible to serve or cause to be served all notices of the Corporation and be custodian of the Corporation's records (other than financial records). The Secretary shall also have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time prescribe.

Section 4.8. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the oversight of all financial matters within the Corporation and the maintenance of accurate financial records of the Corporation and shall be the custodian of the Corporation's financial records. The Treasurer shall also have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time prescribe.

Section 4.9. Compensation. Persons serving as Officers shall not receive any salary or compensation for their services as Officers. An Officer shall be entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred by him or her in carrying out his or her duties as such.

ARTICLE V

SELF-DEALING TRANSACTIONS

Section 5.1. Purpose. The purpose of the procedures prescribed in this Article V is to protect the Corporation's best interests when entering into a transaction or arrangement that also might benefit the private interest of a Trustee, Officer or employee of the Corporation or a blood or marital relation of a Trustee, Officer or employee.

Section 5.2. Board's Authority. The Board shall not authorize corporate action, and no committee shall recommend corporate action, except in accordance with procedures set forth herein.

Section 5.3. Procedures.

(a) Duty to Inquire. In its consideration of any action the Board and all committees shall first conduct appropriate inquiry to determine whether the action involves a Self-Dealing Transaction, including determining the nature, scope and details thereof. "Self-Dealing Transaction" means any

transaction having the School as one party and one or more of the following among the proposed other parties thereto:

- (i) Trustees, Officers or employees of the School, or blood or marital relations of any of them,
 - (ii) an entity in which a Trustee, Officer or employee of the Corporation, or blood or marital relation of any of them, holds an ownership or investment interest,
 - (iii) an entity which employs or otherwise compensates a Trustee, Officer or employee of the School, or employs or compensates a blood or marital relation of any of them, and/or
 - (iv) any entity which has as a member of its board of directors or trustees a Trustee, Officer or employee of the School, or a blood or marital relation of any of them. A Trustee involved in an actual or potential Self-Dealing Transaction is referred to herein as an "Involved Trustee." Involved Trustees, and Officers and employees, related to a possible Self-Dealing Transaction being evaluated shall not participate in the inquiry into or the determination of whether the transaction is a Self-Dealing Transaction, but may present to the Board regarding the nature and extent of his or her relationship to the matter being considered.
- (b) Determining Whether a Self-Dealing Transaction Exists. After inquiry in accordance with subparagraph (a) immediately above, the Board shall take action as to whether the transaction is a Self-Dealing Transaction; provided, an Involved Trustee shall not participate in the deliberation of or vote the issue of whether a transaction is a Self-Dealing Transaction.
- (c) Action on a Self-Dealing Transaction. If the Board determines a transaction being considered is a Self-Dealing Transaction, the Board will exercise due diligence to determine whether the Corporation can arrange an alternative transaction more favorable to the School with reasonable efforts. An Involved Trustee shall not participate in this determination. As part of its due diligence, the Board may involve or engage one or more disinterested people to investigate alternative transactions. If the Board decides not to proceed with an alternative transaction, the Board shall determine whether it is in the Corporation's best interests and is fair and reasonable to the Corporation to authorize the Self-Dealing Transaction; provided, an Involved Trustee shall not participate in the deliberation of or vote upon the authorization of a Self-Dealing Transaction.
- (d) Violations. If the Board has reasonable cause to believe that a Trustee, Officer or employee has violated the School's Trustee, Officer and Employee Code of Ethics, it shall conduct further investigation as the Board deems warranted, shall inform the Trustee, Officer or employee of the basis for such belief, and afford him or her an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If the Board determines that a violation of the Code of Ethics has been committed, the Board shall take appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action. A Trustee who is the subject of an investigation or possible disciplinary or corrective action under this subparagraph (d) shall not participate in the deliberation of or vote on such determination or disciplinary or corrective action.
- (e) The Procedures prescribed in subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) immediately above shall apply to actions of committees of the Board in the same manner and to the same extent as prescribed for Board actions.

Section 5.4. Records of Proceedings. The minutes of the Board of Trustees and all committees with Board-delegated powers shall contain the names of the persons and entities involved in transactions which are or may be Self-Dealing Transactions, findings of the Board in respect of the scope and nature of those person's and entities' involvement, actions taken in accordance with this Article, the names of the persons present for or who participated in discussions thereof and a summary of the content of such discussions, and a record of votes taken in connection therewith, including the names of those present for and who participated in voting and their respective votes.

ARTICLE VI

MISCELLANEOUS

Section 6.1. Interpretation of Charter. In the event of a conflict between these By-Laws and the Charter, the provisions of the Charter shall control.

Section 6.2. Effectiveness of Non-Public Notices. Non-public notices given under these By-Laws shall be deemed effective only upon verified receipt or refusal.

END

Attachment 5(C). Code of Ethics

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL (SICS)
TRUSTEES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

The undersigned Trustee, Officer or employee of SICS shall comply with the Code of Ethics of the School, as set forth below in this document, during the entirety of his/her tenure on the Board or employment with the School:

Provision 1. Trustees, Officers and employees of the School Corporation will conduct or direct the affairs of the School and exercise their powers and responsibilities subject to the limitations of New York State Education Law, General Municipal Law and Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, and the School's charter and the Bylaws of the School Corporation, as applicable.

Provision 2. No Trustee, Officer or employee of the School Corporation shall engage in a "Self-Dealing Transaction," except as approved by the Board in accordance with procedures set forth in Article V of the By-Laws of the School Corporation. A Trustee who is or may be a party to a Self-Dealing Transaction is referred to herein as an "Involved Trustee."

Provision 3. In respect of any transaction under consideration by the School or to which the School is already a party, a Trustee, Officer or employee of the School Corporation shall have the obligation to make a "Self-Dealing Disclosure" as defined below, if he or she:

- (i) is or proposes to be, or has a blood or marital relation who is or proposes to be a party to the transaction in conflict of official duties,
- (ii) holds an ownership or investment interest in, or whose blood or marital relation holds an interest in, an entity which is a party to the transaction in conflict of official duties,
- (iii) is employed by or is otherwise compensated by, or whose blood or marital relation is employed or compensated by, an entity which is a party to the transaction in conflict with official duties, and/or
- (iv) is, or whose blood or marital relation is a director, trustee or corporate officer of an entity who is a party to the transaction in conflict with official duties. A "Self-Dealing Disclosure" is the prompt, full and frank public, written disclosure to his or her immediate supervisor (if applicable) and to the Board of his or her interest (or interest of his or her blood or marital relation), giving rise to the Self-Dealing Disclosure obligation. It is the obligation of every Trustee, Officer and employee to inform himself of matters which may be under consideration by the Board by timely reviewing publicly available information and making appropriate inquiry of the Board or Executive Director. Disclosure required under this shall include all relevant and material facts known to the Trustee, Officer and employee about the contract or transaction, and shall be set forth in the minutes of the Board.

Provision 4. In addition to the above Provisions of this Code of Ethics, Trustees, Officers and employees of the School Corporation shall avoid at all times engaging in activities that would appear to be unduly influenced by persons who have a special interest in matters under consideration by the Board or relating to the School. Specifically, no trustee, officer or employee shall:

- Directly or indirectly, solicit any gift, or accept or receive any gift having a value of seventy-five dollars or more, whether in the form of money, service, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing

or promise, or in any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him, or could reasonably be expected to influence him, in the performance of his official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his part;

- Disclose confidential information acquired by him in the course of his official duties or use such information to further his personal interests;
- Receive, or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the School or the Board of which he is an officer, member or employee or of any School or Board Committee or entity over which he has jurisdiction or to which he has the power to appoint any member, officer or employee; or
- Receive, or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before any School or Board Committee or entity, whereby his compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by such agency 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.

Provision 5. A Trustee, Officer or employee cannot have an interest in any for-profit contract with the school. Trustees, Officers or employees who have contracts with not-for-profit entities, such as charter management organizations, partners, and found organizations must disclose these contracts but they are not prohibited.

Provision 6. As a requirement of section 803 of the General Municipal Law, any Trustee Officer or employee who has, will have, or later acquires an interest in—or whose spouse has, will have, or later acquires an interest in—any actual or proposed contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement, including oral agreements, with the School Corporation of which he or she is an officer or employee, shall publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest in writing to his or her immediate supervisor and to the governing body thereof as soon as he or she has knowledge of such actual or prospective interest. Such written disclosure shall be made part of and set forth in the minutes of such body.

Provision 7. A Trustee, Officer or employee who violates this Code of Ethics will be subject to corrective or disciplinary action including removal in respect thereof.

Provision 8. Trustees, Officers and employees cannot hold investments in conflict with official duties with the exception of holdings where when less than five per centum of the outstanding stock of the corporation is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by such Trustee, Officer or employee.

Provision 9. Trustees, Officers and employees shall not have private or future employment in conflict with official duties as shall be determined by the Board upon disclosure prior to such employment or upon hire.

Provision 10. Trustees, Officers and employees of Sofara International Charter School will be required to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of and agreeing to comply with the Board, Officer and Employee Code of Ethics.

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR SOFARA INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL (SICS)
TRUSTEES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

Signature _____

Name of Trustee, Officer or Employee _____

Date signed _____

Attachment 8(A). Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures
Sofara International Charter School

Personnel Procedures: All employees of Sofara International Charter School will be expected to adhere to the policies below. Each employee, upon hire, will be given a copy of the personnel handbook and it will be reviewed. All employees will be expected to sign an Employment Acknowledgement Form and this form will be kept in their employee file. The personnel handbook will be reviewed and updated as needed with approval from the Board of Trustees (Board). SICS reserves the rights to modify, revoke, suspend or change, any or all such plans, policies or procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice. The resolution of any questions, interpretations or applications of policies will be the sole prerogative of SICS’ and its management. This handbook is not an employment contract and does not create legally enforceable obligations for the schools or the Board.

Equal Opportunity Employment: It will be the policy of SICS to provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, military service status, or any other protected classification. This policy will apply to all aspects of the employment experience, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotion, transfer, disciplinary action, layoff, return from layoff, SICS-sponsored training, and social and recreational programs. Any and all such employment decisions will be made in a non-discriminatory manner. SICS will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and all applicable state and local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities. SICS will also provide reasonable accommodation for such individuals in accordance with these laws.

It is SICS’ policy to:
• ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner in the pre-employment process and that employees with disabilities are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner in all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment;
• administer medical examinations to employees when justified by business necessity;
• keep all medical-related information confidential and retain it in separate files;
• provide reasonable accommodation to applicants and employees with disabilities, except where it would create an undue hardship for SICS; and
• notify individuals with disabilities that the school provides reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities by including this policy in the personnel handbook and by posting the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s poster on discrimination throughout school premises.

A qualified individual with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation by communicating this request to the Executive Director (ED) either orally or in writing. Upon receiving the request, the ED will meet with the employee to identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and accommodation that SICS may make. SICS reserves the right to request additional medical documentation. The Director of Teaching & Learning (DOTL) and ED will make the final decision.

Immigration and Nationality Act: In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control each new employee of SICS, as a condition of employment, will complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility as requested on the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 within three (3) business days of starting employment. Where indicated, employees will be required to submit documentation establishing continued eligibility for employment.

Hiring Procedure: All SICS positions will be posted publicly and will include a job description and minimum requirements. All postings will include the following wording: *“As an equal opportunity employer, SICS hires without consideration to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or disability.”* All applicants’ resumes and cover letters will be reviewed to ensure that they meet minimum requirements and experience. All candidates will be asked to provide references that will be checked and will be required to provide FBI clearances upon hire. SICS’ hiring process will include the following phases:

- **Submission of Resume and Cover letter:**

- **Interview:** SICS will utilize an interview protocol that includes a list of interview questions and a rubric containing objective criteria. The DOTL, ED, or a designee may elect to pre-screen candidates with a telephone interview to discover whether the candidate has the knowledge & experience required and work in a manner consistent with SICS' instructional philosophy and culture.
- **Demonstration Lesson:** Teaching candidates who are invited to continue in the process will be asked to conduct one or more demonstration lesson(s).
- **Checking References:** SICS will call references provided by the employee including a former employer.
- **Offering Employment:** SICS will offer employment through a hire offer memo and a phone call. SICS' job offer letter will include at least the following: a) job title or position offered; b) salary offered; and c) a restatement that the employment will be at-will.
- **Fingerprinting:** All employees must first clear the NYSED fingerprint screening process. OSPRA form 101, 102 and/or 104 must be submitted to NYSED for each new employee. SICS reserves the right to amend, extend or truncate this process as circumstances require.

Teacher and Staff Qualifications: Teacher and staff selection shall be based on strong academic preparation, professional competence, intellectual rigor, emotional maturity, enthusiastic professional attitude, knowledge of instructional practices, and ability to contribute to the furtherance of SICS educational goals. Teachers with bilingual French & IB experience or training will be given priority in interviewing. Attention will be paid, among other factors, to the candidate's academic records and to his or her previous relevant experience. Successful candidates for teaching and staff positions must demonstrate that they are willing and able support the educational and developmental needs of a diverse student population.

SICS will make efforts to attract key personnel who contribute to the diverse skill-set necessary to thrive in a charter school setting. We anticipate hiring a diverse team of educators, from a wide range of experiences, cultures, and countries of origin, to serve a diverse population of students. Teachers should have at least two to four years of experience designing and teaching an integrated curriculum, differentiating instruction for children who have multiple learning styles. They should also have achieved a Masters Degree in Education. Additionally, candidates should have a proven track record of high achievement in the classroom or other applicable setting and commitment to accountability; they should exhibit a belief in and alignment with SICS' core beliefs and educational philosophy SICS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations regarding teacher certification and licensure. In the case of non-certified instructional personnel, SICS will consider the teacher's experience, references, demonstration lesson, interview, and other criteria deemed appropriate by the DOTL and Executive Director.

Recruiting effective teachers and staff that align with SICS' mission: SICS will seek to establish a broad applicant pool for all available and vacant positions. SICS will diligently seek its employees through a variety of means, including the IB network of educators, Board referrals, teacher recruitment fairs and targeted advertisements, and relationships with colleges and graduate schools of education. SICS will attempt to promote diversity in its applicant pool by advertising positions in targeted media & networking with minority organizations in addition to actions presented in III C of the charter. Job postings on *idealist.org*, *tieonline.com*, and *ACTFL* or similar websites, and networking and communication with the NY Charter School Center and the NY Charter Schools Association and similar organizations will also be applied.

Employee Terminations: To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, SICS will expect employees to follow rules of conduct that protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization. It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following non-exhaustive list is examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination and should not be read to limit the "at will" status of employees.

- theft, damage or unauthorized removal or possession of SICS property
- falsification of timekeeping records
- any discriminatory act
- sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty, including operating vehicles or equipment
- any disruptive behavior, including fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- gambling on the premises
- safety violations including lack of supervision of students
- possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms
- excessive absenteeism, tardiness or any absence without approval

- misappropriation of school property

All SICS employees will be employed “at-will,” and may be terminated with or without cause or notice and are not guaranteed employment for any length of time. SICS will reserve the right to change the school organizational structure and eliminate jobs or job classifications when needed.

Staff Qualifications and Licenses: It shall be the obligation and financial responsibility of each SICS staff member to obtain and maintain certifications, licenses, and other credentials necessary for the position for which he or she was hired. It shall be the sole discretion of SICS to determine from time to time whether any staff member’s certificates, licenses, credentials and qualifications are sufficient or appropriate for any position at SICS.

Occupational Exposure Policy: The policy of SICS on occupational exposure will be consistent with the laws and regulations outlined by the United States Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Employees exposed to blood or other bodily fluid, in the course of their jobs will be required to exercise universal precautions. Universal precautions are intended to prevent the transmission of blood-borne disease when providing first aid or health care. Such precautions include the use of protective gear, washing hands and any contaminated areas with soap and water, and seeking medical attention for any significant exposure to the blood or bodily fluids of another person.

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATION AND EVALUATIONS

Professional Expectations

Hours of Operation, Work Days, Week and Year and School Year: The SICS building will open each school day from 7am until 6pm. If access to the building is needed outside of the specified hours, approval should be sought from the Director of Teaching & Learning or Executive Director. Special access will need to be scheduled two (2) weeks in advance to allow the administration to apply for the required permits. Employees work hours will be 7:55 AM – 4:50 PM, unless otherwise specified in employees hire memo. Each full-time employee each day, at a time specified by the school, may take a 50 minute non-working lunch break. The work year shall be as determined by school leadership and shall be subject to change at its discretion without prior notice. All staff members will be expected to be on time for all duties. If an employee is running late the employee must contact the Office Manager, Executive Director or the DOTL before the start of his or her shift. The Director of Operations will document all lateness. If an employee is excessively tardy without authorization, he or she will receive a written warning and be placed on thirty-day probation and may have his or her pay docked. Failure to correct this action can result in termination.

Additional Hours and Work Days: SICS may require employees to report to work on days not originally scheduled as work days if appropriate to advance the educational program of the school. For example, teachers may be asked to attend presentations or seminars held outside of normal school hours, to provide small-group instruction outside of normal school hours, or to design and execute academic projects. Compensation, if any, shall be determined by the school. SICS employees may take up to ten (10) personal or sick days throughout the fiscal year. These days will not roll over from one year to the next.

Intersession: SICS will require all instructional staff to report to work for one week of Intersession. Employees may express their preference about which week to report, but the Executive Director will make the final determination. Staff will be given a \$1,000 stipend for their work during a full week of Intersession. All regular full-time staff members will be encouraged to attend school events occurring outside of school hours. All regular full-time staff members will be required to attend and assist with trips, parent workshops and parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, all regular full-time staff members will be required to attend up to ten (10) evening or weekend activities beyond these activities.

Criminal Conviction: All employees of SICS will be required to notify the DOTL within 48 hours of occurrence of any criminal arrest and/or conviction whether it occurred in or out of the workplace.

Background Criminal Check: Employees of SICS will be required to successfully clear a background criminal check before their first day of work. If a situation arises where an employee must begin before clearance is received the employee must receive an Emergency Conditional Appointment that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Under a conditional appointment, measures will be taken to ensure that the staff person is supervised on a regular basis to ensure the safety of students. Employees who have never been fingerprinted for the New York State Education Department or the New York Board of Education must be fingerprinted at a facility approved by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services at the employee’s own expense.

Professional Evaluation Process: Our intention is to hire the most qualified people available and to give them the maximum opportunity to succeed and attain professional growth. All staff members of SICS will be expected to demonstrate progressive expertise in job performance and knowledge. The DOTL will be responsible for the performance evaluation of all instructional and program staff. The Executive Director will evaluate the performance of all non-instructional staff. In both cases, the DOTL and Executive Director will provide ongoing support and guidance to their respective staffs. Annual performance evaluations will be conducted to provide the opportunity to discuss job responsibilities, to identify and correct weaknesses, to recognize strengths and to discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. These reviews and evaluations will serve as an objective basis from which recommendations for salary adjustments and other personnel decisions may be made.

Evaluations for teaching staff will be conducted by the DOTL through regular informal classroom visits throughout the year. The visits will be conducted for a range of reasons, including observation of student achievement, demonstration or modeling of **IB** or best practices, assistance with guided instruction, or observation of practice. The visits may not be announced. One to three times per year, each teacher will have a formal evaluation that will be planned at least five (5) days in advance. After the formal evaluation the teacher who was evaluated will receive a performance evaluation based on the visits and observations of the DOTL. For all non-teaching staff their respective Manager or Director (including the ED) will discuss the staff person's performance and establish performance goals based on responsibilities and requirements of the position. The criteria of the evaluation for each position will be based on the school's operating values and the employee's job description. These criteria will be circulated prior to the evaluation. This criterion can be subject to change at any time without notice to the employee. We expect that staff will carry out their responsibilities fully and to the best of their abilities, and conduct themselves in a manner that best serves the interests of SICS. The results of the formal evaluation will be kept in each employee's personnel file. If a staff person's work performance does not meet satisfactory standards, their Manager or Director, in conjunction with the DOTL or Executive Director, may take any of the following steps:

- Identify areas of weakness, counsel and recommend ways to address them within a specified time frame;
- Present a verbal warning, and if the problem(s) continue, staff person is presented with a written warning/letter to file; and/or
- Discharge the staff person.

These steps are not to be seen as progressive in nature. The DOTL or Executive Director will take the step that is most appropriate under the circumstances.

School Policies *Harassment Policy:* SICS will strive to maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment, where employees treat each other with respect, dignity and courtesy. To this end, SICS will consider unacceptable any conduct or comments regarding a person's age, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristic that fail to respect the dignity or feelings of the individual. Accordingly, discriminatory conduct or conduct characterized as harassment as defined below is prohibited. In general, ethnic or racial slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's sex, race, color, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or other protected characteristic constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with a person's work performance or create an intimidating work environment.

Sexual harassment has been defined by federal and state law to include: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. The types of conduct prohibited by this policy will include, but are not limited to:

- Any demand for sexual favors that are accompanied by a promise of favorable job treatment or a threat concerning the employee's employment or the terms and conditions thereof.
- Subtle pressure for sexual favors, including implying or threatening that an applicant's or employee's cooperation of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any effect on the person's employment or future job opportunities.

- Repeated offensive or unwelcome sexual flirtations and advances; verbal comments, jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature; words or gesture of a sexual nature used to describe a person or depict a situation; or the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

All Other Discrimination and Harassment: It will be the policy of SICS that no discriminatory conduct by or against our employees will be tolerated. Harassment of any form will be prohibited, including, but not limited to: verbal, physical, or visual harassment of any kind; any form of sexual harassment (see description above); ethnic slurs; and creating or maintaining an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Harassment is prohibited in all relationships at the school including, but not limited to relationships between staff and between staff and students.

Investigation and Remediation: If an employee believes that he or she has experienced harassment, or believes that he or she has witnessed harassment, that employee should immediately notify the DOTL, Executive Director or any other managing personnel with whom that employee feels comfortable. All reports of harassment will be promptly investigated by the DOTL, Executive Director or his or her designee who is not involved in the alleged harassment, and will be kept confidential to the extent possible. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the DOTL or Executive Director will take appropriate corrective action, which may, upon a determination by the DOTL or Executive Director, include, but not be limited to, an official memorandum in an employee's personnel file or the termination of the offending employee. Documentation of the event, the investigation, and the remediation will be kept for at least three (3) years.

Whistleblower Policy General: SICS will require its directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics, as it relates to the organization, in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. All employees and representatives of SICS, must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. This policy will not be a vehicle for reporting violations of the applicable human resources policies, problems with co-workers or managers, or for reporting issues related to alleged employment discrimination or sexual or any other form of unlawful harassment, all of which should be dealt with in accordance with the Employment Manual. The matters that should be reported under this policy include suspected fraud, theft, embezzlement, accounting or auditing irregularities, bribery, kickbacks, misuse of school assets or suspected regulatory, compliance, or ethics-related issues, concerns or violations.

Reporting Responsibility: It will be the responsibility of all directors, officers and employees to report in good faith violations or suspected violations of high business and personal ethical standards, as such personal ethics relate to the organization, and/or applicable legal requirements ("Violations") in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

No Retaliation: No director, officer or employee who in good faith reports a Violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence as a direct result of such report. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a Violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the Organization prior to seeking resolution outside the Organization. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, this Whistleblower Policy is not an employment contract and does not modify the employment relationship between SICS and its employees, nor does it change that employees of SICS are employees at will. Nothing contained herein provides any director, officer, or employee of SICS with any additional rights or causes of action, other than those already provided by law.

Reporting Violations: Questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints regarding the ethical and legal standards noted above should be addressed directly to the Chair of the Compliance Committee.

Compliance Officer: The Compliance Officer will be a designee of the Compliance Committee and will be responsible for investigating and resolving all reported violations and shall advise the Compliance Committee and, if the Compliance Officer deems it appropriate, the DOTL and/or the ED, of all reported complaints and allegations of violations. The Compliance Officer will be required to report to the full Board at each regularly scheduled board meeting on compliance activity.

Accounting and Auditing Matters: The Compliance Committee of the Board shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls, or auditing. The Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Compliance Committee of any such complaint and work with the committee until the matter is resolved. Promptly upon receipt, the Compliance Committee shall evaluate whether a complaint constitutes an accounting complaint and if so shall promptly determine what professional assistance, if any, it needs in order to conduct an investigation. The Compliance Committee will be free in its sole discretion to engage outside auditors, counsel or other experts to assist in the investigation and in the analysis of results.

Investigations: The Compliance Officer may delegate the responsibility to investigate a reported violation, whether relating to accounting and auditing matters or otherwise, to one or more employees of SICS or to any other individual, including persons not employed by SICS, selected by the Compliance Officer; provided that the Compliance Officer may not delegate such responsibility to an employee or other individual who is the subject of the reported violation or in a manner that would compromise either the identity of an employee who reported the violation anonymously or the confidentiality of the complaint or resulting investigation. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the scope, manner and parameters of any investigation of a reported violation shall be determined by the Compliance Committee in its sole discretion and SICS and its employees will cooperate as necessary in connection with any such investigation.

Acting in Good Faith: Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation will be required to act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed may indicate a violation of such standards. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality: In making a complaint or submission, an employee of SICS may request that such complaint be treated in a confidential manner. SICS will take reasonable steps to attempt in good faith that the identity of the employee making the complaint remains anonymous. SICS takes seriously its responsibility to enforce this Whistleblower Policy and therefore encourages any employee reporting a violation to identify him or herself so as to facilitate any resulting investigation. Employees may, however, submit complaints on an anonymous basis. Reports of violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations: The Compliance Officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five (5) business days, but only to the extent the sender's identity is disclosed or a return address is provided. All reports will be promptly investigated; the scope of any such investigation being within the sole discretion of the Compliance Committee, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted.

Records: The Compliance Committee will retain on a strictly confidential basis for a period of seven (7) years (or otherwise as required under SICS record retention policies as amended from time to time) all records relating to any complaint and to the investigation and resolution thereof. All such records are confidential to SICS and such records will be considered privileged and confidential.

Alcohol, Smoking, and Drug Policies: In keeping with the SICS policy of ensuring a safe and healthy work environment, smoking or having or using alcohol or drugs will be prohibited throughout the workplace. State Law prohibits smoking in all school buildings, including buses. State Law also prohibits school employees from selling, distributing, attempting to sell or distribute, or being under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance while on school property. This policy will apply equally to all employees, students, and visitors.

If an employee believes that he or she has knowledge of an incident involving smoking, alcohol, or drug use that occurred on school property that employee should immediately notify the DOTL, Executive Director or any other managing personnel with whom that employee feels comfortable. All reports of an incident involving smoking, alcohol, or drug use that occurred on school property will be promptly investigated by the DOTL, Executive Director, or his or her designee who is not involved in the alleged incident, and will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

If an investigation confirms that an incident has occurred, the DOTL or Executive Director will take appropriate corrective action, which may, upon a determination by the DOTL or Executive Director, include, but not be limited to, an official memorandum in an employee's personnel file or the termination of the offending employee. Documentation of the event, the investigation, and the remediation will be kept for at least three (3) years. SICS will retain the right to search or test to maintain the safety, security, productivity, or quality of SICS and its community members; or if it will aid in an investigation of workplace accidents, but only if there is a valid reason to search or test. SICS will comply with applicable laws and regulations for searching and testing. All drug testing will be done fairly and the school will administer tests that conform to the scientific requirements of the New York Drug Testing Act. All results of testing and searching will be kept confidential.

Property Searches: All school property will belong to SICS including, but not limited to, desks, chairs, bookcases, computers, phones, and file cabinets. No person, including any staff member, has any right to privacy with respect to these items or locations. School equipment and instructional materials should not be used for any personal business without prior approval from the Executive Director and DOTL. Employees will also have no expectation of privacy with respect to all

communications, including but not limited to telephone, voicemail, e-mail, and Internet use. SICS will not be responsible for loss or damage of any employee's personal property, even if the damage or loss occurs on school grounds.

Confidentiality: Employees of SICS may not release any privileged information about SICS, its students, its activities, or the activities of its personnel except as normally required by their duties or as expressly permitted by the DOTL. Examples of confidential information include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| § Report cards; | § Residence and contact information; and |
| § Medical records; | § Special Education records. |

Only parents and guardians who have custody of their children and personnel mandated by law are allowed to see confidential information. Any applicable law or regulation supersedes a parent or guardian from seeing confidential information (i.e. a restraining order, a court order). No employee shall publish, disclose, use, or authorize anyone else to publish, disclose, use, or in any way cause to be published, disclosed or used, any private or proprietary information which such employee may in any way acquire, learn, develop, or create by reason of employment with this organization, unless otherwise provided by the DOTL. Any document or other material containing such information is required to be returned to the DOTL upon an employee's termination or resignation.

If an employee finds it necessary to release privileged information about SICS, its students, its activities, or the activities of its personnel except as normally required by their duties or as expressly permitted by the DOTL, that employee must submit a written request to the DOTL. The request must include the information to be released as well as to who the information is being released in order to be considered. Failure to secure permission before releasing privileged information can result in disciplinary action, including termination. The obligation for employee confidentiality continues after employment has been terminated.

Telecommunication Policy: SICS will provide computer and communication systems to support its business activities. These systems may include, but are not limited to: PC's, software, telephone, voicemail and electronic mail systems, all centralized computer equipment, networks, and access to the Internet. Each user will be personally responsible to ensure that these guidelines are followed. No employee of SICS should use any computers or communications systems for any non-school related business. All data in any SICS computer and communication systems (including, but not limited to, documents, and other electronic files, email and recorded voicemail messages) will be the property of SICS. SICS may inspect and monitor such data at any time. SICS may also monitor usage of the Internet by employees, including reviewing a list of sites accessed by an individual. No individual should have any expectation of privacy for electronic communications or account information in the system, including, but not limited to, documents, emails or messages marked "private," which may be inaccessible to most users but remain available to SICS. The deletion of a document or message may not prevent SICS from having access to the item or completely eliminate the item from the system. Likewise, no individual should have any expectation of privacy as relates to his or her usage of the Internet. In addition, SICS may restrict access to certain sites that it deems are not necessary for business purposes. SICS's computer and communication systems may not be used to create, transmit, access, receive, print, download or solicit material that is illegal, unauthorized, inappropriate, derogatory, obscene, sexually explicit or offensive, such as slurs, epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement based on race, color, national origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age or religious or political beliefs. For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, jokes and cartoons is not allowed. Similarly, computer systems may not be used to lobby, solicit or proselytize others for commercial purposes, causes, outside organizations, chain messages or other non-job-related purposes.

Likewise, employees should not download or disseminate copyrighted material, load or execute unlicensed software on school computers or conduct any other activity in violation of applicable law or regulations. Employees will be prohibited from intentionally disrupting the network, destructing or altering information, unauthorized interference with private information, and provision of access to unauthorized persons.

Employees will assume all risks associated with using the network, including indemnification of the school if it is sued for damage caused by the employee's actions on or through the network. Employees will be asked to notify their immediate supervisor, or any member of management upon learning of violations of this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. SICS will have no duty to inform any employee of changes to this policy.

Employee Files and Employee Record Policy: SICS will keep a confidential file on each employee that may include, but is not limited to, the following items: application materials and resume, letters of hire and acceptance, copies of certificates and licenses, performance evaluations, letters of commendation and/or warning letters regarding job performance, records of all disciplinary actions, a signed code of ethics, and documentation required by state or other regulatory agencies. SICS will be committed to the laws and general principles of employee confidentiality as set forth in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) with regard to the dissemination of private health information (PHI) of Agency employees. In order to comply with all rules and regulations, including the ADA, SICS will keep all medical records and all other necessary documents in a separate file. Employee files will be the sole property of SICS.

Employees may view their personnel file upon request and in the presence of the DOTL or ED. SICS will only release information on school personnel as consistent with all applicable rules and regulations. When legally mandated to release information on school personnel, SICS will do so without employee notification. If an employee requests SICS to release information to an outside party, that request must be put in writing to the ED. It is at the sole discretion of the ED, unless mandated by applicable laws and regulations, if information is released.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest will be when any employee, Trustee of the Board, or other person in a position in authority has competing personal or professional interests. All employees will be required to sign a conflict of interest agreement stating that they will not derive any personal profit or gain (excluding salary from SICS), directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation with SICS. Each individual shall disclose to the DOTL or designee any personal interest which he or she may have in any matter related to SICS and not participate in any decision on that matter. It will be the policy of SICS to excuse any staff, Trustee of the Board, or other interested party from any part of the hiring process when the potential employee in question is a relative of the employee, Trustee of the Board, or interested party.

STUDENT-RELATED POLICIES

Mandatory Reporting: All staff members of SICS will be considered mandated reporters under Section 413 of the New York State Social Services Law. Mandated reporters are legally required to initiate a report under this statute's provisions when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or maltreated. SICS will require all staff members who suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect to immediately bring the matter to the attention of the DOTL before completing all other mandatory reporting requirements. It will be the responsibility of every staff member to report any suspected child abuse, maltreatment or neglect directly to ACS. The form to be filled can be found in the Main Office or via the website: <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us>. SICS will also be submitting a report to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the law. Any staff member's failure to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment or neglect may render SICS and the individual employee civilly and/or criminally liable. Reporting suspected child abuse, maltreatment or neglect in good faith will protect the reporting employee and SICS from being legally liable.

New York law defines an "abused child" as a child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for his or her care inflicts or allows to be inflicted serious physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse. A "maltreated child" is any child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for him or her fails to provide him or her with food, clothing, shelter, education, medical or surgical care, who abandons the child, who uses excessive corporal punishment, or who uses drugs or alcohol to the point where he or she loses control of his or her actions. Although New York law defines child abuse and maltreatment narrowly, SICS will require employees to report suspicion of any serious physical or mental injury (other than by accidental means) or sexual abuse to the DOTL and ACS directly, regardless of who is the suspected perpetrator. In all situations involving suspected or alleged child abuse or maltreatment, SICS will endeavor to act in the best interests of the student and to cooperate with the appropriate authorities.

Corporal Punishment: Staff members of SICS should not touch students, unless safety intervention is necessary to protect a child's physical well-being, or the well-being of another person. In the event of a classroom emergency in which a child needs to be physically restrained staff members should notify the DOTL or designee to the extent possible. Corporal punishment is prohibited by New York state law and by SICS. Corporal punishment will result in immediate termination. Prohibited actions include: taking away a child's chair and requiring him or her to stand; requiring a child to sit with his or her

face to the wall; requiring a child to perform a repetitive physical task such as writing the same phrase over and over; and requiring a child to affix something to her body as a symbol of bad behavior, such as tape over her mouth. Any employee who becomes aware of an incident of corporal punishment must report that incident immediately to the DOTL

Student Medicine Policy: A parent or guardian requesting that medication be administered to their child during the school day will be required to submit the following in writing during school hours to the School Nurse:

1. a letter of request and authorization that contains all information required by SBESE policy;
2. written orders for all medications to be given at school, including annual renewals at the beginning of the school year;
3. a written description by physician or dentist of the desired effects and the child-specific potential of adverse side effects;
4. a prescription for all medications to be administered at school, including medications that might ordinarily be available over the counter;
5. a list of all medications that the student is currently receiving at home and school, if that listing is not a violation of confidentiality or contrary to the request of the parent/guardian or student;
6. a list of names and telephone numbers of persons to be notified in case of medication emergency in addition to the parent or guardian and licensed person prescribing the medication;
7. arrangements for the safe delivery of the medication to and from school in the original labeled container as dispensed by the pharmacist; the medication shall be delivered by a responsible adult; and
8. unit dose packaging shall be used whenever possible.

Medicine shall be stored in a locked cabinet, closet, or drawer with access only provided to the nurse and the DOTL. Only the nurse can administer medications. Medication will be stored only in its originally labeled container as dispensed by the pharmacist and will be stored with a photograph of the child whom will be receiving the medication. Staff members of SICS, under no circumstances, will be permitted to administer any form of medicine to a student.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR SICS STAFF

Executive Director Job Description The Executive Director reports directly to the Board and is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of policies established by the Board and the charter. The Executive Director manages the DOTL, the Director of Operations, the Community Outreach Organizer and, in Year 3, Business Manager. The Executive Director makes final decisions about, but not limited to, hiring, budgeting, and resource allocation and oversees planning and development of long and short term strategic plans.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Sets the vision for the school and specific means of executing that vision, including school programming and partnerships, while continuing to support and encourage the mission of SICS in its day-to-day operation
- Co-develops & implements strategic plans and goals
- Recruits, hires, and terminates all staff, with input from the DOTL when appropriate. Gives significant weight to the recommendation of the DOTL in hiring instructional staff
- Maintains communication with SICS’ authorizer and is liaison between NYSED and the SICS Board. Oversees production and submission of all required reports to NYSED
- Fosters a collaborative leadership culture among the school’s leadership team
- Responsible for success of all school programs and ensures that the school is in compliance with SICS’ approved charter, Board policies, appropriate governmental statutes, its authorizer’s and NYSED regulations and all other applicable governmental laws and regulations.
- Communicates vision of the school to the public and the press; represents the school to parents, community leaders, and the general public. Is responsible for all communications and marketing
- Is the public face of SICS in the community, working to build a strong, mutually respectful connection between the school and families and other stakeholders
- Works with the Family-School Assoc. to ensure that parents are engaged in all aspects of school life and have the opportunity to provide input.

- Leads all fundraising and development initiatives, including grant writing and private fundraising
- Oversees and implements parent outreach and student recruitment process

- Works directly with contracted accounting professionals, the Business Manager and with the Board to ensure financial stability, sound fiscal planning, effective asset management and full compliance with government and charter audit requirements

Qualifications: (1) Minimum 5 years experience in urban education, at least 3 of which have been in a leadership role, with knowledge of leadership principles and practices gained through work experience and/or formal education; (2) Advanced Degree such as Masters Degree (preferably in Educational Leadership), Law, or Business; (3) An understanding of instructional practice including those related to delivery of instruction in the IB continuum of programs, development of curriculum and assessment of student performance; (4) An understanding of finance, budgeting, and operations; (5) Exceptional speaking and writing skills; (6) Exceptional interpersonal skills, effective communication and motivational skills; (7) A demonstrated ability to build partnerships with multiple stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds; and (8) Capable, with computer technology, in gathering information and coordinating technical resources for students, teachers and classrooms.

Director of Teaching & Learning (DOTL) Job Description The DOTL is the instructional leader of the school. The DOTL supervises and evaluates all instructional and program staff, including Subject Area Teachers, Social Workers, Counselors, and the Instructional Coaches & Coordinators. The DOTL ensures the educational program is meeting the goals of the charter through coordinating educational programs, professional development, curriculum design, & staff accountability.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Ensures high academic outcomes as identified in SICS' charter
- Responsible for the curriculum, all instructional materials and implementation
- Sets academic vision align with school vision and ensures that all staff are mission-aligned
- Leads staff and teachers in the development and on-going improvement of an academic program tailored to the needs of the school's students
- Makes hiring recommendations to the Executive Director, and leads hiring process for instructional and programming staff
- Aids teachers in implementing effective instruction; monitors student achievement

- Oversees select programs as determined with ED
- Trains, supervises and evaluates all instructional staff and teachers, providing recommendations to the Executive Director on recruitment, retention, hiring and termination decisions.
- Works with staff to create PD plans
- Fosters collegiality and collaborative decision making among staff
- Oversees development and maintenance of school culture, including discipline system
- Plans all staff professional development
- Works with ELL Instructor(s) and Special Education Coordinator to make sure identified students receive designated services

Qualifications: (1) Minimum 5 years experience in urban education, at least 3 of which have been in a leadership role, with knowledge of leadership principles and practices gained through work experience and formal education; (2) Masters Degree in Education; (3) A thorough understanding of instructional practice including those related to IB continuum of programs, delivery of instruction, development of curriculum and assessment of student performance; (4) A demonstrated ability to use data to analyze and improve performance; (5) Exceptional speaking and writing skills; (6) Exceptional interpersonal skills, effective communication and motivational skills; (7) Demonstrated ability to create a positive school culture; (8) Ability to impart a sense of urgency and relentlessness to instructors and all pedagogical and program staff.

Director of Operations Job Description The Director of Operations reports directly to the Executive Director and is responsible for ensuring the effective management of the non-instructional functions of the school. The Director of Operations manages admissions, facilities, student records, food services, the generation of required reports, and other operational and compliance responsibilities. In Year 3, an Operations Associate will be hired to assist the Director of Operations. The Director of Operations will supervise and evaluate non-instructional, non-program staff, including the Office Manager and Operations Associate.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Maintains system to address facility needs

- Manages all classroom spaces, including set-up and break-down at beginning and end of year, respectively
- Oversees school environment to ensure that it is ready and safe for students on a daily basis
- Manages contracted services
- Manages school meals
- Ensures compliance with Department of Health standards
- Oversees handling of all Human Resources administration, including all paperwork for new hires and exit interviews and paperwork for terminations
- Manages compliance related to By-Laws/charter renewal

- Selects and manages relationships with vendors/brokers and manages enrollment of health plans and retirement plans for all staff
- Selects and manages relationships with vendors/brokers for school-wide insurance policies per approval by the Executive Director
- Manages all compliance responsibilities including Titles I-V, teacher certification and fingerprinting, safety, fire drill coordinator, health, software compliance, COBRA letters, student lottery, annual Sexual Harassment seminar, and any legal issues
- Other duties, as assigned by the ED

Qualifications: (1) Demonstrated record of leadership, management and interpersonal skills; (2) Bachelor's Degree or higher in Operations Management, Organizational Management, Business or related field; (3) At least three years previous experience in Management capacity at a charter school or comparable environment; (4) Knowledge of/experience with relevant laws, regulations, governmental agencies, budgeting and charter authorizer requirements

Community Outreach Organizer Job Description The Community Outreach Organizer is responsible for assisting the Executive Director with creating the face of SICS and ensuring that the vision is being realized. The Community Outreach Organizer liaisons with all stake-holders of the school community including families and donors. Additionally, they will aid the Executive Director in overseeing the financial and personnel growth of the school. He or she manages all fundraising initiatives, including grant proposals, relationships with individual donors, and any fundraising events. He or she will also manage the initial stages of the hiring process. He or she reports to the Executive Director.

Specific responsibilities:

- Assists the Executive Director with application to and administration of all competitive grants
- Assists the Executive Director with all fundraising events, including follow up
- Develops relationships with community organizations, families, and potential donors
- Recruits candidates for all existing and new staff positions
- Represents school at hiring fairs, screen resumes, conduct initial phone interviews when needed

- Develops opportunities for SICS students, such as jobs, internships & summer programs in collaboration with school counselor
- Oversees external communications, including press releases, community newsletter, annual report and other publicity materials
- Increases parent involvement in the school and convenes regular parent meetings
- Organizes open school night and other events
- Other duties as assigned by the ED

Qualifications: (1) Demonstrated record of success in development and/or talent recruitment field; (2) Bachelor's degree or higher in communications or other communications-related field; (3) Exceptional written and verbal communication skills; (4) Knowledge/experience of relevant technology; (5) Ability to quickly develop and maintain relationships with potential employees, donors, press and other constituencies to the benefit of SICS

Business Manager Job Description The Business Manager will be hired in Year 3, and is responsible for maintaining all financial systems and operations of the school. He or she will report to the Director of Operations. **Specific Responsibilities:**

- Posts all revenues, bank deposits, expenses, check disbursements in accounting system and maintains files of all related accounting documents
- Manages all payroll responsibilities including relationship with payroll service, electronic payroll processing, W-2 and 1099 distribution, time sheet management, posting payroll

- expenses in accounting system, filing of related documents using Binder System;
- Tracks all days off (vacation, sick, personal, jury duty, bereavement, excused absences for professional development) and researches ways to automate tracking and communicating this to staff.

- Manages contracted services
- Manages school meals
- Handles Human Resources administration, including all paperwork for new hires and exit interviews and paperwork for terminations
- Manages enrollment of health plans and retirement plans for all staff

- Manages all compliance responsibilities including Titles I-V, teacher certification and fingerprinting, safety, fire drill coordinator, health, software compliance, COBRA letters, student lottery, annual Sexual Harassment seminar, and any legal issues
- Managing compliance related to By-Laws and charter renewal
- Other duties assigned by Director of Operations

Qualifications: 1) Demonstrated record of organization and interpersonal skills; (2) Bachelor's Degree or higher in Business Management, Finance, Accounting or other similar field; (3) At least two years previous experience in business or finance capacity at a charter school or similar environment; (4) Knowledge of/experience with relevant laws, regulations, and charter authorizer requirements

IB Coordinator Job Description The PYP Coordinator helps teachers strengthen their knowledge base and repertoire of teaching skills including inquiry, in order to implement the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO's) programs with fidelity. This person will promote the fundamental concepts of the International Baccalaureate Programme and help to ensure that such practices support improved student performance. The coordinator is a member of the school leadership team and collaborates with other members of the team to develop a school culture that reflects the qualities of the IB Learner Profile.

Specific Responsibilities

- Distribute information, communications and materials from the IBO and other relevant information to teachers and administrators as appropriate
- Plan and organize school level and external IB-approved training for teachers and administrators
- Provide school level professional development in instructional delivery and IB practices as needed (through modeling, workshops, non-evaluative observations and feedback, etc.)
- Assist the principal in scheduling and monitoring collaborative meetings of grade level teams and other team configurations
- Establish & maintain communication with and participation in sub-regional IB Mid – Atlantic groups.
- Ensure that all regulations set by the IBO concerning programmes and procedures are carried out properly and all deadlines are met.
- Ensure that all PYP teachers are issued a username and password for access to the Online Curriculum Centre.
- Provide guidance and support to staff to implement the PYP, including developing a programme of inquiry, using the PYP planner and using a diverse set of assessment strategies
- Ensure that sufficient resources are organized and managed within the school and identified within the local community for the implementation of the PYP, including students undertaking both collaborative and independent inquiry.
- After the point of authorization, provide teachers and students are provided with guidance concerning the PYP exhibition.
- After the point of authorization, organize and conduct visits to the school by interested outside parties such as parents and area candidate schools.

Qualifications: 1) Knowledge of change management theory and practice; 2) Knowledge of adult learner characteristics and training principles and practices; 3) Ability to apply current technology to staff development and instructional delivery; 4) Outstanding communication skills; 5) Minimum of 3 years of successful teaching experience; 6) Master's Degree and experience planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating staff development programs preferred. 7) Prior training and experience in an IB program preferred but not required.

Instructional Coach Job Description The Instructional Coach has the same job description as the Subject Area Teachers (see below), with the following additional responsibilities and qualifications. As SICS grows, one Instructional Coach will become a Senior Instructional Coach and focus exclusively on assisting teachers with growth and development in a non-evaluative capacity. **Specific Responsibilities:**

- Observes each Subject Area Teacher at least once every week, conducting pre- and post observation conferences

- Provides additional, non-evaluative coaching on areas of lesson and unit planning, delivery of instruction, standards alignment, classroom management, and assessment
- Other duties, as directed by the DOTL or ED in support of teacher performance

Qualifications: (1) Minimum five years teaching experience in an urban or charter school; (2) Minimum one year experience as Coach, Department Head, or other intermediary instructional leadership position

Subject Area Teacher Job Description (Including Special Education Instructor , bilingual teachers, and ESL Specialists) SICS will strive to hire instructional staff that has a combination of skills an attributes that align them with the general IB philosophy and the SICS mission. Priority will be given to instructors with IB experience or training at the program level for which they are applying to.

Subject area teachers, including Special Education and ELL Teachers, are responsible for ensuring that all students in their classes are achieving at high levels both academically and socially, and are prepared for high levels of achievement in life and on State exams. All subject area teachers report to the DOTL.

- Executes the mission of SICS including high academic achievement, the application of critical thinking skills and ethical standards to learning, and living and problem solving through individual teaching and learning practices
- Believes that every child can and will achieve high academic standards and provides consistent support to our students no matter how challenging the individual situation may be
- Consistently reflects on self and instructional practices, to achieve these academic goals
- Plans student learning and individual achievements based on long and short-term goals, and program objectives
- Selects and uses effective instructional methods and learning materials
- Manages the classroom in a positive manner and keeps students on task

Specific Responsibilities:

- Attends, participates, and facilitates team meetings and professional development opportunities, as well as common planning times
- Communicates and collaborates with peers, sharing student work, methodologies, and strategies as well as coordinating lesson topics with other teachers in order to create a coherent curricular design to achieve the overall purposes of the SICS school program
- Communicates regularly with parents about both positive and negative interactions with students, making a minimum of two positive contacts (phone, email, or text message) with parents per week
- Prepares, administers, and reviews all required student assessments
- Meets regular and predictable attendance requirements
- Participates in PD and personal growth opportunities
- Other duties, as assigned by the DOTL.

Qualifications: All content area teachers must hold a NYS professional teaching license or be eligible for reciprocity to include (1) Minimum Bachelor's degree in subject area to be taught, Master's Degree preferred; (2) Minimum of two years teaching experience in an urban public school or charter school setting; (3) Proven track-record of high achievement in the classroom and commitment to accountability; (4) Belief in and alignment with SICS's core beliefs and educational philosophy; (5) Valid New York State Certification, except in cases where the DOTL shall make an exception under the terms of this Policy, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Social Worker and School Counselor Job Description The Social Worker and School Counselors will support the school in addressing the social, emotional and developmental needs of the school's students and families, and in helping students and families access appropriate services and resources. They report to the DOTL.

- Provides mandated counseling services pursuant to students' IEPs
- Provides "at-risk" counseling for students referred by staff or self-referred, for those students whose behavior, school progress, or mental or physical impairment indicates a need for assistance

- Conducts student observations and/or Functional Behavior Analyses for students who have persistent behavioral issues
- Develops student behavior plans
- Coordinates external services for those who require
- Develops and reviews service plans in consultation with students, their families, and school staff, and performing

follow-up assessing the quantity and quality of service provided

- Supports school staff in addressing issues such as suspected child abuse and neglect. Training staff in their role as mandated reporters; acting as school liaison with Administration for Children's Services
- Maintains case history records and prepares reports
- Trains staff on compliance with the Dignity for All Students Act

- Addresses emergency situations impacting students, such as leading group counseling sessions that provide support in areas such as grief, stress, or chemical dependency
- Arranges for medical, psychiatric, and other tests that may disclose causes of difficulties and indicate remedial measures
- Interviews students individually, in families, or in groups and assessing their circumstances, capabilities and problems, to determine what services are required to meet their needs
- Other duties, as assigned by the DOTL

Qualifications: (1) Masters degree or higher in School Counseling or Social Work, as appropriate; (2) Appropriate New York State Certification; (3); Minimum three years experience working as a school counselor in an urban public or charter school; (4) Demonstrated ability to work productively with staff and with diverse populations of students, parents, and families, including students with disabilities or students with limited English proficiency; (5) Demonstrated understanding of issues facing children and youth, especially in urban environments; (6) French-speaking a plus

Guidance Counselor Job Description (in addition to duties described as school counselor)

The Guidance Counselor supports students and parents through mandated counseling services and crisis intervention as well as the higher education application process, and ensures that students have a realistic, workable and comprehensive post-secondary plan. A Guidance Counselor will be hired in Year 2 and reports to the DOTL

Qualifications: (1) Bachelor's degree required, Masters Degree preferred; (2); Minimum three years experience working as counselor in an urban public or charter school; (3) Demonstrated ability to work productively with staff and with diverse populations of students, parents, and families, including students with disabilities or students with limited English proficiency; (4) Understanding of post-secondary options for students, including colleges, trade schools, and training programs; (5) Excellent oral and written communication skills; (6) Exceptional organizational skills; (7) Ability to represent SICS to organizations, donors, colleges, trade schools, and training programs.

Office Manager Job Description The Office Manager is the first point of contact for many parents and other visitors, and is responsible for making the school a welcoming, open environment. The Office Manager reports to the Director of Operations and supervises the School Aides. **Specific Responsibilities:**

- Answers and redirects, as needed, general telephone and email inquiries
- Maintains office appliances
- Tracks and replenishes office supplies
- Coordinates internal meetings and appointments
- Manages postal operations
- Manages student recruitment process, including outreach and tours for parents
- Ensures student enrollment is at the correct count
- Carries out administrative tasks with respect to recruitment, lottery administration, and enrollment as

- directed by Director of Operations, DOTL or ED
- Manages student transportation, including procurement and distribution of MetroCards, and all transportation requirements for field trips
- Coordinates school-parent communications, including mailings or reminder phone calls
- Manages system to address facility needs
- Schedules & logs fire alarms as per with the law
- Other duties, as directed by the Director of Operations, DOTL, or Executive Director

Qualifications: (1) Minimum Associate's Degree or Business training; (2) Demonstrates and successful record of prior employment in administrative, secretarial, or office manager in educational environments; (3) Knowledge of and experience with relevant technologies; and (4) French or Arabic speaker a plus

School Aide Job Description School Aides report to the Office Manager and are responsible for providing support to the Office Manager in carrying out his or her office and other administrative tasks at the school in support of the DOTL, Executive Director, Director of Operations, Office Manager and all instructional staff.

Qualifications: (1) Minimum of High School Diploma or secretarial training; (2) Knowledge of and experience with relevant technologies; (3) French speaker a plus

POSSIBLE FUTURE POSITIONS

Special Education Coordinator Job Description The Special Education Coordinator oversees special education services, testing accommodations, fulfillment of IEP mandates and coordination with the CSE. The SpEd. Coordinator will also be a Special Education Instructor, with part-time administrative responsibilities.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Oversees special education and related services, programs and grants, and ensures compliance with state and federal laws and regulations related to the implementation of IDEA
- Remains current regarding laws, policies, trends and best practices related to education in general and SpEd programs specifically and shares this info. with administrators and staff on a regular basis
- Conducts all diagnostic testing required for accommodations by the College Board for SATs, PSATs, and other college entrance exams
- Provides training on UDL system of instruction and assists teachers with UDL planning
- Ensures that all students with disabilities receive appropriate testing accommodations during all

- assessments, including when taking Regents Exams
- Expands learning opportunities for students in an on-going effort to update opportunities, improve services and programs, offer instructional pathways based on best practices and maximize progress
- Provides support with complex IEPs including facilitating meetings and advising stakeholders
- Attends all IEP meetings with the CSE and coordinates participation of other school personnel, parents and students
- Ensures IEPs are updated and submitted in a timely fashion
- Provides reports each trimester to the DOTL
- Other duties as determined by the DOTL

Qualifications: (1) Minimum Masters Degree; (2) Valid NYS Special Education Certification; (3) Special Education administrative and teaching experience in an urban public or charter school, preferably in a high school setting; (4) Demonstrated ability to work effectively and collaboratively with multiple stakeholders; (5) Extensive knowledge of provisions of IDEA, Section 504, assessment and curriculum for Special Education student; (6) Demonstrated ability to implement Special Education strategies and accommodations, particularly UDL; (7) Extraordinary organization skills, allowing for detailed tracking of data, coordinating and following through on IEP meetings and procedures, and tracking of progress of students with disabilities

Director of School Culture Job Description The Director of School Culture is responsible for implementing the positive culture of the school, as well as maintaining high behavioral standards through enforcement of the school discipline policy. In Year 3, an Associate Director of School Culture may be added to assist the Community Outreach Organizer and DOTL

Qualifications: (1) Minimum Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree preferred; (2) Background in School Counseling (certification preferred); (3) Excellent written and verbal communication ability; (4) Attention to detail and ability to manage multiple data systems at once; (5) French-speaker a plus

Parent and Family Coordinator Job Description The Parent and Family Coordinator may be added in Year 2. He or she will report to the Executive Director. The Parent and Family coordinator is the chief liaison between parents and the school.

Qualifications: (1) Minimum Bachelor's Degree; (2) Demonstrates and successful record of prior employment in parent and community engagement role; (3) Knowledge of and experience with relevant technologies; (4) Strong oral and written communication skills; (5) Multilingual speaker a plus

VOYKA NICOLE SOTO - Curriculum Vitae

PROFILE STATEMENT

American licensed teacher with experience in American and Middle Eastern Elementary and Middle Schools. Experience teaching mainstream, GT, special needs, and ESL students. Proven ability to solve problems while effectively leading staff in a team-work environment as a Team Leader. Demonstrated strong cross-cultural communication skills. Experience with curriculum development and chairing school-wide committees that work to identify and develop resources aligned with instructional needs. New school planning and development. Collaborated on systemic reform as part of Magnet Leadership Team. Collaborated on continuing reform and development as part of School Leadership Team.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

American Special Education Schools – Middle East 2002-2005 Creative Children International School, Dasman Model School, & Fawzia Sultan International School:

RESOURCE TEACHER / PLANNER / TEAM LEADER

- Participated in ECIS accreditation process on Leadership Team
- Wrote initial start-up curriculum (scope & sequence)
- **Co-wrote start-up plan for school opening through SWOT analysis**
- **Managed many areas of the opening plan**
- Chaired Middle School Science Committee
- Designed inquiry & support programs for special needs students
- Served as Team Leader for lower grades (Mentor & Coach)

RESOURCE TEACHER / PLANNER / TEAM LEADER

- Assessed and evaluated student academic levels for placement
- Assessed, evaluated, and coordinated learning of Special Needs students
- Managed self-contained classroom of SN, ED, and LD students
- Wrote student IEP's and Term Plans aligned with SN curriculum
- Served as Team Leader for grades 1 to 3

N.Y.C. Board of Education: 1999 -2013

CLASS ROOM TEACHER – Elementary School

IB Teacher

- Developed IB PYP units of study aligned with CCLS and NYC scope and sequence
- Created trans-disciplinary lesson plans that met differentiated student inquiries
- Co-developed inquiry based performance projects and tasks
- Planned and developed grade-wide student exhibition
- Mentored fellow teachers on teaching and learning in IB

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SPECIALIST – Middle School grades 6, 7 & 8

Assistant Dean of Middle School

LANGUAGE ARTS & SOCIAL STUDIES

- Provided ongoing Intervention support for classroom teachers
- Provided intervention services through small group and whole class instruction
- Developed Academic Intervention Plans for level 1 and 2 students in 6th & 7th grade
- Collaborated on the development and implementation of systems for promoting positive student behaviors

RESOURCE ROOM TEACHER – Elementary School grades K-6

- Served and evaluated individual student needs
- Performed testing for special needs students in collaboration with the SBST
- Created balanced assessment instruction plans for individual students
- Organized and ran faculty-staff professional development workshops

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SPECIALIST- Pilot Program, Character Education

- Developed values and ethics curriculum for general education (K-6)
- Successfully taught program through reading, writing, math, art, science and S.S.
- Established, coordinated, and ran school incentive program for 1200 students
- Designed and wrote monthly school newsletter
- Implemented curriculum through developed units of study for school based diversity & non violence program

SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT PROJECTSFaculty

Mentor – Special Education teachers
 Developed & implemented Middle School discipline policy
 Chaired Middle School Science Committee
 Discipline Committee Member
 Chaired Student Services committee as a member of the School-wide Steering Committee
 School Leadership Team Core member
 Magnet Leadership Team Member
 Assisted in development and training of parent volunteer group
 Developed and implemented school based student incentive system
 Organized and ran faculty-staff professional development workshops.
 Organized faculty professional development conference travel
 Implemented school based diversity & non-violence program
 School based Chapter Leader, United Federation of Teachers

Student

Experience in organizing and facilitating uniquely designed authentic learning experiences

- Organized school events and performances
- Produced and directed original student performances
- Implemented a Model U.N. program
- Faculty advisor for student newspaper
- Facilitated several student centered clubs
- Supervised student led fundraisers
- Facilitated process for articulation
- Organized student project exhibition

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Psychotherapist – Private practice

- Specializing in child development and adult group therapy

Assistant Researcher

- Epistemology: Implicit learning and tacit knowledge
- pre-professional experience available upon request

EDUCATION

United World College

- Certification, International Baccalaureate Continuum: Teaching and Learning

The College of St. Rose

- Certification, Students with Disabilities

George Mason University

- Master in Education, International Curriculum and Instruction

City University of New York at Brooklyn College

- Bachelor of Art, Psychology

OTHER

Languages

English – Mother tongue

French – Conversational

Arabic – Basic

Licensing

NYS / Permanent Elementary (Common Branches)

NYS / Students With Disabilities 1-6 VA / PK – 6