

FULL APPLICATION SUMMARY

Proposed Charter School Name	Truxton Academy Charter School
Application History	Standard New School Application
Proposed Board Chair Name	Lucinda Denkenberger
Proposed Board Chair Email Address	████████████████████
Proposed Board Chair Telephone Number	██████████
Public Contact Name	Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk
Public Contact Email Address	kjlaudermilk@gmail.com
Public Contact Telephone Number	(607) 345-6466
District of Location	Homer Central
Opening Date	August 2017
Proposed Charter Term	5 Years
Proposed Management Company or Partners	
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span for Indicated Years	Year 1: K-4, 80 students
	Year 5: K-6, 140 students
Mission Statement	The mission of the Truxton Academy Charter School is to cultivate an enthusiasm for learning through a project-based curriculum that celebrates our rural life, environmental stewardship, and our agricultural heritage. Through real world, student-centered learning we will plant a strong foundation for future academic success.

Location

Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) will be located in Truxton, NY, a small rural community 11 miles east of Cortland, surrounded by farms and forests. TACS will provide an innovative, educational choice of excellence for elementary students of low and middle income, rural and migrant families in Truxton and adjacent rural communities. TACS will be housed in the former Hartnett Elementary School. A local non-profit community corporation acquired this building for TACS.

Mission and Objectives

TACS will accomplish its mission to “plant a strong foundation for future academic success” by: (a) providing an educational choice of excellence, relevance and innovative learning experiences, (b) raising academic achievement and developing career readiness skills for children, (c) introducing rural agricultural and environmental awareness using place-based experiential learning, and (d) providing an opportunity for local colleges and universities to interact with an innovative charter school model designed for rural communities.

Students Served:

TACS will serve families seeking a choice in educational venues within a 15-mile radius of the school. The target student population includes: rural students, Spanish-speaking students from migrant families, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.

Key Design Elements

The innovative learning experiences offered in TACS's key design elements reflect its mission by: 1) incorporating **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** across the curriculum, 2) integrating **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)** objectives with **agricultural and environmental** resources, 3) beginning **Spanish language instruction** at the elementary level, and 4) creating a **School Family** culture.

Unique Characteristics

The local agri-business community, as well as natural resources, will provide important opportunities for enriching "real world, student-centered learning." **Each classroom will be paired with a local farm or agri-business.** Classes will visit to their agri-business monthly and participate in hands-on projects that integrate academic standards.

During the first 5 years, TACS plans to construct a **Rural Life Lab** on the school grounds. The Rural Life Lab will consist of: a chicken coop, a small animal barn, and a gardening area. TACS students will be involved in the daily care of the chickens, farm animals, and plants.

TACS's **Spanish Language** program will be the first foreign language program available to elementary students in the local surrounding school districts.

Teachers and staff members will be trained in **Conscious Discipline**, a skill-based classroom management program designed to help students and staff create positive, caring classrooms and a **School Family**.

Since New York State does not currently have rural charter school, TACS would like to provide a model for other rural, agricultural areas in the State.

Leadership and Staffing

The Head of School will provide leadership for Classroom Teachers, a Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, a Spanish teacher, Art, Music and Physical Education teachers, Teaching Assistants and support staff. Professional development will include: a 3-week Summer Teacher/Staff Institute in August, weekly staff and grade level team meetings, and monthly staff development sessions.

Family/Community Involvement

"It takes a village to raise a child." From the beginning, the initiative to establish TACS has been a shared community vision. Community volunteers have worked hard to purchase the building and prepare it for TACS students and families. TACS will hold monthly Family Nights, School Open Houses, Student/Family Celebrations, and Concerts. Community volunteers will have opportunities to assist TACS in a variety of ways, including: reading and math groups, extended day enrichment activities, student clubs, field trips, Rural Life Lab, and many others.

Participating Organizations: TACS's Academic Advisory Panel is represented by: Cornell Cooperative Extension, State University of New York College of Environmental Science & Forestry, Syracuse University, the Research/Evaluation/and Development (R/E/D) Group and State University of New York at Cortland. They will be a valuable resource for academic input, review, and student enrichment activities.

CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT

Proposed Charter School Name: Truxton Academy Charter School

Proposed School Location (District): Homer Central

Name of Existing Education Corporation (if applicable): Not Applicable

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

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, race, creed, national origin or ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, age, religion, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the Charter Schools Act allows, to the extent consistent with Federal law, “the establishment of a single-sex charter school or a charter school designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English language learners.”¹¹

The applicant group also makes the following assurances pursuant to Section 7221b of the United States Code (USC), which will be incorporated into, and made a part of, the Charter School’s charter, if granted, and be binding on the Charter School itself:

- An assurance that the charter school will annually provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in this application; ¹²

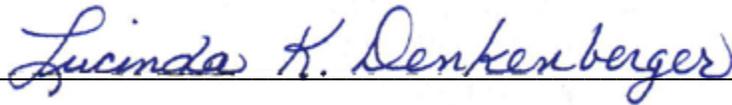
¹¹ N.Y. Education Law § 2854 (2)(a)

¹² 20 USC & 7221b (b)(3)(I)

- An assurance that the charter school will cooperate with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department in evaluating the program assisted; ¹³ and
- That the charter school will provide such other information and assurances as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department may require. ¹⁴

I, *Lucinda Denkenberger*, hereby certify that the information submitted in this Full Application to establish *Truxton Academy Charter School* is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after issuance of the charter.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lucinda K. Denkenberger". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Date: August 16, 2016

¹³ 20 USC & 7221b (b)(3)(K)

¹⁴ 20 USC & 7221b (b)(3)(N)

Truxton Academy Charter School

Where Future's are Grown



A Rural Charter School – proposed opening Fall 2017

Submitted to: New York State Education Department
Charter School Office

August 16, 2016

**Truxton Academy Charter School
2016 NYSED Full Application
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Section I: MISSION, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, ENROLLMENT, AND COMMUNITY

I.A. Mission Statement and Objectives

I.A.1. Mission Statement

The mission of the Truxton Academy Charter School is to cultivate an enthusiasm for learning through a project-based curriculum that celebrates our rural life, environmental stewardship, and our agricultural heritage. Through real world, student-centered learning we will plant a strong foundation for future academic success.

I.A.2. Objectives

Our application addresses in great detail how this mission will be accomplished, framed by accomplishing four project objectives:

1. Provide an educational choice of excellence, relevance and innovative learning experiences for elementary students of low and middle income rural and migrant families in the Town of Truxton, NY and adjacent rural communities.
2. Raise academic achievement and develop career readiness skills for rural children by developing a unique, dynamic curriculum that integrates Project-Based Learning (PBL), Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), and Spanish to provide a meaningful, consistent introduction to 21st Century skill expectations and needs.
3. Introduce rural, agricultural and environmental awareness using place-based experiential learning, introducing world knowledge with a rural focus.
4. Provide an opportunity for local colleges and universities to interact with an innovative charter school model designed for rural communities.

I.A.3. How the School Will Address Objectives Specified in Education Law §2850 (2)

§2850 (2) (a) – Improved student learning and achievement

TACS will improve student learning and achievement by engaging students in meaningful project-based hands-on learning that will be integrated at every grade level to the curriculum that is aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. Continuous assessment and high performance goals will ensure that every student will develop self-confidence and a sense of inquiry to promote high academic achievement and lifelong learning.

§2850 (2) (b) – Increased learning opportunities

TACS will increase learning opportunities for all students, especially those at risk of academic failure, by providing an elementary school curriculum designed to eliminate learning gaps that might exist due to physical, mental or cultural constraints. This curriculum integrates Common Core Learning Standards with research-proven strategies and design elements that integrate students of different ages and abilities to encourage collaboration, teamwork and self-assessment. The school design includes after-school and summer programming, family learning activities, and community-based learning activities.

§2850 (2) (c) – Different and innovative teaching methods

By constructing a STEM-focused, project-based curriculum involving the local agricultural community and environmental resources, our Rural Life Lab , consisting of a chicken

coop, gardening area and small animal barn, will serve as an alternative classroom setting with resources for learning and teaching. The introduction of Spanish language instruction for all children will not only provide additional opportunity for integrating local children of Central American backgrounds with the elementary curriculum, but will also address a currently unmet need to begin a second language at the primary grade level.

§2850 (2) (d) – Professional development

TACS has reached out to area colleges and universities to solicit teacher and staff support for our specialized curriculum. Drawing on expertise at SUNY Cortland, we will provide professional development workshops and seminars and will monitor implementation of project-based learning guidelines and assessment. SUNY Morrisville has committed to providing guidance and support for their “Trout in the Classroom” program as well as providing instruction in the various agriculture-related learning projects that will be a part of our educational program. Faculty in Syracuse University’s Science Education Department will support the inclusion and teaching of STEM principles as well as NextGen science objectives with our teachers. SUNY ESF faculty will assist in supporting teachers with the environmental aspects of our curriculum. The commitment of these educational institutions assures that there will be new and ongoing professional learning opportunities for all faculty and staff at TACS.

§2850 (2) (e) – Expanded choices for parents and students

From its inception, TACS has involved parents and the local community in developing the proposed charter school program. TACS will offer families and students a variety of high quality educational enrichment experiences that will enhance knowledge of our curriculum and encourage appreciation of our local culture. Parents and residents will be invited to workshops and meetings that share the school’s teaching and learning program, which they will learn about through newsletters, personal contacts and the school website. Topics will include PBL, STEM objectives, *Conscious Discipline*, (our family-focused program to develop a cohesive, respectful school culture) and agricultural and environmental issues that affect everyone. The Extended Day program will provide options that include volunteer support for student academic enrichment, the teaching of various crafts, and supplemental music, art, and drama.

§2850 (2) (f) – Accountability

The TACS Board of Trustees with the Head of School will administer a comprehensive program to assess and ensure student progress and success. They will be accountable for student progress in the academic areas of the New York State assessments. In addition to ongoing classroom assessment, timely intervention by teachers, and participation in NYS testing, the school will rely on the R/E/D Group, an evaluation firm whose managing partners are affiliated with Syracuse University, to evaluate our instructional strategies and student achievements to ensure TACS students meet the NYS Learning Standards.

Throughout this application we will show the relationship of the project mission statement and objectives to each aspect of the educational plan.

I.B. Key Design Elements

I.B.1. Enabling All Students to Meet NYS Academic Achievement Standards

TACS will provide students with the opportunity to learn in a rigorous academic environment with a relevant, dynamic curriculum. Our key design elements will serve the

diverse needs of all students and enable them to meet NYS student academic achievement standards. They demonstrate the TACS Applicant Group's core beliefs and values about education and implement purposes described in NYS Education Law §2850 (2). They align with our mission and all aspects of our educational, organizational, and fiscal plans. Please see Section I.C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention (Public Lottery), for our enrollment preference for students at risk of academic failure.

I.B.2. Key Features of the School's Overall Design

Project-Based Learning

TACS students will use Project-Based Learning (PBL) to support academic achievement in all areas of the curriculum. PBL has been shown to improve scholar engagement and retention of classroom material.¹ This hands-on approach provides opportunities for research, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and self-management skills. Throughout the school year, students will be monitored on literacy and math skills to assure compliance with the NYS learning standards, continuous academic growth and student success. Each classroom will be paired with a local agri-business and take monthly field trips to visit and participate in projects with them. For example, with the Reakes Country Store (that sells home-grown vegetables), the children will plant, care for, harvest and distribute pumpkins. Performance-based assessments and accountability* will be used to evaluate projects. Well-designed, integrated projects using innovative teaching and learning methods* provide activities that expand and reinforce students' knowledge for academic success in all subjects and "prepare students for deeper learning, higher-level thinking skills, and intra/ interpersonal skills."²

STEM with Agricultural and Environmental Focus

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) emphasizes creative thinking and problem-solving in an engaging, collaborative team setting. A STEM focus integrated into agricultural and environmental instruction insures these academic subjects will provide an interdisciplinary, differentiated approach while expanding learning opportunities for all students including those at risk of academic failure*. With Department of Environmental Conservation and SUNY ESF support, learning activities requiring research, quantitative measurements, possible consequences and solutions will be an important aspect of our curriculum. Teachers will creatively design units that utilize the forests and habitats surrounding the school to generate interest, motivation and enthusiasm. Over the 5-year charter school term, TACS will build a Rural Life Lab consisting of a chicken coop, a small barn with young farm animals, and a gardening area. TACS students (with help from staff and community) will care for the animals and plants. The Rural Life Lab is drawn from the success of the Walton Rural Life Learning Center, a successful charter school in Walton, Kansas, that integrates agricultural, place-based activities into their curriculum. "Farm to Table" projects will include student-grown organic food for TACS' school lunch program. Students will be actively engaged in using inquiry and exploration to successfully complete meaningful projects. TACS will encourage students to respect and appreciate their rural environment as well as implement

¹ Prince (2014). *PBL for 21st Century Success*, Buck Institute for Education.

² Condliffe, B., Visher, M. G., Bangser, M. R., Drohojowska, S., & Saco, L. (2015). *Project-Based Learning: A Literature Review*. MDRC.

conservation, recycling, stewardship, and sustainability. “Environment-based education increases academic achievement.”³ Thus, TACS will improve student learning and achievement.*

Spanish Elementary Curriculum

Research has repeatedly shown that the brain’s ability to acquire language naturally begins to diminish by age 4 and significantly decreases by age 11. TACS will incorporate a Spanish curriculum as a unique design element, beginning in kindergarten, to initiate multilingual skills for global competency not generally achieved in the existing traditional language programs in public schools.⁴ This will provide parents and students with a rich and unique educational opportunity* plus meet the needs of ELL students enrolled at TACS. All teachers will be required to assist in Spanish lessons and model frequency and consistency by expanding students’ Spanish vocabulary and understanding throughout the school day. Our program will be based on a successful elementary Spanish immersion program created by the Hopkins School District in Hopkins, Minnesota.

School Family Culture

TACS will provide a safe, positive, respectful culture for students, staff and families **to plant a strong foundation for future academic success**. Research indicates that caring relationships between all parties in schools is necessary for academic success.⁵ The School Family atmosphere, with a strong commitment to including parents, will contribute to a warm, open, supportive triad between teachers, students and parents. Teachers will be trained in Conscious Discipline, a comprehensive classroom management program that supports a positive social-emotional climate and provides opportunities for parent education.⁶ When teachers and parents have the skills to model self-regulation and positive conflict resolution, they interact with one another in a kind, respectful manner and children will do the same.

*NYSED Law §2850 (2)

I C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

I.C.1. Projected Enrollment

Table 1: Five Year Enrollment Projection for Truxton Academy Charter School

Grades	Ages	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
K	5	16	19	20	20	20
1	6	16	19	20	20	20
2	7	16	19	20	20	20
3	8	16	18	20	20	20
4	9	16	18	19	19	20
5	10		18	19	19	20

³ State Education & Environment Roundtable(SEER). (2005). *Student Assessment Project, Phase 2: The Effects of Environment-based Education on Student Achievement Poway, CA*.

⁴ American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2015). *Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards*. Available at www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs

⁵ Wentzel, K.R. & Watkins, D.E. (2002). Peer relationships and collaborative learning as contexts for academic enablers. *School Psychology Review*, 31(3), 366.

⁶ Bailey, B.A. (2015). *Conscious Discipline: Building Resilient Classrooms*. Loving Guidance, Inc. Oviedo, FL.

6	11			18	19	20
Ungraded						
Totals		80	111	136	137	140

As seen in Table 1, in Year 1 TACS will enroll up to 80 students in Kindergarten through 4th Grade. Kindergarteners who apply must turn five years of age by December 31st of their Kindergarten year. In the next two years of the initial 5-year charter, TACS will add one grade level per year.

I.C.2. Proposed Application, Admissions and Enrollment Process

Application

The *New York State Charter School Uniform Application Form* (English and Spanish versions) will be available at the TACS office, the school website, and all recruitment events. Applications will be accepted each year beginning February 1st for the coming school year. Applicants will be requested to submit applications in person, by e-mail, or by mail by the first Friday in April. If the number of applications does not exceed the number of openings, applicants will be called and given instructions for completion of registration paperwork. TACS staff will provide assistance to Spanish-speaking families.

Public lottery

If the number of applications exceeds the number of open seats, a Public Enrollment Lottery will be held after the close of the open enrollment period. The lottery will begin with Kindergarten and continue until each successive grade level is filled. Preference will be given to students returning to the school in subsequent years of operation; siblings of enrolled students; residents of the Homer Central School District; students who are self-identified as disabled, eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program (FRPL), and/or English Language Learners (ELLs); and children of employees of the school (limited to 15% of the total enrollment). All applicants will be notified of the lottery results. Successful applicants will be given a list of required enrollment documents to bring to TACS for processing. Families placed on the wait list will be informed of their numerical position. TACS staff will assist families with completion of all registration forms, including the Home Language Questionnaire, the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Application, the School Physical and Immunization Records, and Transportation Requests. If an applicant on the wait list chooses not to register their child, the next name on the wait list will be contacted and offered a position until all openings are filled.

I.C.3. Policy for Addressing Vacancies

When an opening becomes available during the school year prior to May 1st, the next available name on the wait list will be contacted to offer enrollment beginning with the lowest grade. The order set by the lottery will be followed. After May 1st, openings will not be filled until the following school year. For more information, please see *Attachment 1: Admission Policies and Procedures*.

1.C.4. Rationale for Enrollment Size

Our enrollment size reflects the relatively small population in our rural area compared to a city. By the end of the 5-year period, TACS will serve a maximum of 140 students in Kindergarten - 6th grade with classes capped at 20 students. The TACS Applicant Group chose

this particular enrollment size for particular reasons. The Truxton area is a relatively small, rural agricultural community. TACS’ Key Design Elements require small-group instruction for creating a hands-on learning environment emphasizing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and bilingual instruction. In addition, the goal is to balance community need for access to TACS enrollment with a sense of “School Family.” We chose to define the school as a K-6 building during the first five-year period in order to ease students’ transition to their home school districts, since all of them begin middle school in 7th grade.

Growth strategy

TACS will ensure steady enrollment growth by means of continuous recruitment and educational outreach events for parents and families; positive publicity and media coverage of student projects, achievement and success; continued community support for development of the Rural Life Lab; cooperative educational projects with our Academic Advisory Panel; and co-sponsored community events at school with the Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters. Following a 5-year successful charter term, the Applicant Group will consider adding a Pre-Kindergarten class as well as grades 7 and 8.

I.C.5. Evidence that Enrollment and Retention Targets for Special Populations Will Be Met

TACS is committed to meeting the enrollment and retention expectations defined by the Board of Regents. As detailed in sub-sections 6 and 7 below, the TACS Applicant Group will work with various community organizations and parent groups to recruit, enroll, and successfully retain a cross-section of students mirroring the demographics of the Homer School District, with particular attention to students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who qualify for the FRPL Program. A weighted lottery will give preference to students in these categories.

Table 2: Projected Recruitment Levels by Grade and Student Category

Enrollment	Percent	K-4 Year 1	K-5 Year 2	K-6 Year 3	K-6 Year 4	K-6 Year 5
Total for Years 1-5	100%	16/class 80 total	18-19/class 111 total	18-20/class 136 total	19-20/class 137 total	20/class 140 total
Target for FRPL Students	42%	7/class 33+total	7-8/class 46+ total	8-9/class 57 total	8-9/class 58 total	9/class 59 total
Target for Students with Disabilities	13%	2/class 10 total	2-3/class 14 total	2-3/class 18 total	2-3/class 18 total	3/class 18 total
Target for ELL Students	2%	2 total	2+ total	3 total	3 total	3+ total

According to the 2014-2015 Homer School District data, 42% of students qualified for the FRPL program, 13% of students had disabilities, and 0% were ELLs. During 2014-2015, Hartnett School (the location of TACS) had 55% FRPL and 14% had disabilities. Given TACS’ location, we expect that at least 55% of the students will qualify for the FRPL program. The per capita income for the town of Truxton is \$16,516, with 8.9% of families and 11.6% of the population living below the poverty line. Poverty in the rural area surrounding TACS, physical isolation, lack of transportation options, and lack of educational diversity are all factors which

limit local families. Although Homer School District reports that 0% of students are classified as ELLs, a TACS Board member personally visited several large farms in a 10-mile radius of Truxton and found 13 livestock farms that employ a total of about 100 Hispanic workers. These Spanish-speaking families have 19 children ages 8 and under. We expect to have a larger percentage of ELL students as TACS grows during the charter term.

Currently, no local elementary school offers a Spanish language program. TACS' **Spanish language program** is a particular key design element that will attract and benefit local Spanish-speaking families as well as English-speaking families. TACS' convenient central location and smaller class and school sizes will be attractive to local low-income families. TACS will emphasize to parents that many students with disabilities respond well to hands-on, real-world learning strategies.⁷ The **Project-Based Learning** key design element will allow TACS staff to make a persuasive case to families of students with disabilities.

I.C.6. Recruitment and Retention Plan

Recruitment

TACS will continue to publicize its educational program to a broad cross-section of prospective students and families. Following Full Application approval, an extensive recruitment plan will be launched. We will recruit students and families via radio, local newspapers, social media and the TACS website: www.truxtonacademycharterschool.org. Regular Open Houses will be held at the School for prospective students and families. Recruitment brochures will be posted in local businesses, community centers, food pantries, low income housing areas, libraries, day care centers, and preschools to ensure we attract all student groups. The Applicant Group will continue to schedule informational meetings and presentations at community centers, libraries, and community-wide child care centers throughout the area. We will share information with local Parent Teacher Organizations, businesses, organizations and professionals that serve students and families in the greater Truxton area. Brochures translated into Spanish will be hand-delivered to farms with migrant workers.

Retention

TACS will retain students by providing many opportunities to ensure and celebrate student success and maintain a high level of parent satisfaction. We will actively seek high quality teachers who share similar backgrounds as our population and who bring cultural understanding of our students. We will seek to develop a supportive School Family among students, parents, staff, and other family members through regular communication and events, such as orientations, conferences, home visits, celebrations, performances, and monthly family suppers. Parents will be encouraged, but not required, to volunteer in the school and classroom. The TACS Academic Advisory Panel, including representatives from the Schools of Education at SUNY Cortland and Syracuse University, plans to offer special educational programs for students as well as placement for student teachers at TACS. Annual anonymous

⁷ Filippatou, D., & Kaldi, S. (2010). The effectiveness of project-based learning on pupils with learning difficulties regarding academic performance, group work and motivation. *International Journal of Special Education*, 25(1), 17-26; and Belland, B. R., Ertmer, P. A., & Simons, K. D. (2006). Perceptions of the value of problem-based learning among students with special needs and their teachers. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, 1(2), 1-18; and Guven, Y., & Duman, H.G. (2007). Project based learning for children with mild mental disabilities. *International Journal of Special Education*, 22(1), 77-82.

parent surveys will be done to assess parent satisfaction and gain valuable feedback for improving TACS. We will offer an After-School Extended Day Program and a Summer Enrichment program to help students remediate academic weaknesses.

I.C.7. Recruitment and Retention of Students in Targeted Areas

Students with Disabilities

The TACS Applicant Group will meet with parents to recruit students with special needs by working closely with all preschools, daycare centers and agencies serving children with special needs and their families. This includes the Cortland County Health Department – Children With Special Needs Division (including the Pre-K Special Education and the Physically Handicapped Children’s Programs), the Coordinated Children’s Services Initiative (CCSI) and the Franziska Racker Centers for children with disabilities. Program administrators, social workers, special education teachers, parents, and students will be invited to learn more about TACS. Our special education philosophy will be shared during Open Houses and Information Nights. Recruitment brochures will specifically mention the special education program.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools offer the following strategies for retaining students with disabilities: 1) adopt key instructional strategies to support all students; 2) identify strategic partnerships and coalitions; 3) hire intentionally and well; and 4) track, analyze, and report data.⁸ TACS will maintain a culture of high expectations for all students. We will convey the message that all students are welcome and expected to succeed. Our Response to Intervention (RTI) program will have a sharp focus on early literacy, quality instruction, targeted interventions, and progress monitoring to benefit all students. We will hire skilled teachers, who understand special education law and how to accommodate individual students’ needs. Teachers will communicate well and work closely with one another and families to help students be successful.⁹

English Language Learners

TACS will employ a bilingual ELL teacher who will personally visit the farms where the Spanish-speaking families live, get acquainted with them, invite them to enroll in TACS and administer the Home Language Survey. Our Prospective Student Enrollment Form and School Information Brochure have been translated into Spanish and are available at public recruitment events and on our website. Following Application approval, we will secure Spanish translation services to assist parents at Open Houses and enrollment events as well as reach out to the Cortland Adult ELL instructor and ELL class. We will also give preference to hiring bilingual teachers.

To retain our English Language Learners (ELL), TACS staff will integrate and celebrate cultural traditions of ELL families throughout our school community. TACS will host a Cultural Night in which all families are invited to share a special dish reflecting their heritage and a special ethnic or cultural tradition or custom within the school community. By creating a welcoming school environment that respects and celebrates the cultural traditions and customs

⁸ National Alliance for Public Charter Schools website, available at: <http://www.publiccharters.org/>

⁹ These strategies draw on Rhim, L.M & O’Neill, P. (2013). Improving access and creating exceptional opportunities for students with disabilities in public charter schools. National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools. Available at: http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Special-Education-in-Charter-Schools_20131021T154812.pdf

of our students and their families, we will build a strong sense of community within our school environment. TACS staff will encourage native language use at home. Communications with families will be in their home language, and we will have a translator available for parent conferences and school events so that ELL students and families can be full participants in TACS events. Our website will have links to bilingual and translated materials (school information, applications, etc.) for all families and students. Parents will be encouraged to volunteer at school (in the classroom, lunchroom, or library) as well as visit their children's classroom regularly, especially at reading time. This will help them as they work with their children at home to increase reading comprehension.¹⁰

FRPL eligible students

TACS is located in rural central New York where 55% of area families are economically disadvantaged and their children qualify for the FRPL program. Our brochures and handouts will include statements of participation in the FRPL program. We will emphasize the familiar and central school location to draw from surrounding low income rural areas. Additionally, recruitment brochures will be distributed to local food pantries, agencies that serve low income families, and low income housing projects.

TACS will incorporate flexibility to help our students reach success and lessen the stress often found in families living in poverty. We will develop a close, supportive School Family among students, parents, staff, and other family members through regular communication and events. Monthly Potluck Suppers or Spaghetti Dinners will be hosted to share a meal together, build a strong sense of school community and provide an easy way for families to eat out. Teachers and staff will respectfully communicate and partner with parents throughout the year. They will continuously monitor and measure parents' perception of TACS programs and their child's academic and social/emotional progress. When parents can't get to school for Parent Teacher Conferences, teachers will offer to have the meeting at their house. Our leadership team will collaborate with classroom teachers to provide struggling students with intensive Response to Intervention (RTI) instruction in order to close achievement gaps by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps. TACS teachers will act as important liaisons for helping to identify any needs that may place a child at risk, academically or socially. These needs will be addressed in a timely manner utilizing both School and community resources. Our staffing pattern and community volunteers will contribute to a low student-to-teacher ratio to ensure that students have a resource-rich environment and time and attention to reach mastery of reading and math skills.

Students whose families may be less informed about available options

The TACS Applicant Group has contacted and will continue to contact less informed families by distributing information house-to-house, placing signs along Route 13 (the main road through Truxton and East Homer), and posting informational fliers at local grocery stores and post offices.

¹⁰ These strategies draw on best practices described in *Engaging ELL Families: 20 Strategies for School Leaders*, available at: <http://www.adlit.org/article/42781/> and Haynes, J. (2007). *Getting started with English Language Learners, how educators can meet the challenge*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

I.C.8. Ensuring Adequate Enrollment and Allowing for Full Accessibility

The TACS Applicant Group developed a Prospective Student Enrollment form to assess preliminary interest. During the past year, we received 94 prospective enrollments. Some of these students will be too young or old to start in the Fall of 2017. Forty-four prospective students are ready to start school at TACS in August, 2017. The TACS Applicant Group conducted extensive community outreach to assess the needs of families and gather feedback to help design the key elements and curriculum for TACS. Following Application approval, we will continue our community outreach and conduct an extensive recruitment campaign. We expect to open with a minimum of 80 students. The Truxton Academy Charter School building is fully ADA-accessible with a wheelchair ramp and elevator between floors. This school building housed the former Hartnett Elementary School for many years through June 2015.

I.D. Community to be Served

I.D.1. Community Description and Need

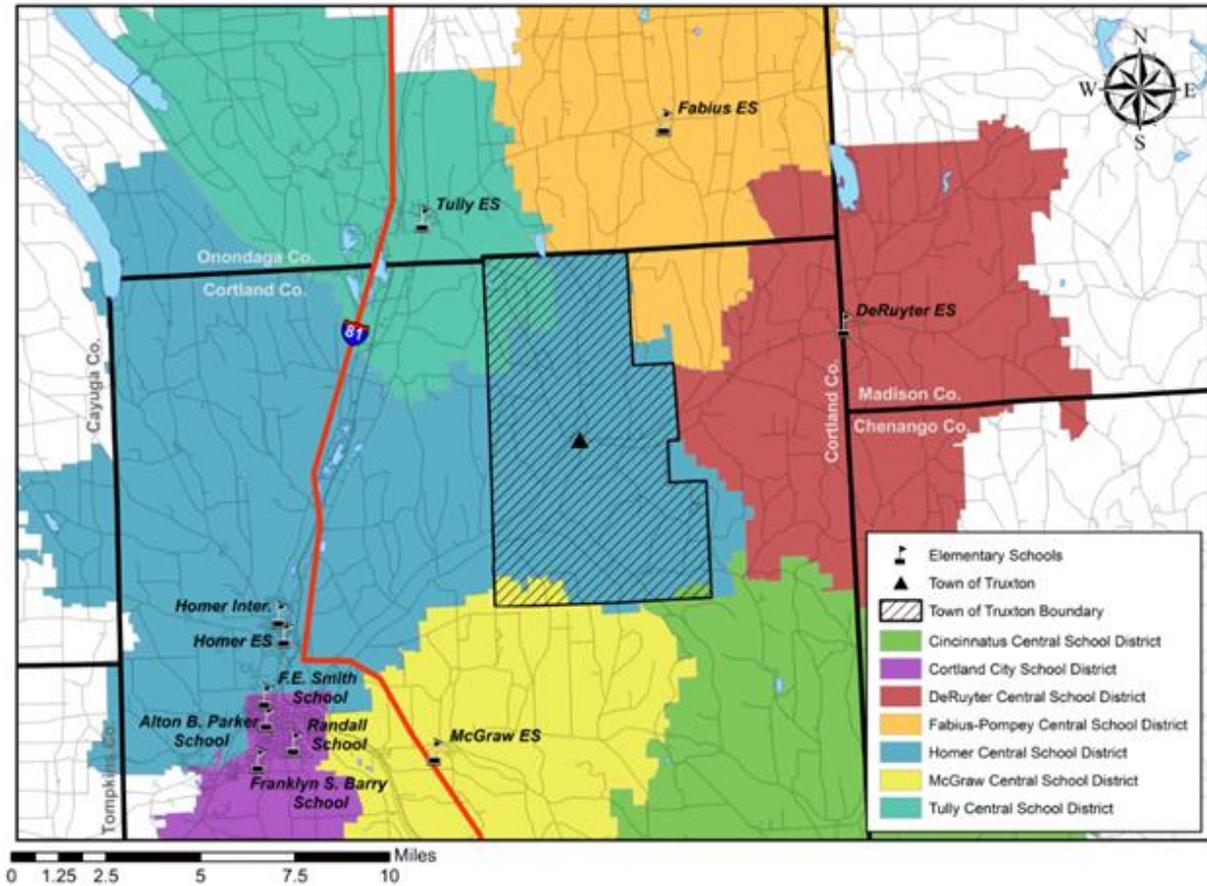
Truxton Academy Charter School will serve the township and surrounding communities of Truxton, New York, a small rural town with a population of 1,121 (2014 estimate), surrounded by farms, forest and nature areas. It is situated in northern Cortland County and is typical of numerous small towns, villages, and hamlets in Upstate New York. Six neighboring rural and city school districts are located within fifteen miles of the town, which contains a recently closed elementary school. This school building has been acquired by Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters, Inc.(NP) on behalf of the proposed charter school.



The racial composition of the town is 97.55% White, with all other ethnic groups totaling 2.45% (including Hispanic or Latino, the next largest single ethnic group at 0.65%). The per capita income for the town is \$16,516, with 8.9% of families and 11.6% of the population below the poverty line.¹¹

¹¹ U.S. Census, 2000.

Figure 1: Map of Surrounding School Districts



I.D.2. The Student Population that TACS Will Serve

The intended target population is families seeking choice in educational venues; they include residents within a 15-mile radius of the proposed facility whose children are currently assigned to the Homer Central School District and four neighboring school districts, and home-schooling families in the same area. The target population includes 59% economically disadvantaged students (FRPL, 2014-15) due to economic stagnation, the decline of the family farm, and high real property taxes, among other factors (Cortland County ranks as the 6th highest taxed county in the U.S. <http://www.ppiny.org/reports/2011/highest-taxed-counties-in-new-york-state0411.htm>). The adjoining districts have demonstrated low to average student academic achievement on NYS assessments (See II.C.2. Public Schools Academic Data.) TACS will provide a much-needed, tuition-free educational choice.

Whereas the nearest cities of Syracuse and Utica are home to many immigrants and refugees, Truxton, like most rural communities, has very few residents who are English Language Learners. However, research to find what non-English languages are spoken within a 10-mile radius of the school’s proposed facility found 19 children age 8 and under from Hispanic families employed on 13 of the 82 farms. These families speak Spanish in their homes. Some of these

students have a tutor or Migrant Outreach worker to support their educational progress, but many have limited interaction with age group peers outside of school.

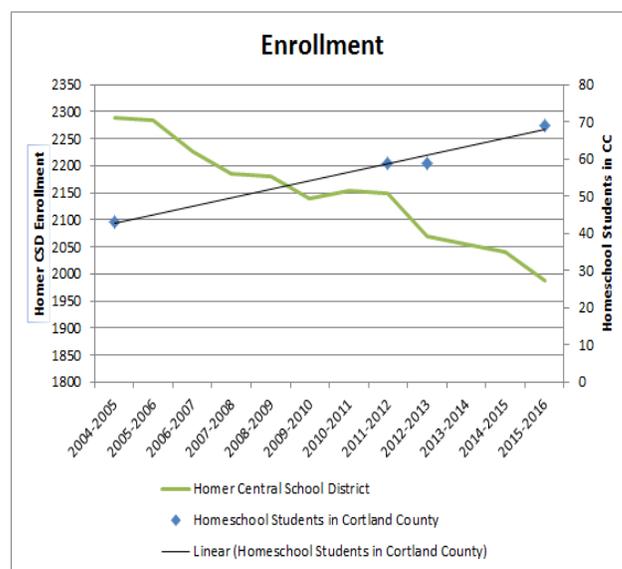
According to the 2014-2015 Homer School District data, 13% of students had disabilities. During 2014-2015, 14% of the students at Hartnett School (the location of TACS) had disabilities.

I.D.3. Reason for the Selection of the Community

Rural poverty, physical isolation, lack of transportation options, and lack of educational diversity limit families' ability to choose an alternative school to the local district school. In spite of these difficulties, dissatisfaction with the Homer School District has pushed more families to seek different opportunities for their children including home-schooling their children or choosing private, faith-based schools. This trend can be seen by the increase in homeschooling while enrollment in the school district has decreased. Truxton Academy Charter School will attract students who have opted out of the local Homer CSD and are looking for an affordable, unique learning experience that is not currently offered to the area.

TACS's is able to serve this community because of its central location to six school districts and existing educational building.

Figure 2: Trends in Public School and Home School Enrollment



I.D.4. Value of the School to this Community

Local businesses and agencies, including agribusinesses, have expressed a need for qualified applicants and employees trained with skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). These employers also encourage appreciation and respect for agriculture in our economy and recognize the demand for environmental sustainability. They are anxious to help TACS students learn by using their local business as a resource for field trips, student projects and studies. Several have offered to collaborate with TACS to expose local children to technology, the complexity of modern business tools, and the applied education that is essential to succeed in the 21st century economy. "Rural schools fill an integral role as centers of the community and as a bridge for youth to connect with the broader society in fulfilling their dreams and ambitions."¹²

I.D.5. Rationale for Expanding Educational Options

Extensive inquiry and interaction with the surrounding residents have uncovered a desire to establish an elementary school that will provide an alternative learning experience.

¹² NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension (2006). Rural vision initiative: A vision for rural New York. Available at: <https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/articles/attachments/ruralVision06lowRes.pdf>

TACS will provide the opportunity for local and neighboring rural students to learn in a rigorous academic environment with a relevant, dynamic curriculum. This curriculum will be built around Project-Based Learning (PBL) which actively engages students in applying math, science, and English Language Arts skills. This will be done in conjunction with real world learning, environmental and agricultural activities, and introduction to a second language beginning in Kindergarten to create a foundation for a rich, exciting elementary school program that can compete successfully with other local elementary education options.

I.D.6. Assessment of Family and Community Support for the Proposed Charter School

Section 1E. Public Outreach details extensive public involvement in assessing the need for the project and involving parents and community members in shaping the program design. Activities have included public forums; meetings with parents, community members, legislators, and representatives of neighboring school districts; surveys, direct mailings, press releases, social media, and the TACS website.

I E. Public Outreach

I.E.1. Means Employed to Inform the Community about the Proposed Charter School

TACS' Public Outreach began in September 2014 and has included public forums; meetings with parents, community members, school districts, legislators, local businesses, colleges, and other charter schools; surveys; direct mailings; open houses; personal house-to-house visits, the TACS website; social media, and traditional public awareness campaigns. Brochures, the prospective enrollment form, news articles, social media and the TACS website have informed the community about the proposed charter school, including the intended location, the target student population, grades to be served, school mission, and a brief description of the educational program to be offered.

I.E.2. Evidence of Public Meetings with Community Stakeholders

Five public forums (10/19/14, 12/3/14, 12/22/14, 1/21/15, 12/14/15) with community stakeholders in the Homer School District were scheduled, advertised, and completed to date. Four were held in Truxton and one in Homer. Reasonable public notice was provided through the Cortland Standard newspaper, signage on Route 13 in Truxton, and fliers posted at the local post office and businesses. All meetings and public outreach events held after April 2015 were posted on the TACS website. The forums featured a multi-media presentation, printed information, and one-on-one discussions with attendees. Please see *Attachment 2b – Evidence of Public Review Process* - for the December 14, 2015 meeting flyer, agenda, minutes, sign-in sheet, and news article. The Applicant Group held five additional public meetings with neighboring School District Boards of Education (BOE) and community centers (Cortland, DeRuyter, Fabius-Pompey, McGraw, and Tully) to increase awareness and solicit feedback. On January 21, 2015 and July 31, 2015, members of the TACS Applicant Group met with the Homer School District BOE and administration to explain TACS plans, answer questions, and strengthen the relationship with the School District.

I.E.3. Means Employed to Solicit Community Input on the Educational Needs of Students

The Applicant Group made extensive efforts to solicit community input to determine the students' educational needs and school design. The following methods were used:

TACS website: www.truxtonacademycharterschool.org went online in April 2015. It offers details on the school mission, proposed location, event information, and contact information for the public to submit suggestions and comments by email, phone, or mail.

Facebook: A very active TACS Facebook page provides a continuous forum for community discussion and suggestions. Launched in April 2015, it provides a forum where school information is shared, all meetings are posted and feedback can be continually solicited.

Online survey: An online parent survey was conducted in January 2015. Parent feedback was the foundation for our school design.

Direct mail campaign: A description of the proposed school was mailed to all Truxton residents and neighboring communities on 5/12/15 with comments to be returned by mail or email. Over 70 completed prospective student enrollment forms were received.

Information booths: Fliers and Prospective Enrollment Forms were provided at several community events. TACS provided information and received direct feedback from attendees.

Town mail survey: A recent survey conducted by the Town of Truxton was mailed to all residents. Of the 244 respondents, 53% felt the present school district is inadequate and 79% were in favor of TACS.

Open houses and board meetings: Open Houses and the TACS Regular Monthly Board Meetings are held at the TACS building in Truxton. Several community members have attended and voiced their comments on the educational and programmatic needs of students.

Personal house-to-house visits: We have participated in conversations with residents while distributing fliers and talking with residents in our district over the last two years.

I.E.4. Responding to Comments Received from Community Stakeholders

The idea of a charter school that would serve the local, rural, isolated, low-income families in the Truxton area was born out of encouragement from community members. Dissatisfaction with the School District's low achievement scores, long bus rides for young students, and failure to listen to the needs of rural families resulted in increasing numbers of families moving out of the district or choosing private schools or home schooling. Inspired by the success of the Walton Rural Life Center (a charter school in rural Walton, Kansas), local parents and community members formed an Applicant Group, solicited input from stakeholders, and submitted a strong application to open TACS. From the start, Applicant Group members knew they wanted a school that would set high goals for students and staff and celebrate and use our rural agricultural environment to boost literacy and achievement. The group was committed to small class sizes, quality after-school programs, and a true school/parent/community partnership. During our community outreach events, parents and community members spoke out against traditional public schools and encouraged us to incorporate into the TACS program Project-Based Learning and real-world science projects; agriculture and our rural environment; health and fitness; after-school, as well as summer tutoring and student activities; science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills to prepare students for career options; a variety of artistic and musical activities; early introduction of a second language; and the involvement of families in the development and

operation of the school. Community members have been consistently supportive of a new and innovative educational experience for their children and our charter school team continues to grow as community members become more involved. Outreach results validated the framework that formed the basis for the beginning of this application. However, many other ideas came from meeting and talking with hundreds of parents, grandparents, teachers, community members, and our Academic Advisory Panel members. The Applicant Group responded to comments by integrating the suggested educational and programmatic needs listed above into a stronger, more responsive school design.

I.E.5. Ongoing Approach to Engage with the Community and Solicit Public Input

The Applicant Group continues to invite community members to attend regular monthly Board of Trustees meetings held on the first Monday of each month at the TACS in Truxton and make comments or suggestions. Please see *Attachment 2b* for the flier that is posted at local businesses and organizations. The TACS website and Facebook pages are ongoing forums for public input. We continue to set up Information Booths at community events.

I.E.6. How Students will be Informed and Given an Equal Opportunity to Attend TACS

Following Application approval, the Applicant Group will do an extensive Public Awareness and Recruitment Campaign utilizing brochures and enrollment forms distributed throughout community businesses, post offices, organizations, the public news media (radio and newspaper), and the TACS website. A weighted public lottery will be held if more applications are received than space as outlined in *Section I C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention*.

I.E.7. The proposed charter school is not intended to operate as a restart or turnaround school

I.F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

I.F.1. Public and Nonpublic Schools in the Area

The proposed student population of TACS will draw most students from the Homer Central School District when it opens in August 2017. The other public school districts affected are Cortland CSD, DeRuyter CSD, Fabius-Pompey CSD, McGraw CSD, and Tully CSD. The private schools affected are St. Mary's Elementary School, Cortland Christian Academy, and Bible Baptist Church School. The Truxton area had 104 students enrolled in Hartnett Elementary School in 2014. During the subsequent year approximately 20 students withdrew from the Homer Central School District after the Hartnett School was closed by the district in June, 2015. TACS expects to attract a majority of the remaining students (60) back to the Truxton area with the opening of TACS.

I.F.2. Programmatic Impact of the Proposed School on Other Public and Nonpublic Schools

The TACS proposal has been shared with the remaining five adjacent school districts: DeRuyter CSD, Fabius-Pompey CSD, Tully CSD, McGraw CSD, and Cortland CSD. The interest expressed by families, orally and in writing, in these districts support our estimate of 8 students from Cortland City SD and 2-6 students from each of the other adjacent districts enrolling in

TACS when the school is opened. The effects on each of these adjacent districts is less than 5% as shown in the tables below.

Figure 3: Area School District Enrollment and Projected TACS Participation

School District	# of Students	TACS Students	% of Students
Cortland CSD	2439	8	-1%
DeRuyter CSD	425	5	1%
Fabius CSD	677	2	1%
Homer CSD	1988	60	3%
McGraw CSD	514	4	1%
Tully CSD	912	2	-1%

The above referenced school districts of DeRuyter, Fabius, McGraw and Tully each have a traditional configuration of one K-6 elementary building and one junior-senior high school (grades 7-12). The exceptions are the Cortland School District which has five

elementary buildings (K-5) with a combined junior-senior high school and the home district of Homer CSD which has one K-3 elementary building, an intermediate-junior high building and a separate high school. The TACS probable enrollment of 60 students from the Homer School District (student population of 1,988) represents 3% of the total enrollment of the district at a cost of \$686,520 to the Homer CSD, 1.7% of their total budget. (NYSED BEDS-2014-2015) The City of Cortland also has two nonpublic elementary schools. St. Mary’s Elementary School, Cortland Christian Academy, and Bible Baptist Church School have a total enrollment of approximately 300 students. The likely impact on these private schools should not exceed 2%.

All of the districts in central New York State have seen a slow but steady decline in public school student enrollment over the past ten years. This trend is expected to continue with the current economy and tax situation in the state. However, home schooling and private school enrollment has continued to increase. As of October, 2015, the Homer School District accounted for 69 homeschooled students. (Homer CSD Board of Education Minutes, October, 2015) The adjoining Towns of Cuyler and DeRuyter estimate approximately 90 homeschooled students in the DeRuyter CSD. (L. Randall, Cuyler Town Supervisor) TACS expects 5-10 previously homeschooled students to enroll over the initial charter period.

I.F.3. Fiscal Impact of the Proposed School on Other Public and Nonpublic Schools

We expect to draw most of the students from HSCD and CCSD. TACS will have a minor impact on both districts according to the proposed HSCD 2016–2017 budget of \$41,886,438 and the Cortland budget of 49,576,887. The table shows the potential financial impact on HSCD and CCSD, based on their approved annual budgets. The budget and this table are prepared assuming charter tuition flat and no increase in district budget. Even if we assume an increase in the state aid per pupil rate for charter schools it is unlikely that this percentage increase in charter tuition reimbursement will exceed the district increase in budget. Therefore, the total financial impact will not be likely to climb higher than 3.0%, which can be considered a small impact. We do not expect to draw more than 1 to 2 students from St Mary’s and Cortland Christian Academy as many parents send their children to these schools for religious reasons. It seems reasonable to anticipate 0 to 2 students which would be a small impact on either of the private schools. St Mary’s has over 200 students K-8 and Cortland Christian Academy has over 100 K-12.

Figure 4: Five-Year Fiscal Impact Report

Largest Enrollment District: Homer CSD							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
			(BxC)		(D+E)		(F/G)
Operational Year	TACS Enrollment	Per Pupil Rate	Per Pupil Aid	Other District Revenue ¹³	Total Funding to Charter School from District	Total General Fund Operating Budget	Projected Impact (% of Budget)
Year 1 (17-18)	60	11,592	695,520	47,250	742,770	41,886,438	1.773%
Year 2 (19-19)	79	11,592	915,768	58,085	973,853	41,886,438	2.350%
Year 3 (19-20)	97	11,592	1,124,242	70,073	1,194,315	41,886,438	2.852%
Year 4 (20-21)	98	11,592	1,136,016	75,162	1,211,178	41,886,438	2.892%
Year 5 (21-22)	98	11,592	1,136,016	77,576	1,213,592	41,886,438	2.898%

Second Largest Enrollment District: Cortland City CD							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
			(BxC)		(D+E)		(F/G)
Operational Year	TACS Enrollment	Per Pupil Rate	Per Pupil Aid	Other District Revenue ¹³	Total Funding to Charter School from District	Total General Fund Operating Budget	Projected Impact (% of Budget)
Year 1 (17-18)	8	10,642	85,136	6,300	91,436	49,576,887	0.184%
Year 2 (19-19)	19	10,652	202,198	7,745	209,943	49,576,887	0.423%
Year 3 (19-20)	25	10,642	266,050	9,343	275,393	49,576,887	0.555%
Year 4 (20-21)	26	10,642	276,692	10,022	286,714	49,576,887	0.578%
Year 5 (21-22)	26	10,642	277	10,344	10,621	49,576,887	0.579%

Section II: EDUCATIONAL PLAN

II.A. Curriculum and Instruction

II.A.1. Framework for Teaching and Learning

The learning experiences of rural children may build self-reliance, but can curb academic progress. Inconsistent access to the Internet, libraries, and other enrichment experiences can create disparity in students' language comprehension and literacy development.¹⁴ TACS has addressed this disparity by choosing a curricular framework that builds a common language, closes gaps, and establishes academic competence to achieve the TACS mission of planting a strong foundation for future academic success.

The *Core Knowledge Curriculum Series*TM will be used as a framework for the instructional program in the core academic areas. This published instructional program¹⁵ addresses students' learning needs and the TACS mission and objectives, and is explicitly aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. The staff will combine this program with

¹³ SPED Funding, Food Services, Grants, Etc.

¹⁴ Howard, P. N., Busch, L., & Sheets, P. (2010). Comparing digital divides: Internet access and social inequality in Canada and the United States. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 35(1), 109-128.

¹⁵ For more information, see <http://coreknowledge.org/curriculum-series>.

specialized instructional programs that reflect our Key Design Elements: Project-Based Learning (PBL) Agricultural and Environmental Knowledge, Spanish language instruction, and School Family culture. Individual assessment and flexible grouping will reveal the individual learning strengths and needs of all students to ensure the primary objective that each child will have a rich literacy and skills base on which to “improve student learning and achievement.”

TACS is committed to incorporating the Common Core Learning Standards and the New York State Testing Program into the key design elements of the curriculum framework. With expertise of local and state educators, our administrators and teachers will be trained in the implementation of these guidelines and the assessment content expectations. (For more details, please see *Section III.E. Professional Development*).

II.A.2. How the Curriculum Will Further the School’s Mission and Key Design Elements

On the premise that informed individuals need a common body of knowledge with which to communicate with one another and to participate in society, TACS has designed a curriculum that will ensure that every child will (a) be reading and writing literate, (b) master the fundamentals of science, (c) examine the basic principles of government, (d) understand important events in history, (e) explore essential elements of mathematics, (f) build skills in reading and speaking Spanish, and (g) experience the arts and music.

A key design element of TACS is STEM with an agricultural and environmental focus blending them into a cohesive instructional program that reflects our mission. To enrich this curriculum, TACS classrooms will partner with local agri-businesses to provide the place-based agricultural and environmental learning activities. Project-based instruction will also take advantage of the school’s Rural Life Lab: an ADA-accessible barn/classroom facility and garden area where students will learn and practice animal husbandry and agrarian science.

The key design element of School Family Culture is the foundation on which we will establish an atmosphere of excellence for all TACS students. Using *Conscious Discipline*, a comprehensive classroom management program, students, parents, teachers and support staff will be trained to interact in a kind, respectful manner.¹⁶ This training will facilitate a safe, positive culture of individual confidence and academic focus to improve student achievement and to involve parents in the academic activities of their children

II.A.3.a. Description of Curriculum, Resources, and Instructional Strategies

English Language Arts

TACS will use the *Core Knowledge Curriculum Series* (CKCS) K-5 Language Arts Program to ensure a strong, sequential ELA design that encompasses literacy strands endorsed by EngageNY.¹⁷ This rigorous curriculum incorporates instructional technology in the classroom, support special learning needs within the units of study, and includes multicultural content for all students’ mutual respect and understanding. Research points to CKCS as an effective educational program for children with different levels of social and informational levels. It is ideal for rural students who may have fewer social and educational enrichment opportunities.

¹⁶ Bailey, B., *Conscious Discipline*. Loving Guidance, FL, 2015; and Bailey, B. *Creating the School Family*. Loving Guidance, FL, 2011.

¹⁷ NY State Education Department. <https://www.engageny.org>

CKCS provides “equitable access to excellence in education.”¹⁸ *(Lower elementary students will have a 90-minute block of ELA and Spanish language every morning, as well as 40-minute block of ELA – Oral Language/Writing every Tuesday and Thursday. Upper elementary students will have a 90-minute block of ELA and Spanish every morning, as well as 40-minute block of ELA Writing Lab every Tuesday and Thursday.)*

Mathematics

CKCS Math will provide classroom teachers with a framework to insure consistency, pacing, reinforcement, and assessment of the student’s math skills as well as accommodations for special needs students. TACS will also use *FastBridge Math Assessment* a minimum of three times a year to track individual competency and progress. (For more information, please see *Section II.D. Assessment System*). Instructional strategies provided by STEM resources such as *Project Lead the Way* (PLTW) will provide opportunities to investigate, discover, and explore hands-on, relevant math skills and successfully apply acquired skills to new situations. *(Both the lower and upper elementary students will have a 50-minute math class every morning, followed by a 40-minute applied math and STEM lesson on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.)*

Science

TACS will utilize *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS) and the CKCS science curriculum as a framework for providing meaningful concepts and real-world challenges for students to discover, explore, and question through units of study. Related project-based activities will engage students in building understanding of scientific principles and hone their ability to share observations and conclusions with peers and propose additional theories and possibilities. Multi-disciplinary projects that will address the key design element of agriculture and environmental classroom learning opportunities.

TACS teachers will incorporate *Project Lead the Way* (PLTW) as part of their STEM framework to expand the units of study choices. PLTW is specifically designed using NGSS to provide elementary children with experiences in science, technology, engineering and math needed to succeed in our global economy. The *Project Wild* program will provide further opportunities for science enrichment and exploration in our rural setting. In addition, *Food, Land and People* (FLP) curriculum resources will assist students in selecting and growing appropriate vegetables and fruit to cultivate in conjunction with our Rural Life Lab activities. Resources and guidance in developing an understanding and respect for agriculture in the local economy are also available through Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County and the National Agriculture in the Classroom organization and website. *(Both the lower and upper elementary students will have a 45-minute Science/Rural Life Lab/Environmental Education class every day.)*

Spanish language

As one of the key design elements, TACS will introduce Spanish at the Kindergarten level. This addition directly addresses many of the objectives for charter school success in NYS. By beginning Spanish language instruction in the earliest grade and continuing to prioritize the program at every grade level, TACS will provide an expanded learning opportunity for all

¹⁸ Mackley, T. A. (1999). *Uncommon sense: Core knowledge in the classroom* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

students, improving their intellectual capabilities and creating an innovative teaching experience not only for the students, but for the staff and families.

As a framework for Spanish instruction, TACS faculty will use the Hopkins School Spanish Immersion Curriculum, which focuses on both language proficiency and cultural knowledge.¹⁹ This elementary program was created by the Hopkins School District in Hopkins, Minnesota three years ago, drawing on research and recommendations of ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).²⁰ The Spanish instruction curriculum at TACS will also reflect the Elementary Spanish Immersion designed by Lisa Sohn, World Language Coordinator.²¹ The program will be introduced at Kindergarten and second grade in the first year, and expanded to all levels the following year with faculty presenting the benefits and challenges of a FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) program to TACS parents during orientation activities preceding the school year. Strategies for successful learning will be facilitated by a FLES-accredited teacher who, using the Hopkins Curriculum Sequence as a guide, will collaborate with the classroom teachers. This language teacher will assist in preparing Spanish lessons to be implemented at each grade level and will provide supportive materials and resources. Weekly assessment of each child's success with using and understanding introduced vocabulary will drive lesson planning. *(All students will have a 90-minute block of ELA and Spanish every morning.)*

History and geography

Incorporating the varied history and geography of Central New York, TACS teachers will provide a curriculum that expands the student's understanding and appreciation of these subjects. Using "real world, student-centered learning," students will visit a variety of local geographic phenomena, museums, and historic sites linking text to the real world. Teachers will use the framework provided by the CKCS materials to ensure content continuity between grades and assessment of the students' overall learning in these areas. *(All students will have 45 minutes of Social Studies every day of the week.)*

Humanities: music, art, drama, and dance

The Truxton community has a rich history of music, art, drama and dance that TACS will incorporate into a curriculum that is guided by CKCS art and music. The school day will provide guided lessons, independent activities, and musical instruction. Student art projects and stage performances will be further developed during the extended day session at the end of each school day. As Clark et al (2013) observed, "the length of the school day and how time is used...are significantly associated with impacts."²² *(All students will have two 45-minute art classes and two 45-minute music classes per week.)*

¹⁹ Hopkins Public School, Hopkins, MN. Elementary Spanish Instruction. Available at:

www.HopkinsSchools.org/Spanish

²⁰ ACTFL, (2015). Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards. Available at: www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Aligning_CCSS_Language_Standards_V6.pdf

²¹ Lisa Sohn, World Language Coordinator at Hopkins Public School, Hopkins, MN. See:

www.HopkinsSchools.org/Spanish.

²² Tuttle, C. C., Gill, B., Gleason, P., Knechtel, V., Nichols-Barrer, I., & Resch, A. (2013). *KIPP middle schools: Impacts on achievement and other outcomes. final report.*

Physical education and wellness

TACS will use *Project Adventure*-based physical activities as a framework for compliance with NYS Physical Education Learning Standards. In addition to traditional PE activities, students will have opportunities for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, gardening, maintaining domestic animal areas, simple construction, orienteering, and other physical activities appropriate for their age and ability. The Town of Truxton has local access to several ADA-accessible areas, including the Labrador Hollow Unique Area, the Tinker Falls Trail and Labrador Mountain Ski Center, providing additional opportunities for students with special needs to learn with their peers. Caring for gardens and young farm animals and poultry in the Rural Life Lab, students will learn the importance of healthy bodies as well as healthy lifestyle choices as they mature. *(A minimum of 45 minutes daily is scheduled for Physical Education/Wellness activities.)*

Technology and library

Many rural students in our particular area of New York State have limited or no access to high speed Internet or “smart” phone service in their homes. Using NYS Learning Standards for Technology, TACS will embrace the responsibility of exposing all students to the responsible use of the Internet as well as the skills needed to explore, confirm, and transfer information. The framework for teaching these skills will be provided with careful selection of commercial curriculum resources and teacher-designed units of study.

The Town of Truxton lacks a public library, so a TACS school library will have a vital role and be available to the community. Library skills will be taught in conjunction with classroom studies and projects to teach students library organization and use of fiction and non-fiction print and media resources.

II.A.3.b. Curriculum Review Procedures

TACS Board of Trustees, will direct TACS Head of School, Assistant and staff to seek feedback initially using a curriculum evaluation based on the **Scriven Model**. Properly implemented, this model will summarize merits and demerits of the elementary curriculum and insure continued relevancy of the TACS curriculum design. Formative and summative content using checklists and rubrics will be used to evaluate quality of curriculum implementation and results.

Teacher notes on Unit lessons, summer curriculum review of these Units, student portfolios and student performance data will be evaluated in terms of stated TACS goals and objectives. NYS assessments as well as Terra Nova results will be included in summative conclusions. Teachers, students, and parents will also be expected to critique Units of Study by responding to relevant rubrics and questionnaires. Feedback and suggestions for improvement will be encouraged.

During the Summer Teacher Institute, Units of Study will be reviewed yearly for content, use of relevant materials, and learning outcomes, then revised and updated. The student and parent feedback will be an important aspect of this process. These units will be published or archived electronically by TACS staff, creating valuable teaching resources that might also be shared with the wider academic community. Comprehensive curriculum evaluation and improvement will ensure the academic growth of the students and continue parental and community support for the charter school.

II.A.4. Curriculum and Special Needs Populations

At TACS, all students, including those with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), struggling learners, and advanced or gifted learners will have access to a high-quality educational experience. Students with special needs at TACS will benefit from the project-based learning activities, a variety of supporting curricula that provide active and interactive educational opportunities, flexible grouping, varied ADA-accessible learning environment, and meaningful connections to the greater community. The opportunities to interact with peers at many levels will also encourage confidence and a positive classroom attitude. *Section II.B. Special Student Populations and Related Services* details the inclusion principles of TACS, the methods used to ensure that at-risk students catch up and remain with their peers, students with disabilities have appropriate and meaningful access to all instructional activities, ELL develop skill and confidence speaking English alongside classmates who are developing skill and confidence speaking Spanish, and gifted and talented students are appreciated and enabled to pursue their special interests.

II.A.5. Instructional Strategies

TACS' instructional strategies will provide innovative learning opportunities for our students. These include small and large group instruction, place-based experiential learning, hands-on project-based learning activities, center-based learning, integration of appropriate reading and writing workshops with specific literacy instruction, and co-operative multi-level participation. In addition to the frequent role of the teacher as "a guide on the side," a large portion of the curriculum drives the need for academic mastery in all areas of instruction for students to successfully accomplish carefully designed authentic learning. As University of Minnesota education professors David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson observed, "More than 1,200 studies comparing cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts have found that cooperative learning methods improve scholars' time on tasks and intrinsic motivation to learn, as well as scholars' interpersonal relationships and expectations for success."²³

II.A.6. Meeting Benchmark 1 of Charter School Performance Framework

Truxton Academy Charter School will meet the expectations of Benchmark 1²⁴ and further student learning by providing "a strong foundation for future academic success." This will be accomplished by requiring full engagement in the learning activities, using teaching resources effectively, and carefully monitoring the knowledge obtained during the students' academic career, not only at the elementary level, but also at higher grade levels. (For more information, please see *Section II.D. Assessment System*.)

²³ Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An educational psychology success story: Social interdependence theory and cooperative learning. *Educational Researcher*, 38(5), 365-379.

²⁴ *Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher ...*

II.B. Special Student Populations and Related Services

II.B.1. Participation and Progress

General education curriculum

At TACS, all students, including those with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), struggling learners, and advanced or gifted learners will have access to a high-quality educational experience. TACS' welcoming environment, small class sizes, hands-on and project-based curriculum, and individualized instruction will be inclusive and designed to support the growth and skill-building of all learners. All students can demonstrate high levels of academic growth in a welcoming School Family with clear expectations and a structured, focused, and supportive environment. TACS' variety of learning strategies will assist all students to access, participate, and progress in their learning.

Extra-curricular and after-school programming

Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to learn new skills, develop relationships with other students, and improve talents and self-esteem. All students – including those with disabilities, ELLs, at-risk students, and gifted – will be included. TACS will make every effort to provide full access for students with disabilities to participate in extracurricular activities, including modifying or providing accommodations.

II.B.2. Responsiveness to the needs of special student populations

At TACS, teachers will create a classroom community where all students feel safe, respected and comfortable. Differentiated and individualized instruction, scaffolding, partnering with parents, linking instruction with assessment, and balanced literacy instruction will contribute to helping all students, including students with special needs, achieve success.²⁵

II.B.3. Processes and Procedures to Identify, Assess and Serve Special Student Populations

Students at Risk

A student at-risk of academic failure falls behind typically-performing peers. We understand that at-risk students need quality instruction and intervention strategies immediately. Early intervention at the K and 1st grade levels and early intervention in the school year at all grade levels is very important for long-term academic success. Our *Response to Intervention* (RTI) program, (outlined in *Section II.D. Assessment System*) is designed to **identify and assess** at-risk students before serious failure occurs, and to **provide interventions** to help them achieve academic success. At any time a parent/guardian may refer their child for special education evaluation to determine if they qualify for special education services. Students who have not been so identified will be monitored through the RTI system. **Evaluation:** During RTI Team meetings, teachers will work together to assess student progress and the effectiveness of planned interventions.

²⁵ Tompkins, G. E. (2010) *Literacy for the 21st Century: A Balanced Approach*. (5th ed.). Boston, MA:Pearson Education, Inc.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

TACS is committed to attracting, recruiting, and meeting the needs of currently underserved Hispanic children whose parents work on farms in our rural agricultural area. Before the school year begins, our ELL teacher will personally visit with the Hispanic families and invite them to enroll in TACS. **Identify and assess:** The Home Language Survey will be given to all newly enrolled students. If, after an informal interview with the student and his/her parents, the ELL teacher verifies that the student may be a potential ELL, he/she will administer the *New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)*. Any student who scores below the designated proficiency level will be considered Limited English Proficient (LEP) and will be eligible for services. **Services:** With TACS' language immersion approach, all ELLs will learn in the same classrooms as English-speaking children. LEP students may receive "push-in" English instruction and will be frequently paired with English-speaking students in the classroom. TACS' key design elements of project-based learning and hands-on STEM instruction will aid ELL students in acquiring vocabulary. Each year, after ELLs have been identified, parents will be invited to meet with teachers with the goal of helping all students become proficient English readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. The School's exit criteria for ELL students will be based on the student's progress measured annually by the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). **Evaluation** of the ELL program will take place annually with an analysis of the ELL students' growth toward benchmarks to English proficiency.

Academically advanced and gifted students

TACS believes that all students are gifted and talented in different areas. Identifying students' specific gifts and talents occurs over time with multiple opportunities to discover particular abilities and interests. Early identification in school improves the likelihood that gifts will be developed into talents. Teacher observations, student tests, and gifted characteristic checklists may be used to **identify and assess** gifted and advanced students. **Services:** Project-based learning and STEM education in the hands-on Rural Life Lab will offer opportunities for students to explore and research questions they themselves have developed. Cooperative programs offered through SUNY Cortland, Syracuse University Science Education Department, and SUNY ESF give students numerous possibilities to develop their gifts and talents. Our "Study Buddy" Leadership Project lets students to work with older children in academic subjects and projects. Students may also be accelerated to the next grade above their current one in reading, writing, or math groups. **Evaluation:** TACS will solicit and respond to feedback from students, parents, and families through surveys, meetings, and conversations regarding the needs of advanced and gifted students as well as other students with special needs.

II.B.4. Identifying and Serving Students with Disabilities

If students who are receiving Response to Intervention (RTI) support continue to perform significantly below grade level, the Team will determine whether referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) is warranted. Working closely with child's home school district, the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will make a referral to the district's CSE. Our staff will involve parents throughout the entire process. The home district's school psychologist will conduct an in-depth **assessment**. The Special Education Coordinator will ensure all appropriate individuals are present for the CSE meeting. **Services:** If a disability is determined, the CSE will develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). TACS staff will implement

appropriate modifications and accommodations to help make each student progress in his or her least restrictive environment. TACS will comply with the Federal Child Find requirements (34 CFR &300.125) which mandate that schools have a procedure for *identifying and evaluating* students with disabilities (SWD). Upon new student enrollment, the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will contact the student's home district to request student records and determine if the student had previously been identified as a student with a disability. Those documents will be evaluated to determine any mandated services and TACS' ability to meet those requirements. If a student's IEP recommends services that TACS is not able to provide, the school will work closely with the district's CSE and student's family to decide on the course of action that best meets the student's needs.

Students who do not qualify for Special Education Services but still have a disability that affects their access to the instructional program may be eligible for a 504 plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which requires that a school provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. *Services:* Students who qualify under Section 504 will receive accommodations and modifications. Once the disability is documented, a 504 plan will be developed. The teacher, parent, and Special Education Teacher/Coordinator will be involved in the development of the plan. The plan will be reviewed and amended as often as necessary, at least annually.

II.B.5. Supports, Programs, Resources and Personnel Used to Assist SWD

TACS will employ a NYS certified Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, a NYS certified ELL teacher, and a Special Education Teaching Assistant to provide support and instruction to students with special needs (see *Attachment 8a Staff Responsibilities and Qualifications*.) The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will oversee the special education program and ensure compliance with New York State regulations, Charter School law, Child Find, Section 504 and IDEA. He/she will manage and review the referral process, ensure that mandated services are provided, and submit annual reports in compliance with 34 CFR §300.750. The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, ELL Teacher, and Special Education Teaching Assistant will co-teach with classroom teachers. Working closely as a **Student Support Team (SST)**, they will modify lessons to individualize instruction as well as monitor and assess the effectiveness of the approaches being used. *Services:* TACS will meet the needs of students with special needs by providing:

Integrated Co-Teaching Services: Classroom and special education teachers collaborate on planning and teaching a comprehensive program that can adapt to the needs of individual students and, in some cases, the entire class.

Accommodations and Modifications: The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will work with staff to make sure that all accommodations are being followed according to the students' IEPs and that students are receiving meaningful inclusion and appropriate instruction.

Progress Monitoring: Special Education staff will evaluate the effectiveness of programming, noting how students perform on IEP goals plus mastery of grade level standards.

Social and Behavioral Supports: TACS' staff will create and maintain a safe, positive, respectful School Family culture that welcomes and connects with all students and families.

II.B.6. Processes and Procedures for Providing Specialized Instruction

Specially designed instruction (SDI) at TACS will consist of individualized instructional activities linked to the student's IEP goals and objectives. The certified Special Education Teacher will adapt the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to meet the child's needs and ensure access to the general curriculum. He/she will plan meaningful SDI so that it will be an intentional, systematic process that specifically addresses the student's IEP goals.

II B.7. Working with the Districts to Ensure that Eligible Students Receive Services

The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will communicate with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) Chair at each district of residence on IEP-related items, service provisions, and other special education matters. TACS will work directly with the district to schedule related services as required a child's IEP; services may be contracted out to a private provider to ensure fair and adequate funding for related student services. The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will maintain ongoing communication with the student registrar, the finance department, and/or the CSE of each district of residence to confirm enrollment and the services that the district will provide, and to ensure that funding has been received. The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher and the school accountant will meet monthly to review funding received from districts, and discuss changes in enrollment and related services.

II.B.8. Overseeing the IEP Process

The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will oversee the process of managing all IEP records and ensure the compliance of all plans is in place. All confidential documents, such as IEPs and evaluations, will be kept in a secure location, such as a locked filing cabinet or a secure network folder. IEPs will be signed in and out of the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher's office for all service providers and teachers who work directly with the student.

II.B.9. Process for Coordinating and Communicating

The classroom teacher, the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher and the Special Education Teaching Assistant will have one common planning period together daily for planning, assessing, monitoring progress, and tracking goals. Team meetings will be scheduled weekly for K-2 and 3-6 teachers to review data, monitor progress, and determine appropriate instruction and intervention for all students.

II.B.10. Ancillary and Support Services

TACS' Community Volunteer Program will bring adults from the community to the school. They can make a difference in students' lives by volunteering in TACS' classrooms, lunchroom, extended day program and library. Our Academic Advisory Panel's hands-on learning programs (e.g., Syracuse University's Science Education program for TACS students) will help support students with special needs.

II.B.11. Evaluating the Instructional Program for Special Student Populations

The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, Classroom Teachers, Special Education Teaching Assistant, ELL Teacher, and Head of School will regularly review data to determine if

students are meeting established benchmarks developed on students' IEPs as well as grade-level benchmarks. Programmatic audits will be conducted to ensure logs and minutes are compliant with NYS and school guidelines. Teachers and parents will be surveyed regarding the value of the training, resources, and services received to meet the needs of special students.

II.C. Achievement Goals

II.C.1. Incoming Student Population

Students will be drawn mainly from the Homer SD, with some coming from the Cortland, DeRuyter, or McGraw SD, private schools, and home schooling. The percentage of students in the HSD with disabilities is 13%. The 2014-2015 HSD data reports 0% of students are ELLs; however, a recent survey reports 19 children living with Spanish-speaking families within 10 miles of TACS. While the overall percent of HSD students who qualify for Free & Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) is 42%, TACS' FRPL percentage may be closer to 59% (the 2015 rate for Hartnett School located in the TACS building).

II.C.2. Public Schools' Academic Data

The 2014 and 2015 NYS Assessment scores for 4 school districts surrounding TACS compared to statewide are shown below. **All scores are below the statewide average.**

Table 3: Composite State Proficiency Scores for Participating Districts

Assessment	Cortland SD	DeRuyter SD	Homer SD	McGraw SD	Statewide
2014 ELA	21%	18%	26%	17%	31%
2014 Math	26%	34%	30%	15%	36%
2015 ELA	21%	20%	27%	15%	31%
2015 Math	31%	35%	34%	18%	38%

II.C.3. Goals for Achievement

Goal 1: Using the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework Indicators and Measures for Student Performance, the following will be used to assess high academic standards.

	Indicator	Measure	Meets Level
I. 1. Student Progress Over Time (Growth)			
I. 1a.	Aggregate Growth	MGP for all students on NYS assessments	State Average
I. 1b.	Subgroup Growth	MGP for all accountability subgroups	State Average
I. 1c.	Aggregate growth to proficiency	Perf. Index (# of students proficient or making growth sufficient to achieve proficiency within 3 years or by Grade 8)	Effective Annual Meas. Obj. Target
I. 1d.	Subgroup growth to proficiency	Perf. Index (# of students proficient or making growth sufficient to achieve proficiency within 3 years or by Grade 8)	Effective Annual Meas. Obj. Target

I.2. Student Achievement (Attainment)			
I.2a.	Aggregate Prof.	% of students proficient on 3-8 NYS assessments- all students	State Average
I.2b.	Subgroup Prof.	% of students proficient on 3-8 NYS assessments- subgroups	State Average
I.2c.	Similar Schools Comparison	Effect Size in “Comparative Regression Analysis controlling for prior academic performance and student characteristics	Stat. significant + effect size
I.2.d.	District Comparison	% of students proficient on 3-8 state assessments	> district average
I.2e.	Subgrp Comparison	% of students proficient on 3-8 state assessments	> district average
I.3. State and Federal Accountability System			
I.3	State Accountability Designation	Reward, Good Standing, Local Assistance Plan, Focus, or Priority School Status	Good Standing

Goal II. Students will increase academic achievement and develop career readiness skills.

II.1. Charter Specific Goal: Scholars will develop strong academic and career readiness skills.			
II. 1a	Reading Competency	PM Benchmark Reading Assessment-3x/year, FastBridge Reading Assessment measures growth.	80% of all students on benchmark for grade level beginning with Winter Benchmark
II.1b.	Writing Competency	Writing Inventory – Collected 3x/year	Begin Grade 1, 80% will meet benchmark for # of words written
III.1c.	Mathematical Competency	FastBridge Math Assessment – administered 3x or more each school year	80% of all students will successfully complete assessments
III.1d.	Tech Competency	Tech Literacy Assessments TBD	80% will meet prof. standards
III.1e.	Science /PBL Comp.	Teacher-Created Unit Assessments	80% students meet prof. standards
III.1.f.	Spanish Competency	Teacher-Created Assessments	80% students meet prof. standards

Goal III. Students will demonstrate Leadership, Service and Positive Character Traits (TACS’ Culture and Climate)

III. 1. Charter Specific Goal – Students will demonstrate Leadership, Service, and Positive Character Traits.			
III.1a.	Leadership	Study Buddy Leadership Project - older students mentor younger students.	95% of students mentor younger students 1 hour/month, begin Oct.

III.1b.	Service	Community service projects. Data collection by Administrative Assistant.	Beginning in K, 95% of all students will perform 3 hours/year
III.1c.	Positive Character Traits	Staff will choose 1 positive character trait/month (responsibility, kindness, etc.)	School-wide overall average score = 4 out of 5 on Rubric.

II.C.4. Methods and Timeline for Assessing Progress Toward Goals

During the Summer Teacher Institute, teachers will map grade level units for the school year and set benchmark goals aligned with NYS Common Core Learning Standards. Students will be assessed formally three times each year. The benchmark goals will be used to identify the need for academic support leading to Response to Intervention (RTI) services.

II.C.5. Explanation of How This Method of Evaluation Best Measures Student Progress

TACS determined this method of evaluation best measures student progress because it clearly measures growth, identifies deficits, and leads to educational decision-making by all staff members. It is useful for helping TACS’ teachers plan meaningful instructional learning strategies for students and provide specific, prescriptive interventions as needed.

II.C.6. Communication of Goal-Specific Evaluation Data

The Head of School will use goal-specific data to evaluate the academic progress of individual students and the school utilizing the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework during and at the end of the school year. Each quarter, the Head of School will compile a progress report for the Board. The Board will receive training on the Performance Framework to stay on target in its Performance Agreement. The Head of School will compile all school-wide student assessment data and oversee benchmark assessments. Student assessments, grades, and state testing will be reviewed at team meetings. Parent communication will occur through email, letters, one-on-one conversations, and P-T conferences. The community will be notified in news releases and community celebrations.

II.C.7. Progress Toward Meeting Achievement Goals

TACS teachers will use student assessment data to adjust instruction and create learning activities that help students achieve academic and character goals. Staff members will collect daily observations, student surveys, portfolios, work samples, and assessments. These methods will be used to guide instruction toward meeting achievement goals. Grade-level teacher teams will analyze assessment data weekly to evaluate instruction, student progress, and curriculum effectiveness. Data will be reviewed at the individual, subgroup, and whole school levels to monitor the effectiveness of programs and interventions and alert staff for areas of concern. TACS’ assessment plan will align with Benchmarks 1, 2, and 3 of the NYS Charter School Performance Framework.

II.D. Assessment System

II.D.1. Assessment Aligned to Mission, Objectives, and Overall Educational Priorities

TACS' Mission states: "Through real world, student-centered learning we will plant a strong foundation for future academic success." One of our objectives is to "raise academic achievement and develop career readiness skills." The assessments will document: 1) the growth and development of our students' skills in mastering the NYS Common Core Learning Standards, 2) establishment of a strong foundation for future academic success, and 3) the increase in academic achievement and development of career readiness skills. Strategic use of data drives curriculum development, best practices in instructional delivery, and Response to Intervention (RTI) plans. Our students will take all required NYS assessments. To prepare for state assessments in 3rd grade, benchmark assessments will provide reliable formative data to ensure that students are developing strong literacy skills and are on track for success. Benchmark Assessments will be administered three times or more each year.

II.D.2. Assessments to Gather Screening, Diagnostic, and Proficiency Information

Assessments have been chosen based on merit and supporting research in addressing skills.

1. *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-IV)* – a screening assessment administered when students start school and annually to those who are below benchmark. Vocabulary instruction improves students' reading comprehension, writing quality, plus listening and speaking vocabulary.²⁶
2. *Home Language Survey* – a screening assessment for all students.²⁷
3. *FastBridge Reading* – a diagnostic assessment that measures oral reading fluency and comprehension in all grades, given tri-annually or as often as weekly to students who fall below benchmark.²⁸
4. *PM Benchmark Guided Reading Assessment* – a diagnostic/proficiency assessment that measures reading fluency, comprehension, and reading levels - given tri-annually in all grades, except Kindergarten where it will start in January.²⁹
5. *Dolch (Pre-K – 3rd grade) and Fry Sight Words List (500-1,000 Most Common Sight Words)*³⁰
6. *FastBridge Math Assessment* – a diagnostic tool that measures math proficiency administered tri-annually to all students.³¹

²⁶ Joshi, R.M. (2006) Vocabulary: A critical component of comprehension. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 21(3), 209-219.

²⁷ NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages. Home Language Questionnaires. Available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/bilinged/pub/hlq.html>

²⁸ Andren, K. J. (2010). *An analysis of the concurrent and predictive validity of curriculum based measures CBM), the measures of academic progress (MAP), and the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) for reading.*

²⁹ See <http://www.nelson.com/pmbenchmark/related.html>

³⁰ See <http://www.sightwords.com/sight-words/>

³¹ Shapiro, E. S., Dennis, M. S., & Fu, Q. (2015). Comparing computer adaptive and curriculum-based measures of math in progress monitoring. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 30(4), 470-487.

Table 4: Assessment Schedule and Timeline

September	Fall Assessment by October 30	Winter Assessment by January 31	Spring Assessment By May 15
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test Home Language Survey	PM Benchmark Reading (1 st -6 th grade) Sight Words Writing Samples FastBridge (Math) Letter/Sound Correspondence (K)	PM Benchmark Reading (K-6 th grade) Sight Words Writing Samples FastBridge (Math)	PM Benchmark Reading (K-6 th grade) Sight Words Writing Samples FastBridge (Math)
Weekly or Monthly for Students Below Benchmark: FastBridge Oral Reading Fluency End of Units: Teacher Assessments in Math, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Technology Ongoing: Log of Books Read + Teacher/Student Conferences Monthly: Character Trait Focus and Vote for Students of the Month			

II.D.3. Processes of Administering and Analyzing Assessments and Developing Action Plans

Classroom teachers, the Special Ed Coordinator/Teacher and Teaching Assistants will work together to *administer* assessments during the school day. All staff members will receive assessment training at the Summer Teacher Institute. A formal RTI process will be implemented to make sure struggling students are identified and provided with the essential supports to succeed in school. Data will be analyzed at weekly grade level team meetings and students will be grouped and served according to **Tier 1—Core Instruction:** at or above benchmark; **Tier 2—Strategic Interventions:** within one year of benchmark; and **Tier 3—Intensive Interventions:** more than one year below benchmark for each assessment.

Teams will work collaboratively to develop *action plans*. All students’ academic needs will be identified through comparing individual scores with benchmark goals. For students performing below benchmark, performance goals and individual academic learning plans will be developed to meet students’ specific needs, research-based interventions will be provided, and progress will be tracked and monitored to determine the success of the intervention. If the student is not responding to the intervention, the team will examine what might be preventing the student from making adequate progress. TACS will collaborate with faculty members on our Academic Advisory Panel at SUNY Cortland and Syracuse University Education Departments to provide research-based instructional strategies for struggling and special education students. Teachers will be expected to share results with grade level teams and the Head of School within two weeks after the benchmark assessment. The Head of School will share assessment data with the TACS Board. Parents are partners at TACS and regular parent communication will ensure that parents are aware of their child’s progress. For students, report cards will be standards-based using a rubric scale denoting Proficiency Level or “Not Yet”. Coinciding with the TACS objective to *Raise Academic Achievement and Develop Career Readiness Skills* are the beliefs that students WILL reach high academic standards and that failing is not an option. Teacher professional and performance assessments will be tied to student performance and growth. General school-wide assessment information will be available to the community on our website.

II.D.4. Assessment Data Used to Inform Key Decisions and Improve Academic Outcomes

State and benchmark assessments will yield information providing specific direction to teachers and staff for future instruction. Other assessment tools, including observations, anecdotal records, conference notes, and performance assessment rubrics, are important for comprehensive understanding of students. Assessments will be used to identify student's educational needs; revise educational goals and standards; evaluate and improve teaching effectiveness; revise teaching strategies when and where needed; provide instructional feedback to students and parents; grade student achievement; evaluate curriculum quality; fulfill State required reporting purposes; and evaluate program strengths and needs.

II.D.5. Assessment Requirements Consistent with State Law and Board of Regents Policies

During the term of the initial five-year charter, TACS will administer the New York State English Language Arts Assessments and the New York State Mathematics Assessment in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6. The New York State Science Assessment will be given in Grade 4. High achievement success on the NYS Assessments will demonstrate that TACS reached our objectives and fulfilled our mission. TACS will remain current on all assessment requirements involving the New York State Testing Program as well as relevant policies of the Board of Regents (BOR). This will include methods of administering and scoring of assessments required by NYSED to ensure the integrity and security of the State assessments.

II.D.6. Plan for Measuring and Reporting Educational Performance and Progress

TACS' plan for measuring students' performance and progress is outlined in detail above. Our plan for clear, concise and regular reporting of students' growth and achievement will take several forms:

- **Individual** –Classroom teachers, the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, and Teaching Assistant will be informed of the academic performance and progress of students in order to improve instruction as well as create and implement RTI action plans. Reliable and valid measures such as benchmark data from standardized tests, reading levels, and math assessments will be communicated to students and parents formally with report cards and parent/student/teacher conferences.
- **Cohorts/Grade Level** – Grade level teacher teams will share data regularly in order to plan targeted instructional support for every student. Benchmark assessments will assist teams in grouping students for RTI services. Grade level data will be shared with the TACS faculty at faculty meetings. The Head of School will inform the Board of Trustees on benchmark data and NYS Assessment scores and growth at regular presentations at Board meetings.
- **School Wide Results** – School wide success on NYS Assessments will be shared with the community via our school website and to NYSED in the Annual Report of Progress submitted each year. One individual at TACS will act as the Intake Coordinator and Chief Information Officer to report student data in the Student Information Repository System (SIRS). All required reporting will be in accordance with NYSED requirements.

II.E. Performance and Promotion Standards

II.E.1. Promotion Standards Aligned to Mission, Educational Program and Assessment System

Problem-solving skills attained through PBL instruction will help students approach and master new learning experiences. Our promotion standards will reflect the growth of these problem-solving skills in conjunction with scholastic achievement for each student to ensure the overall academic success of our charter school. TACS will maintain high academic standards and expect learning success from each student, leading to grade-level promotion. The learning and teaching framework will further each child's acquisition of knowledge as demonstrated by numerous evaluative instruments previously described in *Section II.D*. With consistent assessment and timely academic intervention when needed, the possibility of grade retention will be remote. Poor performance on assessments will immediately engage RTI and a collaborative plan to correct the student's achievement deficiencies.

II.E.2. Promotion Policies and Standards

Students' achievement of grade level mastery of content and skill sets will be reflected in quarterly ***Student Report Cards*** showing *Level 4-Mastery, Level 3-Proficiency, Level 2-Working towards Proficiency* and *Level 1-Not Yet Proficient* at this level. This will alert parents to their children's strengths and weaknesses in achieving grade level benchmarks and describe how any Level 1 and Level 2 areas will be specifically addressed. The Head of School will oversee this process and ensure appropriate services are provided to the child. When a change in educational plan is needed the Head of School and teachers will meet to assess and create a plan with the assistance of the parents. TACS will carefully evaluate whether a student would benefit from repeating a grade considering a range of indicators including achievement of grade-level benchmarks in ELA, Math and Science, extended absence, classroom formative and summative assessment data, anecdotal records, standardized test records, RTI data and examples of student work (portfolio). Parents of students being considered for retention will be alerted as early as possible, but no later than the end of February of the current school year. Once a student is identified as being in jeopardy of retention, teachers will create a targeted academic plan to help prevent it. They will also work with parents to offer suggestions for out-of-school intervention as available and at-home activities that might be helpful. Summer school will also be recommended. For students who have received extensive intervention throughout the school year with little progress, a referral for assessment may be made to determine if a learning disability exists.

II.E.3. Sample Promotion Standards for 1st Grade and 4th Grade

The following table includes specifics skills to be taught at 1st and 4th grade levels at TACS. This includes the latest priorities as addressed by the Homer Central School District in order to facilitate student integration when entering higher grade levels in the District. Student performance in these skills and at the levels considered acceptable for promotion will be: Common Core standards of *Level 2- Working towards Grade Level Standards, Level 3- Meeting Grade Level Standards* and *Level 4- Mastery of Grade Level Standard Proficiency* on State Assessments.

Table 5: Sample Promotion Standards for First and Fourth Grades

	First Grade	Fourth Grade
English Language Arts	Developmental Level ³² Reading Literature & Informational Text: Key ideas and details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Fluency & Comprehension Foundational Skills: Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, Phonics and Word Recognition, Grammar, Spelling Writing: Text Types and Purposes, Production Writing, Research Writing	More Advanced Level Reading Literature & Informational Text: Key ideas and details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Range & Level of Text Complexity, Fluency and Comprehension Foundational Skills: Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, Phonics and Word Recognition, Grammar, Spelling Writing: Text Types and Purposes, Production Writing, Research Writing, Ability to write in cursive
Math	Number: Place Value, Comparison, Addition and Subtraction to 100 Measurement: Ordering and Comparing Length Measurements as Numbers Geometry: Identifying, Composing, and Partitioning Shapes	Number: Place Value, Rounding, Algorithms for Addition + Subtraction, Multi-Digit Multiplication + Division Measurement: Unit Conversions, Angle Measure and Plane Figures Fractions: Equivalence, Ordering and Operations, Decimal Fractions
Science	The Human Body, Astronomy, History of the Earth, Animals and Habitats	Simple Machines, Force and Motion, Animal Defense Mechanisms

Students with Disabilities

Students with IEPs and those in the process of being evaluated will be advanced to the next grade based on individualized-promotion criteria, as well as the previously described criteria including the assessment data contained in their portfolios.

Exit Standards

TACS students will exit the elementary program proficient in math, science, literacy and social studies content knowledge at the sixth grade level and above. Student mastery of these standards will be evaluated using results from state exams, and internal school assessments and grades. TACS students will have also demonstrated problem-solving and critical thinking skills (assessed with collaboratively designed rubrics) necessary to continue to excel academically in subsequent grades.

II.F. School Schedule and Calendar

II.F.1 A Typical Student Day at Truxton Academy Charter School

A typical day for Kindergartners at TACS takes place in the Farm Learning Environment in the Kindergarten classroom. The classroom is designed to look like a farm commonly seen in the Truxton community. After entering the school and eating breakfast, students participate in a Classroom or School meeting. After the Pledge to the Flag, student helpers assist with reading

³² See detailed lists of skills in NYS Common Core Learning Standards: www.engageny.org

the daily calendar in both English and **Spanish** and weather information. The children have learned to say the morning greeting and daily calendar information in both English and **Spanish** earlier in the year. Children share important happenings, **Oral Language**, and the teacher reviews daily jobs and the day's schedule.

The day begins with a 90-minute **English Language Arts (ELA)/Spanish** block. The students are learning about Plants and Farms, topics in the NYS Core Knowledge Language Arts K Listening and Learning Strand. The students listen to the teacher **Read-Aloud** - *From Seed to Plant* by Gail Gibbons. He/she shows children a real green bean plant and students identify and name the: roots, stem, leaves, flowers, beans, seed, and soil. The classroom teacher integrates **Phonics** by writing each letter in the word "plant" on the white board and helping the children sound out the individual letters and blend them into the word "plant." Literacy Centers begin where small groups of students rotate among centers to complete tasks related to the same content. The Classroom Teacher meets with a small homogeneous group of students at one table for a **Guided Reading** Center. She holds up a **sight word** (e.g., "the") in the book "How Plants Grow" and asks children to look for it as they read the book together. Each child has a copy of the book. Looking at the cover, she asks what they think the book will be about. Together they read the book out loud pointing to each word as they read. While the Classroom Teacher works with a small guided reading group, three other literacy centers take place simultaneously. The **Special Education** teacher pushes in and accompanies 2-3 identified students who have IEPs, providing support needed. The time spent with students with disabilities is in accordance of law mandated by the number of minutes on the IEP. At the **Writing Center**, there are cards with pictures of plants with labeled plant parts (stem, leaf, root, etc.). Each child draws a picture of a plant in his/her journal and writes the name of each plant part on the picture. At the **Independent Reading Center**, there is a collection of 8-10 plant picture books, e.g., *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle and *My Garden* by Kevin Henkes. Children choose books to read independently. At the **Vocabulary Center**, there are real examples of plants (e.g, a leaf of lettuce, a carrot) with corresponding word cards.

After small group center rotations, the class visits the outdoor gardening area to identify and draw a variety of plants and care for the plants located there. Back in the classroom the children identify photos of farm animals and food (e.g. cow-milk) with corresponding word labels. They walk around the room and find 5-10 foods they like. They draw a picture of them and write the word under the picture that describes them. Teachers help students who appear to struggle with hearing the sounds and writing the words. After ELA is over, students have a 10-minute **Fitness Break** to walk around the school or do exercises in the classroom.

During the 50-minute **Math** Block, students practice oral counting (1-50) as a group. The teacher introduces counting in sets of 2s. They count and record the numbers of different objects rotating in 4 small groups. The teacher introduces 2-dimensional shapes – circle, square, triangle, etc. Using precut patterns, the class identifies and plays a game with different sizes and shapes of 2-dimensional shapes.

After the Math Block, students have a 40- minute period of **Applied Math** and **STEM** on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and **ELA – Oral Language and Writing** on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The lesson for the day is Comparison of Length and Weight. Using scales and rulers, the children weigh, measure, and record the weight, length, and width of a variety of plant

foods (e.g. squash, green beans, corn). They analyze the data to find out which vegetables are the heaviest, lightest, longest, and shortest.

Then they go to the cafeteria and playground for a 35-minute lunch and recess period. Students participate in **Social Studies**, including **Character Education**, for the next 45-minutes. The lesson from the Common Core Standards involves students' understanding of the role of traditions and holidays. What makes holidays special? The ELL teacher joins the group and the classroom teacher and ELL teacher co-teach the topic by helping children brainstorm a list of holidays in the U.S. and **Spanish**-speaking countries and ways these holidays are celebrated. Students choose 3 holidays and draw symbols of them. They discuss establishing a new class holiday and inviting other classes to join in the celebration. The Character Trait of the month is Kindness. The goal is to help children become more aware of noticing and doing acts of kindness. They brainstorm ways to be kind to others at home and at school. The class creates a Kindness Project where they record one or more acts of kindness per day.

Then the students go to the Gym or outdoors for 45 minutes of **Fitness and Health** activities with the Physical Education teacher. After Fitness, the children have a 45-minute period for Science, **Environmental Education** and **Rural Life Lab**. Today the children engage in **Project-Based Learning** in the **Rural Life Lab**. They feed and water the chickens, collect, wash, weigh, and prepare the eggs to sell to the community. The Kindergarteners then have a 45-minute period for **Art, Music or Library/Media** with Special teachers. The student's day is now complete. Dismissal occurs and the one hour **After School, Tutoring, and Student Clubs** program begins. This provides additional intervention program opportunities.

II.F.2. Organization of Teachers' Work Week

The Teachers' week will be organized on a five-day cycle. Teachers will have two 45-minute preparation/planning periods daily. One of those 45-minute periods will be common *planning time* with the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher to collaborate and design plans for students with special needs. The other 45-minute block will be for lesson planning and preparation as well as weekly or bi-weekly meetings with other K-2 or 3-6 grade teachers. Aligned with TACS' mission to "plant a strong foundation for future academic success," teachers will collaborate on monitoring, analyzing student proficiency data, developing tiered interventions, and creating RTI action plans for students who score below benchmark. Teachers will have staff meetings in the morning before school starts with the Head of School as needed.

II.F.3. Differences in Teacher Schedules

Lower and upper elementary students' and teachers' schedules are attached in *Attachments 3a* and *3b*. One particular difference between student and teachers' schedules is that on the first Friday afternoons of each month from October through June, teachers will have Professional Development. During that time, TACS will provide a Special Learning Program for students at school. On those Friday afternoons, special art, music, and literature enrichment activities will be planned for students with the help of community members, Academic Advisory Panel members, and gifted and talented groups in the surrounding area.

II.F.4. Length of the School Day and Year

At TACS, the school day will run from 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The Extended Day program will run from 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. The annual calendar for TACS is 189 student days, approximately 7 days longer than the Homer School District. Combined with the Extended Day program, students at TACS will be in session an equivalency of **approximately 30 school days longer** than their counterparts in the Homer School District. The academic year will begin in late August and end in late June. The number of staff days is 206 for the first year at TACS. In Year One, staff will spend three weeks on Professional Staff Development prior to the school opening. In succeeding years, all staff will return in August for one or two full weeks of Professional Staff Development and New Teacher Orientation, approximately 15 days longer than their counterparts in the Homer School District.

Summer Program

A Summer Program will be offered for enrichment and remedial support. Morning sessions (1/2 day) for 4 weeks (the equivalent of 10 days) will take place in July and the first week in August. The Extended Day Program and the Summer Program will support struggling students and provide enrichment opportunities for all children interested in exploring new and imaginative learning opportunities.

Time allocated for professional development

The time allocated for professional development is: August 7-25 (Summer Staff Institute) = 15 days, Friday, September 1st = 1 day, Friday, June 22nd = 1 day, First Friday afternoons x 9 months = 3 days for a Total = 20 days. Monthly Professional Development Sessions will be held on the first Friday afternoons of each month (Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1, Jan. 5, Feb. 2, March 2, April 6, May 4, and June 1) from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. This will give staff time to review student academic performance data and adjust instruction according to up-to-date data on student needs. Simultaneously, students will participate in a “Fun Friday” Learning Enrichment Program at school. These “Fun Fridays” will provide time for students to fulfill *Assessment Goal III - Students will demonstrate Leadership, Service, and Positive Character Traits*. Study Buddies (older students paired with and mentoring younger students) will rotate in small groups and participate in special art, music, physical education and literature enrichment activities with the help of our Academic Advisory Panel and community members. During our Planning Year, the Applicant Group will develop a plan for “Fun Fridays” incorporating Assessment Goal III and our key design elements.

II.F.5 School Calendar and Student Schedule

Please see *Attachment 3c* for the 2017-2018 School Calendar. Samples of weekly student and teacher schedules are included in *Attachments 3a* and *3b*.

II.G. School Culture and Climate

II.G.1. Approach to Student Behavior Management and Discipline

TACS will implement a positive approach to student behavior management and discipline utilizing (1) a *Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)* system that will set clear student behavior expectations starting from the first day of school, (2) *Conscious*

Discipline, a skill-based classroom management program that will provide staff and students with skills and structures to create a positive, caring classroom and School Family, and (3) character and leadership development.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system

The PBIS system begins with developing a matrix prior to the opening of school and posting it so it is seen daily by students as they enter the building. Setting expectations on the first day of school, as well as practicing routines and procedures, will reduce student behavior problems, improve school safety, and reduce the number of discipline referrals. Teachers will develop a system of explicit routines and procedures so that students will know what to expect and do at all times during the school day. Students will participate in fun activities to practice routines until they are automatic. Teachers may use photos of routines to help younger children master them. Appropriate behavior will be taught, practiced, reinforced and celebrated. Examples of the classroom behavioral expectations include **Be Safe**: keep hands, feet and objects to yourself; **Be Respectful**: be encouraging and helpful; and **Be Responsible**: have supplies ready.

Conscious Discipline

Safety, Connection, and Problem-solving are the core components of *Conscious Discipline*.³³ (1) When children, staff, and community members come to TACS, they will be welcomed into a big family – a key design feature. The success of TACS' academic program and students depends on creating and maintaining a safe, strong, positive, respectful School Family culture for students, staff, and families. Research indicates that caring relationships among all parties in schools are necessary for academic success.³⁴ (2) The School Family brings all children, especially the most difficult, to a place of willingness to learn through a sense of belonging. It reduces stress while creating an atmosphere of caring, encouragement, and meaningful contributions.³⁵ (3) Connection with others “wires” the brain for impulse control and contributes to self-regulation skills. To support staff in establishing the School Family, a national trainer from the *Conscious Discipline* program will train staff during the Summer Staff Institute. When teachers and parents have the skills to model self-regulation and positive conflict resolution and they interact with one another in a kind, respectful manner, children will do the same. TACS plans to provide training for parents in *Conscious Discipline* skills.

Character and leadership development

TACS will incorporate character development into our social studies curriculum, focusing on one positive character trait (e.g., honesty, respect, helpfulness, kindness, compassion, trustworthiness, responsibility, and self-control) per month. Staff members will encourage, reinforce and celebrate positive behavior and character traits throughout the school year. Upper elementary students will be expected to model character traits for younger students as they work together in reading, field trips, and service projects.

³³ Bailey, B. A., (2015). *Conscious Discipline: Building Resilient Classrooms*. Loving Guidance, Inc.

³⁴ Wentzel, K. R., & Watkins, D. E. (2002). Peer relationships and collaborative learning as contexts for academic enablers. *School Psychology Review*, 31(3), 366.

³⁵ Bailey, B. A., (2011). *Creating the School Family*. Loving Guidance, Inc.

Children with special needs

TACS' approach to discipline for students will include procedures to determine whether behavior is a manifestation of the child's special needs. Please see *Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy* for complete details on discipline for students with special needs. The purpose of the discipline system is to redirect students to productive learning, thus developing habits required for future success. The consequences for misbehavior must be clear and consistent with meaningful follow-through. All consequences will include opportunities for reflection and reconciliation to maintain connections with the School Family. If a student needs time to refocus, he/she can go the "Safe Place" in the classroom or to the Nurse's office to reflect on their behavior and establish a plan for returning to their classroom.

II.G.2. Student Discipline Policy

Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy includes the rights and responsibilities of students and identifies the kinds of infractions that are subject to disciplinary measures, including expulsion or suspension from the school. It is consistent with: (a) the requirements of due process and with federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities, and (b) the requirements of the Dignity for All Students Act (Education Law Article 2) relating to the creation of policies intended to create a school environment that is free from discrimination or harassment.

II.G.3. The School Culture

TACS will adopt a discipline policy that is designed to maintain a safe, orderly environment in which students can learn effectively. We will have an orientation for parents and families prior to the first day of school in which TACS' Student Discipline Policy will be distributed to all families and staff, providing a guide for consistent behavioral management and consequences. A discussion will be held about the School Family culture, student goals, and behavioral expectations. School staff will implement the school's discipline policy starting from the first day of school, setting expectations, practicing routines, building the School Family with skills, and focusing on the month's character traits. TACS' physical environment will be a safe, positive, orderly place that promotes academic, physical, and social-emotional growth and achievement. TACS will promote a school environment in which students feel physically and emotionally safe and can participate in decision-making. Student achievement in all areas will be acknowledged and celebrated. To evaluate that the environment is safe and conducive to learning, parents, students, teachers and staff will be anonymously surveyed each year by the R/E/D Group regarding the school's safety and the quality of the learning environment.

II.G.4. Family Involvement and Communication

A support system based on building connections among parents, students, teachers and community members to ensure the optimal development of all, is a fundamental part of the success that students will experience at TACS. Parents will partner with teachers, and TACS will be a helpful, supportive environment that welcomes families and community members. Open communication is essential and parents will be well-informed of their child's progress. Monthly Community Events will be held at TACS and relationships will be forged with community members and groups, with a goal toward collaborating on programs to enhance the education

and lives of our students. Examples include Monthly Potluck Suppers, Open Houses, School Celebrations, Student Concerts and Art Shows, and Home. TACS will involve families with constructing our Rural Life Lab (e.g., a greenhouse, chicken coop, etc.). We will provide Family Handbooks and a school website to keep families updated on school happenings, needs, and volunteer opportunities. Parents and community members will be encouraged to volunteer in classrooms, on field trips, in the library and cafeteria, and in the Extended Day program.

To gauge satisfaction with school climate, The R/E/D Group evaluation consulting firm (which will provide *pro bono* assistance) will include questions related to learning environment, student engagement, discipline, bullying, etc., in the surveys and focus groups with students, parents, and staff each year. The findings will be used to inform adjustments and guide continuous improvement. For more details, please see *Section III.D. Evaluation*.

Section III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

III.A. Applicant Group Capacity

III.A.1. Background Information on Applicant Group Members

Please see the *Attachment Table 1: Applicant Group Information*.

III.A.2. Roles

Please see the *Attachment Table 1: Applicant Group Information*.

III.A.3. How the Applicant Group Came Together

Faced with the lack of rural services—including educational program choices—in the area surrounding the Town of Truxton, a group of past educators, parents and other community stakeholders decided to take action. While researching charter schools, the team was particularly inspired by one that had been established in a similar rural area in Kansas, the Walton 21st Century Rural Life Center.³⁶ The video, *Using Agriculture to Spur Achievement - The Walton 21st Century Rural Life Center*³⁷, that introduced the team to Walton to their charter school curriculum design using agriculturally based PBL curriculum. This opened our eyes to how we could make learning fun again amongst the challenges of common core standards in public school. The Rural Life Lab allows for everyday hands on interaction with real world experiences from live plants and animals utilizing technology. We also witnessed how essential the school is to the community and the community is to the school. Our team has communicated directly with faculty from Walton through email, phone and an in-person tour of the facility. From there, a vision was born.

III.A.4. The Planning and Writing process

The Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) team began to lay the groundwork for an exciting new educational option in July, 2014. Initially, the three main leaders were the retired elementary teacher Cindy Denkenberger, the local daycare owner Krysta Austen, and farm

³⁶ The Walton Rural Life School's home page is: <http://w-usd373-ks.schoolloop.com/>

³⁷ Using Agriculture to Spur Achievement – The Walton 21st Century Rural Life Center <https://youtu.be/HQT2uwDXcF0>

manager, veterinary technician, and 4-H Club leader K. Jeanetta Laudermilk. As of June 2014, the team had met twice a month, conducting research; gathering input from local parents, teachers, and other community members; and defining the key design elements. In February and June 2015, the team submitted Letters of Intent to NYSED that were denied. In March 2016, an expanded TACS team with growing local support submitted a Letter of Intent to the SUNY Charter School Institute, which was approved. Upon further review, the team decided to retract the proposal to provide more time to strengthen the application and prepare it for Round 2 of NYSED's 2016 RFP process.

III.A.5. Primary Author of the Final Application

The primary author of this application is Elaine Sturges, retired elementary teacher with experience in public, private and charter schools; former University of Wyoming and U.S. Forest Service instructor for teachers on conservation and natural science; former Colorado State Coordinator for the Early Childhood Project WILD Program (teacher workshops, study buddy leadership and Project Based Learning) and then SUNY Cortland Project WILD Facilitator; and consultant/naturalist for Hartnett and Tully Elementary Schools in Central New York. The R/E/D Group, a consulting firm with ties to Syracuse University's School of Education, has provided *pro bono* assistance with budget analysis and proposal editing.

III.B. Board of Trustees and Governance

III.B.1. The Administrative Relationship between TACS and the Board of Regents

The TACS Board of Trustees (BOT) will have a performance contract with the Board of Regents that provides the school with the autonomy to design and operate its programs in exchange for accountability for results: namely, academic performance, organizational viability, and fiscal soundness. Our Founding Team understands the responsibility of governing a public charter school, including the provisions concerning conflicts of interest in section 715 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. Please see *Attachment 5a*.

III.B.2. Proposed Governance Structure of the School

The TACS by-laws dictate that the BOT will have at least five members, including the positions of President/CEO, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parent Representative. For a list of members of the initial BOT, a description of their qualifications (including previous board or employment experience) and their three-year terms, please see *Attachment 5a: New Applicant and Prospective School Trustee Background Information*. All current and future members will meet the qualifications listed in Article III, Section 2. A, B, C, D of the By-Laws; see *Attachment 5b: Proposed By-laws*). Trustee recruitment is done by consensus of the Board.

Organizational structure

The Board currently consists of a President, Vice-President, Financial Advisor and non-voting Recording Secretary. The remaining members are participants in Standing Committees devoted to curriculum, finance, community outreach, marketing and public relations, and agricultural buildings. Ex-officio members include members of our Founding Team and will also include the Head of School and an elected Student Community Organization parent representative (voting member). The BOT has drafted a charge for each committee but not

delegated any specific authority to them; any permanent or financial commitments will only be made at the Board level. The Board will delegate authority for and oversight of the day-to-day operations of the school to the Head of School, who will report directly to the full Board during regular and specially called meetings, of which all members will be duly notified. The board will establish measurable annual performance goals, conduct mid-year and end-of-year evaluations of the Head of School, and hold him or her accountable for implementation of Board's policies and procedures. The BOT will clearly communicate its reporting requirements to the Head of School, including content, format and frequency of data.

Procedure for conducting and publicizing monthly board of trustee meetings

The Board will meet at the school on the first Monday of every month from 7 to 9. Notice of monthly meetings will be posted on the TACS website and in local businesses and community centers. The agenda will be developed by the President/CEO in consultation with the Head of School and will include a written report by the Head of School, a financial report, and opportunity for public comments. A package of action items will be distributed to board members prior to all meetings in a timely fashion. A quorum of three must be present to constitute a legal meeting. Minutes will be taken at all board and committee meetings; copies will be posted on the TACS website and archived in the school office. Committee meetings will occur as needed and are set up by their chairpersons. The Board will adhere to the open meeting law of the State of New York, Article 7, section 103.

Promoting parental and staff involvement in school governance

The board will include one elected Student Community Organization parent representative (voting member). The Head of School will encourage parents and teachers to attend board meetings. Participation and involvement will be promoted with the inclusion of a 10 minute class presentation lead by the students. These monthly presentations will rotate through the grade levels so every class will have the opportunity to present during the school year. A time for public comment and an opportunity to directly address the board with concerns will be provided as well.

III.B.3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and its Officers

The Board of Trustees (BOT) is recognized as the final authority for policies and operational decisions related to the functioning of TACS. It also may delegate authority to officers and employees of the school corporation in accordance with provisions of the charter. The BOT will not manage the school, but will ensure accountability to the mission and values described in this proposal as well as academic and fiscal viability.

Board members' roles and responsibilities include (a) monitoring program implementation and compliance with the charter agreement and relevant laws and regulations, (b) recruiting, hiring and evaluating the Head of School, (c) approving major policies and regularly reviewing and revising them as necessary, (d) preparing for and attending board and committee meetings, (e) making informed decisions to support the success of the school, and (f) facilitating long-term strategic planning. The roles and responsibilities of the proposed corporation Board of Trustees are described in Education Law & 2853 (1) (f) and also, in great detail, in our By-Laws, Article III, Section 1, B. 2. and Article, IV, Section 2. (see *Attachment 5b*). The Board will ensure that the Head of School and all staff remain in compliance of all local,

state, and federal laws and regulations. Also, the Board will ensure that TACS complies with all standards and requirements of its authorizing entity, The Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York.

III.B.4. Proposed By-Laws

Please see *Attachment 5b*.

III.B.5. Proposed Code of Ethics

Please see *Attachment 5c*.

III.B.6. Recruitment, Selection, and Development of Trustees

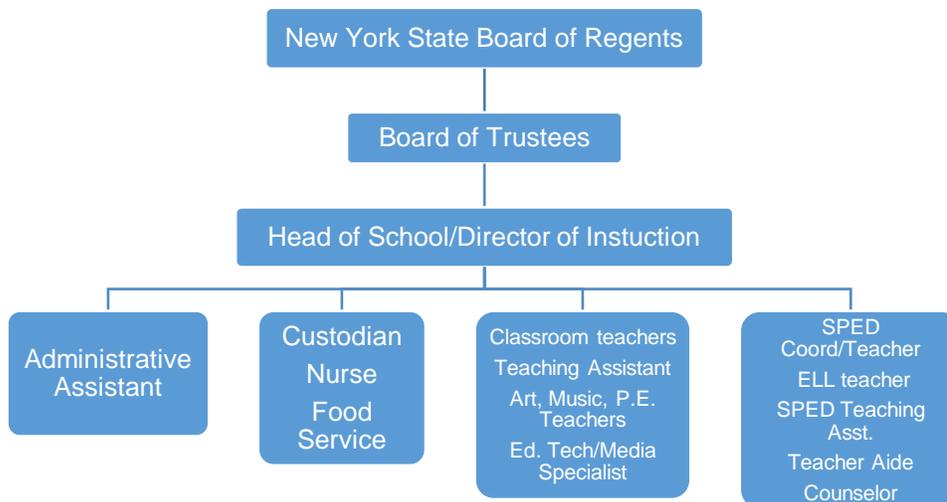
Trustee recruitment is done by consensus of the Board inviting individuals with a sincere interest in the concept of a unique rural charter school and an occupation relevant to the mission of the charter school to sit on the board. It is important for the individual to be articulate in sharing a desire for a quality education for children and be a willingly engaged representative of the Board.

New trustees are invited to sit in on Board meetings prior to becoming a member and will be provided a copy of Board bylaws and Code of Ethics when they are seated on the Board. They will be encouraged to visit area charter schools as well as required to be familiar with TACS’s programs and personnel. The Board will ensure that TACS complies with all standards and regulations put forth by its authorizer, NYSED.

III.C. Management and Staffing

III.C.1. Organizational Chart

Figure 5: Organizational Chart



III.C.2. Organizational Structure and Management Needs and Priorities

TACS will operate five classrooms (growing to seven by Year 3) with one teacher each. A full-time Teaching Assistant will rotate throughout all the classrooms. A full-time Special

Education Coordinator/Teacher and a half-time Special Education Teaching Assistant (increasing to full-time in Year 2) will provide the mandated services included on students’ IEPs. An ELL teacher will be charged with recruiting ELL students and families, providing translation services, and teaching Spanish to English-speaking children. Physical Education/Fitness, Art, Music, and Library/Media will be staffed per Table 6. All teachers will report directly to the Head of School, who is charged with day-to-day operation and supervision, including providing guidance to staff, overseeing school finances, and implementing professional development.

III.C.3. Management Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of School will be responsible for instructional and programmatic leadership, curriculum development and implementation, personnel decisions, budget development, Board communication, fiscal oversight, staffing needs, and legal compliance. He/she will oversee financial management in conjunction with contracted services from an accounting firm, who will handle payroll and train administrative staff to collect, protect, and enter financial and audit information and materials. TACS will contract with an outside firm to conduct an annual compliance audit. The Special Education Coordinator/ Teacher will oversee the Special Education Program. He/she will work closely with the Special Education Teaching Assistant, the ELL teacher, the Teacher Aide, the School District CSE, and any special education contracted services.

III.C.4. Qualifications, Recruitment, and Selection for the Head of School

The future Head of School will be a visionary leader with a record of prior success in creating a Professional Learning Community and working collaboratively with staff, students, parents, and members of the community. He/she will be an experienced school educator, administrator and strong team leader with a commitment to accountability. He/she will demonstrate passion and determination to administer a rigorous curriculum aimed at academic achievement in a healthy, safe, positive, welcoming “School Family” environment for all students. The candidate will have demonstrated experience with teaching and administration in public and charter schools, rural students from low-income households, special education, designing curricula aligned with the Common Core, academic data collection and assessments, managing personnel and administering teacher evaluations, overseeing school budgets, and facilitating board governance. A nationwide search will be conducted to recruit the most qualified candidate. The BOT will complete a rigorous interview process to select the finalist.

III.C.5. Staffing Plan for Effective Implementation of the Educational Program

As seen in Table 6, below, the teaching and support staff positions will increase as the school grows with new grades (5th in Year 2, and 6th in Year 3) and higher enrollment.

Table 6: Truxton Academy Charter School Staffing Chart

	Number of Staff				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
School Year	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Grade levels	K-4	K-5	K-6	K-6	K-6
Position					
Head of School/Director of Instruction	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Special Education Coordinator/Teacher	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Administrative Assistant	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Classroom Teachers	5.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
Teaching Assistants	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
ELL Teacher	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
Educational Tech/Media Specialist	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Art Teacher	.25	.25	.25	.25	.25
Music Teacher	.25	.25	.25	.25	.25
Physical Education Teacher	.75	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Teacher Aides			1.0	1.0	1.0
Therapist/Counselor (contracted)			0.1	0.2	0.3
Nurse	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Cafeteria/Food Service	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8
Custodian	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total Staff	13.75	15.50	18.40	18.50	18.60
Number of Students	80	111	136	137	140

III.C.6. Meeting the Needs of ELL and Special Education Student Population

TACS has budgeted for a half-time ELL Teacher to meet the needs of the small number of ELL students expected in the first two years. He or she will increase to full-time in Year 3. A full-time Special Ed Coordinator/Teacher will be supported by a Special Education Teaching Assistant (half-time in Year 1 and full-time in Years 2-5). TACS may increase special education staffing in subsequent years depending on student needs.

III.C.7. Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

Job descriptions and hiring timelines will be posted on national and local job search websites, charter school websites, and published in regional newspapers. The hiring process for teachers will include resume analysis, phone conferences, team interviews, and lesson demonstration. To ensure high quality, applicants will be screened, references and background information checked, and interviews held. TACS is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and Affirmative Action and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, veteran's status, sexual orientation, or disability. All school employees will be required to submit a fingerprinting clearance in conjunction with the Laws of New York 2001, Chapter 180. In accordance with Education Law 2854(3)(a-1), TACS may hire teachers who are not certified or otherwise approved by the Commissioner of Education (not exceeding 30% of the teaching staff). All non-certified teachers will be "subject matter competent." The responsibilities and qualifications for specific staff members are found in the job descriptions in *Attachment 8a: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures*.

III.C.8. Strategies for Recruiting Effective Teachers

TACS will conduct national searches for the best qualified teachers, including through the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and the National Charter School Resource

Center job boards, advertising in local media and networking with other high-performing schools. TACS will recruit and retain highly effective teachers by providing: high-quality professional development (see *Section III. E.* for details); a positive, professional work environment (a safe, healthy School Family culture that values and respects input from all individuals); a strong collaborative environment (emphasizing teamwork, high expectations, success and achievement for all staff, students, families, and the community); and a generous benefit package with medical insurance (which may include more than one option or provider that the school will provide to each full-time employee; dental insurance (offered to full time employees); short-term disability insurance (in accordance with NYS law, covering certain injuries, illnesses or other disabilities occurring outside the workplace); and a 401k or 403b matching retirement plan (with a 4% match by the employee).

III.C.9. Staffing Needs Aligned To Mission, Key Design Elements, Education Plan, Budget, Anticipated Enrollment and Growth

TACS will hire quality instructional staff that will “plant a strong foundation for future academic success,” as stated in the mission, and provide the professional training that will enable them to implement the key design elements of Project-Based Learning, STEM, Spanish, and a School Family Culture. The staffing plan is aligned to the budget presented in *Attachment 9: Budget and Cash Flow Template*, as well as with anticipated student enrollment growth and the addition of grades 5 and 6, as seen in inTable 6, above.

III.C.10. Working Conditions and Compensation Package Will Aid Recruitment and Retention

The plan for attracting and keeping highly qualified staff at TACS relies on investing in the creation of a highly positive work environment, as described in great detail in *Section II.G. School Culture and Climate*; in professional learning, as described in *Section III.E.*; and in the generous compensation and benefits package, as described here in *III.C.8* and *III.C.11*.

III.C.11. How Base Salaries and Increases Will Be Determined

To retain effective teachers and staff, a competitive salary will be offered. Base salaries will be determined by professional education levels, years of experience, and student achievement levels. The base salary will be in the average range for teachers in Central New York Charter Schools. Salary increases will be determined by the Board of Trustees, based upon rate of per pupil tuition increases, school academic success, and cost of living adjustments.

III.C.12. Addressing Human Resource Challenges

The Head of School in conjunction with the Board will handle personnel and human resource challenges. If necessary, an attorney will be consulted. The school will follow the Personnel Policies in the Employee Handbook developed by the Board.

III.C.13. Student Assessment Data to Drive Key Decisions

Student assessment data will drive key decisions in the recruitment, evaluation, retention and support of appropriate personnel. For example, if students are struggling with meeting benchmarks in certain subject matter areas, experienced teachers with proven success in those areas will be recruited. Financial incentives will be given to teachers receiving student growth scores in the effective and highly effective range.

C.1. Charter Management Organization

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

C.2. Participating Organizations

The Academic Advisory Panel includes Dr. John W. Tillotson, Associate Professor of Science Education, Syracuse University (SU); Dr. Charles M. Spuches, Assistant to the President for Outreach at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF); Dr. Beth Klein, Professor of Science Education, Campus Sustainability Coordinator, State University of New York at Cortland (SUNY Cortland); and David C. Rutherford, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Cortland County. They will facilitate opportunities for SUNY-ESF and SU students to do inquiry-based activities and programs with TACS students; facilitate summer camps and field trips (for example, CCE's K-2 Robotics Summer Day Camps and SUNY ESF's Environmental Summer Day Camps, 3-5); assist (*pro bono*) with customized professional development; assist (*pro bono*) TACS teaching and administrative staff, e.g., by collaborating on appropriate portions of the curriculum; and exposing TACS students to colleges, contacts, and role models as they consider future career opportunities. However, no contracts or monetary arrangements have been drawn up, so CCE, SU, and SUNY-ESF, SUNY Cortland do not qualify as formal partner organizations as defined by this NYSED RFP.

Local area businesses have reached out to establish a partnership with TACS as a learning resource for students. These businesses include, Trinty Valley, Twin Oaks Dairy, LLC, New Penn Farm, Forest Lake Campground, Reakes Country Goods, Southern Hills Veterinary Hospital, and Levi Sutton, PE, PLLC. A proposed business partnership agreement has been presented and is being finalized (see *Attachment 7*).

III.D. Evaluation

In order to ensure high student achievement, responsible leadership and public accountability, TACS will implement a rigorous evaluation process. The results of the programmatic audit will be shared with community stakeholders, with comments invited, at the April Board of Trustees meeting each year. TACS will conduct classroom assessment per the Professional Learning Community Model.³⁸ This model requires school-wide collaboration and shared efforts and responsibilities, and seems especially appropriate for our small rural school.

III.D.1. Assessing the Academic Program

Students' academic skills will be assessed and tracked per the intervals and instruments described in *Section III. D. Assessment System*. Individual teachers will be trained to use the assessment software prior to the opening of school. The Head of School and Educational Technology Specialist will coordinate assessment and work with individual teachers to develop strategies for academic success. The effectiveness of the academic program will be monitored through ongoing classroom observations by the Head of School, student assessment data, and feedback from teachers, students and parents. The R/E/D Group, LLC, an educational evaluation consulting firm with ties to Syracuse University, will advise TACS on the overall evaluation plan,

³⁸ DuFour, R. (2004). "What is a professional learning community?" *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 6-11.

the design and administration of survey instruments, and ensuring the confidentiality of respondents.

III.D.2. Assessment of School Leaders, Administrators, Teachers, and the Board of Trustees

The Head of School will be assessed by the Board of Trustees according to NYS Education Law 3012-c. Sixty percent of the evaluation will be aligned with the NYS Leadership Standards using the Marshall Principal Evaluation Rubric, 2012 Revised Edition, on the NYSED Approved List of Principal Practice Rubrics. Forty percent of the evaluation will be based on: (1) feedback from an independent evaluator; (2) feedback from teachers, support staff, students, parents, community members, Board of Trustees, and neighboring school district staff; and (3) review of school records, documents, and processes. This evaluation will be performed annually each January. It will focus on evidence of: effective administrative and team building skills; support for TACS' mission and key design elements; a respectful and collaborative manner with teachers and students as well as suggestions for improvement in the areas of assessment and curriculum.

Teachers will be evaluated according to NYS Education Law 3012-c. Sixty percent will be based on rigorous and nationally recognized measures of teacher performance using Danielson's Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2013 Instructionally Focused Edition, on the NYSED Approved List of Teacher Practice Rubrics. Forty percent will be based on student achievement in state and local assessments. This assessment will be completed by the Head of School in conference with individual teachers three times during the school year.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) will request feedback on its effectiveness in overseeing the operation of TACS and supporting its programs each year in January. A survey requesting comments on the items listed below will be distributed to TACS staff, parents, community members and neighboring school district administrators. The R/E/D Group will summarize the findings at the April BOT Meeting, and make observations and recommendations. The BOT assessment will focus on: attendance and participation of members; quality of communication with and support for the Head of School and teaching faculty; evidence of sound fiscal practices and conscientious use of TACS funds; accountability and involvement of individual Board members in providing leadership, reviewing key policies and procedures; maintaining the TACS' mission; and handling grievances and community relations (with TACS parents, other residents, and neighboring school districts).

III.D.3. Data and Process for Evaluating Educational Program

TACS' educational objectives, corresponding indicators/metrics, and specific targets are described in detail in *Section II.C. Achievement Goals*. The process that will be used to evaluate TACS' educational program, progress toward achieving the objectives, and use of findings to improve teaching and learning, is described in *Sections II.D. Assessment System, III.E. Professional Development*, and the remainder of this section.

III.D.4. Operational Effectiveness and Fiscal Soundness

Operational Effectiveness - TACS will monitor its operational success and growth by reviewing the longevity of staff, exit interviews, parental comments, student disciplinary actions, and team meeting input. We will have online anonymous surveys as well as anonymous comment systems.

Fiscal Soundness – TACS understands that fiscal responsibility is synonymous with success of our educational mission. Our budget is designed conservatively and shows respect for taxpayer funding. It is designed to prioritize items that have the most impact on achieving the school goals. Our financial team will consistently monitor the monthly cash flow vs budget goals and as mentioned in Section III J. The Head of School, and Financial team will prepare a summary of the monthly fiscal status as well as any variances. This will be reported to this to the BOT (Board of Trustees). The BOT will work with the Head of School and fiscal team to ascertain appropriate corrective measures. The annual budget will be positive. We will utilize appropriate purchasing procedures aligned to New York Procurement Laws. The fiscal soundness of the school will also be based on reaching the specified reserve amount after the school year. TACS will work to correct any determinations of the outside independent annual audit.

III.D.5. Plan for Teacher Evaluation Aligned with NYS’s Approach to Student Growth Data

In alignment with NYS Education Law 3012-c, 60% of TACS’s teacher evaluation plan will be based on teacher performance rubrics using the Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation listed above. According to the Law, the other 40% of teacher evaluations are based on student achievement – 20% from NYS state test results and 20% from a list of three options – state tests, local tests approved by NYSED, or third party assessments approved by NYSED. The Head of School will work closely with teachers to support them in improving teaching skills with meaningful professional development and individual mentoring.

III.D.6. Assessment of Parent and Student Satisfaction

Parents and students will be encouraged to share observations in writing throughout the school year through prompts in the TACS monthly newsletter, at parent-teacher conferences, and on the school website. Additionally, parents will be invited to complete an annual online survey in January focusing on their satisfaction with various aspects of the school, and their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the Board, Head of School, and teachers. Parents lacking internet access will be invited to use a school computer to complete the survey. Student engagement will be measured by administering a research-validated survey designed for students in grades 3 through 5, such as the School Engagement Measure (SEM)-MacArthur survey.³⁹ TACS will also welcome feedback from the NYSED Charter School Office to meet and exceed benchmarks in the Charter School Performance Framework for renewing NYS charter schools.

³⁹ The SEM-MacArthur survey was developed and tested by Jennifer Fredricks, Connecticut College; Phyllis Blumenfeld and Jeanne Marie Friedel, University of Michigan; and Alison Paris Posner, Claremont McKenna College for the MacArthur Network for Successful Pathways through Middle Childhood, 2001-2005.

III. E. Professional Development

III.E.1. High-quality Professional Development and Training Plan

TACS' plan contains all five of Archibald's characteristics of high-quality professional development, including: 1) alignment with school goals, state standards, assessments and formative teacher evaluation, 2) focus on core content and modeling of teaching strategies, 3) inclusion of active learning of new teaching strategies, 4) provision for teacher collaboration, 5) embedded follow-up and continuous feedback.⁴⁰ In the first year, establishing a positive school-wide culture of success will be a top priority. Aligned with our school mission to "plant a strong foundation for academic success," the professional development plan will include: a three-week Summer Teacher/Staff Institute (August 7-25, 2017); Monthly Professional Development Staff Meetings; Weekly or Bi-Weekly K-2 and 3-5 Team Meetings; Ongoing coaching, mentoring, and Lesson Study; Professional Learning Community (PLC) study sessions; and Summer Staff Development for School Board and Administration.

Table 7: Outline of the Summer Teacher /Staff Institute

Topic	Types of Training	Professional Trainer
Positive, Safe, Healthy School Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating a School Family – Conscious Discipline ▪ Community volunteer training ▪ Blood borne pathogens training ▪ Sexual discrimination training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Company Trainer ▪ Head of School ▪ School Nurse ▪ Head of School
Creating a High Quality Curriculum: Instructional Delivery, Curriculum Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing, mapping units with Common Core ▪ Literacy components - ELA modeling strategies ▪ STEM & Next Generation Science Standards ▪ Environmental Ed – Project WILD, PLT ▪ Spanish and ELL Learners ▪ Agriculture in the Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum Prof. ▪ SUNY Cortland School of Education ▪ John Tillotson, SU School of Education ▪ Elaine Sturges (BOT) ▪ ELL Teacher ▪ Cornell Cooperative Extension
Instructional Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project-Based Learning & Lesson Study⁴¹ ▪ Classroom Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beth Klein, SUNY Cort ▪ Academic Adv Panel
Administering Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FastBridge Reading and Math ▪ PM Benchmark Reading ▪ Charter School Performance Benchmark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Company Trainer or Teacher Leader ▪ Head of School
Providing Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Response to Intervention (RTI) and IEP Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special Ed Coord. ▪ Teacher Leaders

⁴⁰ Archibald, S. (2011). *High quality professional development for all teachers: Effectively allocating resources*. Washington: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

⁴¹ Klein, B. S. (2001). Guidelines for effective elementary science teacher inservice education. *Journal of Elementary Science Education*, 13(2), 29-40; and Klein, B. (2005). Application of the Guidelines for Effective Elementary Science Teacher Inservice Education. *Journal of Elementary Science Education*, 17(2), 57-72.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coaching, demonstrating, modeling, intervention strategies 	
Monitoring Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data Analysis – effective ways to examine results and track progress of students 	Special Ed Coordinator and Head of School

Monthly professional development staff meetings

Ongoing professional development will be embedded into monthly staff meetings as indicated in *Attachment 3c: Proposed School Calendar*. Staff will meet for two hours on the first Friday afternoon of each month. This will give them time to review student academic performance data and adjust instruction according to student needs. Staff will address operational aspects of the school, plan student and teacher celebrations, and share effective instructional practices. Simultaneously, students will participate in a “Fun Friday” Learning Enrichment Program at school. This will allow them to fulfill Assessment Goal III (“Students will demonstrate Leadership, Service, and Positive Character Traits.”) Study Buddies (older students paired with and mentoring younger students) will rotate in small groups and participate in special art, music, physical education and literature enrichment activities with the help of our Academic Advisory Panel and talented community members.

Weekly or bi-weekly K-2 and 3-5 team meetings

TACS will provide teachers and staff with daily and weekly time to collaborate and assess student data during the periods when their students are attending Art or Music. During this time, lower elementary and upper elementary teachers will meet to discuss improving classroom strategies, sharing teaching practices, interpreting data assessment, and developing individual learning plans to address student needs, and other topics as they arise.

Ongoing Coaching/Mentoring

Experienced staff members may mentor other teachers who are new to TACS and those who may have received a below benchmark review. Mentors will help teachers understand and utilize evidence-based instructional practices. The Head of School will determine who needs mentoring and provide them with a performance plan with measurable goals. The goals will be reviewed and updated at agreed upon times.

Lesson Study may be used for coaching and mentoring. It is designed to help teachers produce quality lesson plans and gain a better understanding of student learning. Within the Lesson Study, the team collectively plans, teaches, observes, revises and shares the results of a single class lesson.⁴² The Head of School will visit classrooms weekly and attend grade team meetings. These opportunities will be used to collect evidence related to each teacher’s professional growth goals and evaluate the implementation of staff development training into practice. The Head of School will hold monthly one-on-one meetings with teachers.

Teachers may meet once a week after school as a *Professional Learning Community* to study and discuss in-depth topics such as Conscious Discipline or Lesson Study, a research technique designed to build pathways for ongoing improvement.

⁴² Lewis, C., Perry, R., & Hurd, J. (2004). A deeper look at Lesson Study. *Educational Leadership* 61 (5); and Lewis, C., Perry, R., Hurd, J., & O’Connell, P. (2006). Lesson Study comes of age in North America. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 273-281.

Summer Staff Development for School Board and Administration

Each year, the Head of School and Board of Trustees will attend a full one-day retreat during the month of July or August, where they will develop a set of strategic goals to help them and the school move toward fulfilling their vision for TACS' future. The Head of School and the Chairman of the Board will attend the annual state leadership conference and/or the national charter school conference.

III.E.2. Evaluation and Review of Professional Development

To evaluate the efficacy of the program, the Head of School will enlist the R/E/D Group evaluation consulting firm (*pro bono*) to assess whether it is building teacher confidence and improving teacher behavior, improving student skills and achievement, providing continuous support for teachers, and contributing to a positive, healthy learning environment for students and staff. Teachers will be asked to identify ongoing professional development needs through an end-of-year review. That information will be used to plan the annual Summer Institute prior to the start of the new school year. The Professional Development and Training Plan will also be evaluated and reviewed by the Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees, drawing on teacher evaluation surveys and student data (benchmark and state assessment data). Surveys will be distributed after each session at the Summer Institute to provide the school leadership team with confidential feedback and constructive suggestions for improvement for the next year.

III.E.3. Addressing the Needs of Special Student Populations

The Summer Teacher/Staff Institute will include training on addressing the needs of students identified as at risk of academic failure, students with disabilities, and ELLs. The Special Education Coordinator will advise TACS on local experts in Special Education to facilitate training in RTI and IEP Planning, Data Interpretation, and Progress Monitoring. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the RTI plan outcomes will be completed. Data meetings will focus on student progress within their RTI plan. For an in-depth explanation of the RTI tiers and process, see *Section II.D*. Teachers will examine the data deeply and interview students about errors on practice assessments to determine their learning gaps and develop future lessons to meet students' needs.

III.E.4. Retention of Administrators and Teachers

Student achievement declines with high teacher turnover. An excellent Head of School and high-quality, meaningful professional development contributes significantly to teacher satisfaction. TACS will strive to provide both. The following factors will contribute to a positive working environment: a positive School Family in which students can and will succeed; hiring the best Head of School, Teachers, and Staff; providing the best salary schedule and benefit package possible with our resources; providing opportunities for collaboration and building positive relationships; immediately addressing behaviors and issues that do not reflect TACS' values; setting high expectations for staff and students with a positive attitude; networking with academic institutions and consultants to find high-quality staff development facilitators.

III.E.5. Teacher Planning and Collaboration

Collaboration with fellow teachers and staff increases student achievement. As noted above, TACS teachers will plan and collaborate for three weeks in the summer, and weekly and monthly during the school year. Since TACS is small, daily collaboration is highly likely to occur.

III.E.6. Plans to Build Organizational Capacity, Share Resources and Best Practices

TACS will build capacity by drawing on educational professionals and Academic Advisory Panel members (SUNY Cortland, Syracuse University, SUNY ESF, Cornell Cooperative Extension) to provide professional development and student teachers and by relying on veteran educators to make sure that best instructional practices are used consistently throughout the school. Over time, TACS will build a Student and Teacher Resource collection of professional books and articles. Currently, all New York State's charter schools are located in cities. TACS' goal is to establish and refine a model for future charter schools located in small towns and the rural agricultural areas in New York State.

III.F. Facilities

III.F.1. Facilities to be Used

TACS will use an existing school building for its classroom instruction. A newly-established non-profit corporation, Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc., purchased the recently closed Hartnett Elementary School building, Academy Street, Truxton, NY on January 15, 2016, following a successful community outreach and fundraising campaign.

III.F.2. Educational Program, Anticipated Enrollment, and How the Facilities Meet the Needs

This facility meets TACS's needs for 5 general education classrooms in Year 1 (2017-2018), 6 in Year 2 (2018-2019) and 7 in Years 3 through 5. The classrooms range in size from 598 to 639 square feet. TACS understands the square footage requirements for classrooms, as defined on the NYSED Website.⁴³ Additional rooms include: a gymnasium/auditorium (2540sq/ft), community fitness room, music/arts/science laboratory (1172sq/ft), and a library/computer laboratory (639sq/ft). TACS will have offices for the administrative team, nurse, support staff as well as a teacher's room. Food services will use the kitchen/cafeteria (1625 sq/ft). The property outside the school includes: a playground, fields for sports, and storage sheds for maintenance. A forested area lines the sports fields.

III.F.3. Residential Facilities

TACS will not provide residential facilities.

III.F.4. Assurance that Facilities will be Accessible for Students and Adults with Disabilities

The TACS facility is totally ADA accessible with wheelchair ramps at entrances to the building and an elevator connecting the first and second floors. TACS will remain compliant with ADA standards.

III.F.5 Evidence That Facility is Adequate for Program, Location and Target Population

⁴³ http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/publicat/building_aid_guidelines_072804.html

The advantage of this facility is that it was a fully-functional elementary school through June 2015 and it contains: a gymnasium, classrooms, children's bathrooms, and cafeteria. Project-Based Learning (PBL) and STEM with an Agricultural and Environmental focus will be implemented within the existing classrooms and in neighborhood fields, farms, forests, and gardens. The proposed agricultural buildings for the Rural Life Lab on school grounds include: a greenhouse and/or gardening area, a chicken coop, and a small animal barn. TACS will apply for grant support to purchase materials for the Rural Life Lab outbuildings and we expect significant community volunteer help with construction. This facility is ideally located near local farms for student field trips, the SUNY-ESF research property and several environmental areas, such as Labrador Hollow Unique Area and Tinker Falls. It is centrally located for our target population coming from several adjacent school districts.

III.F.6 Knowledge of Facilities Costs

TACS will lease space in the building from the non-profit corporation, Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc. A leasing rate agreement including utilities has been established. Since supporting community education is an essential part of the group’s mission, TACS’s lease/utilities rate is a set rate for the first five years. TACS will have the option to lease additional space or purchase the building in the future. The school building already meets NYSED requirements and will have a certificate of occupancy prior to school opening.

III.F.7 Evidence to Support Facilities-Related Budget Assumptions

TACS’s budget has been designed to include facility leasing and the repairs needed prior to opening. These estimates are based on completed building surveys and architectural studies. Many repairs have already been completed by community volunteers, drawing on in-kind donations of materials. Additionally, we have obtained and reviewed the utility and maintenance costs for the building over the past few years.

III.G. Insurance

Table 8: Insurance Coverage Limits

We have explored coverage with Austin & Co., Insurance Agency, Inc., Bailey Place Insurance, and First Fidelity Brokerage. TACS will seek coverage for general and professional liability, property, and personal injury as shown below. The budget is adjusted above the quotes we have been given.

General liability	\$3,000,000
Business personal property	\$250,000
Computer equipment	\$250,000
Director’s and officers’ liability	\$3,000,000
Umbrella liability	\$5,000,000
Hired & non owned auto	\$1,000,000
Workers compensation	Statutory limits
Catastrophic student accident	\$1,000,000

III.H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

III.H.1. Health Services

TACS will comply with all health services requirements applicable to other public schools including, but not limited to, all immunization and diagnostic testing requirements. TACS shall provide on-site health care services similar in scope to those available to children attending other public schools. TACS will seek to have a part-time school nurse to supervise the disbursement of medication (in accordance with §2853(4) (a) and §912 of the Education Law), the treatment of students who are ill or injured, and to train faculty and staff in first aid. Hearing and vision testing will be done on all new students by a qualified individual. A review of student immunization requirements and the proper supporting documents shall be completed for all new students. All instructional and medical staff will receive CPR training and an automated external defibrillator (AED) will be on site. Cumulative health records will be stored in locked filing cabinets accessible only by authorized staff members. These records will include proof of immunization and authorization for administration of medication. All visits to the nurse, including reason and treatment, will be documented in each child's file. Parents will be expected to provide emergency contacts in the event their child becomes ill or is injured.

Immunizations

The school will ensure that all new students adhere to New York State requirements for immunization before they attend. Parents or guardians must provide proof for TACS documentation that their child has received all required doses of vaccines. Parents or guardians may waive immunization in accordance with Public Health Law and exemptions to immunizations shall be granted if a licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner certifies such immunization may be detrimental to the student's health, or if the student's parent or guardian holds genuine and sincere beliefs contrary to such immunizations.

Plans and procedures for students who require daily medication during school hours

Students requiring medication must bring a letter from their physician showing medical necessity, or an Authorization for Administration of Medication to Students. All medication must be sent with the pharmacy label attached. Only medications requiring a dose during school hours will be administered in school. All daily or twice a day medications shall be administered at home before or after school. Asthmatic students who require daily medication must have a current Authorization for Administration of Medication to Students form on file. The student will be sent to the medical room daily at the prearranged time. Medication must be stored in the medical room except for students with documented permission to carry and self-administer their own medication. Medication will only administered by the school nurse. Diabetic students requiring blood sugar monitoring must have a glucose monitoring form on file. These students will be sent to the medical room at prearranged times as per their physician's instructions. Blood sugar monitoring and the administration of insulin will be performed by the school nurse.

Emergency medication

The requirements allowing registered professional nurses to administer agents used in the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis include: (1) following non-patient specific standing orders and protocols authorized by a physician or a nurse practitioner and (2) maintaining or

insuring the maintenance of a copy of the standing order(s) and protocol(s) that authorizes them to administer anaphylactic treatment agents.

TACS will adapt the recommendations in the New York State Education Department's manual GUIDELINES FOR MEDICATION MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS.

III.H.2. Food Services

TACS will have breakfast and lunch available for the full purchase price or less for all students without any service charges. In addition, students will also be allowed to bring their lunch and/or breakfast to school.

III.H.3. Participation in Federal Programs and Food Preparation

TACS intends to participate in the Federal Free-and Reduced-Priced breakfast, lunch and snack programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and adhere to all applicable requirements including meal pricing, determination of eligibility, nutritional value, and reporting requirements. Any and all food service subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs shall be used exclusively for the purpose of providing meals to eligible students, and for no prohibited purpose.

Food will be prepared and brought to the school by a prominent food service provider. We have been in contact with Aramark Food Services and Preferred Foods. The food will be served in our own food service facilities, including kitchen and cafeteria accommodations. Expenses for subsidized meals will be met by subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs; and expenses for full price meals will be met by sales charges. The food service program has been reflected in the budget.

Traditionally, our area has had a relatively high percentage of students eligible for free-and reduced-price lunch compared to the overall home district. To improve student performance, attendance, and health, we will explore a *breakfast in classroom* concept, combined with our daily class or school-wide meeting. If enrollment follows historic trends of greater than 50% FRPL, the school will be able to offer an after school snack program via the USDA's school-based snack program.

TACS intends to turn the food service into not only a nutritional event, but also a learning event. We are pursuing the Farm to School program because it aligns with the mission of the school. TACS also intends to have our own gardens and composting on site to enhance the children's hands-on learning. TACS will have small animals and poultry at the main school grounds within compliance of health and agriculture department regulations. Rural life labs will also supplement the learning experience by taking students to maple sugaring facilities, dairy manufacturing, and farms. Whenever possible, these experiences and foods will be integrated into lesson plans and diet. We will try to source snacks locally while remaining in compliance with state and federal requirements. These will be implemented into the food service and academic programs as allowable. Students who elect to join the Cooking Club after school will have opportunity to harvest from our gardens.

III.H.4. Transportation

TACS students will receive the transportation services for which they are eligible under Education Law § 2853(4)(b) and § 3635. If a student is not eligible for such transportation, the

student's parent or guardian will be responsible for providing it. TACS will provide bus service to and from rural laboratory sites, as well as during times when the charter school operates outside of the district's normal calendar. This expense is accounted for in the budget via a contracted service.

III.I. Family and Community Involvement

III.I.1. Vision and Strategy for Family and Community Involvement

From the very beginning, the initiative to establish a charter school in Truxton has been a community undertaking. A meeting was held by local residents in December 2014 to discuss future options for area students. An overwhelming number of participants agreed that opening a charter school was the best option to pursue. "It takes a village to raise a child." All the Founding Group and Board members are community residents, including parents with school-aged children, retired educators, and business owners.

III.I.2. Family and Community Involvement in Planning, Implementation, and Program Design

Getting parents involved is integral to the "School Family" **key design element**, as described below. There will be at least one voting parent member on the Board of Trustees. Several current members are parents. The development of board policy, governance of the school and program design will continue to draw on input from local residents.

III.I.3. Cultivating Family and Community Involvement and Steps Already Taken

The monthly Board meetings are open to the public. TACS maintains active social media posts and campaigns as a means to keep parents and community members informed and continually providing input. TACS will achieve a vibrant learning environment and positive school culture for our students, staff, families, and the community as follows:

The School Family

To assist school leaders in establishing the School Family culture that is a key design feature, teachers and staff will be trained during the Summer Teacher Institute to use specific skills from *Creating the School Family* by Dr. Becky Bailey. A few of the helpful strategies include: Friends & Family Board, the Safe Place, Beginning the Day the Brain Smart Way, and Ways to Be Helpful Books.

Family/Community Involvement

We will involve families and the community, for example, through monthly Family Nights and Family Farm Visits; School Open Houses and Student Success Sharing' Student Concerts and Art Shows; family involvement in constructing the Rural Life Lab greenhouse, chick coop, and animal barn' Family Handbooks with Acknowledgement and Contract Forms signed by students and parents; a volunteer program; and a school website to keep families updated on school events, needs, and volunteer opportunities. Teachers will contact at least four parents each week regarding students' achievement and performance, and make home visits throughout the school year to get to know each student's family. Community volunteers will have opportunities to be involved in field trips, Student Clubs meeting during Extended Day, and helping with classroom reading and math groups.

III.J. Financial Management

III.J.1. Systems, Procedures, and Staff Responsible for Managing School's Finances

TACS' Board of Trustees (BOT) has the final responsibility for the school's fiscal oversight, management, policies and procedures. The BOT will ensure that staff members are appropriately trained, the tasks described herein are completed, and systematic checks and balances are enacted. The school will contract out to a local accounting firm for a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with school finance experience. The CPA will work closely with the Head of School, who will have the responsibility for the school's financial management. The CPA will assist the Head of School and Administrative Assistant in developing TACS' accounts, financial procedures, and implementing an accounting software system that ensures all funds are properly identified, recorded, deposited, safeguarded, and controls are established to support preparation of monthly financial reports. Payroll will be contracted out to a qualified payroll provider who will define the payroll schedule and process, post and reconcile payroll, and fulfill year-end reporting and documentation requirements.

III.J.2. Management of School's Finances and Protection of Records

The school will form a Financial Team consisting of the Head of School, the CPA, the Board's Treasurer and Financial Committee, a parent or community volunteer, and a representative of the instructional team. The Financial Team will meet monthly (prior to TACS' Board Meetings held the first Monday of each month) to review expenses, ensure that spending remains consistent with the budget, and provide monthly financial reports to the Board. The Financial Team will identify academic and operational priorities to frame revenue expectations and spending patterns. Once those priorities have been identified, the Head of School and Financial Team will work with the CPA to craft a budget that supports TACS' mission, student achievement, and accounts for all aspects of the school's operations and expenses in a fiscally responsible manner. A draft budget for each academic year will be presented to the BOT to review, refine, and approve by May 1 to prepare for the following fiscal/academic year. TACS' Financial Team with Board approval will establish and manage the purchasing process with respect to the State Procurement Council pursuant to State Finance Law 161 (2)(d).

TACS will not disclose or provide access to any information from a student's permanent records without consent or written request from the parent or legal guardian of a student under 18 years of age, or of a student 18 years of age or older except as authorized pursuant to, or in response to, a subpoena, as required by law. The school will comply with requests within 45 days after it has been received. The Head of School will maintain up-to-date and accurate student records, monitor access to those records in accordance with applicable law, and report attendance and enrollment in compliance with NYS Education Law. All student records required to be kept confidential will be kept in a locked file in the school office. Electronic files will be kept in an encrypted and password-protected database. A detailed log will be maintained by the Head of School that lists who requests and/or gained access to the records and the reason for the request. The Head of School will work with the Administrative Assistant to coordinate the development and oversight of a program for orderly and efficient management of records, including the legal disposition or destruction of obsolete records. The Board will recommend

appropriate policies, regulations and procedures to accomplish this. The Head of School will maintain all financial accounts and data with approved accounting software.

III.J.3. Process for Conducting Independent, Annual Fiscal Audits, Aligned with NY Education Law 2851(2)(f)

Independent audits of the financial statements will be conducted annually by a NYS CPA selected by the BOT. The audit will cover all financial reports required by NYSED, including a statement of financial position, a statement of cash flows, a statement of activities, and a schedule of expenses. The audit will also include a report containing any significant findings in the financial processes of the school. The audit report will be reviewed by the Financial Team and then presented to the Board. The Board will monitor all efforts by school leaders to address any deficiencies identified by the audit. Financial regulatory forms shall be completed as necessary by the charter school or an accounting firm. The CPA will assure fulfillment of grant requirements, including adherence to grant restrictions and reporting requirements.

III.J.4. Understanding of the School's Financial Management Obligations

TACS is prepared to meet all financial management obligations and requirements as specified by NYS Education Law and implement guidelines given in the NYSED Fiscal Oversight Guidebook..

III J.5. Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Practices

TACS' CPA will ensure that all financial records are maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Annual financial audits will be conducted by an independent NYS CPA in accordance with GAAP, per the US Comptroller General. The Financial Committee will receive training on tactical and operational measures that will be essential in monitoring the school's fiscal health such as: analysis of revenue vs. expenses, cash flow analyses, cash reserves assessments, budgets, facilities and internal controls, accounting systems, audits, reporting, and financial management capacity.

III.J.6. Policies and Processes for Tracking Enrollment, Attendance, and Special Services

The Educational Technology/Media Specialist will train appropriate staff to use software, similar to other schools, for tracking student enrollment, attendance, and eligibility for free- and-reduced-price lunch (FRPL), special education services, and other services relating to state and federal entitlements and other grants. The school nurse will track enrollment and attendance. The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will monitor special education services. The Food Service manager will use a confidential system to track students eligible for FRPL. All data will be reported to the Head of School and Financial Team.

III.K. Budget and Cash Flow

III.K.1. Sound Budget and Fiscal Plan with Sufficient Start-Up Funds

TACS' budget and cash flow projections are sound and reflect a plan for long-term fiscal stability. The attached budget includes a reserve of over 10% in the 1st year growing to over 30% by year 5 with no financial deficiencies identified by annual audits. The start-up budget assumes receipt of the CSP grant of \$500,000. TACS will allocate \$120,000 to pre-opening

expenditures, \$350,000 for Year 1, and \$30,000 for Year 2. TACS has plans for fund-raising events and expects community donations prior to startup. Those numbers are conservative and the budget is not dependent on that income. After start-up funds have been expended, recurring per-pupil revenue will exceed the per-pupil expenses. Startup costs are also held low thanks to collaboration with the community center and volunteers who are preparing the school for student occupancy (see sub-section III.K.5., below, for an estimate of their value).

III.K.2. Budget Consistency with Mission, Educational Program, Staffing and Facility

The budget is aligned with the school's mission. For example, to support the STEM education key design element, TACS' budget includes significant expenses for technology and STEM curriculum materials. To support agricultural education, transportation will be funded to and from such learning sites as our partner farms and SUNY ESF's Heiberg Forest Field Laboratories. Generous allocations for educational supplies (e.g., rural life lab, testing, gardening) will help meet our educational goals. TACS will work with the R/E/D Group and Syracuse University to pursue additional funding through grants applicable to rural education, Project-Based Learning, STEM, ELL curriculum materials, and Next Generation Science Standards. We will contract for additional support staff if needs arise for special education students. Staff salaries are budgeted to accommodate additional base pay for dual certifications to help with special needs and language learners. TACS has aligned payroll costs with other charter schools in our area, resulting in lower anticipated costs than the average charter school, reflecting the region's moderate cost of living compared to other parts of state.⁴⁴

TACS' mission also calls for engaging community volunteers to a great extent to support library staffing, after-school educational programs, sports, music, drama, and other clubs.

III.K.3. Escrow Account

TACS has budgeted \$25,000 in each of the first three years for the establishment of an escrow account of no less than \$75,000 to pay for legal and audit expenses that would be associated with dissolution, should it occur.

III.K.4. Realistic, Evidence-Based Revenue and Expenditure Assumptions

The proposed budget reflects the size of the school/students anticipated. Because the school is located in a significantly rural and low populated area, TACS plans to have 80 students in grades K-4 the first year. A higher grade level will be added each year until the school has grades K-6 with a student enrollment of 140 in year 5. Expenditure assumptions reflect the understanding that the school building to be used is owned by the Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters, Inc., a 501c(3) formed in 2015. Their mission statement includes the support of local education and promotion of community. This aligns perfectly with TACS. The lease with Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters, Inc., allows TACS to lease additional space in the building, if needed, to accommodate the population, including the need to provide specialized services for students with disabilities.

⁴⁴ See, for example, cost of living comparisons at: http://www.bestplaces.net/state/new_york

III.K.5. Strategies for Meeting Budget/Cash Flow Challenges

The Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters (owners of the school building) purchased the school building to be used for education of the children and community. Part of their mission is the success of TACS. They have committed to keeping the lease payments flat for at least the first years. In addition, they are willing to consider a deferred lease in the startup up period, if necessary, to support the fiscal health of TACS. In addition, much of the furniture and building equipment needed in the school has already been acquired via donations. The entire first floor has been painted and restored by community members. The classrooms have been furnished with donated classroom desks and furnishings. The grounds and facility are maintained by community volunteers and/or donations. To date, these in-kind donations are estimated to have totaled **\$90,000**. This relationship, work done to date, and anticipated support moving forward will significantly reduce start-up and ongoing costs.

III.K.6. Commitment to Maintaining the Financial Viability of TACS

TACS enjoys significant community support for TACS, as seen in the formation of the Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters. Additionally, the TACS Board of Trustees is committed to the long-term financial viability of the school.

Table 9: Summary of Cost Benchmarks

	Administration	Instruction	Facilities	Total Budget
Year 1	\$153,000	\$331,500	\$170,700	\$1,485,531
Year 5	\$167,649	\$521,091	\$140,650	\$1,927,088
% of total budget Year 1 / Year 5	10% / 9%	23% / 27%	12% / 7%	

III.K.7. Sustainability Plan Beyond Start-Up and Understanding of Funding Environment

The facilities expenses for Year 1 and 5 are lower than the recommended rate of 15%. This gives TACS a significant advantage. The administration expense at Year 1 and 5 is around the standard of 10%. The instructional expense of 23% to 27% is below the standard of 55%; this will give TACS leeway to hire additional instructional staff as student demands warrant. TACS’ Board of Trustees understands the funding environment and NYS authorizer’s role for charter schools with the following school design and budget projections:

- Enrollment of 80 students in Year 1, 111 students in Year 2, and 140 students in Year 5.
- 1 teacher per 20 Students
- 50% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, based on demographic data
- 12% to 13% of students need special ed. services, based on district and regional data
- Conservative revenue projections with no changes in state or federal allocations
- Salary structure comparable to local charter schools
- % COLA adjustment low at start up, increased in later years.
- Annual escalation in educational materials, office supplies, technology needs and cost
- Lottery weighting for Free and Reduced Price Students
- ELL Teacher, Special Education Director, Special Education TA, and General Education TA

- Support from SUNY Morrisville’s Fish to Classroom, SUNY ESF Environmental Laboratories and Cornell Cooperative Extension Ag Programs and after school grant funded programs
- Syracuse University’s summer STEM program. (A successful trial of this program has been completed this summer at the building that will house TACS.)
- Community volunteerism for after school programs, clubs, gardens, animal husbandry, arts, and classroom assistance.
- Grant writing support via R/E/D Group and SU School of Education
- Experienced educators who will further our educational programs.
- Board Member Dr. Beth Shiner Klein, Professor of Science Education, Elementary Science Education and Environmental Studies, PBL, and co-directs the Teacher Professional Development Network of Central New York will help with student instruction development, staff development, and college level student teachers to help our teachers.
- Laura Payne Bourcy, R/E/D Group with experience in rural education and grant funding.

Our budget was developed and prepared by the TACS financial committee, working hand-in-hand with other Founders and community members. The budget has been reviewed by Charter School Business Management Inc, 237 West 35th St, Suite 301, NY, NY. The 5-year budget plan shows a positive operating income each year, with a narrowed net income in year 4 solely due to proposed construction of outbuildings on the TACS campus. TACS will be applying for grant support for these expenses. Additionally, we expect significant volunteer help constructing the outbuildings. During the initial charter period, TACS will have a positive fund balance that grows each year.

III.L. Pre-Opening Plan

The pre-opening plan below summarizes tasks to be completed prior to opening in August 2017. TACS has drafted a far more comprehensive spreadsheet that can be sorted by date, committee/topic, or responsible party. The leadership team will continuously monitor and update this plan, incorporating lessons learned from other charter schools’ start-up experiences. TACS has already: held 12 monthly Board of Trustees meetings in order to organize as a functioning entity, selected and installed Trustees, established a schedule of monthly BOT meetings and developed and expanded the Founder’s Group to assist in community outreach; created committees and assigned chairs to address specific charter school criteria; prepared proposed bylaws for a 501(c)(3) and Code of Ethics for approval; and assisted in raising funds to purchase the vacant elementary school building in Truxton.

Table 10: Pre-Opening Plan

Task	Start / End	Person(s) Responsible ⁴⁵	Description
Governance, Policy and Compliance			

⁴⁵ Key: ALT = Academic Leadership Team; AST=Academic Support Team; BF=Budget & Finance; BOT=Board of Trustees; FG = Founders Group; SA School Administrator; SC=Staffing Committee.

Board Meeting	Nov-16/ Nov-16	BOT	Hold Board of Trustees Meeting: elect officers, confirm meeting schedule and committees for the remaining Pre-Opening tasks
Bylaws, Code of Ethics, Policy Manuals	Nov-16/ Nov-16	BOT	Adopt bylaws, code of ethics and policy manuals.
Obtain EIN and 501c3 Status	Nov-16/ Nov-16	BOT	File for employer identification number and 501(c)(3) status
Fiscal Policy and Procedures	Nov-16/ Dec-16	BOT	Finalize fiscal policy and procedures, research and hire accounting firm
Building and Facility			
Facility Needs	Mar-17/ Jul-17	SA	Determine and meet the needs for building improvements, classroom furniture, accessories, technology and equipment as well as administrative, cafeteria and security
Instruction			
School Calendar and Curriculum	Nov-16/ Jan-17	SA	Review and finalize
Teacher Institute	Aug-17/ Aug-17	SA	Conduct staff orientation and professional development
Staffing			
Hiring Personnel	Nov-16/ May-17	BOT/ SC	The BOT will form a staffing committee to define and meet staffing needs, advertise, recruit and interview for open positions.
Finalize Candidates for Hire	May-17/ Jun-17	SC/ BOT	Staffing Committee propose candidates to BOT for hire, conduct background checks and fingerprinting requirements
Enrollment			
Admissions and Enrollment	Nov-16/ Jan-17	BOT	Comprehensive policies for admissions, enrollment and attendance must be drafted
Marketing and Advertising	Nov-16/ Aug-17	SC/ BOT	Marketing and advertising will continue to ensure adequate enrollment
Conduct the Lottery	Apr-17/ Apr-17	SA	Conduct the lottery and notify parents and guardians of results
Application and Admission Summary	Apr-17/ May-17	SA	Complete summary form available at NY Charter Schools
Business and Finance			
Establish Financial System	Jan-17/ Jan-17	BF	Establish financial system including payroll
Finalize and Present Budget	Jan-17/ May-17	BOT / SA /BF	Review, revise and approve 2017-2018 budget
Curriculum	End		

Scope and sequences	Apr-17/ Apr-17	ALT	Complete Year 1 scope and sequence for gr. K-4
Year 1 module/unit plan	May-17/ May-17	ALT	Complete year 1 module/units of study level curriculum plan including performance tests, rubrics and resource guides aligned to NYCCLS, identify Year 1 external assessments.
Place orders	Jun-17/ Jun-17	BF	Purchase and receive curriculum materials

III.M. Dissolution Plan

TACS will adopt and implement a dissolution plan that complies with New York State Law §2854(2)(t), 219 & 220 and any closing procedures specified by the NYSED. The Board will inform the public and establish a Dissolution committee to effectively and efficiently implement the plan. The committee may be made up of a Board Finance Committee Member and the administrative assistant. The Head of School and committee will work cooperatively with NYSED by providing the information needed for the transition process; and oversee and organize the transfer of students and student records, including Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), student health and immunization records, attendance records, and report cards. Prior to dissolution, the school will conduct a series of meetings for parents to support them in making decisions regarding selection of educational programs for their children, including Homer Central School District or other home school districts, Charter Schools, and non-public schools.

The Board will designate one trustee and one school employee to oversee the closing of the school from an operational and financial perspective. After an employee termination date is established, the school will notify all staff of termination of employment and/or contracts, and notify benefit providers of pending termination. Employees will be notified of eligibility for New York State Unemployment Insurance pursuant to any regulations of the New York State Department of Labor. The dissolution plan will provide that all property which the school has leased, borrowed, or contracted for use will be returned. The return of such property will conform with contractual prearrangement, where applicable, or will be done with reasonable promptness. The school will accumulate a reserve fund of \$75,000 by setting aside \$25,000 each year for the first three years of operation to cover debts in the case of the school’s dissolution. In the event of dissolution, assets in excess of those necessary to meet liabilities, shall be transferred to another NY State charter school, school district or not-for-profit as designated by the Board and within congruence with statute.

TACS has drafted a detailed dissolution timeline:

Within the first 10 days

- A Dissolution Committee will be established by the Head of school and the Board.
- TACS will deliver an enrolled student list to NYSED, and any other home districts of enrolled students, or non-public schools.
- The Head of School and Board of Trustees will discuss with NYSED and the districts in which scholars reside regarding openings and availability for scholars being displaced by dissolution.
- The Director or Head of School will begin to work with vendors to settle outstanding financial obligations. In addition, he/she will contact all major vendors and inform them of the closure

plans.

- The Head of School and the Board of Trustees Finance committee Chair will conduct a meeting with the auditor to begin a process for producing financial statements pertinent to the closure and establish a preliminary process for identifying assets required for transfer.
- The Head of the School will prepare a checklist for school closure.
- The Head of School and Academic Directors will notify all parents and staff in writing of the ensuing closure. Placement plans and options will also be addressed in writing.
- The Head of School and Academic Directors will meet with students and share information about the ensuing closure and the placement process.
- A series of information sessions for families and students about other school opportunities and assistance will be provided.
- The school will distribute all official closure information through its maintained website and make it available to the media.

Days 11-20

- Staff will meet with each student and their parents to determine placement options.
- Staff will prepare written reports about individual meetings to the Head of School.
- A Finance update will be provided to the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee on current vendors and services, including but not limited to, balances remaining and service discontinuation time line.

Days 20-30

- TACS staff will continue to meet with each student and their parents to determine placement options. Placement meetings will be completed within this time frame.
- The Head of School and Academic Staff will prepare a complete report on placement efforts to the Board of Trustees leadership.
- The school will transfer student records to the home districts, or schools where a student will now be enrolled.
- Parents of the enrolled students will be informed of the transfer of student records and will be provided a copy.
- The Head of School will prepare an updated report for the Board Finance Committee on current vendors and services, including but not limited to, balances remaining and service discontinuation time line. Any financial obligations in existence at Day 30 will be documented along with time line for resolution of outstanding debts.

Days 30-120

- TACS staff continues to manage the closing of the financial records and resolution of outstanding obligations, as well as any other outstanding issues.
- Upon closure of financial records, the audit firm will complete a final audit and report to the Board of Trustees.
- Available assets after all debts have been met will then be distributed to the identified beneficiary. Expediency will be prioritized during this phase of the dissolution process, but the 120 day time frame reflects that some items, particularly of a financial nature, may not be completely resolved immediately following the closure.

I.C. Attachment 1

Truxton Academy Charter School Admissions Policy and Procedures

Enrollment Applications

Families interested in enrolling a child at Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) will be required to submit a TACS Enrollment Application. To provide for nondiscriminatory application availability, applications will be available, at a minimum, at parent information sessions, for pick-up at the school, and on the school's website. Families are encouraged to visit the school, talk to instructional, administrative, and other staff, visit classes, and meet currently enrolled students when making the decision about enrolling their children. Every effort will be made to assist families with language or other barriers in completing the application including providing a Spanish version for ELL families. 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. TACS will not impose any arbitrary requirements for application beyond completion of the one-page TACS application. 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. TACS welcomes all students, including those with disabilities, ELL learners and students eligible for FRLP, to enroll in the charter school.

Enrollment Eligibility

Only applicants living in New York State may apply for, enroll in, or attend the school, and all New York State residents are so entitled. Compliance with Applicable Laws: As a public school, TACS will be open to children who are eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school. The school will follow all applicable State and Federal laws in admitting students. The Truxton Academy Charter School will not discriminate on the basis of, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs or activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The President of the TACS Board of Trustees will be designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies.

A child will be eligible for initial admission to the school for kindergarten if the child reaches the age of five years old on or before December 31st. All students admitted as provided above will be required to submit completed enrollment forms and information by the date specified in the notice of admission. Wait-listed students will complete enrollment forms upon selection for admission. An admitted student will be subject to the forfeiture of his or her right to enroll or remain on the waiting list if the enrollment form 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 the school's admissions policy and the procedures thereunder, or to be placed on the waitlist in the same manner as a late application. TACS 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 TACS) in order to promote and ensure contemplated enrollment in each grade at the school so the school may best execute its programs, serve its student body, and achieve its mission. The intentional provision of untruthful information at application, admission, or enrollment will entitle the school to permanently exclude the child from the school, even if the student was admitted, enrolled, or permitted to attend.

Preferences Regarding Intent to Enroll

The school will give preferences to the following pupils, in the following order of priority:

- to pupils returning to TACS in its second and subsequent years of operation,
- to the siblings of enrolled pupils,
- to all pupils who live within the Homer Central School District
- to pupils, self-identified, as a student with disabilities, English language learner, and/or qualify for free or reduced price lunch, and
- children of employees of the charter school or of a charter management organization limited to 15% of the charter school total enrollment.

In order to confirm the intent to maintain enrollment, the school will send an Intent-to-Return letter home to parents of all current students before the lottery every school year. The letter requests written confirmation that the child will return to TACS the following school year and indicates that the signed form must be returned in order for the school to hold a seat for the student. After these reasonable efforts to contact the family to confirm enrollment, the school may elect not to enroll students who have not confirmed.

Waiting lists will not be carried over from year to year.

The school may send an application or other information directly to families who have previously applied.

Deadlines

Applications will clearly state the enrollment deadline. It is the policy of TACS to encourage and support the development and strength of its student and family community as far in advance of new student enrollment deadline as practically possible. TACS believes the early establishment of the home/school relationship will contribute to the academic success of its students and the school's achievement of its mission. The application deadline will be March 1st for the following school year.

Lottery and Other Admission Procedures and Waitlist

If TACS has more applicants than available classroom space, it will select students (from among qualified applicants) using a random selection method, a public lottery. If there are fewer applicants for a grade than there are places available in the grade, all applicants will be admitted to the grade on the date the lottery was to have been held.

The random selection lottery will be open to the public. The school will notify all applicants of the time and place, which will generally be between **April 2 and April 15**,

subject to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the school. Names will be drawn until all available classroom positions have been filled. Any remaining names will be drawn to establish waiting lists to be used to fill openings during the school year for which the student applied. After all eligible names have been drawn, the school will add the names of applicants who submitted applications after the 5:00 PM deadline on April 1st. All post-deadline applicants will be added in the order in which they are received. As spaces become available, TACS will make enrollment offers in the order of placement on the waiting list.

Lotteries for all grades for an academic year are expected to be conducted on the same day and will be publicized in a manner consistent with the requirements of Section 104 of the Public Officers Law and will be open to the public. Lotteries are expected to be conducted from highest grade to lowest grade for each year. Families of students admitted or waitlisted as provided above will be notified in writing. Openings for places in a grade after the admission and enrollment processes are complete will be backfilled based on the waitlist order.

The drawing of the name of an applicant will be deemed the drawing of the name of the applicant's siblings participating in the lottery for the same grade or a lower grade, as long as there are places available in the siblings' respective desired grades when the applicant's name is drawn, or will entitle the siblings to the next places on the waitlist for the desired grade. However, TACS will have the right, but not the obligation, to add places in a grade on a nondiscriminatory basis in compliance with applicable laws for a sibling under these circumstances, even if the grade is otherwise closed. Filling classroom vacancies that remain or occur beyond March 1 of a given year will be addressed by the Head of School in conjunction with the Board of Trustees on a student by student basis, but are generally discouraged.

As of the date of its application for a charter, it is the policy of the school to admit new students to the school in kindergarten through fourth grade for the first year of operation. For the second year of operation, applications will be accepted from kindergarten through fifth grade. For the third year of operation, applications will be accepted through sixth grade. The school may choose to accept more students in a given year to account for attrition over time. Families are encouraged to visit the school, talk to instructional, administrative, and other staff, visit classes, and meet currently enrolled students making the decision about enrolling their children.

Student Transfer and/or Withdrawal Procedures

TACS is a public school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. At any time, a parent or guardian may transfer their child to a different school. A parent or guardian wishing to withdraw his/her child from TACS will be asked to complete a request for student withdrawal form. TACS personnel will meet with the family and discuss their reasons for withdrawing from TACS, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that are apprised from these discussions. Upon request from the new school, TACS will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school.

Table 2: Public Outreach Information

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
09/28/14	Information booth with info on proposed Charter School	Truxton Town Park	Families with children and community residents	Questions about a charter school and how it would operate	Planned further informational activities	75
10/19/14	School Forum	Truxton Town Hall	Families and community residents	Need for further outreach regarding charter school	Planned further outreach	15
12/3/14	Hartnett Community Forum	Homer Center for the Arts, Homer, NY	Families and residents in Homer, Cortland, and Truxton	Options utilizing Hartnett School including starting a Charter School	Focus on pursuing a charter school as most viable option	120
12/22/14	Seeking community input on educational options	Truxton Fire Station, Truxton, NY	Families and community residents	Community voted to pursue creation of a Charter School in Truxton	TACS Board of Trustees created and community members recruited	60
1/21/15	Special Meeting with Homer CSD BOE & community	Hartnett School, Truxton, NY	Homer CSD Board of Ed and Truxton Community	Homer BOE had no interest in a conversion charter school	TACS Board moved forward to create a charter school	45
1/30/15	Parent Survey on local education	Hartnett School Facebook Page Social Media	Parent input on local education	Parents looking for educational choices	Used to develop educational model	12-15
4/18/15	Information Booth at Plow Day Celebration	East Homer Grange/Church	Families and community residents	New volunteers to support TACS efforts	Increased interest in pursuing creation of Charter School	80
4/19/15	Official TACS website and Facebook page launched	Internet	Families and educators in extended Central NY area	Steady increase in enrollment and questions about TACS	Expanded information translated in Spanish to ELL families	250

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
5/9/15	TACS fliers distributed house to house in Truxton area	Truxton rural area and village of Homer, NY	Homer Central School District families and taxpayers	Generally positive support for creating the Charter School in Truxton	Expanded area support for the Charter School	300
5/12/15	Direct mail campaign explaining proposed Charter School	Truxton and East Homer Mail Delivery	Families and residents	Increased completed enrollment forms from families	Confirmed community interest in pursuing TACS	2260
5/25/15	Fliers distributed with Memorial Day Parade float	Truxton, NY	Families and residents in the Truxton area	Continued interest in the Charter School	Confirmed community interest in TACS	45
5/29/15	Meeting with Senator Seward	Oneonta, NY	Legislative support	Received letter of support from Senator Seward	Continued efforts to reach other legislators	4
6/2/15	Circulated TACS fliers at Dairy Parade	Cortland, NY	Cortland County residents	Raised awareness of Charter School efforts	Need to continue outreach efforts	100
6/6/15	Community Barn Dance	Forest Lake Campground, Truxton, NY	Families and community residents	High interest in continuing to develop a Charter School	Funds raised to help advertise TACS	150
6/13/15	Hartnett School Carnival Information Booth	McGraw Field, Truxton, NY	Homer School District families and community residents	Specific requests for including agriculture, the arts and physical education in TACS curriculum	Included requested curriculum areas in Charter School design	50
7/7/15	Cortland County Junior Fair Children's Activities & Information Booth	Cortland Fairgrounds, Cortland, NY	Cortland and Homer families and legislators	Positive responses from local and state legislators	Encouraged further dialogue between legislators and Homer School District	60
7/31/15	Meeting with Truxton Town Board & Homer School District to strengthen relationship with TACS efforts	Homer Central School District Office Homer, NY	Truxton Town Board & Homer Central School District	Homer School District was committed to disposing of the Hartnett School building in Truxton, NY	Truxton Town Board and TACS committed to acquiring Hartnett School building for the Charter School	8

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
8/03, 8/10, 8/17, and 8/24/15	Summer Recess Activities for Children	Hartnett School Playground, Truxton, NY	Local families with children	Need for more advertising and information	Increased posting of events and activities using websites & signs	8-10
9/12/15	Tully Community Fair and Parade – Information Booth & Float	Tully, NY	Families with children in the extended Charter School area	Residents requested inclusion of the arts and Spanish in the curriculum	Explored and included Spanish and the arts in our TACS elementary curriculum	25
9/16/15	Meeting with academic resource people	Truxton Church, Truxton, NY	SUNY Cortland Professor and Ithaca Charter School teacher	Encouraged Project-Based Learning & administrative guidance	Confirmed inclusion of Project-Based Learning in curriculum	5
9/27/15	Information Booth, Petting Zoo, Youth Activities	Harvest Fest McGraw Field Truxton, NY	Families with children and community residents	330 residents signed a petition in support of the Charter School	Confirmed community support for the Charter School	400
10/7, 10/14, 10/20, 10/26/15	Meet/Greet with Area School Board Members- Presentation on proposed TACS	McGraw, DeRuyter, Fabius-Pompey, Tully, NY	School Board Members in neighboring School Districts	Respectful responses and questions regarding TACS	Set community meetings in each location for further outreach	10-15/meeting = 40-60 total
10/14, 10/15, 10/21, 10/27/15	Informational meetings in adjacent school districts	McGraw, DeRuyter, Fabius-Pompey, Tully, NY	Families of young children and community residents	Negligible attendance	Learned the challenges of publicizing activities in our rural area	12
10/17/15	Taste and Toast Fundraiser & Information Event	Labrador Mountain, Truxton, NY	Truxton Alumni and Community Residents	Positive encouragement and financial support for obtaining Hartnett School and creating TACS	Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters purchased Hartnett School on 10/29/15 to house the Charter School	300

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
11/04/15	Visit and tour of Finn Academy Charter School	Elmira, NY	TACS Board and Applicant Group	Met with Head of School who shared the importance of community feedback and documentation	TACS Board and Applicant Group increased community outreach and continued Work on Full Proposal	6
12/14/15	Truxton Community Meeting	Truxton Fire House, Truxton, NY	Community residents and area families	Positive support for project-based learning, Spanish and agriculture and environment in curriculum.	Clarified and included physical education, the performing arts and enrichment in the curriculum	45
12/16/15	Meeting at SUNY ESF	SUNY ESF Campus, Syracuse, NY	Academic resources and support	Discussed educational needs and proposed academic partnership	Agreed to create an Academic Advisory Panel for the Truxton Academy Charter School	10
1/20/16	Onsite visit to area farms employing Hispanic workers	Livestock farms in a 10-mile radius of Truxton, NY	Spanish-speaking families with children	Thirteen livestock farms employ Hispanic workers with 19 children 8 years and younger	Confirmed support for including Spanish in TACS key design elements	15
1/27/16	Began Facebook campaign-asked questions on school culture, school day, uniforms, etc.	Social Media - Facebook	Parents, families and community members	Uniforms not desired Length of school day – mixed responses After School activities desired	TACS will not have uniforms, will continue to develop After School choices	12-15
2/21/16	Onsite visit to Hartnett School by Assemblywoman Claudia Tenney	Hartnett School, Truxton, NY	Truxton Town Board and TACS Applicant Group	Positive feedback from Ms. Tenney on building, need for educational choice in rural areas	Received a letter of support from Ms. Tenney and encouragement to continue our efforts for TACS	10

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
2/23/16	Presentation to Cortland Enlarged School District BOE	Cortland, NY	Cortland Board of Education members	Respectful response about TACS	Will keep Cortland BOE informed about status of TACS	12
3/23/16	Organizational Meeting for Academic Advisory Panel at SUNY ESF	SUNY ESF Campus, Syracuse, NY	SUNY ESF SUNY Cortland Syracuse Univ. R.E.D. Group Cornell Coop Extension	Formally organized the Academic Advisory Panel as a Partner with TACS	Discussed scope of student-related projects and benefits to TACS's curriculum	10
4/2/16	Open House at Truxton Community Center (formerly Hartnett School)	Truxton, NY	Families and Community Residents	Positive response from attendees on the condition of the building	Encouragement for the TACS Applicant Group creating the Charter School	30
4/29/16	Tour of Walton 21 st Century Rural Life Center and Meeting with Principal	Walton Charter School in Walton, Kansas	TACS Board of Trustees and Applicant Group	Positive specific feedback on a rural, ag-focused, Charter School	Helpful ideas, observations for the Rural Life Lab and curriculum	6
5/4/16	Visit to SUNY Morrisville	Morrisville, NY	TACS Board of Trustees & TACS students	SUNY Morrisville will provide Trout in the Classroom Program	Established a cooperative relationship and resources with SUNY Morrisville	8
5/30/16	Fliers distributed with Memorial Day Parade float	Truxton, NY	Families and residents in the Truxton area	Positive participation by children and families	Confirmed continued community interest in TACS	80
6/7/16	Circulated fliers at Dairy Parade & sponsored float	Cortland, NY	Cortland County residents	Informed on progress of Charter School	Need to continue to share unique curriculum	400
6/29/16	Information Table at Vacation Bible School	Truxton, NY	Families from Tully, East Homer, Truxton, Cuyler & DeRuyter	Shared info and distributed Prospective Enrollment Forms	Collected prospective enrollment forms	35-40 families

Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Target Stakeholder Group	Feedback Obtained	Action Taken on Feedback	Number of Attendees
7/6/16	Information Table at Cortland County Junior Fair	Cortland, NY	Cortland County residents	Informed of progress of proposed charter school and distributed information and prospective enrollment forms	Confirmed continued community interest in TACS	125
8/2-8/12/16	Syracuse University Science Education Class	TACS, Truxton, NY	SU Students & Community Children	Positive participation by SU & Community children	Confirmed Community and Academic Advisory Panel interest in TACS	22
8/14/16	Information Booth at DeRuyter Field Days	DeRuyter, NY	Families and residents from DeRuyter and surrounding area	Positive participation by children and families and informed on progress of Charter School	Confirmed continued community interest in TACS	65

Historical Sequence of Events in Forming Truxton Academy Charter School

Date	Event, Location, Purpose
07/19/14	Truxton Community Picnic - John J. McGraw Field, Truxton, NY - Information Booth - discussed education options with parents and community members
09/01/14	Education Option Questionnaire mailed to Truxton residents
09/28/14	Truxton Harvest Fest - Information Booth provided info on proposed charter school and other educational options with parents and community members
10/01/14	Organizational Meeting at 7738 Shackam Rd - discussing school design and focus
10/05/14	Hartnett Community Meeting - discussion about proposed charter school
10/19/14	Hartnett School Forum - Truxton Town Hall - discussion with community residents
10/15/14	Organizational Meeting at 7738 Shackam Rd - discussing school design and focus
10/29/14	Organizational Meeting at 7738 Shackam Rd - discussing school design and focus
12/03/14	Hartnett Community Forum - Homer, NY - presentation on TACS and received feedback from community
12/18/14	Organizational Meeting at Truxton Methodist Church - discussing school design and focus
12/22/14	Community Input Meeting at Truxton fire station - discussing education options and collecting feedback from community members
01/01/15	Organizational Meeting at 6083 Hights Gulf Rd - discussing community meeting and moving forward on proposed charter school
01/05/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
01/12/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
01/21/15	Special presentation about proposed charter school to Homer Central School District BOE and community - 6337 Academy St Truxton, NY
01/30/15	Online Charter School Survey to Community - Feedback collected for use in school design and curriculum focus
02/10/15	Formal Letter mailed to HCSD BOE informing of proposed charter school and submission of Letter of Intent to NYSED
02/06/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
02/11/15	LOI - submitted to NYSED
03/10/15	Email regarding Meeting previous week – committees decided LOI decision discussed
03/17/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
03/28/15	Organizational Meeting - New Penn Farm office, 5493 Cheningo Rd, Truxton
04/07/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
04/18/15	East Homer Plow Days - East Homer, NY - Chili Cookoff by community members representing Truxton Academy Charter School as a fundraising and community outreach event.
04/18/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building Outside Pavillion - organization meeting (open to the public)
04/19/15	TACS website and Facebook page launched - provides information about proposed & contact information for feedback from the community
04/28/15	Fundraising Committee Meeting - planning summer fundraising and community outreach event
05/05/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)

Historical Sequence of Events in Forming Truxton Academy Charter School

Date	Event, Location, Purpose
05/09/15	Information distributed house to house in Truxton area regarding proposed charter school & received feedback from local community residents
05/12/15	Direct Mail Campaign explaining proposed charter school and soliciting input mailed to Truxton and surrounding communities
05/19/15	Visited Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School to learn information about that School and request feedback on our proposed charter school
05/19/15	Homer Central School District BOE Meeting - community members elected 2 candidates to the who support the proposed charter
05/19/15	TACS Board Meeting -New Penn Farm office, 5493 Cheningo Rd, Truxton - organization meeting (open to the public)
05/25/15	Memorial Day Parade Float and celebration in the Truxton community, provided info on TACS and gained feedback from local residents
05/29/15	Meeting with Senator Seward, Oneonta, NY to provide info on proposed TACS and request feedback
06/02/15	Cortland Dairy Parade, Cortland, NY - marched with prospective students and circulated flyers to provide info on proposed charter
06/03/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
06/06/15	Community Barn Dance - Forest Lake Campground, Truxton, NY - fundraising and informational event - received support and feedback from community members
06/08/15	Charter Team meeting- prepare for 2nd LOI submittal
06/13/15	Hartnett School Carnival, John J. McGraw Field, Truxton, NY -Information Booth - shared information on proposed charter school and received feedback from attendees
06/15/15	Charter Team meeting- prepare for 2nd LOI submittal
06/19/15	2nd Letter of Intent - submitted to NYSED
06/20/16	Meeting with Caitlin Tufts and Becky Perkins at Haylor Freyer and Coon, Inc., Syracuse, NY - discussed benefit plan options for TACS
07/06/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public) - discuss LOI denial by NYSED and plan for future.
07/07/15	Cortland County Junior Fair, Cortland, NY - Information Booth - provided information on TACS and received support and feedback from area residents
07/15/15	Organizational Meeting - 7738 Shackam Rd, Truxton - meeting with local teachers to gain feedback on TACS's proposed curriculum
07/22/15	Organizational Meeting - New Penn Farm office, 5493 Cheningo Rd, Truxton
07/30/15	Organizational Meeting - preparation for meeting with Homer Central School District administration
07/31/15	Joint meeting with Truxton Town Board Members and HCSD administration to discuss the proposed charter school and the Hartnett Elementary Building
08/03/15	Truxton Summer Recess - Hartnett Elementary Playground, Truxton, NY - Pizza Party with kids and parents - solicited feedback from parents while kids played
08/03/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
08/10/15	Meeting with Syracuse University professor to solicit feedback on proposed Charter School curriculum and proposal

Historical Sequence of Events in Forming Truxton Academy Charter School

Date	Event, Location, Purpose
08/10/15	Truxton Summer Recess - Hartnett Elementary Playground, Truxton, NY - String Rocket Party with kids and parents - solicited feedback from parents while kids played
08/17/15	Truxton Summer Recess - Hartnett Elementary Playground, Truxton, NY - Painting Party - solicited feedback from parents while kids played
08/20/15	Meeting with Truxton Town Board regarding the possibility of obtaining Hartnett School for the location of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School
08/24/15	Truxton Summer Recess - Hartnett Elementary Playground, Truxton, NY - Ice Cream Social with kids and parents - solicited feedback from parents while kids played
08/24/15	Meeting with Syracuse University professor to solicit feedback on proposed Charter School curriculum and proposal
09/12/15	Tully Community Fair, Tully, NY – Information Booth and float in parade - provided information on proposed TACS and received feedback from community
09/14/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public) - discuss LOI denial by NYSED and plan for future.
09/16/15	Meeting with SUNY Cortland professor and Ithaca Charter School founder - Truxton Methodist Church - to request feedback on proposed TACS curriculum and proposal
09/27/15	Harvest Fest, John J. McGraw Field, Truxton, NY - Information Booth - provided info on proposed TACS & requested feedback from community residents - 330 residents signed a petition to support the Truxton Academy Charter School
10/05/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
10/07/15	McGraw School Board of Education Meeting, McGraw High School - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/14/15	McGraw Community Meeting, McGraw Community Center - follow up to BOE meeting - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/14/15	DeRuyter School Board Meeting, DeRuyter High School - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/15/15	DeRuyter Community Meeting, Parish House - follow up to BOE meeting - introduced proposed TACS information & requested
10/17/15	Taste & Toast Truxton Fundraiser - Labrador Mountain, Truxton, NY - fundraising and informational event - received support and feedback from community members
10/20/15	Fabius Pompey School Board Meeting, Fabius High School - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/21/15	Fabius Pompey Community Meeting, Fabius Community Center - follow up to BOE meeting - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/25/15	Phone Bank, Truxton, NY - contacted Truxton Alumni - received a great deal of positive feedback for proposed TACS and support for purchasing the Hartnett School building for TACS eventual location
10/26/15	Tully School Board Meeting, Tully High School - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/27/15	Tully Community Meeting, Tully Free Library - follow up to BOE meeting - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
10/29/15	Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc. purchased Hartnett School in Truxton, NY - intended location for proposed TACS and Truxton Community Center

Historical Sequence of Events in Forming Truxton Academy Charter School

Date	Event, Location, Purpose
11/02/15	Meeting with local teachers, received feedback on TACS Academic Success portion of SUNY Charter School Institute Proposal
11/02/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
11/04/15	Visit to Finn Academy Charter School, Elmira, NY -visit to gain information on their charter school and solicit feedback on our proposed charter school
11/08/15	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
11/14/15	Meeting with local teachers, received feedback on TACS Academic Success portion of SUNY Charter Schools Institute Proposal
11/15/15	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
11/16/15	Byrne Dairy Corporation, Cortland, NY - tour of facility and meeting with Quality Control Administrator - discussed agri-business educational needs and partnership with proposed TACS
11/21/15	Meeting with local teachers, received feedback on TACS Academic Success portion of SUNY Charter Schools Institute Proposal
11/22/15	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
11/30/15	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
12/07/15	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
12/14/15	Truxton Community Input Meeting - Truxton Fire Department, Truxton, NY - to solicit specific feedback from parents and community members for proposed curriculum and school design for TACS
12/16/15	Meeting at SUNY ESF with Dr. Spuches, Assistant to the President - discussed educational needs and partnership with proposed TACS
01/03/16	Conference call with Ellen Eagan from OnTech High proposed Charter School - soliciting input on our proposed school design and curriculum
01/04/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building - organization meeting (open to the public)
01/11/16	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
01/15/16	Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc. closed on former Hartnett Elementary Building, 6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY - our location is secured
01/17/16	Meeting with Ellen Eagan from OnTech High proposed Charter School - soliciting feedback on our Letter of Intent
01/25/16	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Municipal Building, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
01/27/16	Began Facebook campaign - asking series of specific questions on school culture and curriculum i.e. uniforms, extended day, following school districts' calendars, etc. (ongoing)
02/01/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)

Historical Sequence of Events in Forming Truxton Academy Charter School

Date	Event, Location, Purpose
02/08/16	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
02/09/16	Meeting with Ray & Co - received quote for Payroll services
02/15/16	Proposal Committee Meeting - Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY - to solicit feedback and discuss Proposal for Truxton Academy Charter School
02/21/16	Onsite visit with Assemblywoman Claudia Tenney - 6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY - asked about our progress and direction and offered her support
02/23/16	Cortland Enlarged School District BOE Meeting, Cortland High School - introduced proposed TACS information & requested feedback
03/06/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
03/08/16	Meeting with Neal Kerling, CPA - to discuss finance and accounting.
03/23/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
04/02/16	Truxton Community Center Open House - Truxton, NY - Public Event to Tour the building and discuss future home of TACS
04/11/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
04/29/16	Visit to Walton 21st Century Rural Life Center, Walton, KS - met with school leaders and toured facility
05/02/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
05/04/16	Visit to SUNY Morrisville - Morrisville, NY - discussed educational needs and partnership with proposed TACS
05/30/16	Memorial Day Parade Float and celebration in the Truxton community, provided info on TACS and gained feedback from local residents
06/06/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
06/07/16	Cortland Dairy Parade, Cortland, NY - marched with prospective students and circulated flyers to provide info on proposed charter school
07/09/16	Meeting with Alexis Hammack, Director of Math Curriculum at Coney Island Preparatory Charter School
07/11/16	TACS Academic Advisory Panel Meeting - SUNY ESF, Syracuse, NY
08/01/16	TACS Board Meeting - Truxton Community Center - organization meeting (open to the public)
08/02/16- 08/12/16	Syracuse University Graduate Course "Curriculum Problems in Science" - Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY - course concludes with a one day summer science camp for children grades 4th thru 7th. Introduced parents to PBL/STEM course and solicited feedback.
8/8/2016	Letter sent to HCSD Superintendent to establish a positive, professional working relationship.
8/13/2016	DeRuyter Field Days and Parade, DeRuyter, NY - info booth provided update on proposed charter school to community members - parade was cancelled due to weather.

OUR COMMUNITY. OUR SCHOOL. OUR FUTURE

WHAT'S NEXT?

PLEASE ATTEND A COMMUNITY MEETING AT THE
TRUXTON FIRE STATION

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22ND AT 7PM

SHARE IDEAS FOR THE
EDUCATIONAL FUTURE OF OUR
CHILDREN

TRUXTON FIRE STATION
MONDAY, DECEMBER 22ND AT 7PM

Truxton School Community Meeting
December 22, 2014

Number attending: 50 +/-
Truxton Fire Hall

Presenters: Jeannetta Lauder milk, Victor Siegle, Krysta Austin

Agenda:

Welcome and congratulations on the successful District vote which defeated the bond initiative to bring New Tech High School to Truxton (Hartnett Ele. School). Also, sincere thanks to all who made it possible with signs, mailings, editorials etc. We were reminded of the effectiveness of being united as a community in order to keep our elementary school here in Truxton.

What's Next?:

Jeannetta presented her power point presentation describing the educational options that have been put forward with pros and cons of each. Questions and comments were encouraged as each option was represented. She also shared the video from the Walton Agricultural Charter School and comments and observations were shared again.

New Tech Ele. School:

Krysta explained New Tech Ele. School without BOCES involvement or support. We would have to enter into a 4-year contract with the organization and it would take that long to fully implement their program, She also pointed out that the New Tech organization expects the school to follow their educational model and we would be paying them \$100,000 a year to run this program in Truxton.

Lots of Choices:

Victor shared some background on anticipated income from the state for local school districts again dismissing the HSD's argument that it was necessary to close Hartnett Ele. in order to save the district needed money for other programs.

He then presented an extensive spread sheet of many known and new choices as options for the education of Truxton students. With each item (copy attached) he assessed how the different effected entities might react to each option. This inspired much more conversation, observations and questions.

New Tech Ele., a private school, home-school co-op, and charter schools were especially of interest with many questions. A detailed explanation of the options just with the charter school model with upcoming deadlines, funding and overall process with local control were highlighted. The difference between converting the existing school or starting a completely new school would be determined by the support or non-support of the HSD. The proposal process can be greatly speeded up by copying a successful charter school plan such as the Walton School proposal.

Conclusions:

- We need to find out the present cost of operating the Hartnett School.
- As a community we need to maintain a united front as we proceed with the necessary upcoming conversations the the HSD.
- We need to determine how the busing of children would proceed especially if we are forced to separate from the HSD.
- Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe was appreciative of the options offered and shared how important our efforts are not only for our children but the future of the Town of Truxton as well.
- Victor shared a letter to be sent to the HSD at their next mtg. on Jan 13 to initiate communication with the board following the Dec. bond vote. He asked that as many signatures as possible be attached to show determined effort to resolve this issue and a continued united front from the community.
- A group name for all of those involved was proposed by Jim Denkenberger. **Forum for the Future** will be considered by the group.
- New boiler for Truxton is estimated to cost \$200,000 instead of the 1.5 million budgeted by the HSD and BOCES.
- The next community meeting was set for Jan. 5, 6:30 pm at the Town Depot.

Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters
and Truxton Academy Charter School

Invite you to join us for
a **Truxton Community Meeting**

Let's talk ideas!



Come for an update on the sale of the building and the charter school application process. The groups hosting the meeting are looking for your ideas and input for the future of our community.

Monday, December 14, 2015

7pm @ the Truxton Fire Department
3741 Route 13, Truxton, NY

For more information, visit us on Facebook  or call 607-745-5482 or email truxtonacademy@gmail.com.

truxtonalumniandcommunitysupporters.org • truxtonacademycharterschool.org

Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc.

Truxton Community Input Meeting Agenda

December 14, 2015 @ 7pm

Handouts

- Fact sheet for Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc.
- Fact sheet for Truxton Academy Charter School
- Charter School Community input survey form

Schedule

- **7:00 pm**
Greeting and refreshments.
- **7:10 pm**
Welcome attendees. Introduce board members in attendance. Give brief explanation of TACS.

Open the floor to community question and answer session.
 - Ask what ideas or issues people want to raise.
 - Summarize themes and issues that emerged.
 - Do not spend valuable time defending what the council has/has not done. Focus on gathering opinion, ideas, perceptions (even if the perceptions are inaccurate, they are still valuable because they point to misperceptions by the public).
 - Have one or more members take notes of comments and discussion points.
- **7:30 pm**
 - Cindy- Introduce myself and the board, the expectations of SUNY concerning the Board and the benefit of each of the members at this time. Briefly, our new timetable for LOI with reasons. (4 minutes)
 - Elaine- Why we need a charter school, our reasons and the importance of hearing the public's thinking as we complete the proposal including survey & how to return (4 mins)
 - Jeanetta- Vision, mission...what are we missing, what should we add. (4 minutes)
 - Walton Video (8 minutes)
 - Stuart and Adam- Open floor to questions and concerns...Krysta / others to record answers. Encourage them to address questions to any of the Board Trustees. (10 mins)
 - Patty - Close meeting with Mr. Finch's letter.
- **8:00 pm**
Adjourn

Stay for additional questions if necessary.

Truxton Community Meeting- December 14, 2015

The Truxton community was invited to attend the community meeting in the Truxton Fire Hall for the purpose of learning about the status of and receiving input concerning the recently acquired former Hartnett Elementary School as well as to receive information on the status of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School, to be located in the aforementioned school building, and to again provide the residents with an opportunity to share any concerns, questions and suggestions for the use of the building and the proposed charter school. A total of 36 residents attended and many participated in the conversations held on both topics.

Specifically, the questions and suggestions for the Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) included:

- Will the charter school incorporate STEAM curriculum- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math?
- Would the program integrate thematic learning with all aspect of the curriculum while addressing different learning styles?
- Would the program incorporate the arts as an integral part of the curriculum?
- How will the school address physical education and connect physical interaction with the curriculum?

Conclusions-

The residents who attended were supportive of the charter school concept and the information shared about project-based learning, early introduction of a foreign language and incorporating the environment and agriculture in the curriculum. They were less informed and wanted clarification and information about how we would address the creative and performing arts, the importance of addressing varied needs of the students, and insure the availability of a rich and varied curriculum in all aspects of the school day including physical education and enrichment activities.

As a response to these concerns and interests, the proposal will build a curriculum that includes, expands and clarifies how these areas will be addressed and communicate these aspects to the community before the opening of TACS.

Truxton Community and Charter School
~~Board~~ Meetings 12/14/15

Lynne Ari

Cindy Denkenberger

Jim Denkenberger jrdjr@outlook.com

Richard W. Fyfe

David Sturges

Korinne L. Hommedieu

Eric Wilson

Martha McCall

Lloyd McCall

Tran Bryshaw

Julie VanHagen

John Landrone

Mary Ann Hotie

Karen Reome

Daniel F. McCall

Kay Reakes

Dan Reakes

LISA POTTER

DOUGLAS POTTER

Jeanette Landermilk

Beth Klein

Truxton Community + Charter School
Meeting 12/14/15

Lou Barney

John Perry

Laura Perry

Leann HeBica

Joaquin S. Lira

Matt Dankenberger

Anzeli Perry

Beth Wilson

~~John Perry~~

Jan Sutton

Levi Sutton

Capleton Young

James J. Dendry

Lane Ryan

Kathleen Dendry

Future of Hartnett



Future of Homer Central School District

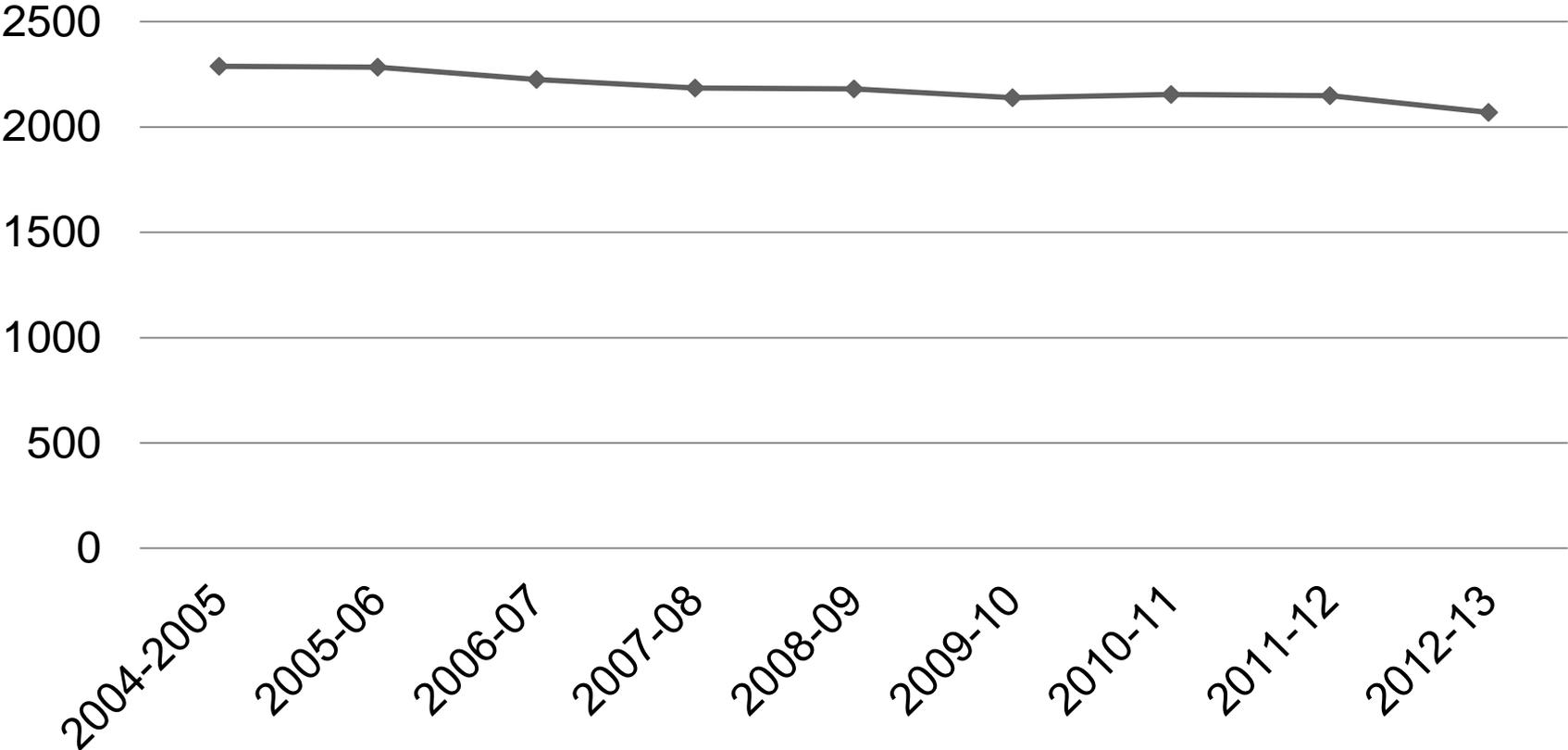
Data

- Data from (NYSED information and reporting service -IRS)
- Enrollment Data from (BEDS)

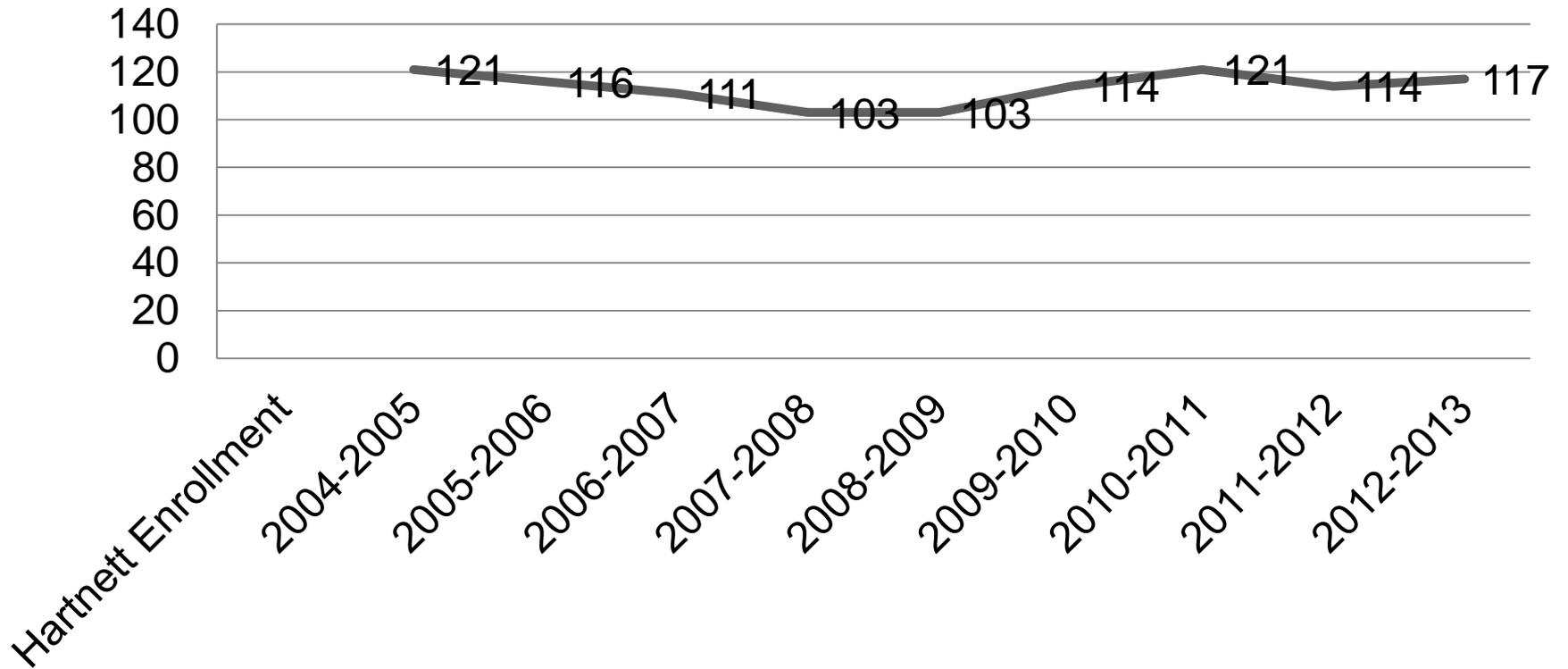
Pressure for Change

- Enrollment in District 
-  Funding to schools
- Secure the future for Truxton and Homer
- Improve education in the district
- Just as competition in sports improves performance, competition in education improves performance as well

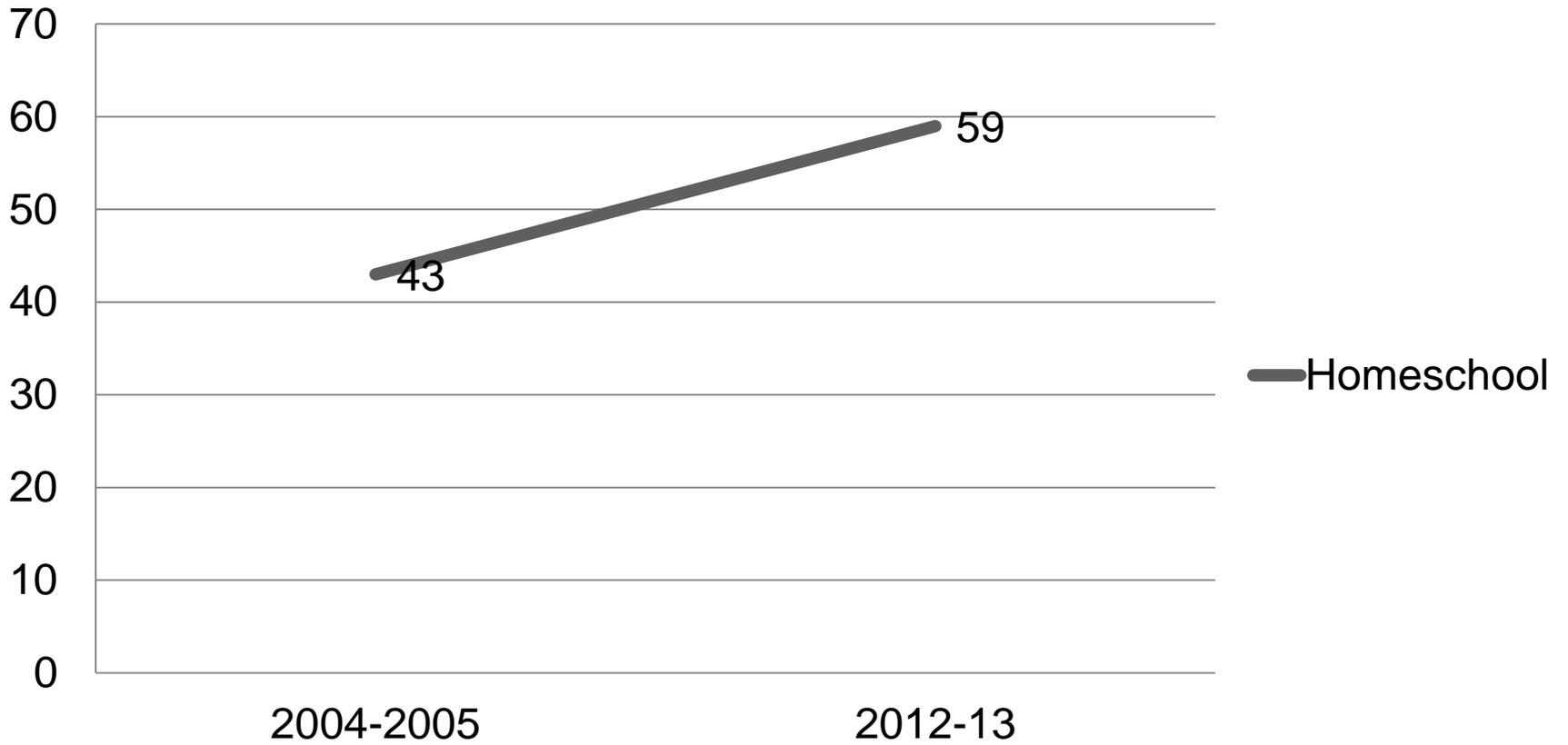
HCSD Enrollment



Hartnett Enrollment BEDS data



Homeschool



Why a Charter School

- Change from rule-based to performance-based accountability.
- Charter schools have more freedom of how to teach.
- Charter schools provide an opportunity for teachers to incorporate best teaching practices with individual needs and interests of the students.
- Charter schools are one of the highest performing group of schools in the nation.
- Charter Schools not only are high performing themselves but through competition increase performance of the district as a whole.
- Through specialized instruction charter schools fill enrollment through normal enrollment practices. Charter schools have a higher appeal to homeschooling and private schooling families and are often at full capacity with a lottery system to fill any openings.

What are Charter Schools

A charter school is a publicly funded independent school established by teachers, parents, or community groups under the terms of a charter with a local or national authority. Charter schools have the freedom to teach outside of main stream teaching (common core).

What do we want to see?

- Teaching focused on problem solving and collaboration
- Digital literacy and educational technology
- Project Based Learning

Why change?

- Problem solvers
- Group collaboration skills
- Ability to manage projects
- Hands on experience
- New skills for a new century
- Knowledge of how to use technology for today
- Leaders

Got Questions???

We have answers...

Community Meeting to learn more about
proposed Charter School in Truxton and
invite suggestions---

October 14, 2015

At

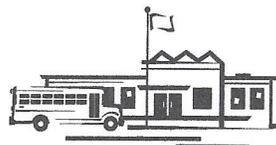
McGraw Community Building

7:00-8:00 p.m.

Please come and find out what a
neighboring community is doing to provide
a unique elementary school in our area of
central NY.

Sponsored by the Truxton Academy Charter School
Committee

truxtonacademycharterschool.org



Schedule for Sharing Truxton Academy Charter School with Neighboring Communities

Please- Mark your calendars and notify Cindy if there is any conflict for you or these dates. The Community meeting dates are confirmed with the town venue and will be difficult to change.

We now have need of TACS volunteers who have background with computer projection to present a brief program at the community meetings (presentation to be prepared and scripted for your aid) and answer questions concerning charter schools in general and our program in particular.

Handouts will also be available and a petition sheet expressing support for a charter school and school choice in our area. They can also show support for world lang. in ele. school.

Also, even if you have not signed up for board of ed. presentations, or community meetings, please consider attending for moral support and input.

1. McGraw School Board: Wed., October 7th 7:00 pm at McGraw H.S.

Patty Dawson and Krysta Austin

**1 -M. McGraw Community Meeting: Wed., October 14- 6:45 -8:15 pm
at McGraw Community Center (adj. to town offices)...**

Presenters:

**2. DeRuyter School Board: Wed., October 14- 6:00 pm at DeRuyter
School**

Adam Aldrich and Jeannetta Laudermilk

**2 -M. DeRuyter Community Meeting: October 15-6:45-8:00 pm at
Parish House...**

Presenters:

**3. Fabius Pompey School Board: Tues., October 20th -6:30 pm at
Tom and Lydia Brown**

**3 -M. Fabius Pompey Community Meeting: Wed., October 21, 6:45-
8:00 pm. Fabius Community Center (Rte. 80)...**

Presenters:

**4. Tully School Board: Tues., October 26 -6:00 pm Tully High School
Jeannetta Laudermilk and Patty Dawson**

**4 -M. Tully Community Meeting: Tues. October 27, 6:45- Tully Free
Library Community Room...**

Presenters:

VILLAGE OF McGRAW
GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT

P.O. BOX 676
MCGRAW, NY 13101



50-7044/2223

NO.

6999
6999

DATE

10/21/2015

Void after 90 days

AMOUNT

35.00

PAY CINDY Dinkenberger

THIRTY FIVE AND XX / 100 * * * * *

TO THE ORDER OF
CINDY Dinkenberger
7738 Shackham Road
Tully, NY 13159

VOID AFTER 90 DAYS

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

⑈006999⑈ ⑆222370440⑆000336954506⑈

VILLAGE OF McGRAW

GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT

11120 - CINDY Dinkenberger

Check Date: 10/21/2015

6999
Check No. 6999

Voucher	Date	Description	Amount
172605	10/20/2015	Refund CB Dep	\$35.00
1.	35.00		

Total: \$35.00

Refund of deposit to reserve McGraw Village Community Center
for TACS Community Outreach Meeting

TACS Community Meetings (10/2015)

Proposed Agenda and Talking Points

Set up chairs, table for computer presentation as needed. Set out refreshments (if they have been provided) at beginning of meeting and invite participation.

Try to keep entire presentation to the hour time scheduled. Agree ahead of meeting which sections will be presented by each presenter.

(Please try to speak distinctly as some of the venues do not have the best acoustics and some attendees may be hard of hearing.)

Welcome

Introduce yourselves and brief personal background.

Briefly inquire as to the make-up of the audience.

Hello – I'm Patty Dawson. I am part of the founding committee for the TACS. I have a very special interest in having quality education in our community – her name is Livia and she is 6 years old.

Who is with us tonight?

Parents grandparents educators

Record number attending

Purpose tonight: INFORM, RECEIVE FEEDBACK & SHARE IDEAS

Mission Statement

The Truxton Academy Charter School will cultivate enthusiasm for learning. We will plant seeds of understanding and appreciation for our progressive rural life, environment and its resources. Using project-based, hands-on learning, integrated with today's technology, our nurturing school will produce unique academic opportunities for its students,. Harvesting knowledge and skills, these students will become innovative citizens and leaders of the future.

comments:

Why a charter school:

To quote resident Jeannetta Lauder milk: "Because we care. We cannot stand idly by knowing we can do more, and create a better learning environment and a better future for the next generation. Because we gladly stand up for what is right!

Public school has traditionally been accepted as an adequate to excellent venue for receiving a worthwhile education but realistically many schools are rated higher or lower depending on many factors.

alternatives - private school, faith-based schools, home schooling to name the most common.

We would like to have another choice our area, a unique elementary charter school.

This school will teach in ways students learn best using project-based learning not state-dictated lessons and will provide a creative curriculum that utilize the student's interests, develop pride in the local community and rural life and reflect best practices for learning a foreign language early in a child's education.

Why do we continue to reapply for a charter from NYS?

We won't give up or give in until we make the Truxton Academy Charter School a reality. The rigorous process the state requires when applying insures that we have in place an excellent plan for the first five years operating the charter school while meeting all NY State educational standards and assessments.

Who makes up our group:

Parents, grandparents, educators from all levels – preschool thru university, leaders in local agri-business and other local businesses.

Where do the participants live?

Mostly the Truxton and surrounding Communities but also from a wide area

of central NY region.

When will the school open?

Depending on the acceptance of our latest proposal, the charter school could open as early as the 2017-2018 school year.

Purpose of the community meetings being held this month:

Inform area residents of our charter school plans explaining our mission statement in more detail.

Receive input from our neighboring communities concerning the proposal of a charter school in the Truxton area.

Receive feedback on teaching a foreign language beginning in kindergarten.

Share ideas and aspects that should be considered for inclusion in our proposal. (Take notes.)

Meet NYS requirements in terms of obtaining community support and input for a charter school in Truxton, NY.

Share a brief video of another charter school that is providing us with a successful model that has inspired our own vision of a worthwhile elementary school and provides a choice for parents that differs from the traditional elementary school program.

Introduce and share video of Walton 21st Century Learning Center. (Partner should have it set up and ready)

Comments and observations about the video. (Notes should be taken)

Conclusion:

Encourage opportunity to **sign petition** of support for TACS and come to fundraiser.

Share appreciation for attending.

Suggestions or additions for the community presentations as we go forward. (Take notes)

Be sure chairs, tables, etc. are returned to original position. Lights off, door locked, key returned if necessary.

McGraw School Board of Education
October 7, 2015

As representatives from the Truxton Academy Charter School, we wanted to be proactive in introducing ourselves to our neighboring school districts.

We know that local school districts work extremely hard to create the best working environment and provide a quality education for their students and we appreciate it.

Our goal is to create a school that is different than mainstream public education to offer families a choice. That is why we are developing our charter school around project-based learning. Project based learning, problem based learning and inquiry science based learning have been around for years. They have been proven successful through youth education organizations including boy scouts, girl scouts, 4-H and FFA.

We have also chosen to use agriculture as our teaching instrument because it works so fluidly in the elementary setting. A bonus in using agriculture as a teaching instrument is how easily science, technology, engineering and math can be brought to the learning environment. Many of us from this rural area know how much these STEM elements are now used in the field of agriculture.

Our group of dedicated representatives from Truxton Academy Charter School are proud to bring a choice to the parents in the Homer Central School District and surrounding communities. We have spent countless hours developing an educational program that will bring active learning back into the classroom and create an environment that will serve every student; excelling students, average students, ADD, autistic or special needs students. It will be the right fit for students who are not meeting their abilities in the classroom they are currently in.

Finally, it is important to our community to share with our younger generations the true value of rural living and its place in our future.

We are excited to continue our efforts and are happy to answer any questions you may have now or at any time in the future.

We have scheduled an information meeting at the McGraw Community Center for next Wednesday, October 14th @ 6:45pm. We would like to introduce Truxton Academy Charter School to the McGraw community and offer the opportunity to learn more about us and give constructive input. We hope to see all of you all there.

The future of Hartnett

got questions?

truxtonacademycharterschool.org



Where futures are grown.

Charter schools are exciting because they are public, and therefore tuition-free, yet have more flexibility in how they operate. Charter schools have their own governing board of trustees that makes decisions for that one school, and not for an entire school district.

This makes keeping what's best for that school the priority.

The Truxton Academy Charter School is in the planning phase.

Support from the community and prospective enrollment numbers will help form our proposal.

Please complete an Enrollment form today if you are interested in having your children attend.

Thank you for supporting Truxton Academy Charter School as the educational choice for your child's future!

truxtonacademycharterschool.org



Here's what will set us apart:

- Project Based Learning with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math elements (STEM)
- Governing board of trustees making decisions for our school only - not the whole district
- Strong Community and Parental involvement in our childrens' educations

Agriculture has been brought into elementary classrooms across the country for many years with great success. Growing plants, hatching eggs, life cycles, just to name a few. These are lessons students become wrapped up in. Truxton community has the luxury of a rural community surrounded by agriculture which is ideal for using as a teaching resource. Working together between school, community and local agri-businesses we will use the resources around us to teach our kids how to become higher level thinkers and problem solvers who enjoy coming to school to learn.



Frequently Asked Questions

truxtonacademycharterschool.org

What is a charter school?

A charter school is an independently run public school granted greater flexibility in its operations, in return for greater accountability for performance. The "charter" establishing each school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, students served, performance goals, and methods of assessment.

What is the difference between charter schools and other public schools?

Charter schools are public schools of choice, meaning that families choose them for their children. They operate with freedom from some of the regulations that are imposed upon district schools. Charter schools are accountable for academic results and for upholding the promises made in their charters. They must demonstrate performance in the areas of academic achievement, financial management, and organizational stability. If a charter school does not meet performance goals, it may be closed.

Are charter schools all the same?

No. Charter schools can vary a great deal in their design and in their results. Uncommon Schools creates schools based on the principles and practices that have proven successful in producing significant academic gains at high-performing urban charter public schools across the country.

Who authorizes charter schools?

This varies from state to state, depending on the state's charter law. In New York, there are three authorizers: the New York State Board of Regents, the State University of New York Board of Trustees, and local boards of education.

Who can start a charter school?

Parents, community leaders, social entrepreneurs, businesses, teachers, school districts, and municipalities can submit a charter school proposal to their state's charter authorizing entity.

Who attends charter schools? Whom do they serve?

Nationwide, students in charter schools have similar demographic characteristics to students in the local public schools. In some states, charter schools serve significantly higher percentages of minority or low-income students than the traditional public schools. Charter schools accept students by random, public lottery.

How are charter schools funded?

As public schools, charter schools are tuition-free. They are funded according to enrollment levels and receive public funds on a per pupil basis. Charter schools are entitled to federal categorical funding for which their students are eligible, such as Title I and Special Education monies. Federal legislation provides grants to help charters to manage start-up costs.

Do teachers need to be certified to work at a charter school?

Certification requirements vary on a state-by-state basis. In New York, while the state does not require that 100% of teachers be certified at each charter school, the rules under the "No Child Left Behind" Law mean that teachers need to get their licenses with reasonable speed.



Truxton Academy Charter School

6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY 13158

Phone: 607-345-6466

Email: truxtonacademy@gmail.com

truxtonacademycharterschool.org

Where Futures are Grown...

Board of Trustees:

Cindy Denkenberger cdenkenberger@hotmail.com

Jeanetta Laudermilk kjlaudermilk@gmail.com

Krysta Austen ckausten5@yahoo.com

John Tillotson jwtillot@syr.edu

Korinne L'Hommedieu Urlhommedieu@frontiernet.net

Beth Klein Beth.Klein@cortland.edu

Stuart Young seyoung@twcny.rr.com

Adam Aldrich adamaldrich123@gmail.com

Elaine Sturges esturges77@gmail.com

Truxton Academy Charter School would be the first agriculture based, Rural Elementary Charter School in New York. The Charter School will open with grades K thru 4 expanding to include grade 5 and 6. Truxton Academy Charter School will offer a way of learning to all students equally who need to or want to learn differently. TACS will participate in the Free and Reduced Price lunch program.

Charter Schools are public schools and are tuition-free. Charter schools have more flexibility than regular public schools. Charter schools have their own governing board of trustees to make decisions for their school. Local decision-making keeps each charter school focused on building a strong community with values that will impact our children's education.

The focus for our new charter school is:

Project Based Learning (PBL): Project Based Learning is a teaching method for students to gain knowledge and skill by investigating complex problems, questions, and challenges. PBL builds deeper knowledge, problem-solving abilities and higher-level thinking.

Agriculture and Environment related Projects: Our location, with agribusiness surrounding us, will be a primary component of our students' education. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) concepts will be emphasized in our curriculum.

Spanish Language: Introduction of Spanish in Kindergarten with consistent sequential instruction at all grade levels.

It is important to our community to share with our younger generations the true value of rural living and its place in our future.



2017-2018

Truxton Academy Charter School Prospective Enrollment Application Grades K-4

Student: _____
Last Name First Name

Date of Birth: _____ **Current School:** _____

Current Grade: _____ **School District of Residence:** _____

Home Address: _____

Mother/Guardian: _____
Last Name First Name

Home Address (if different): _____

Primary Phone: _____ **Secondary Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Father/Guardian: _____
Last Name First Name

Home Address (if different): _____

Primary Phone: _____ **Secondary Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Does the applicant student have any sibling(s) that would also enroll at Truxton Academy Charter School now or in the future? Yes No

Siblings:

Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth	Grade (if applicable)
-----------	------------	---------------	-----------------------

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Any child eligible for admission to a traditional public school is eligible for admission to a charter public school. Admission to a charter school cannot be limited on the basis of disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats, a random selection process, such as a lottery, must be used. However, charter schools do give preferences to "at risk" students, siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school, and students living in the charter school's district of location.

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

Barn Dance

COMMUNITY EVENT

JUNE 6, 6-9PM

AT

FOREST LAKE CAMPGROUND

5816 HICKEY RD

TRUXTON, NY 13158

RAFFLE

FUNDRAISER

PIZZA

SQUARE DANCING

BAKE SALE



TRUXTONACADEMYCHARTERSCHOOL.ORG

\$5 per person, ages 12 and under FREE.

Wear Hartnett gear and receive a

free raffle ticket!

NO ALCOHOL

Hartnett Community Celebration

Saturday, June 13th

2 - 6 PM

Truxton Town Hall
(the old Truxton Depot)



Pig Vicious BBQ

☺ Donations are
Welcome

Sponsored by:
Truxton SCA

- ☺ Games for All
- ☺ Antique Fire Trucks
- ☺ Truxton & Cuyler Fire Trucks
- ☺ Smith Ambulance
- ☺ Farm Tractors & Equipment
- ☺ Horse Drawn Wagon Rides
- ☺ School Bus Safety
- ☺ Bounce House
- ☺ Charter School Display
- ☺ Farm Animals
- ☺ Dunk Tank
- ☺ NYS Police & DEC
- ☺ Obstacle Course
- ☺ Church Pie Wheel



Truxton Academy Charter School added 8 new photos.

Published by Patty Henry Dawson [?] · July 8, 2015 ·

Come on down to the 2015 Cortland County Junior Fair and visit our booth! Today thru Saturday!



342 people reached

Boost Post

Like

Comment

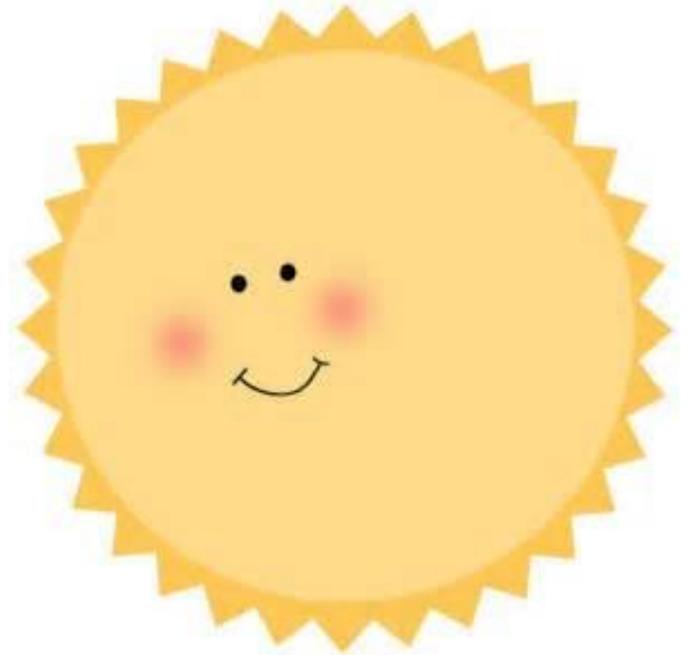
Share



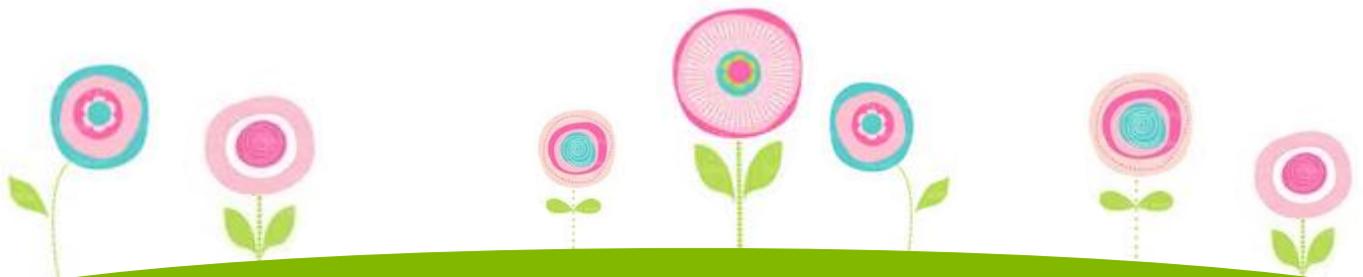
Attention all KIDS!

JOIN US
every Monday in August
@ 10:00am

Hartnett Elementary
School Playground



Summer Recess in Truxton



Sponsored by Truxton Academy Charter School

visit us @ truxtonacademycharterschool.org for more information or on **facebook.**



Truxton Academy Charter School added a new photo.

Published by Patty Henry Dawson [?] · September 11, 2015 ·

Come join us at the 2015 Tully Community Fair
Saturday, September 12th
8:30am to 2:30pm

We will have a booth at the Fair and would love to see you there! **Bring the kids to march in the parade with us!** We have fun crafts and balloons, too!

Scheduled events:

- 8:30am: The "Moo" Run starts in front of the Library
The T.A.G. Garage Sale Opens (19 State Street)
- 9:00am: Fair Booths Open on the Elementary School
Lawn – Food, Arts & Crafts
- 10:00am: Parade Begins

If you would like to join us in the parade, parade line up begins at 9:30am. Assemble at the school parking lot between the high school & elementary school.

354 people reached

Boost Post

Help us *create* a new school!

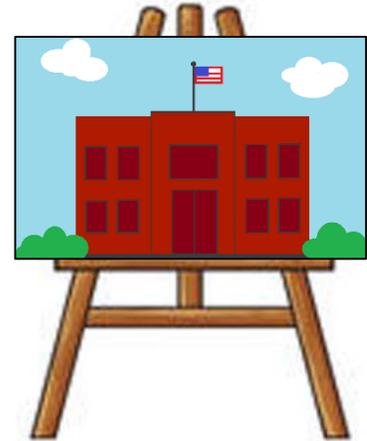
Truxton Academy Charter School needs your help...
join us later today at 1:30pm to paint a masterpiece!

We would love students to create a painting of the
Truxton School that we could then auction off at our
big fundraiser on October 17th.

We will provide the paint, brushes, a canvas and step-by-step instructions.

There will also be snacks provided as we will periodically need a few minutes to let our paint dry. Since we will be asking your child to leave their painting behind for auction, we will provide a token of appreciation for them to take home.

We will be working with acrylic paint which is water based and does wash off your hands and other areas quickly with soap and water. Once paint is dry, it doesn't typically come out of most materials so please consider your child's clothes wisely or bring a smock.



Help us *create* a new school!

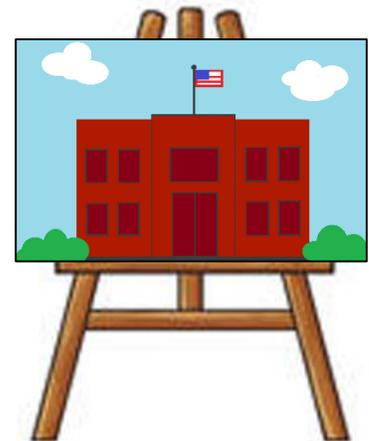
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Truxton Academy Charter School

Published by Patty Henry Dawson [?] · September 24, 2015 · 🌐

Come see us this Sunday, September 27th at Harvestfest in Truxton! We will have a super fun "Cute Animal Photo Op" for your children. Let your child pick there favorite cutie - we'll take the picture and send a 5X7 print home with you. Photos will be taken from 11am to 1pm and are \$5.00. All proceeds will benefit Truxton Academy Charter School and the churches of Truxton. We hope to see your there!



Truxton Academy Charter School added 9 new photos to the album: Animal Fun @ Harvestfest 2015.

Published by Patty Henry Dawson [?] · September 28, 2015 · 🌐



179 people reached

Boost Post

Come Taste and Toast Truxton

Join Us

FOR

Cocktails



October 17th
6-10 PM

AT

Labrador Mountain

Fundraiser-Auction-Raffle-Door Prizes

Appetizers and Refreshments
Entertainment by local artist Chris Merkley

Auction to Benefit Truxton Academy Charter School

Presale tickets \$30 each or 2 for \$50. Tickets purchased at the door will be \$30 each. Please visit truxtonacademycharterschool.org for auction items or more information. Please support our efforts to keep education in Truxton.

Entertainment, Appetizers and Drink Samplers Compliments of TACS.

Cash Bar Available.

Come Taste and Toast Truxton

Join Us
FOR
Cocktails
October 17th
6-10 PM
AT
Labrador Mountain

Fundraiser-Auction-Raffle-Door Prizes

Appetizers and Refreshments
Entertainment by local artist Chris Merkley

Auction to Benefit Truxton Academy Charter School

Program for this evening:

- 6:00 Gather and greet old friends and new
 - 6:15 First food presentation begins
 - 6:30 Auction explained and bidding begins
 - 7:00 White Russian Sampler available
 - 7:15 Second food presentation begins
 - 7:30 Auction continues with round table
 - 8:00 Spiked Warm cider Sampler available
 - 8:30 Auction continues...
 - 9:15 Presentation of desserts
 - 9:30 Final Auction items including cabinet
- Cash Bar open until 10:00

Come Taste and Toast Truxton

Join Us
FOR
Cocktails
October 17th
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Special thanks to:

Chris Merkley
Musical Entertainment

Labrador Mountain management, Heidi Bartholomew,
and the kitchen and bar staff for your generous support
and assistance in the preparation and execution of this
fundraiser event.

Raffle, Auction and Food Donations:

2 Kids Goat Farm	Meghan Henry & Luke Park
Adhan Piping	Morgan Hill Maple Syrup
Allison Mastroe	Nasty Dog Treats
Bearup Construction	NY Beef Producers
Bob's Barbecue	Old Homer House
Burger King	Patricia Dawson Designs
Byrne Dairy	Price Chopper
Doug & Lisa Potter	Reake's Country Goods
Dougherty Food & Ferments	Rita & Gary Dawson
Cazenovia Equipment	Shirley Marshall
Kris & Dale Smith	Springside Farm
Color Me Red	Stephen & Betty Carpenter
Cortland Fitness Center	St. Patrick's Catholic Church
Cuyler Diner	The Garback family
Details Grooming	The Riehlman family
Double J Biker & Western Shop	Trinity Valley
Legacy Farm	Truxton Liquor Store
Levi Sutton	Upstate Imports
Forest Lake Campground	Walden Oaks Golf Course
Groton City Animal Hospital	Walmart
Heidi Bartholomew	Wendy's
Hill of Beans	YWCA
Labrador Mountain	

sponsored by:
Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters

Special thanks to:

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Bob's Barbecue	Old Homer House
Burger King	Patricia Dawson Designs
Byrne Dairy	Price Chopper
Dougherty Food & Ferments	Reake's Country Goods
Cazenovia Equipment	Rita & Gary Dawson
Kris & Dale Smith	Shirley Marshall
Color Me Red	Springside Farm
Cortland Fitness Center	Stephen & Betty Carpenter
Cuyler Diner	The Garback family
Details Grooming	The Riehlman family
Double J Biker & Western Shop	Trinity Valley
Legacy Farm	Truxton Liquor Store
Levi Sutton	Upstate Imports
Forest Lake Campground	Walden Oaks Golf Course
Groton City Animal Hospital	Walmart
Heidi Bartholomew	Wendy's
Hill of Beans	YWCA
Labrador Mountain	

sponsored by:
Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters

Candlelight Vigil for the Truxton School Building

Wednesday, October 28th @ 6pm
6337 Academy St, Truxton, NY

Join us to share, love and support.





2016 Celebration in Truxton

Join the Truxton Community Center and Truxton Academy Charter School parade float!

Ride along on our hay wagon or follow along on your bikes... Everyone is welcome to join us - the more the merrier!

We will meet at the Truxton Community Center (formerly Hartnett Elementary School) parking lot on Monday, May 30th @ 9am to decorate our float and get ready for the parade. Wear Hartnett gear or maroon if you have it or of course your patriotic red, white & blue! Contact us at truxtoncommunitycenter@gmail.com if you would like more information.

Musical? Join the marching band!

They are looking for more participants so recruit friends and family! There is a practice scheduled Wednesday, May 25th @ 6pm at the Truxton Community Center. The band will be meeting on parade day at the community center at 9:00am. Please dress in red, white and blue! Contact Korinne L'Hommedieu at rlhommedieu@frontiernet.net if you would like more information.

We hope to see you there and thank you for your support!



SYRACUSE
UNIVERSITY

Summer Science Extravaganza for Kids

All kids grades 4th thru 7th
Friday, August 12, 2016
10:00am to 2:00pm
Truxton Community Center
6337 Academy St, Truxton, NY

The Department of Science Teaching at Syracuse University is pleased to offer Truxton & neighboring area children in grades 4-7 the opportunity to participate in a one-day summer science camp that will feature fun and engaging hands-on learning activities designed for middle schoolers. This free science camp will be held from 10 am -2 pm on Friday, August 12 at the Truxton Community Center. A pizza lunch will be included along with special SU-themed door prizes to be given away at the conclusion of the workshop.

Graduate students and pre-service science teachers from SU will lead science camp participants through a series of small group activities that highlight the practices of science and engineering design. Kids will rely on teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills to tackle fun science learning challenges. Parents are welcome to stay and observe the science camp activities to learn more about the problem-based learning approach to designing science, math, engineering, and technology (STEM) curricula.

Space is limited. Go to truxtoncommunitycenter.org to register.
Email: truxtoncommunitycenter@gmail.com for more information



Syracuse University Summer Science Extravaganza for Kids!

	Student's Name	Parent/Guardian Dropping Off	Parent/Guardian Picking Up	Emergency Contact During Event	Contact Phone	Signed Waiver	Food Allergy
1	Aidan Westendorf	TANYA	TANYA	TANYA		X	NO
2	Alyssa Porter	KATHIE	KATHIE	KATHIE		X	NO
3	Amberle Brown	LYDIA	LYDIA	LYDIA		X	NO
4	Amelia Brown						
5	Benjamin McGrath	ANGELA	ANGELA	ANGELA		X	NO
6	Bodey McGrath	ANGELA	ANGELA	ANGELA		X	NO
7	Brielle Gilbert	Meghan	CINDY	Meghan		X	NO
8	Christopher Kent						
9	Eliza Taubman	PATY	PATY	PATY		X	NO
10	Gehrig Garback	PATY	PATY	PATY		X	NO
11	Hannah Whitney	Mary Ann	Mary Ann	Mary Ann		X	NO
12	Izzie Brown						
13	Jack Smith	ED MOORE	CLAIRE	CLAIRE		X	NO
14	Katie Porter	KATHIE	KATHIE	KATHIE		X	NO
15	Leah Updyke						

Syracuse University Summer Science Extravaganza for Kids!

	Student's Name	Parent/Guardian Dropping Off	Parent/Guardian Picking Up	Emergency Contact During Event	Contact Phone	Signed Waiver	Food Allergy	
16	Levi Whitney	Mary Ann	Mary Ann	Mary Ann	[REDACTED]	X	NO	
17	Liam Austen	KRYSTA	TANYA	KRYSTA		X	NO	
18	Logan Austen	KRYSTA	PATY	KRYSTA		X	NO	
19	Morgan Robideau	Meghan	CINDY	Meghan		X	NO	
20	Nicholas Lines	Audrey	Audrey	Audrey		X	NO	
21	Reagan Hillman	ANGELA	ANGELA	ANGELA		X	NO	
22	Samantha Arnold							
23	Sean Zajac	PATY	PATY	PATY		X	NO	
24	Shana O'Brien	Megan	Megan	Megan		X	NO	
25	Taylynn Platt	DAWN	SHAWN	DAWN		X	NO	
	CASEY MOORE	ED	CLAIRE	CLAIRE			X	NO



Truxton Academy Charter School Board of Trustees Meeting

**Have a question?
Want to stay up to date
or voice your input?**

Please join us for our monthly public
meeting, always the first Monday
of the month at 7pm

Truxton Community Center
6337 Academy Street
Truxton, NY 13158

For more information, visit our website:
truxtonacademycharterschool.org
email: truxtonacademy@gmail.com
phone: 607-345-6466 or visit us on [facebook](#).



Patty Dawson <patty.henry.6@gmail.com>

Fwd: School choice

1 message

KJ Laudermilk <kjlaudermilk@gmail.com>
To: Patty Dawson <patty.henry.6@gmail.com>

Sun, Feb 28, 2016 at 4:41 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KJ Laudermilk** <kjlaudermilk@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Feb 10, 2015 at 6:00 PM

Subject: School choice

To: kdwyer@homercentral.org, rweatherby@homercentral.org, ksharpe@homercentral.org, msweeney@homercentral.org, wpedrick@homercentral.org, David Quinlan <dquinlan@homercentral.org>, Imorenius@homercentral.org, Mary Beth Mathey <mmathey@homercentral.org>, Sonia Apker <sapker@homercentral.org>



school board charter location.pdf

107K

Dear School Board,

Our commitment to keep an Elementary in Truxton is continuing. It has always been our desire to keep the Hartnett Elementary Facility open. Based on the boards recent decisions it appears this is unlikely. As we have discussed at public meetings and presented to the board, we are continuing to work towards a charter school in Truxton. As of February 10, 2015 we have filed a letter of intent with New York State Education Department. We ask the board to consider working together on this effort as this process continues. The Hartnett building on Academy Street would be our preferred location for the charter school. Should this not be feasible other locations within the Truxton community will be developed.

Thank You,

K. Jeanetta Lauder milk

Meeting with Senator Seward- May 29, 2015

History concerning closing of Hartnett Elementary School, Truxton

- Concern about surprising decision to close Hartnett School (Spring, 2014)
- Movement by Truxton community to keep it as an elementary school with the vision of improving it
- Defeat of Bond Issue (which included New Tech High School in Truxton) by a large majority (Fall, 2014)
- Multiple presentations to the Homer School Board on a variety of strategies that could be utilized to improve the school using innovative and proven elementary curriculum programs
- Multiple presentations to the board with facts and figures showing a financial loss rather than savings to the district over a period of time
- Vote by school board to close Hartnett without any serious response or discussion to numerous proposals made (Winter, 2015)
- Discussion by the board on disbursement of Hartnett School
- Consultant report confirming recommendation to close Hartnett School (Classroom numbers and comparisons provided by Homer S. D.) (May, 2015)

History of Truxton Charter School Proposal

- Concerned residents and parents begin conversations about the benefits of a charter school to enhance or if necessary, replace present school if it is closed (Summer, 2014)
- Small group of parents and residents meet to continue exploring models and requirements for a charter school, connected with NE Charter Schools Network (Fall, 2014)
- Further study provided the Walton Charter School model in Kansas, NYSED law pertaining to charter schools, and steps in the process for creating a charter school (Winter, 2014)
- First questionnaire (flyer) placed around community and on Facebook soliciting degree of interest in a charter school (Dec. 2014)
- First Truxton community meeting (Dec. 22, 2014) at Fire Dept. with power point presentation on possible choices which included charter school. Vote was taken to prioritize residents preferences for the future of the school. Charter school came in second-place as it was first.

Truxton Academy Charter School Activities- January - May, 2015

- Formed Board of Trustees with six initial members representing a cross-section of the Truxton community (Jan.,2015)
- Submitted first Letter of Intent to NYSED (Feb., 2015) which was rejected with suggestions for succeeding with next application in June, 2015
- Participated in Webinar for successfully completing our Letter of Intent and continued to develop our full proposal including financial and demographic information
- Mailed second questionnaire, developed new informational Facebook page for Truxton Academy Charter School, planned community fundraisers, and participated in the Memorial Day Parade
- Visited Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School in Syracuse (May, 2015)

Questions:

- What is your role on the Education Com. and experience with charter schools, if any?
- Could you be an advocate for acquiring the closed Hartnett School?
- Would you be willing to be one of our liasons with the NYSED as our proposal is submitted?
- Are there any other legislators that you feel might also be interested and/or helpful in supporting our charter school proposal?
- Would you be willing to write a letter of endorsement for our proposal based on the information you have received thus far?

Additional arguments concerning the conversion of Hartnett School to a public charter school in Truxton, NY

Presented to HSD Board of Ed. Fall, 2014

It is very important to understand converting Hartnett School to a charter school would include insuring that:

- It would be open to all children in the Homer School District with priority given to the children in the Town of Truxton and East Homer
- No tuition would be charged as our tax dollars, state and federal aid would apply as in the past
- There would be no special entrance requirements.

Why a charter school?

- They increase learning opportunities, not only for average and above average students, but also those at-risk children who are struggling in the traditional classroom setting.
- They are raising the bar of what is possible and what could be expected in terms of excellence in the public school environment.
- They encourage the use of innovative teaching methods/education designs.

Because monies available are a major consideration of this board, as it should be, there would be little renovations required for a charter school as it already serves our elementary children adequately.

There is also considerable financial support for converting Hartnett Elementary School to a charter school at the federal and state level. In the past, the U.S. Dept. of Education has awarded over \$136 million in charter school grants to 12 state education agencies.

At the New York State level, State Stimulus Fund Grants are available for the coming year in the amount of \$3.1 million with a maximum of \$200,000 per approved application. There are also Title 1 and other funds designated for forming or duplicating a successful charter school model.

We again ask for time to prepare and offer detailed counter-proposals to the School Administration's single focus agenda on this topic. Our taxpayers and our students deserve this consideration.

Cindy Denkenberger <cdenkenberger@hotmail.com>

Mon, Aug 8, 2016 at 10:33 AM

To: "nruscio@homercentral.org" <nruscio@homercentral.org>

Ms. Nancy Ruscio
Superintendent
Homer Central School District
Homer, NY

August 8, 2016

Dear Ms. Ruscio,

Time has passed quickly since we last spoke and it would be beneficial if we could arrange a time to meet together before the new school year commences. Sharing the common goal of providing the best educational opportunities possible for all of our students, kindergarten through high school, I would like to speak with you (and the Board, if desired) concerning our current status as regards to our continued efforts on behalf of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) team.

As part of the Homer Central School District, we anticipate many shared interests and responsibilities going forward. We both recognize that an open, professional dialogue will best serve all of our efforts on behalf of the students.

We understand you have been incredibly busy with the construction project at the high school, but hope you might be able to set aside a brief time for us to speak together in the next week or so. Please have Kelly contact me at the above email address or by phone (842-6755) to confirm a time and how best we might proceed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Cindy Denkenberger

TACS Board of Trustees

Questionnaire

Choosing Education for Central New York Elementary Children

1. Would you consider an alternative educational experience for your child/ren (educating outside of main stream public school)?

Yes No Maybe

2. If no, what are you planning for your child/ren in the next three years?

3. If yes what have you considered?

Please number the following statements...

0...would not consider 2...second choice

1...first choice 3...third choice

_____ Would you consider an elementary project based learning charter school – an independent public school with a chosen focus?

_____ Would you consider a Christian school that integrates faith, family and community with hands on learning?

_____ Would you be interested in a community home school coalition for elementary age students?

Other...

What school district do you reside in _____.

What school does your child attend _____.

What are the age(s) of your child/ren _____.

Optional, if you would like more information on alternative educational opportunities in CNY please include your email address.

Charter Schools Give Parents a Choice

A charter school is a publicly funded school with a special focus. It is run independently from the main school district with a separate governing board. This board is solely in charge of that one school making it easier to concentrate on the students learning and achievements. Public funding makes charter schools tuition free. Charter schools also have access to private funding opening more income avenues. State testing is still done but a charter school is able to decide how they want to teach. Allowing for 'uncommon teaching'.

The idea of a charter school is great but how would it affect an entire school district for example Homer? If a charter school was to be incorporated within the school district all students within that district would have first slots to the school. If East Homer/Truxton area was the host area, students within that area would have first choice. All open slots would then go to the entire Homer District and if there were still slots available after that it would be opened outside the district.

Homer Central School District would gain enrollment and therefore receive more state aid while cost of instruction would fall to the charter school. If the school becomes a conversion charter school, teachers would be able to retain their collective bargaining while a start-up charter would be different.

The main benefit is choice. There is limited choice in public education other than mainstream public schools. Luckily Homer is a great school. What if you want something different for your child/ren? Private school is hard for most families to afford, and homeschooling although very beneficial, is not for every family most often because of jobs. We like options, we want options for our children's education.

Please voice your choice, education survey at: <http://goo.gl/forms/N567chyrBk>

Charter School

An opportunity has presented itself. We have access to starting our own community run school. A tuition free public school called a charter school. We have at our fingertips the ability to have our decision making board of trustees whose sole concern would be the operation of this one school. As a charter school we can develop our own curriculum with "uncommon teaching". Our students would still be tested through state standardized testing making it possible to track the students progression. Through community support this is possible.

Before advancing to the next step in creating this school we are required to find what interest lies within the parents of students currently enrolled and within the community. Please respond by answering the following questions.

* Required

1. Your Name *

First and Last

2. Please list children within your household and their ages. *

3. Where they currently are instructed. *

4. What school district do you currently reside in? *

Homer, Cortland, Tully, Deruyter, Fabius
Other; please specify.

5. Your Address

6. Your Phone Number

7. Your Email *

8. Are you interested in enrolling your child/ren in a charter school in Truxton *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

9. Are you a Truxton Community member without Elementary age children?

If so we would still like to know how you feel.

.....

10. Comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Questions

.....

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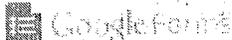
.....

12. Please choose your favorite charter school name.

Mark only one oval.

- VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction for Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)
- Truxton Academy Charter School
- LIFE Charter School at Truxton (Learning Institution for Everyone = LIFE)
- Other:

Powered by



Timestamp Your Name Please list children within your household and their ages. Where they currently are instructed. What school district do you currently reside in? Your Address Your Phone Number Your Email Are you interested in enrolling your child/ren in a charter school in TruxtonAre you a Truxton Community member without Elementary age children? Comments Questions Please choose your favorite charter school name.

1/30/2015 19:54:43 Kimberlee Lauder milk Matt 6yrs, Ally 3 yrs Matt is currently at Hartnett. Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Love the idea of a charter school. LIFE Charter school (Learning Institution for Everyone = LIFE)

1/31/2015 7:30:20 Krysta Austen 9, 7, 6 Hartnett Homer ckausten5@yahoo.com Yes

1/31/2015 8:08:29 Tracey Cartland Kasmira - Two, Kenzie - 4 months Too young, they're still home Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes yes VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction for Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)

1/31/2015 10:56:53 Branden Brown 2 children 16 months and 3 months Not currently Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Truxton Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 11:22:31 Vicky Reed Jacob Hemingway....11 Hartnett Elementary Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Truxton Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 11:33:12 Cindy Hemingway 11 Hartnett homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Truxton Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 12:14:29 Jeannine Gettis two cortland child development center DeRuyter [redacted] VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction for Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)

1/31/2015 14:09:47 Steven Cartland 2. (2yrs) (-1) N/A Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Not in school yet but will be soon Wish we could get rid of common core...would probably get more support without it. Truxton Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 16:54:05 Jean Sutton 0-but 2 Grandchildren ages 6 and 3 Hartnett Elementary Homer [redacted] [redacted] Yes Yes I want my grandchildren, the community and future children and their families to have an elementary school option. I love the idea of project based learning and open to alternative methods of instruction. Is there a way I can help? Truxton Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 17:25:09 Kimberly friedman lucas 6, gabe 8 mcgraw elementary [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Undecided I am interested
I learning more about this! VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction for
Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)

1/31/2015 17:30:41 Kelly hollister Calvin Brito 6 yrs old Truxton Homer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes Will the kids be
able to participate in sports against other schools? Teachers remain as they are right now? Truxton
Academy Charter School

1/31/2015 17:44:35 Kristin Avery Kaden, 10 Dryden Elementary [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes No
LIFE Charter School at Truxton (Learning Institution for Everyone = LIFE)

1/31/2015 19:38:12 Donna Atkins 1 senior 1 jr high 6th Homer High and Jr High Homer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] No no "How
many courses would be taught for Jr High to meet State Standards?

Would you have a plan to meet students with reading or math delays or disability in general. or even
advanced students.

How much would a student's education cost" VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction
for Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)

1/31/2015 23:44:25 Patricia DawsonLivia - [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes Truxton
Academy Charter School

2/1/2015 1:07:44 Sarah Kleefeld Dakota [REDACTED] Homer Homer
[REDACTED] Undecided VISION Charter School at
Truxton (Valuable instruction for Students in Our Neighborhood = VISION)

2/3/2015 12:53:06 kevin Laudermilk Matthew 6 allyson3 hartnett homer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes no Truxton
Academy Charter School

2/3/2015 16:40:34 tom brown aidan 11 amberle 9 hartnett homer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes Truxton
Academy Charter School

2/4/2015 11:06:06 Natalie Bolyard No Childeren No Children Tonawanda City [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] No No "I no longer live in the
town of Truxton due to my career bringing me to Western New York. However, I grew up attending
Hartnett Elementary and was two steps ahead in my education due to my studies there. If I could
choose I place to send my future children to school, Truxton would be at the top of my list.

Thank you for working to keep a school in the Truxton community!"
Charter School

Truxton Academy

2/6/2015 12:19:00 Cindy Denkenberger 0 n.a Homer
[REDACTED] Yes Yes Truxton Academy Charter
School

2/6/2015 19:30:00 Adam Aldrich 6,3, 5months Hartnett Homer [REDACTED]
Truxton Ny [REDACTED] Yes Truxton
Academy Charter School

2/8/2015 16:28:42 Jeannie O'Donnell Gabriel-9 & Kaleb-7 Hartnett Elementary Homer
[REDACTED] Yes
Truxton Academy Charter School

2/8/2015 20:17:40 Kris Smith grandkids go to Harnett Hartnett Homer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yes We have 2 grandson's in Truxton . This
is the 4th generation going to Hartnett, let's keep it here!
Truxton Academy
Charter School

2/8/2015 20:39:39 Ashley Riehlman Levi 3 yrs and 1 due any minute not in school et Homer
[REDACTED] Undecided

2/8/2015 20:52:59 Megan Morrison Shana -7, Aaron -6, Liam -6, [REDACTED]
Homer [REDACTED]
Hartnett Charter School

2/9/2015 13:51:27 Jenni Cirbus Kaylin 3yrs old and Shawna 1yr old home daycare Homer
[REDACTED] Yes Yes
VISION Charter School at Truxton (Valuable instruction for Students in Our
Neighborhood = VISION)

2/9/2015 21:58:04 Jennifer Park Jacob 10,Brianna 12 and Nicholas 16 Lafayette Tully
[REDACTED] Yes
Big Picture Learning at Truxton

Truxton Academy

Charter School

Where futures are grown



The Truxton Community has a new and wonderful educational opportunity. With the strength our community has demonstrated time and again, we will bring an elementary school to our community that will bring our community back to our school.

Upcoming Events

May 19

Homer CSD Budget & Board Member Vote 7am - 9pm
High School Music Building

May 25

Memorial Day Parade – join our float!

June 6

Barn Dance Fundraiser at Forest Lake Campground

June 13

Hartnett Elementary Community Celebration

Event details are available at: truxtonacademycharterschool.org



The focus for our new charter school is:

To bring Project Based Learning (PBL) back to the elementary classroom. Project Based Learning is a teaching method for students to gain knowledge and skill by investigating complex problems, questions, and challenges. PBL builds deeper knowledge, problem-solving abilities and higher-level thinking.

To use our rural location to enhance our student's education. Many elementary classrooms already use agriculture-related lessons. Our location, with agribusiness surrounding us, will be a primary component of our students' education. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) concepts will be emphasized in our curriculum.

Charter Schools are public schools and are tuition-free, but charter schools have more flexibility than regular public schools. Charter schools have their own governing board of trustees to make decisions for their own school. Local decision-making keeps each charter school focused on building a strong community with values that will impact our children's education.

truxtonacademycharterschool.org • 607-345-6466 • PO Box 102, Truxton, NY 13158

Truxton Academy Charter School

Donde el futuro es cultivado.



La comunidad de Truxton tiene una nueva y maravillosa oportunidad educativa. Con la fuerza que nuestra comunidad ha demostrado una y otra vez, traeremos a nuestra comunidad a nuestra escuela primaria.

Próximos eventos

May 19

Homer CSD Budget & Board
Member Vote 7am - 9pm
High School Music Building

May 25

Memorial Day Parade – join
our float!

June 6

Barn Dance Fundraiser at
Forest Lake Campground

June 13

Hartnett Elementary
Community Celebration

Detalles del evento están
disponibles en:
truxtonacademycharterschool.org



El enfoque de nuestra nueva escuela es:

Para llevar el aprendizaje basado en proyectos (PBL) volver a la escuela primaria. Aprendizaje basado en proyectos es un método de enseñanza para que los estudiantes adquieran conocimientos y habilidades al investigar problemas complejos, preguntas y desafíos. PBL construye conocimiento profundo, habilidades de resolución de problemas y pensamiento de alto nivel.

Utilizar nuestra zona rural para mejorar la educación de nuestros estudiantes. Muchas aulas de primarias ya usan lecciones relacionadas con la agricultura. Nuestra ubicación, con la agroindustria alrededor de nosotros, será un componente primario de la educación de nuestros estudiantes. Conceptos de ciencia, tecnología, ingeniería y matemáticas (STEM) se enfatizarán en nuestro plan de estudios.

Las escuelas charter son escuelas públicas y son gratis, pero las escuelas charter tienen más flexibilidad que las escuelas públicas regulares. Las escuelas charter tienen su propio Consejo de administración para tomar decisiones por su propia escuela. La toma de decisiones sigue cada escuela charter se concentra en la construcción de una comunidad fuerte, con valores que afectará la educación de nuestros hijos.

truxtonacademycharterschool.org • 607-345-6466 • PO Box 102, Truxton, NY 13158



Truxton Academy Charter School

6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY 13158

Phone: 607-345-6466

Email: truxtonacademy@gmail.com

truxtonacademycharterschool.org

Where Futures are Grown...

Board of Trustees:

Cindy Denkenberger cdenkenberger@hotmail.com

Jeanetta Laudermilk kjlaudermilk@gmail.com

Krysta Austen ckausten5@yahoo.com

John Tillotson jwtillot@syr.edu

Korinne L'Hommedieu Urlhommedieu@frontiernet.net

Beth Klein Beth.Klein@cortland.edu

Stuart Young seyoung@twcny.rr.com

Adam Aldrich adamaldrich123@gmail.com

Elaine Sturges esturges77@gmail.com

Truxton Academy Charter School would be the first agriculture based, Rural Elementary Charter School in New York. The Charter School will open with grades K thru 4 expanding to include grade 5 and 6. Truxton Academy Charter School will offer a way of learning to all students equally who need to or want to learn differently. TACS will participate in the Free and Reduced Price lunch program.

Charter Schools are public schools and are tuition-free. Charter schools have more flexibility than regular public schools. Charter schools have their own governing board of trustees to make decisions for their school. Local decision-making keeps each charter school focused on building a strong community with values that will impact our children's education.

The focus for our new charter school is:

Project Based Learning (PBL): Project Based Learning is a teaching method for students to gain knowledge and skill by investigating complex problems, questions, and challenges. PBL builds deeper knowledge, problem-solving abilities and higher-level thinking.

Agriculture and Environment related Projects: Our location, with agribusiness surrounding us, will be a primary component of our students' education. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) concepts will be emphasized in our curriculum.

Spanish Language: Introduction of Spanish in Kindergarten with consistent sequential instruction at all grade levels.

It is important to our community to share with our younger generations the true value of rural living and its place in our future.



2017-2018

Truxton Academy Charter School Prospective Enrollment Application Grades K-4

Student: _____
Last Name First Name

Date of Birth: _____ **Current School:** _____

Current Grade: _____ **School District of Residence:** _____

Home Address: _____

Mother/Guardian: _____
Last Name First Name

Home Address (if different): _____

Primary Phone: _____ **Secondary Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Father/Guardian: _____
Last Name First Name

Home Address (if different): _____

Primary Phone: _____ **Secondary Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Does the applicant student have any sibling(s) that would also enroll at Truxton Academy Charter School now or in the future? Yes No

Siblings:

Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth	Grade (if applicable)
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Any child eligible for admission to a traditional public school is eligible for admission to a charter public school. Admission to a charter school cannot be limited on the basis of disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats, a random selection process, such as a lottery, must be used. However, charter schools do give preferences to "at risk" students, siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school, and students living in the charter school's district of location.

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____



Truxton Academy Charter School

6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY 13158

Teléfono: 607-345-6466

Email: truxtonacademy@gmail.com

truxtonacademycharterschool.org

Donde se cultivan Futuros ...

Junta directiva:

Cindy Denkenberger	cdenkenberger@hotmail.com	Beth Klein	Beth.Klein@cortland.edu
Jeanetta Laudermilk	kjlaudermilk@gmail.com	Stuart Young	seyoung@twcny.rr.com
Krysta Austen	ckausten@yahoo.com	Adam Aldrich	adamaldrich123@gmail.com
John Tillotson	jwtillot@syr.edu	Elaine Sturges	esturges77@gmail.com
Korinne L'Hommedieu	rlhommedieu@frontiernet.net		

Truxton Academy Charter School sería la primera basada en la agricultura, las zonas rurales Elementary Charter School de Nueva York. La Escuela Charter se abrirá con los grados K a 4 ampliando para incluir grado 5 y 6. Truxton Academy Charter School ofrecerá una forma de aprender a todos los estudiantes por igual que necesiten o deseen aprender de manera diferente. TACS participará en el programa de almuerzo gratis a precio reducido.

Las escuelas charter son escuelas públicas y están libres de matrícula. Las escuelas charter tienen más flexibilidad que las escuelas públicas regulares. Las escuelas charter tienen su propio consejo de administración para tomar decisiones por su escuela. La toma de decisiones locales mantiene a cada escuela experimental centrado en la construcción de una comunidad fuerte con valores que tendrán un impacto en la educación de nuestros hijos.

El enfoque de nuestra nueva escuela autónoma es:

Aprendizaje basado en proyectos (PBL): aprendizaje basado en proyectos es un método de enseñanza que los estudiantes adquieran conocimientos y habilidades mediante la investigación de complejos problemas, preguntas y desafíos. PBL construye el conocimiento, las habilidades más profundas de resolución de problemas y el pensamiento de orden superior.

Agricultura y medio ambiente relacionados con Proyectos: Nuestra ubicación, con la agroindustria que nos rodea, será un componente principal de la educación de nuestros estudiantes. Ciencia, tecnología, ingeniería y matemáticas (STEM) conceptos se hará hincapié en nuestro plan de estudios.

Español Idioma: Introducción del español en la guardería con la instrucción secuencial consistente en todos los grados.

Es importante para nuestra comunidad para compartir con nuestras generaciones más jóvenes el verdadero valor de la vida rural y su lugar en nuestro futuro.



2017-2018

Truxton Academy Charter School Solicitud de Inscripción prospectivo Grades K-4

Nombre del estudiante: _____

Fecha de Nacimiento: _____ Escuela actual: _____

Grado actual: _____ Distrito Escolar de residencia: _____

Domicilio: _____

Nombre Madre/Tutor: _____

Domcilio (si es diferente): _____

Telefono principal: _____ Telefono secundario: _____

Email: _____

Nombre Padre/Tutor: _____

Domcilio (si es diferente): _____

Telefono principal: _____ Telefono secundario: _____

Email: _____

¿Tiene el estudiante solicitante tiene hermanos (s) que también se matricularse en la escuela autónoma Truxton Academia ahora o en el futuro? Si No

Siblings:

Apellido	Nombre de pila	Fecha de Nacimiento	Grado actual
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Apellido	Nombre de pila	Fecha de Nacimiento	Grado actual
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Apellido	Nombre de pila	Fecha de Nacimiento	Grado actual
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Cualquier niño elegible para la admisión a una escuela pública tradicional es elegible para la admisión a una escuela pública de la carta. La admisión a una escuela autónoma no puede limitarse sobre la base de la discapacidad, raza, credo, sexo, origen nacional, religión, ascendencia, capacidad intelectual, medidas de logro o de aptitud o capacidad atlética. Si el número de aspirantes superior al número de plazas disponibles, un proceso de selección al azar, como una lotería, debe ser utilizado. Sin embargo, las escuelas charter dan preferencias a "en riesgo" los estudiantes, los hermanos de estudiantes ya matriculados en la escuela autónoma, y los estudiantes que viven en el distrito de la escuela autónoma de ubicación.

Firma del padre _____ La Fecha _____

Town of Truxton

Cortland County

State of New York

Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Truxton

Supervisor

Lloyd Sutton

Town Board Members

Nicole Albro Sprouse

Gus Wehbe

Carleton Young

PJ Dwyer

Comprehensive Plan Committee Members

Randy Young--Chair, Adam Aldrich, Kathie Arnold, Tom Brown, Eric Johnson, Joe Mastriano, Molly McDermott, Joe Pullman, Richard Ryan, Jeff Spicer

The Town of Truxton thanks the following agencies who provided assistance in the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan: The Cortland County Planning Department, the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Department and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Date (date adopted by Town Board)

Note: This Comprehensive Plan updates and replaces the Town of Truxton's original Master Plan dated June 30, 1981

Fire Protection

The entire Town of Truxton is served by its own volunteer fire department. The Truxton station has a membership of 29 firemen on the active roster in 2016. The station is equipped with eight vehicles: a 1500 gallon per minute engine with a tank of 1000 gal. (#903), a 1000 gallon per minute engine with a 750 gal. tank (#901), a 2000-gallon capacity tanker (#922), a heavy rescue vehicle (#941), a light duty rescue vehicle for home medical emergencies (#942), a brush truck with 4-wheel drive and a 500 gal/min. pump with 125 gal. tank for off road fires (#911), a snowmobile and a side by side all-terrain vehicle (#912 & #913). The fire department works extensively with all of its surrounding fire departments under Cortland County's Mutual Aid Plan to provide the best coverage possible.

The standard for adequate fire coverage, as established by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, indicates that coverage is adequate if it can be provided within a radius of five miles from the first responding fire department with that area given an ISO rating of 9. Therefore, there are two areas in Truxton with less than adequate coverage: the northwestern and the southwestern corners which have an ISO rating of 10.

Ambulance Service

Ambulance service for the Town is provided by a commercial supplier, Smith's Ambulance, stationed in DeRuyter, with two ambulances.

Police Coverage

Police protection is provided at the County level by the County Sheriff's Department, which has a staff of 34 persons, with 21 officers on the road. Additional police protection is provided by the State Police, with substations in Homer and the Village of Marathon.

Municipal Facilities

Public facilities include the Town Highway Department garage and storage area; the rehabilitated historic Train Depot that houses the Town Clerk's and Supervisor's Office, the Town Court, and a Board meeting room; the U.S. Post Office in a rented building; and the John J. McGraw Ball Field which includes a historic grandstand and a newly built picnic pavilion. All are located in the hamlet except the town highway garage, located on Route 91 and the solid waste transfer station located on Academy Street.

The Town owns and operates a transfer station that is open each weekend to allow Town residents to deposit their municipal solid waste and recyclables. There are two small memorial parks, the Veterans Park and the Andy Tei Memorial Park, in the hamlet that are owned by the Town.

Schools

Truxton's first public school class was taught in 1799 by A.W. Baker. A modern school structure was built in 1935 with a capacity at that time of 250 pupils. Truxton maintained its own school in that building until 1969, when it was

pressured by the State to consolidate with the Homer Central School District. The building remained an elementary school for grades kindergarten through sixth until 2015, when the Homer School District Board voted to surplus the building and bus existing students to Homer. Most of the Town is in the Homer School District with a small area in the northwest corner served by Tully and the southwest corner served by McGraw School District. Students are bused to and from their respective schools. There are some parents who opt for homeschooling, private schooling, vocational school, or sending their children to other public school districts. As of the writing of this plan, there is an effort by the community to create a public charter school called Truxton Academy. The community group that has proposed the charter school seeks to promote rural living, improve academic quality, reduce transit time for students, and stabilize the community.

There are multiple higher education opportunities available nearby including community colleges, State colleges, private colleges, and universities.

Community Center

In January of 2016, a community based non-profit organization, The Truxton Alumni and Community Supports, Inc., purchased the school building from the Homer Central School District. At this time, work is just in the formative stages to make the building into a multi-use community center.

Health Care

There are no health care facilities or physicians located in Truxton. The nearest health care providers are located in Tully, Cortland, Homer, and Cincinnatus and the nearest Hospital is in Cortland. The nearest level one trauma center, regional perinatal center, and children's hospital are in Syracuse.

Public and Private Recreation

The Town owns and operates the John J. McGraw Ball Fields on the west side of Cheningo Rd, adjacent to the Town Depot.

The Town's ball field provides public access to the Tioughnioga River for canoeing and fishing. Labrador Creek is an excellent trout stream, especially further upstream, but there is no provision for public access to its banks.

The major commercial recreational facility in the Town is Labrador Mountain Ski Center north of the hamlet on Route 91. It is a ski center that draws many from the Syracuse metropolitan area. However, facilities for overnight stays are limited and the Center is mostly open only during the winter season, although occasional non-winter events are held there.

A major camping facility for recreational vehicles exists on Hickey Road on the central eastern border of the Town called Forest Lake Campground. This is a private commercial campground that could be expanded if road access were improved between the campground and the hamlet center.

Truxton Survey Response Totals (244 Total Surveys)

	Disagree				Agree		Total
	1	2	3	4	5		
Community Atmosphere							
1.) Truxton is a good place to live	3	7	31	71	131	243	
2.) The rural setting is an asset	2	6	13	46	175	242	
3.) Truxton is a safe place to live	1	8	19	70	144	242	
4.) Historical Architecture should be maintained	13	9	47	61	110	240	
5.) Small-town atmosphere is desirable	2	7	20	56	156	241	
Growth and Development							
6.) Maintain environmental quality	4	8	19	61	151	243	
7.) Protect water resources	6	5	13	46	174	244	
8.) Encourage agriculture	5	6	24	62	146	243	
9.) Restore historical structures	18	17	50	78	78	241	
10.) Support residential construction	10	11	42	75	97	235	
11.) Maintain and improve local roads	2	4	15	59	162	242	
12.) Enforcement of the local junk yard law	15	6	19	43	153	236	
13.) Develop a community center	22	13	62	55	85	237	
14.) Expand tax base	18	11	48	59	80	216	
15.) Provide employment opportunities	13	11	38	65	99	226	
16.) Encourage heavy industrial development	92	47	58	26	9	232	
17.) Encourage light industrial development	44	27	60	63	43	237	
18.) Encourage commercial development	41	30	50	64	45	230	
19.) Provide public water in Truxton hamlet	101	32	48	27	22	230	
Community Services: Truxton has adequate							

20.)	Fire protection	5	7	29	64	138	243
21.)	Schools	96	25	48	22	38	229
22.)	Postal Service	10	21	41	53	114	239
23.)	Parks	28	31	67	50	55	231
24.)	Recreation opportunities	34	29	69	55	48	235
25.)	Ambulance service	23	15	49	74	72	233
26.)	Medical care	66	41	50	46	34	237
27.)	Land use regulations	25	19	79	48	55	226
28.)	Enforcement of current regulations	28	28	69	50	51	226
29.)	Transfer station	11	3	19	67	135	235
30.)	Senior citizen programs	6	11	56	65	81	219
31.)	Town website	14	19	75	53	54	215
Housing Needs							
31.)	More senior housing	34	26	80	55	39	234
32.)	More new home construction	17	25	69	46	73	230
33.)	More affordable housing	43	33	70	48	42	236
34.)	More apartment complexes	110	56	41	19	12	238
35.)	More mobile home parks	170	30	25	7	8	240
Recreation							
36.)	Develop more programs for adults	20	29	82	58	45	234
37.)	Develop more programs for youth	15	14	39	72	99	239
38.)	Need more snowmobile trails	54	40	81	24	18	217
39.)	Need more playgrounds	35	31	79	46	42	233
40.)	Need more nature/walking trails	44	29	56	44	67	240
41.)	Fund Recreation with tax dollars	76	40	53	36	24	229

42.) Other:	2	3	3	6	12	26
43.) Other:	1	2	3	4	10	20
44.) Other:	1	2	3	4	9	19

What would you like to see in Truxton?

45.) Community library and resource center	4	30	32	57	70	233
46.) Medical office	46	28	51	43	62	230
47.) Grocery/convenience store	19	14	40	53	107	233
48.) Community center	29	13	56	51	86	235
49.) Automotive repair	33	23	81	40	41	218
50.) Dog park	114	36	40	21	19	230
51.) Office or business park	90	27	51	49	13	230
52.) Manufacturing / Industry	91	35	46	36	23	231
53.) Pre-school	35	11	46	44	100	236
54.) Daycare facility	27	13	47	51	97	235
55.) Tuition-free public/charter school	37	12	38	31	112	230
56.) Fitness center	33	29	53	43	77	235
57.) Hotel / Motel	102	48	55	14	9	228
58.) RV Park	128	28	46	14	16	232
59.) ATM	74	30	51	39	36	230
60.) ATV Trails	81	27	44	34	44	230
61.) Other:	1	2	3	6	15	27
62.) Other:	1	2	3	4	11	21
63.) Other:	1	2	3	4	7	17

Homeowner 204

Renter 14

Seasonal

3

Year Round Resident

149

Truxton Survey Percent Response Totals (244 Total Surveys)

	Total Responses	<u>Disagree (%)</u>				<u>Agree (%)</u>
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Community Atmosphere						
1.) Truxton is a good place to live	241	1.26%	2.93%	12.55%	29.29%	54.39%
2.) The rural setting is an asset	240	0.84%	2.52%	5.46%	18.91%	72.69%
3.) Truxton is a safe place to live	240	0.42%	3.36%	7.56%	28.57%	60.50%
4.) Historical Architecture should be maintained	238	5.51%	3.81%	18.64%	25.85%	45.76%
5.) Small-town atmosphere is desirable	239	0.84%	2.95%	8.44%	23.21%	64.98%
Growth and Development						
6.) Maintain environmental quality	241	1.67%	3.35%	7.95%	25.52%	61.51%
7.) Protect water resources	242	2.50%	2.08%	5.42%	19.17%	70.83%
8.) Encourage agriculture	241	2.09%	2.51%	9.62%	25.94%	59.83%
9.) Restore historical structures	239	7.56%	7.14%	21.01%	32.35%	31.93%
10.) Support residential construction	233	4.33%	4.33%	18.18%	32.03%	41.13%
11.) Maintain and improve local roads	240	0.84%	1.68%	5.88%	24.79%	66.81%
12.) Enforcement of the local junk yard law	234	6.47%	2.59%	8.19%	18.53%	64.22%
13.) Develop a community center	235	9.44%	5.15%	26.18%	23.61%	35.62%
14.) Expand tax base	214	8.49%	4.72%	22.17%	27.83%	36.79%
15.) Provide employment opportunities	224	5.86%	4.50%	17.12%	28.83%	43.69%
16.) Encourage heavy industrial development	230	39.47%	20.18%	25.00%	11.40%	3.95%
17.) Encourage light industrial development	235	18.45%	11.59%	24.46%	27.04%	18.45%
18.) Encourage commercial development	228	17.70%	13.27%	21.68%	27.88%	19.47%
19.) Provide public water in Truxton hamlet	228	43.81%	13.72%	20.80%	11.95%	9.73%
Community Services: Truxton has adequate						
20.) Fire protection	241	2.09%	2.93%	11.30%	26.36%	57.32%
21.) Schools	227	41.78%	11.11%	20.44%	9.78%	16.89%
22.) Postal Service	237	4.24%	8.90%	16.95%	22.03%	47.88%
23.) Parks	229	11.45%	13.22%	29.52%	21.59%	24.23%
24.) Recreation opportunities	233	14.72%	12.12%	29.44%	23.38%	20.35%
25.) Ambulance service	231	9.61%	6.55%	20.52%	32.31%	31.00%
26.) Medical care	235	27.90%	17.60%	20.17%	19.74%	14.59%
27.) Land use regulations	224	10.36%	8.11%	35.14%	21.62%	24.77%

28.)	Enforcement of current regulations	224	11.71%	12.16%	30.63%	22.52%	22.97%
29.)	Transfer station	233	4.76%	1.30%	7.79%	29.00%	57.14%
30.)	Senior citizen programs	217	2.79%	5.12%	26.05%	29.77%	36.28%
31.)	Town website	214	6.60%	8.49%	34.43%	25.00%	25.47%
Housing Needs							
31.)	More senior housing	232	14.78%	10.87%	33.91%	23.48%	16.96%
32.)	More new home construction	228	7.52%	10.62%	30.09%	20.35%	31.42%
33.)	More affordable housing	234	18.53%	13.79%	29.31%	20.69%	17.67%
34.)	More apartment complexes	236	46.15%	23.50%	17.09%	8.12%	5.13%
35.)	More mobile home parks	238	70.34%	12.71%	10.59%	2.97%	3.39%
Recreation							
36.)	Develop more programs for adults	232	8.26%	12.61%	35.22%	24.78%	19.13%
37.)	Develop more programs for youth	237	6.38%	5.96%	16.17%	30.21%	41.28%
38.)	Need more snowmobile trails	215	24.41%	18.31%	37.56%	11.27%	8.45%
39.)	Need more playgrounds	231	13.97%	13.10%	34.50%	20.09%	18.34%
40.)	Need more nature/walking trails	238	18.64%	12.29%	23.31%	18.22%	27.54%
41.)	Fund Recreation with tax dollars	227	33.33%	17.33%	23.11%	16.00%	10.22%
What would you like to see in Truxton?							
45.)	Community library and resource center	231	18.34%	13.10%	13.54%	24.89%	30.13%
46.)	Medical office	228	19.91%	12.39%	22.12%	18.58%	26.99%
47.)	Grocery/convenience store	231	8.30%	6.11%	17.47%	22.71%	45.41%
48.)	Community center	233	12.12%	5.63%	23.81%	22.08%	36.36%
49.)	Automotive repair	216	14.95%	10.75%	37.85%	17.76%	18.69%
50.)	Dog park	228	49.56%	15.93%	17.70%	8.85%	7.96%
51.)	Office or business park	228	38.94%	11.95%	22.12%	21.68%	5.31%
52.)	Manufacturing / Industry	229	38.77%	15.42%	20.26%	15.42%	10.13%
53.)	Pre-school	234	14.66%	4.31%	19.83%	18.97%	42.24%
54.)	Daycare facility	233	11.26%	5.19%	20.35%	22.08%	41.13%
55.)	Tuition-free public/charter school	228	15.93%	5.31%	16.37%	13.72%	48.67%
56.)	Fitness center	233	13.85%	12.55%	22.94%	18.61%	32.03%
57.)	Hotel / Motel	226	44.64%	21.43%	24.55%	6.25%	3.13%
58.)	RV Park	230	55.26%	12.28%	20.18%	5.70%	6.58%
59.)	ATM	228	32.30%	12.83%	22.57%	16.81%	15.49%
60.)	ATV Trails	228	34.51%	11.95%	19.03%	15.04%	19.47%

There may be small discrepancies between the survey percentages table versus the percentages in the text. The text percentages were updated to include the last few late survey submissions, whereas the survey percentages table was not updated with those additional few surveys.

Summary of most frequently cited survey written comments:

- approximately 20 commenters stressed the need to clean up and maintain properties with several specifically referring to enforcement of the junk car ordinance.
- a significant number commented on preserving natural resources and their relationship to tourism and recreation.
- several expressed thanks for the opportunity for public input via the survey.

Chapter IV

IV. Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to guide policies and actions affecting the physical environment and to consider the effects of any decisions regarding development on the social, cultural, economic and aesthetic assets of the Town. In order to ensure a solid basis for determining the goals and objectives of the plan, a Community Values Survey was mailed to the approximately 862 residents of the Town over the age of 18. A total of 244 surveys were returned and reviewed. Several responders included written comments with their completed survey. The survey responses (including the written comments) were utilized as the basis for development of the goals and objectives detailed herein. *The discussion in this chapter reflects survey questions having responses that more than 50% of the residents either agreed or disagreed with the topic.*

An overwhelming number of survey responders (more than 80%) considered Truxton to be a good, safe place to live and considered the small town atmosphere to be desirable. Over 90% considered the rural setting to be an asset. The overwhelming support for maintaining a rural setting and small town atmosphere serves as both a strong guideline for interpreting survey results and developing goals and objectives.

In order for the Town to be successful in preserving a rural environment and maintaining the small town atmosphere, any proposed projects or changes should be carefully reviewed to ensure they do not unreasonably interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life and property of others, or significantly change the character of the Town.

Natural Resources – Town residents demonstrated a very strong desire to maintain environmental quality (87%), specifically with respect to protecting water resources (90%).

Goals Ensure that public policies and actions reflect the value of protecting the innate and existing natural resources and support broad community awareness of environmental, social and economic interdependency as well as the potential consequences of unplanned growth and change.

There was strong opposition (58%) to providing a **public water supply in the hamlet** with a much smaller level of support (21%).

Approximately 50% believed the **Town Website** was adequate.

Recreation – The results for the various questions regarding the need for recreational facilities were somewhat equally distributed with the exception of the need to develop more **youth programs** (72%), and 66% agreed that Truxton has adequate **Senior Citizen programs**.

Goal Encourage recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

Objectives - Take advantage of any future unique situations that could further enhance the Town's recreational opportunities related to utilizing the natural setting and State Forests. Continue the appointment and operation of the Town's Recreation Committee. Whenever possible, support public and private efforts to help aid the development of youth programming through federal, state and private funding opportunities, and incorporating youth programming into the "community center" mentioned in the **Community Facilities** objectives below. It should be noted, however, that nearly 51% responded that recreational program development should not be funded with **tax dollars**.

Community Facilities – Of the sixteen existing or potential community facilities listed on the survey, seven received majority support and four received majority disapproval, the rest being a mixed bag of support and non-support. Having a community center garnered 59% support, a community library and resource center 55%, a grocery/convenience store 69%, and a fitness center 51% support. Additionally, having a daycare facility was supported by 63%, a pre-school by 61%, and a tuition-free charter school by 62% of the respondents, and 53% of respondents deemed the current schools as inadequate and 26% rated them as adequate. A number of responders submitted written comments strongly supporting an elementary charter school.

Alternatively, 65% disagreed with having a dog park, 66% disagreed with having a hotel/motel, 67% disagreed on a RV park, and 55% disagreed with manufacturing/industry in the Town of Truxton, and 51% were not in favor of an office or business park..

Goal Encourage the development and on-going success of the types of community facilities and educational venues supported by the majority of respondents.

Objectives With the purchase of the Truxton School by the Truxton Alumni & Community Supports, Inc, a non-profit founded to operate the building as a community center, the development and establishment of a tuition-free charter school, a library and resource center, a daycare, a pre-school, and a fitness center become viable and feasible possibilities. Encourage community members and groups to work together to develop such resources in the Town and support public and private efforts to effect their initiation, development, and long term success. Support the existence of a grocery or convenience store in the hamlet.

“Truxton could stand to have a better education system whether that be a charter school or having the Town redistricted in to a neighboring district that is doing better such as Tully or Fabius...”

“Truxton would be a much better town/community if we had an elementary school again.”

“...A community center at the new charter school is great idea...”

“We love living in Truxton. Looking forward to continued community building and the possibility of the new charter school. We value the natural resources and love hiking on state land and supporting small, local businesses is important to us as well.”

“...Work with the Truxton Alumni’s and Community Supporters and Truxton Academy Charter School Committee to develop a community center, branch library, and recreational events for adults and youth at the (old) Hartnett School.”

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



JAMES L. SEWARD
SENATOR, 51ST DISTRICT

December 2, 2015

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CHAIRMAN, MAJORITY PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN
INSURANCE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEES

RULES

FINANCE

EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION

AGRICULTURE

HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. Cindy Denkenberger, President
Truxton Academy Charter School Board of Trustees
7738 Shackham Road
Tully, N.Y. 13159

Dear Ms. Denkenberger:

Since you first briefed me on the community's plan to preserve the Hartnett School in Truxton as an educational institution, I have been impressed by the community's unity and by its support for establishing the *Truxton Academy Charter School*.

This is no small undertaking in this day and age – to acquire an older school, rally a community to preserve it, and develop a path toward an alternative, rural-focused education that has excited the area residents. It is clear that the mission of the academy is to continue the anchor in the Truxton community that the Hartnett School has been for generations. The life of our small, rural communities often surrounds the activities of the local school, and a revitalized Hartnett School will provide that center.

I am sure that the trustees' application will receive careful review by the state, and the effort that has been poured into the application will secure the necessary approvals.

Continued community support for the establishment of the Truxton Academy Charter School is clear, and I extend my applause to those in the community who have labored toward this very end.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,


JAMES L. SEWARD
State Senator

JLS:dd:jt

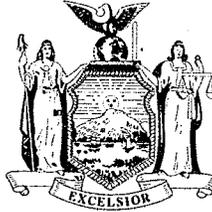
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**THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK**



JAMES L. SEWARD
SENATOR, 51ST DISTRICT

November 16, 2015

**CHAIRMAN, MAJORITY PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**CHAIRMAN
INSURANCE COMMITTEE**

COMMITTEES

RULES

FINANCE

EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION

AGRICULTURE

HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH

NOV 18 2015

Hon. Gus Wehbe, Town Supervisor
Members of the Town Board
Town of Truxton
PO Box 121
Truxton, New York 13158

Dear Supervisor Wehbe and Members of the Town Board,

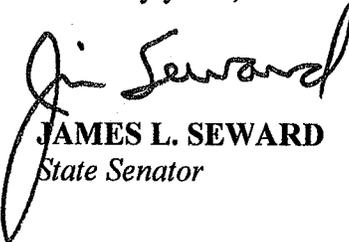
This is to acknowledge receipt of the town board's resolution in support of Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters, Inc. As always, I appreciate hearing from the local governments I am privileged to represent.

I will review the resolution and be sensitive to the town board's concerns. In the meantime, I will maintain my continued support for dynamic and innovative academic opportunities in our rural upstate New York towns.

Again, thank you for contacting me. Please do not hesitate to do so again if I can be of additional assistance.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,


JAMES L. SEWARD
State Senator

JLS:cm:jt





THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

Assistant Minority Leader

COMMITTEES
Agriculture
Banks
Corrections
Insurance
Rules

Gary D. Finch
Assemblyman 126th District
Cayuga, Chenango,
Cortland and Onondaga Counties

December 10, 2015

Ms. Cindy Denkenberger, President
Truxton Academy Charter School Board of Trustees
7738 Shackham Road
Tully, NY 13159

Dear Ms. Denkenberger:

As a past member of the Conference Committee on Education and as a current member of the Conference Committee on Higher Education, I have long maintained that the local community's dedication to its elementary school in Truxton stands as a strong example to other districts throughout New York State. Upon review of your application to the NYS Education Department to establish the Truxton Academy Charter School, I am even more impressed.

You have already signaled to the Department of Education your commitment to Truxton Academy by establishing a board, purchasing the former Hartnett School and defining a mission that emphasizes project based learning, technology, and community collaboration. Your emphasis on preserving rural education, targeting economically disadvantaged families and offering alternatives to students with disabilities are both pragmatic and innovative. I believe that all of the above, along with the Town Board Resolution will be appreciated by NYSED upon final review.

I will keep your concerns in mind as the process moves forward, as well as in Committee work and on the Floor of the New York State Assembly. If I may be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me. Best Wishes.

Sincerely,

Gary D. Finch
Assistant Minority Leader
126th Assembly District

GDF: sbr



CLAUDIA TENNEY
Assemblywoman 101st District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Banks Committee
COMMITTEES
Codes
Education
Judiciary
Social Services
Veterans' Affairs

March 28, 2016

Chancellor Betty Rosa
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Board of Regents, Room 110 EB
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Chancellor Rosa:

As a member of the New York State Assembly Committee on Education, I write in support of the Truxton Academy Charter School's application to become a Board of Regents-authorized charter school in New York State.

The idea to open the Truxton Academy Charter School came to fruition after the closure of the local elementary school. Community advocates, who were looking to provide an alternative for students and parents, began working together to create a school that offers small class sizes, a tailored education and a hands on learning experience.

After the closure of the elementary school, local leaders organized a board and worked diligently to raise enough funds to purchase the then empty elementary school. Once they were able to raise the funds, they then began the journey of forming a charter school.

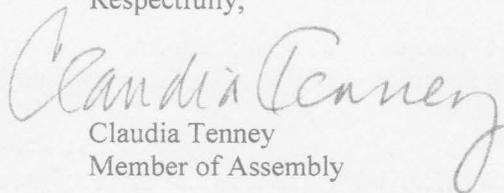
The Truxton Charter School is a great alternative which offers students an environment that is conducive to promoting high educational standards, accountability, and a tailored learning experience.

I recently had the opportunity to visit the Truxton Academy Charter School and speak with their staff and tour the facilities. The story of this school is inspiring as the community worked together to fill a void left by a closed elementary school. While I do not support Charter Schools in some situations, the rural nature of this school district and the importance of maintaining an accessible school to young children, make the case for the charter school in Truxton a compelling situation.

I highly recommend that the Truxton Academy Charter School's application to become a Board of Regents-authorized charter school in New York State is granted. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Respectfully,


Claudia Tenney
Member of Assembly

CT/ha

Nov. 1, 2015

To whom it may concern:

This letter is written in support of creating a charter school in Truxton, N.Y. Background information on the author is submitted at the end of the letter for the purpose of identifying experience in the area of unique educational opportunities.

Two clearly defined questions relate to the idea of a charter school in Truxton: First, why a charter school and second, why in Truxton. The following endorsements address both of the questions.

The consolidated school concept was conceived as a way to bring the strengths of a larger school district to smaller, more rural areas lacking resources. This concept worked well until recently, when more reliable transportation was provided, and the advent of computers, with the internet and social media becoming a reality. No longer do small rural areas of the country need to take a back seat to more urban centers. Very few interests today cannot be satisfied in the most remote of locations, and in fact the interests of each individual can be met more easily in a smaller group than a larger one. The exact same information is available to all.

In a larger consolidated district, the interests of the whole naturally take precedence. Subject matter and level of instruction is often taught to the level and interests of the average student, and at a pace the norm can process. In a smaller group, such concepts as individual skills and interests can more easily be accommodated without disruption. In addition, the personal background, history, abilities and accomplishments can more easily fit the student, because the instructor most likely knows the family background.

Subject matter is another area of interest. As long as certain criteria are adhered to, meeting state requirements in a general area, more innovative styles within that subject area of instruction can lead to startling results not conceived of in a larger school district with all of its rules, bureaucracy, and self-interests at the ready to be battled over. The larger the school, the more likely someone's ego is at risk.

An elementary charter school in Truxton can tailor its curriculum to such heretofore seldom addressed subject areas as agri- and aqua-culture, outdoor education and recreation, animal husbandry, dendrology and forestry, and a host of more rural educational concepts relating to ecology that a larger school has less interest in but never-the-less is becoming more important to us all. Even more to the point, as this country accepts ever more immigrants in large numbers, particularly from Spanish speaking countries with skills of a more basic rural nature, they bring with them children that need to learn English to succeed beyond their present circumstances. By teaching Spanish to all, beginning in the earliest grades, these young immigrants can quickly feel they are a part of the whole by helping those with only English skills, and are part of a group helping each other to succeed. In turn, normally English speaking students learn a skill enabling them to deal with and conduct business with a larger demographic. Children take to this concept much more readily than adults, learn more easily at a young age, and retain these skills longer. Early "foreign" language skills would be a cornerstone of the Truxton Charter School.

So, why is Truxton the place for a charter school?

First, students in Truxton ride a school bus many hours each way every day, for a total of sometimes two or three hours every school day. The more "consolidated" the school district, the more time spent on a bus, burning ever smaller oil reserves and wasting time better spent in more constructive areas. In some cases, these bus rides exceed the actual instructional time spent by many students in

essential basic areas such as science, math, and other core subjects. This is an important reason why some "home schooled" students accomplish their work in half a day and often exceed testing out of proportion with some conventional students. Added up over twelve or thirteen years of a traditional school experience, is it any wonder that many parents are looking for alternatives?

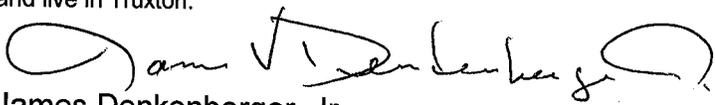
The subject of our failing schools is a topic for another day, but is important. If the goal of government is to provide a level of standards we want most young people to meet, it seems to me that charter schools provides an alternative to larger schools, without totally losing control as is the case with home schooling. A charter school might appeal to that segment of our society that rebels in greater and greater numbers by opting out of such things as standardized testing, for instance, but still would provide the ability of the state to oversee education while moving in the direction people seem to want. Again, a topic for another day.

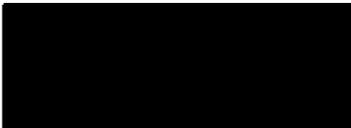
The Truxton area is a mostly rural (you may have guessed) area surrounded by large tracts of not only farm land worked by immigrants, in some cases, but thousands of acres of state forest, state identified "unique areas", ski centers, streams, rivers, ponds, lakes and the like, and is not far from S.U.N.Y. College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Cornell School of Agriculture, and several colleges with concentrations in outdoor higher education. In fact, these schools often conduct classes in the township of Truxton because of the very unique characteristics of the nature areas that abound here. Beginning an elementary school with a focus on rural education seems like a good fit with these schools a ready nearby resource.

As an additional perhaps tangential consideration, the community as a whole lacks a larger central place for other activities such as indoor sports and community events. While not a reason by itself for a charter school, the closing of our local school building has, through the actions of the school board, virtually eliminated Truxton as a viable community center. This small community as a whole has risen up and supported the concept of a charter school to the point where they appear to be successful in out-bidding others in purchasing our original school building. The opening of a local school could also give consideration to such amenities as after school programs for working parents, senior center activities and the like.

By concentrating on an approach through a rural ecologically based curriculum, the skills needed to focus on such subject matter as outlined above can prepare our students for much needed careers as environmental scientists, advanced farming adherents, outdoor recreation experts, and other careers in the same way we are preparing other more urban-focused students in our present school systems to prepare for jobs in factories, offices and the like. Shouldn't there be an alternative?

My background includes attending approximately a dozen very large and small schools prior to college. This includes schools for military dependents both in the U.S. and overseas, where the language of the country was a requirement as early as kindergarten, as well as conventional public schools in the northeast, southeast and west, where the language of the locale was not required, but helpful. I have been employed both in government and private practice, as well as my own business, and have served on many governmental boards and agencies as well as the local school board. Currently I am retired and serve as County Legislator in Cortland County N.Y. and live in Truxton.


James Denkenberger, Jr.



Linda Jones



February 18, 2016

New York State Department of Education
Re: Truxton Academy Charter School Application

To whom it may concern:

The vision of a model rural charter school was conceived by a tight knit community in the small town of Truxton after their elementary school was closed. The school was the heart of this community. It had far more community and parental involvement than your average public school. They organized and fought diligently to save their school. When this battle was lost, they did not give up on their commitment to preserve their local school and all it had to offer their community, their children and their grandchildren.

With a new vision and perseverance to make their closed school something even better than before, they committed their time, money, tireless energy and souls to establishing a charter school in their rural area. A school that will offer a more outstanding education and alternative targeting project based learning. It will be a nurturing school with hands on learning. Students will be taught to be independent problem solving thinkers.

The local community organized, formed a board of trustees and passed a town resolution. Then this tenacious group did the impossible. They raised enough funds to purchase their closed school. They did this with the students of the closed Hartnett Elementary at their sides.

Their goal is to offer greater flexibility and accountability for better performance in a setting that will be conducive to providing a better education to its students. A charter school provides choices and learning experiences that cannot be attained in a public school. Educational choices are not available to rural children as they are in urban areas.

This group demonstrates strong financial management skills. I see them as extremely capable of providing a successful charter school and expanding on it in the years to come. The youth of Truxton and the surrounding area will flourish with such a school.

I highly support the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School and would encourage you to grant them their application to bring it to fruition.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Linda Jones".

Linda Jones
Cortland County Legislator
District 9



Letter of Support

December 2nd, 2015

Dear Ms. Denkenberger and the Board of Directors,

It was a pleasure to meet with you and the other members of the board of directors for the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School. I think your group's tour of our new cultured dairy products plant, Byrne Hollow Farm, clearly illustrates how important agriculture is to the long term success of the Byrne Dairy enterprise.

Your mission, to develop the next generation of agricultural leaders, is going to support the continued success of New York State agribusiness. Students of this project-based learning system will have exposure to the science and technology that will enable them to be the next generation of dairy producers, food processors, and agribusiness leaders. Byrne Dairy's mission relies on the continued supply of high quality milk for all its products and a source of technically competent individuals for its workforce.

Please consider this letter an expression of our support for this progressive and proactive approach to education.

Sincerely,



Carl Byrne
President, Byrne Dairy

Cortland Bulk Milk Producers

3819 Rt. 11 South

Cortland, NY 13045

June 13, 2015

RE: Truxton Academy Charter School, Truxton, NY

Greetings to all who are concerned,

I am writing to express the support of Cortland Bulk Milk Producers Co-op, Inc., for a charter school in Truxton, New York. The milk we produce on our seventy plus dairy farms every year can be processed into many milk products for school children and other people including beverage milk, yogurt, and several styles of cheeses, butter, and dried milk powder. Our farms employ hundreds of people year round to produce this milk. We need quality employees who are numerate, literate, science minded and technologically savvy with a hands on, get the job done attitude. A school which promotes experiential learning, group projects, positive attitudes and personal responsibility will help develop the type of citizen workers we need for our farm, our community, our country and the world.

This school will benefit from the involvement of community businesses and individuals. It will be an anchor for the community and a foundation for successful lives and careers of the students privileged to attend Truxton Academy. We support Truxton Academy for these reasons.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martin Young". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Martin Young, Secretary

June 9, 2015

Cortland County Farm Bureau
1393 NYS Rte 222
Cortland, NY 13045

Truxton Academy Charter School
Truxton, NY

Greetings,

This letter is to show my personal support as well as support from my business for a charter school in Truxton, NY. I recognize that to make this school successful, local businesses and community members must be an integral part. My support is behind this school and I will do my part to help make it a success.

Creating an educational support within our community for our children will solidify our future. I look forward to this school opening and being a prized element of our community.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Fouts".

Paul Fouts
President, Cortland County Farm Bureau

Hiawatha Inn

December 2, 2015

Truxton Academy Charter School
PO Box 102
Truxton, New York 13158

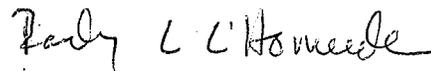
Dear Ms. Cindy Denkenberger:

As a resident and business owner in the Town of Truxton I am pleased to support the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School. It excites me to learn of what opportunities will be provided to the children through project based learning activities with a focus on science, technology, engineering and math. Also, a school close to where the children live will enable the families of our community to participate in the fullest. Students are most successful when there is family involvement.

I recognize it is the community that supports my local business, and a community with a good school keeps families in the area and attracts families to the area. A good school is one of the cornerstones in sustaining and improving the quality of life for residents in rural New York while in turn the residents support local businesses.

In discussions with the founding members of the Truxton Academy Charter School, I, too, share the vision you have for our community by developing a school to meet and exceed the needs of our children. It is my pleasure to offer my full support in building a strong community relationship.

Sincerely,



Randy L. L'Hommedieu
Owner
Hiawatha Inn

June 11, 2015

RE: Truxton Academy Charter School, Truxton, NY

To All Who Have the Best Interest of our Children in Mind,

We've all heard the old adage "It takes a village." The proposed charter school in Truxton exemplifies just that—in order for our community to raise great adults, we need to take a proactive approach and play an integral role in their lives as children. We need to instill in them lessons of accountability, respect and leadership, ultimately shaping their unshakeable, upstanding character.

As a parent of two boys who are now grown adults, I understand the importance of being an active and engaged participant in children's lives, and that doesn't just happen by accident. To build this strong foundation, I strongly believe a charter school is imperative to our community's growth and success in raising our future leaders. As a businessowner in the Central New York area and a resident of Truxton, I will do whatever I can to ensure the school's success throughout the many years to come.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration. I'm looking forward to the Truxton Academy Charter School gracing our community with its ambition, inspiration and innovation.

Best,



Edward C. Mertens, Jr.

Creative Director and Partner, Integrated Marketing Services, Inc.



June 16, 2015

Reakes Country Goods

4107 Route 13

Truxton, NY 13158

To whom it may concern:

We are writing on behalf of the Truxton Academy Charter School. Our family operated farm market of four generations salutes the efforts being made to create a new educational environment in our community.

This proposed school could rejuvenate the appeal of the rural lifestyle, needed to maintain our local farmland and environment. Supporting small, rural education systems in their own element such as this seems like a productive way to develop agricultural and environmental awareness. We appreciate the states support of agri-tourism and marketing campaigns to "Buy Local & Eat Fresh", but if active educational facilities are not available to young families maintaining the rural settings then our agricultural lifestyle will be in jeopardy of disintegrating.

Allowing children to develop in a hands on, project-based charter school, promotes purpose, self-confidence, and a passion for learning. We need our future generations to be well educated, motivated and equipped to build sustainable communities while sharing historic values.

We request your support in helping our community utilize our resources in the development of the Truxton Academy Charter School.

Sincerely,

Kay Reakes
Darrel Reakes

Darrel & Kay Reakes

February 5, 2015

. . .

Southern Hills Veterinary Hospital
38 Clinton Street
PO Box 700
Tully, NY 13159

Truxton Academy Charter School
Academy Street
Truxton, NY

Greetings,

This letter is to show the support from my business for a charter school in Truxton, NY. I recognize that to make this school successful local businesses and community members must be an integral part. My support is behind this school and I will do my part to help make it a success.

An agricultural school in Truxton will be a huge benefit to the young students in and around our community. As a veterinarian I look forward to providing any type of animal related instruction, whether at the school or providing hands on experience at my veterinary hospital.

Kind Regards,
Lydia Aris VMD

Elaine and Dave Sturges
P.O. Box 44
Truxton, NY 13158

June 18, 2015

Charter School Office
New York State Department of Education
Albany, NY

Greetings,

The intent of this letter is to communicate our personal support for the Truxton Academy Charter School. This new School aims to implement Project Based Learning and increase children's awareness and connection with agriculture, the environment and nature.

Elaine is a retired elementary teacher and has 17 years of experience working as a naturalist. For the past 3 years, Elaine has volunteered her time and hands-on materials to help students in Truxton engage in hands-on nature programs that increase children's knowledge of local plants and wildlife as well as reading, writing, and math skills. She will continue to help children in the Truxton Academy Charter School by volunteering to facilitate nature education programs and field trips. She is an experienced teacher at the elementary and university levels and will serve on the Board of Trustees for the new school.

Dave is an experienced forester. We own a forestry property 5 miles from Truxton. We can help facilitate field trips to help the children engage in Project-Based Learning activities linked to forest habitats.

We recognize that community members need to be an integral part of the new Charter School for it to be successful. We support the Truxton Academy Charter School and will help to make it successful.

Sincerely,

Elaine and Dave Sturges

Twin Oaks Dairy LLC
3175 State Route 13
Truxton, NY 13158-3107

February 8, 2015

New York State Education Department
The Regents of the University of the State of New York
Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Charter School Office Staff,

I am writing to vocalize my support for an elementary age charter school in Truxton, NY. Since the Homer Central School District has made the decision to close the elementary school here in Truxton, the circumstances are in place for the start of a charter school to continue the long tradition of a community based elementary school and to provide for a creative, dynamic, project based learning environment that will meet the needs of our community's young children.

Having an elementary school in the Town is a plus for our business in order to help encourage high quality employees with young children to work for us. I also want the option available for grandchildren to come. Our farm would welcome being a partner with a Truxton Academy Charter School class each year.

Sincerely,



Kathie Arnold
Twin Oaks Dairy LLC Member

Martin Young

Whey Street Dairy LLC



June 13, 2015

RE: Truxton Academy Charter School, Truxton, NY

Greetings to all who are concerned,

I am writing to express my personal support and the support of my business, Whey Street Dairy, for a charter school in Truxton, New York. The milk we produce on our dairy farm every year can be processed into over thirty million servings of nutritious milk for school children and other people. We employ more than twelve people year round to produce this milk. We need quality employees who are numerate, literate, science minded and technologically savvy with a hands on, get the job done attitude. A school which promotes experiential learning, group projects, positive attitudes and personal responsibility will help develop the type of citizen workers we need for our farm, our community, our country and the world.

This school will benefit from the involvement of community businesses and individuals. It will be an anchor for the community and a foundation for successful lives and careers of the students privileged to attend Truxton Academy.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martin Young".



Designed by Megan Poole
6th Grade, 2005

TOWN OF TRUXTON

PO BOX 121, Truxton, New York 13158

TEL: (607) 842-6984 FAX: (607) 842-6943

Town Supervisor
Gus Wehbe

Town Clerk/Collector
Kimberly Reakes

Highway Superintendent
Jeffrey Reakes

Town Councilpersons
Stephanie Potter
Lloyd Sutton, Jr.
Nicole Albro Sprouse
Thomas E. Brown

Truxton Town Board Resolution in Support of Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc.

Whereas, Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation formed for the purpose of, enhancing our community's economic vitality and improving the quality of the life and rural services in Truxton, New York, including providing support to the establishment of a charter school in the community and/or other educational and community facilities and services, intended to attract new community members as well as developing other required services to improve the rural Truxton community as a whole, and all other lawful purposes concomitant or consistent with such objectives,

And whereas the Truxton community is experiencing the closing of a local elementary school (Hartnett Elementary School), by the Homer Central School District,

And whereas the long term effect of a community without a local elementary school may have significant negative effect on property values and quality of life in the Town of Truxton,

And whereas the purpose and goals of the Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc. is consistent with and enhances the goals of the Town of Truxton, now therefore be it

Resolved that the Truxton Town Board whole-heartily supports Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, Inc., and its goals in support of strengthening the Truxton community.

*Adopted by
Order of the
Truxton Town Board on
November 4, 2015*

*Kimberly Reakes
Town Clerk*

Truxton Academy Charter School

WHERE FUTURES ARE GROWN!

A new educational opportunity has presented itself to the Truxton community. With the strength this community has shown time and again, we can bring a school to our community that will bring our community back into our school.

Charter schools are exciting because they are public, and therefore tuition-free, yet have more flexibility in how they operate. Charter schools have their own governing board of trustees that makes decisions for that one school, and not for an entire school district. This makes keeping what's best for that school the priority.

Truxton Academy Charter School would be the first Agri-based, Rural Charter School in New York. It is important to our community to share with our younger generations the true value of rural living and its place in our future.

[SIGN our petition of support now!](#)

What makes Truxton Academy Charter School different?

- Project Based Learning with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math elements
- Governing board of trustees making decisions for our school only - not the whole district
- Strong Community and Parental involvement in our children's education



WHY CHOOSE TRUXTON ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL?

OUR MISSION:

Truxton Academy Charter School will cultivate an enthusiasm for learning through a project based curriculum that celebrates our rural life, environmental stewardship, and our agricultural heritage. Through real world, student centered learning we will plant a foundation for future academic success.

“RURAL SCHOOLS FILL AN INTEGRAL ROLE AS CENTERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND AS A BRIDGE FOR YOUTH TO CONNECT WITH THE BROADER SOCIETY IN FULFILLING THEIR DREAMS AND AMBITION”. (RURAL VISION INITIATIVE, FALL 2006, P. 9)

Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) will be located in Truxton, New York, a small rural town surrounded by farms and forest lands. Families, community members, and local business owners have expressed a need for a better education that is local, affordable, and unique, to better the future of our children and our rural community.

We will meet these needs by establishing a charter school that will actively engage students in meaningful hands-on projects where they will apply new knowledge and approach learning with excitement. Students will develop a sense of inquiry and self-confidence that promotes high academic achievement and lifelong learning. Incorporating positive aspects of two successful charter school models, [Walton 21st Century Rural Life Center located in Walton, Kansas](#); and [Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School in Syracuse, New York](#); TACS will construct a **STEM focused project-based curriculum** involving the local agricultural community. Our innovative **Rural Life Lab** will be a unique, alternative classroom setting. In addition, a **Second Language Immersion program** will be introduced starting at the kindergarten level with support from the Hopkins School District in Minnesota.

Project-Based Learning:

Truxton Academy Charter School staff and volunteers will create an active and engaging place-based experience for elementary children taking full advantage of our rural upstate New York setting. Our School will anchor its instruction in the principles of **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** providing students with opportunities for in-depth, authentic hands-on research. Studies indicate that PBL builds deeper and more retained knowledge, problem-solving abilities, team collaboration skills, and higher-level thinking skills (Condliffe et al., 2015; Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009; Walker & Leary, 2009). The PBL-based curriculum will be aligned to meet the NYS Common Core Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Social studies, fine arts, health and fitness activities will be seamlessly integrated into mathematics, science, and language arts curricula. Although a PBL focused High School (Seven Valleys New Tech Academy) will be opening in the area in the fall of 2016, PBL is only occasionally used in area school districts.

Environmental and Agriculture Focus:

The **Rural Life Lab** will provide students, teachers, and community volunteers the opportunity to integrate technology, agriculture, and environmental education into core academics. Our 5-year plan includes development of a greenhouse, chicken coop, animal barn and garden for students to practice skills and engage in hands-on projects. Each classroom will be responsible for part of the care and maintenance of our **Rural Life Lab** and will be **partnered with an area agri-business**. Students will benefit from this partnership through field trips, observations, guidance, and support in learning to understand and respect the value and rigor of farm family life. **Second Language Immersion:** Introducing a second language for our students (Common Core ELA Anchor Standards) and the evidence of success when introduced early in a child's education (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages - ACTFL), TACS will provide Spanish language instruction. This will assist the children in communicating with locally employed spanish speaking farm families and globally with many of the nations of our Western Hemisphere. The surrounding school districts do not currently offer language immersion programs at the elementary level.

Structures to Support School Culture:

Students will have opportunities to work and play in **heterogeneous age and ability groups** as they learn to respect and support one another's skills and differences, needs and backgrounds. Flexible grouping (Proehl, Douglas, et al. 2013) (Harding, 2015) of students and after-school student clubs will be supported by school staff and community volunteers. TACS plans to **involve parents, families and the community** through regular family programs and activities for the purpose of sharing and supporting student presentations, culminating learning activities, civic engagement. Our programs will be augmented with frequent field trips to local businesses and colleges.

Students and teachers will work closely with **higher education and professional advisors**. The TACS Board has connected with faculty members from Syracuse University, SUNY Cortland, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF), and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Trinity Valley Dairy, New Penn Farm, Reakes' Country Goods and Twin Oaks Dairy are a few of the local businesses committed to partnering with TACS, sharing resources and expertise. These colleges and businesses will be integral to expanding and enriching a meaningful place-based curriculum.

Rural community and culture is important to the Truxton Academy Charter School. Students who are educated in safe, structured environments that improve social-emotional competencies, do better academically (Bailey, 2015). School staff will receive training in Conscious Discipline (Bailey, 2015), a skill-based program to help educators, parents, and children resolve conflicts, achieve self-regulation, and build respectful relationships. Using Conscious Discipline (Bailey, 2015) skills, staff, parents, and students will work together to create a *School Family* that values positive character traits including honesty, kindness, and courage.

Instrumental and choral music, a variety of artistic opportunities and health and fitness activities will be provided for TACS students. Studies of these areas suggest that arts and physical education have favorable associations with students' cognitive skills, attitudes and their academic achievement (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010; President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2015).

Truxton Academy Charter School will offer an elective extended school day. This elongated school day will be available for students of all academic need. Enrichment opportunities will include after-school tutoring, social, academic, and sports clubs as well as additional time in our Rural Life Lab. Truxton Academy Charter School will also extend our school year, through additional days for orientation and optional summer learning programs. The research on the benefits of afterschool and summer learning programs shows that "those students who regularly attend well-structured after-school and/or summer learning programs demonstrate higher rates of attendance in school, have fewer discipline referrals, are more prepared for the academic rigors of school, and demonstrate increased achievement in core academic areas such as mathematics, science, reading, and language arts" (Pray , 2011, p. 2).

Truxton Academy Charter School will create an elementary school of excellence and choice and provide New York State with an innovative and successful pilot charter school for rural communities.

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Truxton Academy Charter School Facebook Social Media

<https://www.facebook.com/truxtonacademy/>

This screenshot shows the Facebook page for Truxton Academy Charter School. The page header includes the school's name and navigation options like Messages, Notifications, Insights, and Publishing Tools. A post from Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk, dated January 27, 2016, is visible. The main content is a post from Truxton Academy Charter School, published by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk on February 9. The post asks for thoughts on after-school programs and lists options: Extra-curricular learning opportunities, Sports, Theater, Vocal, Instrument, and Rural Life Lab (greenhouse, ag or environment activities). The post has reached 213 people. A comment from Matthew Denkenberger is visible, suggesting the addition of financial literacy and business planning. The right sidebar shows a 'Promote' section with statistics for 'THIS WEEK': 2 Post Reach, 2 Post Engagement, 0 Sign Up, 0 Website Clicks, 0 of 0 Response Rate, 15 days Response Time, and 0 Check-ins.

This screenshot shows the same Facebook page for Truxton Academy Charter School, but with the comments section expanded. The post from February 9 is still visible. Comments include: Matthew Denkenberger (February 9 at 1:04pm) suggesting financial literacy and business planning; Truxton Academy Charter School (February 9 at 1:06pm) responding to the comment; Krysta Button Austen (February 10 at 5:57am) discussing instrument lessons; and Claire Smith (February 10 at 5:57am) expressing interest in a local place for instrument lessons. The right sidebar statistics remain the same as in the previous screenshot.

Truxton Academy Charter School

December 3, 2015

Like Comment

PEOPLE ALSO LIKE

- Homer Central School District Public School
- Hiawatha Inn Restaurant
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Unlike · Reply · Message · 2 · February 10 at 5:57am

Claire Smith I would love a local place for my son to take instrument lessons asap. I have also heard from people that need local all day and before/after school care in this corner of the county! Due to work in Syracuse they are forced to take their young children to Lafayette at this time.

Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · February 9 at 7:06pm

Jenlea Cirbus Love all the option listed here! I am a Truxton resident with 3 little girls. My husband and I both work full time and would like to keep things local. I work out of town so it would be nice to not have to travel for recreation. Would love to see a garden, instrument and after school program with study and learning opportunities as well

Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · February 17 at 9:44pm

Tonyah Slater I think this is a great idea! As a working mother who is also taking full time classes, it would be great to know that instead of my kids just being at a sitters, they can be continuing to learn, receive homework help, and participate in activities th... See More

Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · February 15 at 8:36pm

Tom Brown Love the idea, extra help for kids as needed, clubs, outdoor activities, music,

Like · Reply · Message · 1 · February 9 at 12:47pm · Edited

Judi Mott Great but every kid does not need to be in everyone of them every year. One a season or semester is enough. Don't keep the kids so busy they have no free time. Parents do yourself a favor too.

Like · Reply · Message · February 10 at 10:00am

Amanda Brown All are great ideas!!

Like · Reply · Message · February 22 at 11:34am

Write a comment...

Promote

THIS WEEK

- 2 Post Reach
- 2 Post Engagement
- 0 Sign Up
- 0 Website Clicks
- 0 of 0 Response Rate
- 15 days Response Time
- 0 Check-ins

Chat (28)

Truxton Academy Charter School

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Truxton Academy Charter School

Published by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudemilk [?] · January 27 ·

What would you like your child to wear at Truxton Academy, uniforms or no uniforms?

This is an interesting discussion with most parents as some feel uniforms can be costly and limiting to children. Other parents see it as a cost saver and also a helpful tool in making one less battle to get ready in the morning.

Please comment with your vote and if you would like to see uniforms would you like simple polo shirt and jeans/khakis, or dress and jacket/tie, or something in betwe... See More

 Kids' School Uniforms & Outfits : Target Mobile

Shop Target.com for school uniforms for boys and girls - pants, shirts, skirts, polos, tights, shoes and more. Receive free shipping on select orders over 25!

M.TARGET.COM

263 people reached

Boost Post

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- 2 Post Reach
- 2 Post Engagement
- 0 Sign Up
- 0 Website Clicks
- 0 of 0 Response Rate
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- 0 Check-ins

Chat (24)

Truxton Academy Charter School

263 people reached

Boost Post

THIS WEEK

- 2 Post Reach
- 2 Post Engagement
- 0 Sign Up
- 0 Website Clicks
- 0 of 0 Response Rate
- 15 days Response Time
- 0 Check-ins

Like Comment Share

Patty Henry Dawson

2 shares

Write a comment...

Truxton Academy Charter School Thank you for your enthusiasm and frankness, Victoria. We greatly appreciate the feedback!

We are diligently working to provide the best school that this area has ever seen. It is amazing to see our team growing with more experienced and even more m... See More

Like Reply 1 Commented on by Cindy Denkenberger [?] · January 29 at 6:35pm · Edited

Molly McDermott I like the idea of simple uniforms because then everyone is the same. You don't have to worry about having the name brand clothes versus the cheaper brand at Wal-Mart or other discount stores. Besides that private and even parochial schools have some s... See More

Unlike Reply Message 2 · January 29 at 6:56am

Truxton Academy Charter School Very good points, thank you Molly!

Like Reply Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Lauder milk [?] · January 29 at 7:26am

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Truxton Academy Charter School

Victoria Preston My last comment prob came out harsh. I really hope the Hartnett school pans out. I hope that it offers services to its students in both academics and other areas in line with or superior to what is currently offered. We definitely support it. But I do think uniforms should be not even on the list of things to do!

Like Reply See Response · January 29 at 5:43pm

Truxton Academy Charter School How long is your child on the bus, just out of curiosity? Thanks for your involvement.

Like Reply Commented on by Tom Brown [?] · January 29 at 10:06pm

Judi Mott uniforms are okay but I feel they stifle a child's individuality. I dont think elementary kids really care about clothes others where unless they are outlandishly different. where in Truxton are people going to get that fancy clothes?

Like Reply Message 1 · January 28 at 12:35pm · Edited

Truxton Academy Charter School If parents support uniforms for their children then a simple uniform would make sense. That might be a certain color polo shirt which can be commonly found at childrens clothing stores. Truxton does not have shopping outlets to make childrens clothin... See More

Like Reply Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Lauder milk [?] · January 28 at 1:16pm · Edited

Tracey Cartland I think uniforms are a wonderful ideal I wore a uniform when I was in grade school. It can be one less thing to manage (argue about) in the morning. At my school, the last Friday of each month was always "dress down day" where we could wear what ev... See More

Unlike Reply Message 1 · February 1 at 11:46am

Patty Henry Dawson I LOVE the idea of uniforms! I think it allows the kids -

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Chat (24)

10:28 AM 6/28/2016

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The screenshot was added to your OneDrive.

Truxton Academy Charter School

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Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · February 1 at 11:46am

Patty Henry Dawson I LOVE the idea of uniforms! I think it allows the kids - especially at the elementary level - to see that they all belong and not having the pressure of "how they look" at that age. I prefer somewhat traditional with khakis (pants/shorts/skirt/jumper) and a polo - maybe jeans/school t-shirt Friday?

Like · Reply · Message · 2 · January 28 at 12:21pm

Kimberlee Jeanetta Lauder milk I like the idea of uniforms that are simple, polo shirts and jeans. Keep life simple and get ready faster. Ally is my fashionista with layering and specialty outfits. Obviously uniforms only will happen if parents want them.

Like · Reply · Message · January 28 at 1:05pm · Edited

Tom Brown Uniforms that fit the theme of the school. I like the idea of jeans and flannel top for field work, and maybe second option of a dressier option. What research says about school uniforms

Virginia Draa, assistant professor at Youngstown State University... See More

Like · Reply · Message · January 28 at 8:19pm

Erin Johnson Don't get me wrong I think uniforms can have a positive effect on children's learning however my concerns are now parents are buying two sets of clothes (uniforms and normal clothes) so that is an add cost and how will it be when the children go to jun... See More

Like · Reply · Message · February 1 at 1:40pm

1 Reply

Erin Johnson My child will be starting school next year and lives on the same road as Vicky child so it will be about the same bus time

Like · Reply · Message · 1 · January 30 at 9:37am

Erin Johnson I would say no uniform the children should have character of there own and as far as name brand or Walmart all kids should be taught at

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Chat (24)

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there own and as far as name brand or walmart all kids should be taught at home that its not what they are wearing that makes a person and not to judge a person by what they are wearing a lesson they will need all of their lives!!!!

Like · Reply · Message · January 29 at 8:51pm

1 Reply

Victoria Preston No uniforms. That is the last thing to be thinking about.

My son started kindergarten in homer this year. We are literally 2 min from Hartnett.

If they are going to open a school again, they need to concentrate on services--foods, nurses, teachers. Etc.

What the small children wear shouldn't even be a thought

Like · Reply · Message · 1 · January 29 at 5:10pm

Victoria Preston Jake gets on the bus at 8am and school starts around 9am.

They get on the bus at 3 in the afternoon and he's usually home about 4:30pm

Like · Reply · Message · January 30 at 12:57am

Tom Brown I find this extremely unacceptable to put young children on a bus for 50 to 80 min each way. This is time the young kids could be learning from family. The school board told us the rides would not exceed 45 minutes

Like · Reply · Message · 1 · January 30 at 10:30am

Steven Cartland A thumbs up for uniforms.

Like · Reply · Message · February 2 at 3:25pm

Victoria Preston The first week or two of school he didn't get home till after 5pm. It was really tough on him.

He has adjusted, but its still a really long day

Like · Reply · Message · January 30 at 7:42pm

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Chat (24)

Truxton Academy Charter School

Page Messages Notifications Insights Publishing Tools Settings Help

Sarah Solombrino
5★
December 3, 2015

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Like · Reply · Message · January 29 at 8:51pm

1 Reply

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Like · Reply · Message · January 29 at 5:10pm

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Like · Reply · Message · February 2 at 3:25pm

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He has adjusted, but its still a really long day

Like · Reply · Message · January 30 at 2:42pm

Write a comment...

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Truxton Academy Charter School

Page Messages Notifications Insights Publishing Tools Settings Help

Sarah Solombrino
5★
December 3, 2015

Like Comment

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Truxton Academy Charter School
Published by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudemilk [?] · December 7, 2015

Problem-Based, Project-Based and Inquiry Based Learning are similar. Students investigate and ask questions to lead their learning rather than being a sponge to have information given and expected to be able to recite that information.

Here is an explanation of Inquiry-Based Learning.

<https://youtu.be/u84ZsS6niPc>

What is Inquiry-Based Learning?

This video explains the teaching methodology Inquiry-Based Learning. It was created for the Inspiring Science Education Project as part of a series of videos...

YOUTUBE.COM

508 people reached **Boost Post**

Like Comment Share

8 Top Comments

Promote

THIS WEEK

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- 0 Website Clicks
- 0 of 0 Response Rate
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Truxton Academy Charter School

December 3, 2015 · Like · Comment

508 people reached [Boost Post](#)

Like · Comment · Share

8 Top Comments

3 shares

Write a comment...

Truxton Academy Charter School Keep the questions coming everyone! This opportunity of starting, creating, designing a school for our extended community does not come often. Voice your opinions, comments, questions and concerns!
Like · Reply · Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk [?] · December 7, 2015 at 5:14pm

Carol St John This is very exciting because the Inquiry Approach to learning is what I studied in college and used during my student teaching semester at the SUNY Plattsburgh campus school...in 1969! It is a great approach because it involves thinking and the teach... See More
Like · Reply · Message · December 7, 2015 at 5:18pm

Truxton Academy Charter School Isn't it interesting how PBL - project based learning, is such a progressive teaching method that magnet and charter schools across the country base their teaching methods around, many with a college prep focus? It has been around for a century and h... See More
Like · Reply · Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk [?] · December 7, 2015 at 5:55pm

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Chat (23)

Truxton Academy Charter School

Carol St John This is very exciting because the Inquiry Approach to learning is what I studied in college and used during my student teaching semester at the SUNY Plattsburgh campus school...in 1969! It is a great approach because it involves thinking and the teach... See More
Like · Reply · Message · December 7, 2015 at 5:18pm

Truxton Academy Charter School Isn't it interesting how PBL - project based learning, is such a progressive teaching method that magnet and charter schools across the country base their teaching methods around, many with a college prep focus? It has been around for a century and h... See More
Like · Reply · Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk [?] · December 7, 2015 at 5:55pm

Judi Mott So how do they evaluate learning? Is this used progressively through the grades or is it all the same level of inquiry?
Unlike · Reply · Message · Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk [?] · December 7, 2015 at 2:16pm
[View previous replies](#)

Truxton Academy Charter School Beth Shiner Klein couldn't have said it better myself. Assessments adapt to what the goals are for a project. It may be how effectively the individual or group educates the community with a community service project. It may be how they best present... See More
Like · Reply · Commented on by Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk [?] · December 7, 2015 at 2:53pm
[View more replies](#)

Phyllis Baird-Henry Excellent post!! xo
Like · Reply · Message · December 9, 2015 at 1:34pm

Write a comment...

Promote

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- 0 Sign Up
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Chat (23)

Section 4. Comments received from the impacted community or communities concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students were addressed.

The founding group and proposed Board of Trustees received the following samples of feedback from impacted community members and prospective parents. We addressed the feedback as outlined in our key design elements and School Overview, II(f).

“Hi, my concerns would be working with children who have prior disciplinary conduct issues. Such as: ADHD, impulsivity, etc. I would want to know that my children would have a staff that knows how to handle these issues effectively & fairly. If I think of anything else I'll let you know. Thanks for considering my input.”

Jeannie O'Donnell

“As a grandparent:

- outdoor programming, or perhaps "un-programming" :) see *Last Child in the Woods* - Richard Louv
- and since the reality of computer has consumed us, keyboarding aka "touch typing"
- old fashioned grammar and spelling and proofreading :)) good library
- all these below look good too, and perhaps related to last? second language, maybe Spanish, at some age option or required?

Thank YOU!”

Jo Roehrig

June 4, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

Our small community was negatively impacted with the closure of Harnett Elementary school. Many parents, my husband and I included, chose to move to Truxton because of the strong performance and location of Harnett Elementary. The closing of our only local elementary school was a devastating blow to our small community.

The Truxton Academy Charter School has the potential to fill a tremendous void felt by the majority of our small community. My husband and I have two small children, ages three and one. Having a local elementary school provides the close to home education our youngest community members require.

I truly hope the TACS has a plan to provide services for the entire spectrum of children. Specialty services and programs will potentially attract more students and families which will help repair, strengthen and grow our small community. Our children are the cornerstone of our community and our future. The hope and dream of many in our small rural community is for TACS to provide our children, no matter their ability or background, a local and equal opportunity to thrive.
Sincerely,

Tracey Cartland

May 13, 2016

Members of the community:

When I first heard about the charter school I will admit that I was hesitant. After attending a committee meeting and meeting the driving forces behind the school they have sold me. They don't just purpose a school they purpose exactly what I was looking for when I moved here, a community, one where everyone knows everyone and they gather together to support one another. It isn't just about a school it's about belonging to the town you live in, this is exactly why we picked Truxton when buying our forever home. Agriculture and family farms are dying but the need for what they provide isn't. Shouldn't we provide every opportunity to educate our children on our history and give them options for their future? I for one like the idea of a small class size and hands on learning in whatever forms it takes. I am a parent who wants my child to receive the best possible education and foundation for the future. Beyond that I want my daughters to have what I had, close ties to their school and community. I think that Truxton Academy Charter School will give them that.

Thank you for your time,
Raina Barber
6320 Academy St
Truxton NY, 13158



Kimberlee Jeanetta Laudermilk shared Linda Jones's photo.

February 22 at 8:48pm · 🌐



Linda Jones

February 22 at 1:25pm · 🌐

Claudia Tenney took time from her busy schedule to visit with the people of Truxton and tour the proposed Rural Charter School. Claudia represents Delaware, Herkimer, Oneida, Orange, Otsego, Sullivan and Ulster counties which is the 101st assembly district of the state. She is seeking election to the U.S. House to represent the 22nd Congressional District of New York currently held by Richard Hanna. Pictures left to right: Elaine Sturgis, Gus Wehbe, Lydia Aris Brown, Amberle Aris Brown, Claudia Tenney, Patty Henry Dawson and Cindy Denkenberger

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Jan 22, 2015

Hartnett School options presented

Truxton residents submit proposals to Homer school board

By SARAH VABER
Staff Reporter

sbullock@cordlandstandardnews.net

TRUXTON — Town residents presented several proposals to the Homer Board of Education Wednesday night that they think may solve the problem of decreasing enrollment and increasing taxes in the district while keeping Hartnett Elementary School open.

Residents also called on the board to form a committee to take an in-depth look into the proposals and the district's finances for potential cost savings, while board members also stated they would like to see detailed financial projections for the options.

Among the options offered at the special meeting in the Hartnett Elementary School gym — attended by about 60 people — were a charter school, a magnet school and squeezing the budget to fund the school.

Luke Morenus, board vice president, said he was encouraged that the presenters and the board seemed to have identified increasing costs as the major problem in the district, despite a decline in enrollment across the district.

"We either need to fix the money, fix the enrollment or some balance of both," Morenus said.

Board members Kimberly Sharpe, Bill Pedrick and Morenus all said they would like time



Joe McIntyre/staff photographer

Proposals submitted Wednesday by Truxton residents seeking the continued use of the Hartnett Elementary School included establishing a charter school and using budget cuts to fund the school.

member Katharine Dwyer. based around a theme, are more per pupil, but it would have to New Tech school. But, the
"I'm loving what I'm hear- autonomous and do not have to pay \$11,000 in tuition, Falls magnet school could stay an el-

Board members Kimberly Sharpe, Bill Pedrick and Morenus all said they would like time to review the finances involved with each option.

Board member Martin Sweeney expressed doubt the plans would allow the district to keep the school, after a plan to turn the building into a project-based learning and technology high school was scuttled in December.

Homer school district voters in a Dec. 16 referendum rejected a proposal to borrow \$5.8 million to renovate the Truxton school to lease the building for the BOCES-run New Tech school.

"I don't want to have to see it sold," Sweeney said, adding he sees fewer and fewer possibilities for keeping the building.

A proposal for a charter elementary school at Hartnett drew the attention of board

cluded establishing a charter school and using budget cuts to fund the school.

member Katharine Dwyer.

"I'm loving what I'm hearing," Dwyer said.

Jeanetta Laudermilk, of Truxton, gave a presentation on two types of charter schools that could be started in Truxton: a start-up charter school and a conversion charter school.

A charter school is a publicly-funded, independent school that must meet educational standards laid out in its charter.

A start-up charter school can be started by anyone without approval from any organization other than the state Education Department or the State University of New York, Laudermilk said. A conversion charter school would convert an existing public school into a charter school with the approval and under the authority of the local board of education.

Charter schools are usually

based around a theme, are more autonomous and do not have to conform to Common Core curriculum, she said. But the students do have to take Common Core state tests.

Charter schools are more attractive to families who send their children to private schools or home school, and frequently have waiting lists for students to enroll, Laudermilk said. They also have access to private funds, such as grants, traditional schools are not allowed to use.

A school district receives state aid for each student who is enrolled in a charter school in its district, but the district has to pay tuition for the students to attend the charter school, said Michael Falls, the district's director of business and finance.

In Homer, the district receives about \$9,000 in state aid

per pupil, but it would have to pay \$11,000 in tuition, Falls said.

But the district could save on the cost of teacher benefits if the school kept current bargaining arrangements, Laudermilk said.

The district could also turn Hartnett Elementary School into a magnet school, Lydia Aris-Brown, of Truxton, told the board.

Magnet schools are public schools overseen by their district that decide to use a subject theme and tend to teach using project-based learning, Aris-Brown said. They also typically attract more students, including students from outside the school's district, she said.

Aris-Brown noted the school could have a science, technology, engineering and math emphasis, just like the proposed

New Tech school. But, the magnet school could stay an elementary school and would not require a \$5.8 million renovation, she said.

Truxton Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe urged the board to leave Hartnett Elementary School open, rather than sell or close the building, until a joint work group can go over the finances of every option for the building together. Wehbe estimated closing the school would save \$206,000 out of the district's \$38 million budget, while selling the building would net about \$400,000.

If the board decides to close the building, Wehbe requested it consider donating the building to the town of Truxton. Wehbe noted he had not discussed the possibility of accepting the donation with rest of the town board.

Our Opinion

Time out for Hartnett

Truxton residents working feverishly to create a charter school to replace Hartnett Elementary School are taking advantage of an agonizing decision by Homer school board members last week.

A group of Truxton residents has filed with the state Education Department a letter of intent to establish a start-up charter school for area youngsters to take the place of Hartnett.

Board members voted 7-2 to reaffirm their August vote to close Hartnett at the end of this school year in June and bus all Truxton area public school students — kindergarten through sixth grade — to schools in Homer. The Hartnett school's current enrollment is just over 100 students.

Homer district voters in a December referendum soundly rejected a \$5.8 million plan to renovate the Hartnett building and lease it to Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES for a regional high school.

Under last week's resolution, the school building, which is about 80 years old and in need of major repairs and updates to its heating system, will be mothballed until a decision is made on its final disposition. That disposition could include selling the property according to the resolution.

Truxton residents strongly resisted closing the school, fearing it would lead to a downward spiral in population and development. Other than farming, Truxton has virtually no commercial activity.

Opponents of the closing have claimed it would save only about \$200,000 a year in operating costs, a drop in the bucket in the district's \$40 million annual budget. The reluctant advocates of closing believe the annual savings would be closer to \$1 million a year.

There is no doubt that school board members viewed closing the school as a last resort forced on them by finances. The district is facing a \$1.8 million gap between expenses and revenues for its upcoming 2015-16 budget. That's on top of losing nearly \$15 million in state aid since 2010 when the governor, the Assembly and the Senate ganged up on the state's public schools to take billions in funds targeted for school aid to pay for their overspending in other areas.

The loss of those funds, called Gap Elimination Adjustment, is an immediate cause of the board's vote to close Hartnett, one board member noted at last week's meeting.

Another member said the board had to go with closing Hartnett because it was the oldest of the districts schools and the one most in need of repairs. The district's other schools, all in Homer, include the Homer Elementary School on Main Street, the Intermediate/Junior High School in Clinton Street and the high school on Route 281.

Perhaps the best thing that could come out of the decision to close Hartnett would be for the Truxton group to be successful in establishing a charter school in the Hartnett building, even though there would be some drawbacks for the school district.

Major drawbacks to the district would be a loss of an as-yet-undetermined amount of state aid and a loss of enrollment for a district that has been seeing enrollment decline for more than 30 years.

The charter school group is hoping for at least 50 students in the first year — hopefully next fall. In addition to former Hartnett students, they are seeking students from nearby districts including Tully, DeRuyter, McGraw and Fabius. They have even had an inquiry from a family in Dryden, one of the group's members said.

Closing Hartnett Elementary School is a traumatic experience for people of Truxton, the Homer school district and the school board members who felt it was the best of a bad set of choices.

Despite the shortcomings, creating a charter school to succeed Hartnett may be the best we can get out of a sad situation.

Homer school board approves \$39.6 million

By SARAH VABER 4/15/2015
Staff Reporter

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HOMER — The board of education decided at Tuesday's meeting to send a \$39.6 million budget that carries no property tax increase, to voter approval on May 19.

The board voted 7-0 to approve the budget, with President Sonia Apker and board member Martin Sweeney absent.

The tax levy would remain at \$15,959,640 under the proposed budget.

What the tax rates will be set at will

depend on the property assessments for the townships in the school district, Superintendent of Schools Nancy Ruscio said this morning. The towns' assessments will not be available until August, Ruscio said.

The fiscal plan does not fund Hartnett Elementary School, which is set to hold its last classes at the end of the school year.

In February, the board noted financial issues and decreased enrollment as reasons it voted to seek a buyer for the elementary school building in Truxton. District voters in a Dec. 16 referendum

rejected a proposal to borrow \$5.8 million to renovate the school and lease the building to BOCES for a New Tech school.

Victor Siegle, a Homer resident and an advocate of the Truxton school, has asked the board to rescind its resolutions that will result in the school's closure and presented a financial proposal he said would allow the school to stay open.

An increase in state aid of more than \$1 million and savings gained by not filling posts vacated by teachers would allow the district to pay for the Truxton school to remain open, Siegle said.

"I urge you to consider keeping

budget, holds line on tax levy

Hartnett open and making a lot of people happy," Siegle said.

But Siegle's proposal is not financially feasible, Ruscio said after the board meeting.

"It's not in the budget that was approved tonight," Ruscio said. If the board decided to rescind the resolution to surplus the building, the district would have to create an entirely new budget, she said.

The revenue figures Siegle presented were not accurate, said Luke Morenus, vice president of the board and a member of the district's Budget and Finance Committee.

There's more to consider than teacher attrition, agreed board member MaryBeth Mathey after the meeting. The school building also needs a new boiler and windows, Mathey said, adding that the vote to strike down the building renovations showed district residents do not want to invest any more money into the building.

Investing in the school is also not an effective use of district funds, she said.

"Yes, we could use that money to run a school for 90 kids or use it in these (Homer) buildings for all 2,000 kids," Mathey said.

Truxton group continuing effort to get charter elementary school for town 6/2015

By SARAH VABER
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TRUXTON — A Truxton group is continuing its efforts to form an elementary charter school and has met with state Sen. James Seward, as well as an Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES administrator.

The group also visited a Syracuse charter school to gather information about how to form and operate a charter school.

Trustees of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School expect to send a second application to form the school to the state Education Department. The deadline for the application is June 23, said Cindy Denkenberger, chairwoman of the group.

An application submitted in February was rejected, but it is typical for a charter school group to have to submit multiple applications, Denkenberger said.

The Truxton Academy Charter School group was formed last summer in response to the Homer Central School board of education's decision to close Hartnett Elementary School in Truxton at the end of this school year. Students would move to Homer Elementary School since Truxton has been part of the Homer Central School District since about 1970.

The move to close the school came after a failed bid to lease the school for a BOCES technology and project-based learning high school. Voters on Dec. 16 struck down a

referendum to borrow \$5.8 million to renovate the building for that purpose. Instead, a consultant has recommended the board close the elementary school, citing declining enrollment and dwindling state aid.

The Truxton charter school trustees must decide if they can revise the application by the deadline, Denkenberger said. If not, the group will work toward next year's winter deadline for charter school applications, she said.

Denkenberger said she, her husband, Cortland County Legislator Jim Denkenberger (R-Cuyler, Solon and Truxton), and another community member met with Seward (R-Milford) on Friday in Oneonta.

Seward indicated he understood why the group was going ahead with the charter school effort, but said he would stay out of the local politics surrounding the issue, Cindy Denkenberger said.

The meeting was just to update Seward on what was going on with the Truxton charter school and to provide an idea of the group's plans, said Jeff Bishop, a spokesman for Seward.

"He's not taking a position on it (the charter school)," Bishop said.

The group has solicited help from the Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School in filling out the application, Denkenberger said. Three trustees of the proposed Truxton charter school and another school supporter visited the Syracuse

school on May 19.

The school was founded in 2003 for grades seven through nine and then expanded to its goal of having multiple campuses in Syracuse for kindergarteners to 12th graders, according to the charter school's website www.sascs.org.

There are hundreds of students on a waiting list to attend the charter school, Denkenberger said.

"It was very inspiring," she said.

The Truxton group learned about how the school is funded and how it deals with teacher contracts, among other issues.

Members of the Truxton charter school group also met with Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES Superintendent J. Francis Manning within the last three weeks, Denkenberger said.

The charter school supporters would like to use BOCES resources, like teacher training, Denkenberger said.

No partnership has been agreed to, Denkenberger said.

Unlike the BOCES high school that was proposed for the Hartnett Elementary School site, the Truxton community is focused on having a charter elementary school in the town.

The Truxton charter school group will be holding a barn dance fundraiser for the school from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday at Forest Lake Campground on Dog Hollow Road in Truxton.

Truxton Academy tries for 3rd time for charter school

8/4/2015
By AMY GERNON
Staff Reporter

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TRUXTON — The board of trustees of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School on Monday night unanimously voted to file a third application for its project, this time seeking approval from the State University of New York Charter School Institute.

The group of Truxton residents spearheading the charter school project began their work last summer when the Homer Central School District announced it would permanently close Hartnett Elementary School this spring and move students to Homer schools this fall.

The charter school would give parents a choice besides Homer Elementary School, and would have a focus on agricultural education, said Jeanetta Lauder milk, a member of the board of trustees.

The group's second application was denied in July by the State Education Department.

The SUNY Charter School Institute offers another option to authorize charter schools in the state.

Applying through the SUNY Charter School Institute will be a more rigorous process, requiring the group to complete more work upfront to see its application approved, Lauder milk said.

The application requires a five-year business plan for the school, as well as curriculum and discipline plans, Lauder milk said.

In addition to Turecek, the board of trustees also brought on three other expert advisors, including CPA Matt McSherry, charter school attorney Jim Evans and John Tillotson, associate professor of science education at Syracuse University.

Tillotson suggested trustees should meet with Charter



Lauder milk

Institute representatives in Albany prior to submitting a third letter of intent in December. Tillotson also recommended that the trustees establish a professional advisory board to bring in additional experts in the field of education. Such a

board would not only be beneficial in designing curriculum and business plans, but would also impress the Charter Institute, he said.

"It's been so helpful to have someone with the insights on what to do and what to avoid," said Cindy Denkenberger, president of the board of trustees for the proposed charter school.

The trustees must also determine whether to create a separate committee to ask the town of Truxton to purchase the former Hartnett Elementary School building when it goes up for auction on Aug. 27.

It would also be an option for the board to work with a private citizen to purchase the building, which is appraised at \$400,000.

"We are at a point right now that the building could easily slip away from us," said Dawson, who added that the charter school will still open even if it does not operate at Hartnett.

Tim Turecek, an advisor to the board, said the higher standard of this application makes it more likely that the charter school itself would ultimately be of higher quality if approved. Turecek was a former superintendent of schools in Marathon and a former dean of students at the New Roots Charter School in Ithaca.

Lauder milk said another benefit of applying through the Charter Institute is that the group will be provided with more feedback to improve its application than what is offered by the Education Department.

The board does not have the financial backing to bid on the school, with just under \$1,700 raised through various endeavors, including an ongoing bottle and can drive, as well as private donations.

The board is also planning an ice cream social at the Town Hall at 2 p.m. on Aug. 23 to raise money, as well as a Hartnett alumni cocktail party at Labrador Mountain ski center in Truxton in September, Lauder milk said.

"We really want it to be fun, and something that happens every year," Lauder milk said.



Amy Gernon/contributing photographer

Truxton Academy Charter School trustees Jeanetta Laudermilk, left, and Patty Dawson present their suggested uses of the former Hartnett Elementary School to the Truxton Town Board Tuesday at town hall.

Hartnett options mulled

Pro-charter school group, town weigh shared building space

By AMY GERNON
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TRUXTON — As the Homer Central School District readies the Hartnett Elementary School building for auction at a later date, members of the group advocating to convert it to a charter school met with the Town Board Wednesday to discuss possible ways the building could be purchased and shared between the entities.

Trustees of the Truxton Academy Charter School group, Jeanetta Laudermilk and Patty Dawson, discussed the possibility of the town buying the building and converting the first level of the school to a charter school while leasing the second floor for recreational purposes and town office space.

However, there are legal questions about any arrangement that would involve the town buying and leasing the building.

Dan Ellis, from the town attorney's

office, said it would not be feasible for the town to rent any of the space to a school, as municipal entities should not act as landlords.

To buy the building, the town would need to demonstrate to the state comptroller's office that it plans to use the entire space for town purposes. Renting half the building to a charter school would not qualify, Ellis said.

Ellis said it would be difficult for the town to purchase the building and later sell it to the charter school, as the town would have to demonstrate that the building was surplus, and no longer needed for town activity.

Laudermilk suggested that the two groups may still be able to share space if instead the charter school group was able to purchase the building and rent space to the town. The group is doing fundraising and searching for benefactors but currently would not have the funds to buy the building.

Town officials seemed amenable to

the idea.

The building, which is appraised at \$400,000 is expected to be auctioned at a date yet to be determined. The school district is still in negotiations with an auction house so the date has not been set.

The earliest the charter school could begin is the fall of 2017. The New York State Department of Education has rejected two applications to open the charter school, Laudermilk said.

"What we hope to do as one door closes, is open a new door that will improve the community," Laudermilk said, adding that she is proud of Truxton and does not want the town to become a "drive-through" community.

In addition to sharing the space with the town, Laudermilk and Dawson suggested offering to lease a portion of the building to the State Police as a satellite location.

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OPTIONS

August 20, 2015

continued from page 1

Dawson and Lauder milk also suggested renting classroom and gym space for adult recreational and education programs, including league sports like volleyball and aerobics classes.

Preschool and child care services, which Dawson said are desperately needed in the area, could be housed in the school as well.

"I believe just by opening the space it would not be too hard to fill," Lauder milk told the board.

The town hall, now located in a renovated former railroad station on Route 13, is only three rooms and does not offer adequate seating when the town court is in session, said Kim Reakes, town clerk. Reakes suggested that the town relocate its

offices to the Hartnett building if a deal were to be struck, and maintain the former railroad station as the courthouse.

Ellis said he would review the legality of the town leasing office space from the charter school.

Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe expressed support for the suggestion, but considered the town's liability.

"Even before you came to us with the idea for the building ... we thought about that," Wehbe said. "You don't know how much I wish the charter school was OK'd already."

The board did not make any plans to bring the matter to a vote, pending further information from Ellis about whether the town can legally rent space from the charter school.

Truxton asked to halt moratorium

Sept. 2015

Impact on Hartnett school concerns Homer school board

By TYRONE L. HEPPARD

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HOMER — Ahead of a Wednesday hearing before the Truxton Town Board on a proposed development moratorium, the Homer Central Board of Education has asked the town to reconsider passing the temporary ban amid fears it will affect the district's plans to auction the former Hartnett Elementary School in Truxton.

After the board failed to convince residents to support renovating the building for conversion into a BOCES high school, the district in August hired Pleasant Valley-based Absolute Auctions and Realty Inc. to conduct the auction. Online bidding will begin at 10 a.m. Oct. 22 and end at

1:01 p.m. Oct. 29.

Following a special meeting Friday, the Homer board asked its attorney, Ed Trevvett, to formally ask the town to drop the moratorium proposal.

On Sept. 16, the Truxton board last week set Wednesday's public hearing on the moratorium that would ban for six months the development of commercial, industrial and residential properties in excess of 5,000 square feet.

If passed, the moratorium would prevent any changes from being made to the Hartnett building, which is 29,798 square feet.

In response, Superintendent of Schools Nancy Ruscio requested a special Board of Education meeting Friday. She also released a statement

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The Homer Central Board of Education wants to auction the former Hartnett Elementary School in Truxton, shown in April 2014.

TRUXTON

continued from page 1

urging residents to voice opposition to the planned moratorium at the public hearing set for 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Truxton Town Offices.

Ruscio argued the moratorium would interfere with the district's ability to sell the building at fair market value.

School board member Martin Sweeney said Monday the board seemed to agree with Ruscio. He said board members asked Trevvett to speak with Truxton Town Attorney Don Armstrong about having the town hold off on enacting a moratorium.

"Whether it was intended or not, it (the moratorium) leaves a distinct impression that it will have an adverse impact on the sales price," Sweeney said.

Sweeney said he got the sense that most

of the board did not feel the need to halt the auction. He said the meeting lasted about an hour and no members from the public asked to speak.

Trevvett said Monday he contacted Armstrong following the meeting.

He said the school district wants the town to reconsider enacting the moratorium not only because it may affect the sale, but because it could make buyers reluctant to bid. A moratorium could stop them from executing plans they may already have in mind for the building, he said.

"The specter of a moratorium ... might impede a purchaser's ability to use the property as they see fit," Trevvett said. "That definitely may impact the willingness of people to want to build on the property and the sale of the property, perhaps."

He added he received a response from

Armstrong on Monday which said the board would be made aware of the request but the town plans to proceed with Wednesday's hearing.

Armstrong declined to comment Monday, but Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe said he was told of the school district's request to hold off on the moratorium.

Echoing Armstrong's sentiments, Wehbe said board members would be informed of the school district's request, however he said the Town Board intends to discuss and will likely vote on enacting the moratorium after the public hearing.

"That decision has to be taken by the Town Board," Wehbe said. "The reason for the meeting is to discuss the moratorium and to get a vote on that. So far, we're going with what has been scheduled."

Our Opinion

Who's running Truxton?

9/29/2015

Now that they have stilled the heart of the Truxton community, Hartnett Elementary School, are Superintendent Nancy Ruscio and the Homer Central School Board going to take over running Truxton's town, planning and zoning boards as well?

One could get that impression from Ruscio's outspoken opposition Friday to the Town Board's decision to consider a building moratorium while it revises the town's comprehensive plan. The board has scheduled a special meeting for 7:45 p.m. Wednesday in Town Hall to vote on a proposed local law establishing the moratorium.

The superintendent urged district residents to come out in force at the Wednesday meeting and oppose the moratorium because, she said, it would hinder the district's plans to auction the Hartnett property.

Truxton's proposed comprehensive plan could affect what uses might be made of the Hartnett property and thus affect how much the school district can sell it for, Ruscio said.

Ruscio announced Friday that the Hartnett property will be sold in an online auction ending Oct. 29, by Absolute Auctions and Realty Inc. of Pleasant Valley. Contacted Monday, a spokesperson for the auction firm said she had no information on the Hartnett auction and did not know when it would appear on the AARAuction.com website.

Truxton Supervisor Gus Wehbe, who appeared before many school board meetings to oppose closing Hartnett, said the town does not want developers to make changes that do not conform to the town's comprehensive plan, which is due for completion in six months. Town Attorney Donald Armstrong is drawing up a new plan to replace the town's 1989 comprehensive plan.

The proposed six-month moratorium would bar specified commercial, industrial and residential uses of property, changes of use, and development in the town, including the Hartnett property.

Ruscio claimed the proposed moratorium would prevent the school board from selling Hartnett for "fair market value" and have a negative effect on taxpayers. She called on district residents to call Town Board members and urge them not to adopt the moratorium.

The object of Truxton's comprehensive plan, like those adopted by the village of Homer and the city of Cortland, is to make sure, to the greatest extent possible, that development in the municipality has a positive effect.

Ruscio, on the contrary, seems to be arguing that the school board should be able to sell the Hartnett property, a key site in the town, for the best price it can get, and that the buyer should be able to do whatever he wants with the property.

The Homer school district has a surplus of classroom space and proponents of closing Hartnett claimed it would cut school taxes — it did. It cut the 2015-16 school tax rate in Homer and Truxton by 8 cents per \$1,000.

Ruscio and the school board determined it was their responsibility to close Hartnett School for the economic good of the district.

We suggest that they let those who were elected to be responsible for the development of the town of Truxton — the Town Board members — decide whether or not a moratorium is in the best interests of the town.

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Local News

Truxton OKs development

Town board adds option for waivers

By TYRONE L. HEPPARD
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TRUXTON — There was standing room only Wednesday evening in the Town Offices, as the Town Board voted to pass its proposed six-month development moratorium, but with one important caveat: developers can appeal to get the law waived for their projects.

About 70 residents gathered to see if the board would pass the legislation, which will ban the development of commercial, industrial and residential properties in excess of 5,000 square feet during the time it takes the town to revise its 1989 comprehensive land use

plan. This plan sets the town's basic development plans in lieu of zoning laws.

Agricultural properties and one- and two-family homes are exempt from the moratorium.

Town board members Wednesday heeded the recommendation of the Cortland County Planning Board, adding a provision that will allow potential developers to apply to waive the law.

The Homer School District has opposed the moratorium, arguing it would adversely impact the sale of the former Hartnett Elementary School, which the district decided to auction after failing to get public support to renovate the building for a BOCES New Tech High School.

The school board voted in August to put the property on the auction block and hired Pleasant Valley-based Absolute Auctions and Realty Inc. last week.

Online bidding for the property will begin Oct. 26 and end Oct. 29.

Of the 17 people who spoke during Wednesday's half-hour public hearing, only three people voiced opposition to the moratorium, including Truxton resident Walt Farnholtz, who said the town should welcome any opportunity to grow its tax base.

"The Town Board should be looking to expand the tax base of the town, not impede it," he said.

While most in support of the law cited the need to take a careful look at how they want land in the town to be developed, others, like county Legislator Jim Denkenberger (R-Cuyler, Truxton, Solon), said they felt this was less about taxes and more about the school district having control.

Board of Education member Martin Sweeney, who attended the meeting,

moratorium

said this morning he disagreed with assertions that the district is trying to control the town, adding he hopes the building is purchased at the best price possible for the interest of both the town and school district.

In the end, the board voted to pass the law with the waiver provision attached.

According to the provision, the Town Board can grant relief from the moratorium if a developer can show its application meets the town requirements to obtain a use variance. The town can also grant the waiver with certain conditions attached.

The board ended up approving the moratorium in a 4-0 vote with board member Nicole Albro-Sprouse abstaining.

Albro-Sprouse declined to comment on why she did not vote for or against the moratorium, but said during the meeting she felt the town's comprehensive plan could be updated without the

moratorium in place.

Given the 4-0 vote, the Town Board could have easily overridden the county's recommendation.

Wehbe said this morning he felt that adding the provision shows the town is not against development.

"The moratorium is not to block every single thing that's happening in the town," he said. "If someone wants to do something the Town Board thinks is a positive addition to the town, we're not against that."

Wehbe said now that the law is passed, he will be touching base with Dave Hartnett, chairman of the town Planning Board, later today to see if it is willing to take up reviewing the comprehensive plan.

The town wants to have a revised comprehensive plan before the moratorium expires.

Our Opinion

Truxton sets the example

How does a local government handle a highly controversial issue?

Truxton showed the way Wednesday when residents filled the meeting room of the beautifully restored 1870's former railroad station to discuss the Town Board's proposed development moratorium and the Homer Central School Board's decision to auction off Truxton's recently closed Hartnett Elementary School.

Townpeople listened patiently as nearly 20 speakers voiced opinions and suggestions. All sides of the issue were covered, including several speakers who without interruption voiced opinions not shared by the majority: selling the former school and putting it on the tax rolls and defending the school board's unsuccessful attempt to keep the school open as a BOCES regional high school.

After almost an hour of discussion, the board adopted the moratorium with a provision that allows developers to apply for a waiver of its provisions. The moratorium will give the board time to adopt much needed revisions to its 29-year-old comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan is vital to guiding development in Truxton because the town does not have a zoning law.

The moratorium will take effect as soon as it is received and filed by the state Secretary of State, sometime before the end of the year.

The intent of the moratorium is to maintain the status quo of land in the town while the comprehensive plan is revised. The revisions will address development pressures and "the immediate potential for irreversible negative impacts on the Town's community character." The new plan will seek to protect the town from dramatic changes in its character and the quality of life of its residents by commercial, industrial and large-scale residential development.

The moratorium bars developments in excess of 5,000 square feet, but exempts agricultural uses and single and two-family homes.

The moratorium local law grants the Town Board the authority to grant waivers to qualified developers and to attach conditions to any waivers granted.

The responsibility for revising the comprehensive plan will go first to the town Planning Board. Should that board decide it needs assistance, the Town Board would consider creating a special citizens committee for that purpose, Supervisor Gus Wehbe said.

The waiver provision should answer Homer Central School Superintendent Nancy Ruscio's complaint that the moratorium would undercut the school board's attempt to sell the building at fair market value and have a negative effect on taxpayers.

What effect the sale of the Hartnett School property would have on taxpayers is in debate.

Victor Siegle, a Homer businessman who studies such issues, said at last night's meeting that the school district would get little revenue from a Hartnett sale. If the building were sold for \$100,000, he said, about \$90,000 would go to the state to pay off money the district borrowed and the most of the rest would go to pay for lawyers and advertising for the sale.

According to school officials, the building also needs a new heating system that could cost up to \$1 million.

The sale of the school notwithstanding, the important thing now for Truxton residents is to create a new comprehensive plan they can live with to guide future development.

While independence and freedom from government intrusion are particularly highly valued in Truxton, we suggest that residents ought to seriously consider creating a town zoning law that will protect the values and land uses they want protected while more strictly controlling development that they might find objectionable.

A Truxton zoning law would be a highly controversial issue, but the townspeople showed last night that they are well prepared to turn controversy into positive action.

Truxton charter school board addresses

10/3/15
10/3/2015
LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — The Truxton Academy Charter School group met Monday to discuss what happens after the Homer Board of Education votes Thursday on whether to accept the group's \$51,000 bid to buy Hartnett Elementary School.

While the Board of Education could decide to reject the bid Thursday, Truxton Academy Charter School Vice President Jeanetta Laudermilk said at Monday's meeting she would prefer to

proceed with plans as if the bid is assured.

"We could sit here all night saying what if," Laudermilk said.

The board of trustees gathered Monday at the 7 p.m. to discuss the next steps for not only the charter school but also the nonprofit group that was created to assist in creating the charter school.

While the end may be in sight for the charter school, the board does not officially own the Hartnett building until after the Homer Board of Education votes to accept the bid Thursday.

The nonprofit group waged the highest bid of \$51,000 at the online auction, which ended Oct. 29. The auction's terms state that the Homer Board of Education will vote on the bid it deems best for the community.

Cindy Denkenberger, president of the Truxton Academy Charter School board of trustees, assisted by retired teacher Elaine Sturges, have begun the initial stages of planning the charter school's curriculum. They have begun writing drafts of class schedules, teacher assignments and projects, Sturges

upcoming action

explained after the meeting Monday.

During the meeting, board member Patricia Dawson discussed the two different identities, to clear up any confusion for supporters.

The nonprofit, The Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters became a nonprofit on its filing date of Oct. 6.

This allows the group to fundraise for a charter school and become tax-exempt. That board is made up of Dawson, Laudermilk and Kay Reakes. The Truxton Academy Charter School group is the group of organizers who want to form a charter school and they needed

to establish a nonprofit organization to try to purchase the building.

The nonprofit wants to purchase the Hartnett building to create a community center for the town of Truxton that would include a day care facility, a common open space for community meetings, a gym, and also the charter school.

Having the Hartnett building in place, and the nonprofit group as support, the Truxton Academy Charter School group plans to apply for charter school designation under the SUNY Charter School Institute, submitting the application by Dec. 11.

Local News

Fundraiser set for Truxton charter

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — A nonprofit group was recently formed to assist with raising funds for the planned Truxton Academy Charter School and it will hold its first fundraiser at 6 p.m. Saturday at Labrador Mountain Ski Resort.

The Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters is the name of the nonprofit and the group hopes in addition to the charter school to also establish a community center in the shuttered Hartnett Elementary School.

Three members of the board of trustees for the proposed charter school formed

the group, receiving official state nonprofit status on Oct. 6. The group wants a community center to fill what members feel is a void in light of the June closure of the elementary school.

"A recreation program is needed in Truxton," said Patty Dawson, founder of the Truxton Alumni and Supporters Group.

She said that without Hartnett Elementary School, several community resources are lacking in the town. The community center will help the town establish a meeting space, gym, fields and pre-kindergarten center, she said.

The primary goal of the corporation is to raise enough funding to purchase

the Hartnett Elementary School building and form the community center. The group also intends to add the charter school after it receives state approval to create the school.

"The building itself, as it stands, has the room to house both the community center and the charter school," Dawson said.

The building is up for auction online, through Absolute Auction & Realty. Starting Oct. 26 and ending at 1 p.m. on Oct. 29, the company will accept bids. The building was appraised at \$400,000 market value.

The board of trustees for the Truxton Academy Charter School formed after the elementary school closed in June.

The board hopes that the corporation that was formed will help it to raise the money needed to purchase the building.

The Oct. 6 approval of nonprofit status from the state Department of State enables the organization to conduct business in the state and collect tax exempt donations.

This is another step in the process of the Truxton Academy School trustees trying to get the charter school up and running. Since June the trustees have sent two applications to the state Department of Education seeking to establish the charter school.

Both applications were rejected by the State Education Department in July

school

and the group plans to reapply through the State University of New York Charter School Institute for acceptance of the charter school after creating additional community support.

The trustees are hoping to garner community support from a series of meetings set in DeRuyter, Fabius and Tully this month, board vice president, Jeanetta Laudermilk said. The first meeting was held at the McGraw Community Center on Wednesday night and garnered little community attendance.

The remaining scheduled meetings are set for 7 to 8 p.m. Oct. 21 at the Fabius Community Center and Oct. 27 at the Tully Free Library Center.

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Aidan Brown, 12, of Truxton, lights memorial candles in honor of Hartnett Elementary School Wednesday during a vigil Wednesday on the school steps.

Joe McIntyre/staff photographer

October 30, 2015

High bid for Hartnett: \$51K

Charter school group submits offer via online auction

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — Carl Hinkle, 79, owner of New Penn Farms, was both last week's anonymous bidder for Hartnett Elementary School and a major contributor to the Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, the nonprofit group which on Thursday submitted the high bid of \$51,000 for the building.

Hinkle had offered the Homer School District \$70,000 last week for the school, a bid the district declined as it had already contracted for the online auction that wrapped up Thursday. He said Thursday if he did not attempt to get the school for the Truxton community, he would regret it for the rest of his life.

Hinkle graduated from Truxton High School in 1953, and felt it was the last identity the people of Truxton have left.

"I've watched the community deteriorate building by building, this was our last remaining building of our own," he

said Thursday.

The online auction through Absolute Auction and Realty started Oct. 23 and ended at 1:01 p.m. Thursday.

"Our company established a unique system, called a dynamic ending, which allows bidders the ability to bounce back from a potential sniper bidder, or bidders that wait until the last possible minute," auctioneer Frank T Pietrzak explained Wednesday. "An extra two minutes is added to the time to give bidders the opportunity to offer a higher bid."

The dynamic ending occurred with the Hartnett building, adding an additional four minutes to the ending time, after two overtime rounds.

The Truxton nonprofit group offered the highest bid of \$51,000 within the overtime rounds. The nonprofit group was formed to formalize and raise funds for the effort to establish a charter school, an idea put forth by the so-called Truxton Academy Charter School group. On Thursday, this group thanked Hinkle on its Facebook page

for his generous donation in memory of his wife, Janie Sprouse Hinkle, who passed away in May.

According to the terms listed on the Absolute Auction and Realty website, the highest bidder must pay a 10 percent buyer's premium to the auctioneer by 4 p.m. the following day before being declared the winners of the auction. The auctioneer then sends the fully funded offer to the Homer Board of Education to vote on.

The Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters have already paid the \$5,100 that was due today, having the money overnighted on 4 p.m. Thursday, said nonprofit member Jeanetta Laudermilk this morning.

Superintendent of Schools Nancy Ruscio said the board would hold a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday to vote on whether to accept the bid. Under the terms worded in the auction, the board has the ability to reject a bid that it believes does not present a positive influence for the community.

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BID

October 30, 2015

continued from page 1

Ruscio said this morning that if the board does not accept the auction bid the district must pay a \$5,000 fee. She said that a possible reason for the board not accepting the bid would be the fact that the building was appraised at \$400,000.

Board member Katharine Dwyer said Thursday she is happy with the fact that the Truxton academy is the high bidder.

"I'm from Truxton and I wanted it to be based in Truxton for the community," she said.

She was unable to comment on whether the board would accept the bid at the Nov. 5 meeting.

Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters was created as a way to raise the necessary funds to buy the Hartnett building. The group's main intention is creating a community center with a charter school attached said one of the group's founders Patricia Dawson, Thursday.

After a fundraiser at Labrador Mountain on Oct. 17, the nonprofit also created a Go-Fund-

Me page and held a candlelight vigil as a way to gather as a community on Wednesday.

"The vigil was an idea from Reakes Country Goods store owner Kay Reakes, as an effort to unite community support for the last time before the auction," Truxton Academy board member Jeanetta Laudermilk said Wednesday.

Dawson said that having a building will improve the group's chances of being approved to form a charter school. The Truxton Charter Academy had previously applied to the state Department of Education, and was rejected both times.

Having the facility in place, and the nonprofit group as support, the Truxton Charter Academy plans to apply for charter school designation under the SUNY Charter Institute, submitting the application by Dec. 11.

After receiving the SUNY Charter Institute's approval, the application is sent to the state department of education with hopefully a faster approval, Dawson explained Thursday.

Cortland

Standard

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2015

CORTLAND, N.Y.

Truxton group's Hartnett bid OK'd

Community center planned at facility

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — A long battle over the future of Hartnett Elementary School came to an end Thursday as the Homer Central School Board of Education approved a \$51,000 bid from a nonprofit group that plans to convert the former school into a community center and eventually a charter school.

The board voted 8-1 to accept the bid from the Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters. Board member Mike Kilmer cast the sole opposing vote.

"We want to jump up and down (in joy), but we are trying to remain professional," Jeanetta Lauder milk, vice president of the trustees of the Truxton Academy Charter school, said after the meeting.

The Truxton Academy Charter school was formed to create a project-based, hands-on-learning alternative education option in the Hartnett building. Lacking funds, some members of that group created The Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters, a nonprofit formed to build a community center for the town of Truxton and eventually a charter school in the building.

The nonprofit group raised over \$10,000 at its Oct. 17 fundraiser at Labrador Mountain ski center, Lauder milk said this morning. The group praised Carl Hinkle, 79, owner of Truxton's New Penn Farms, as a major contributor to the Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters on its Facebook page. The nonprofit also created a Go-Fund-Me page on Oct. 24 to raise any additional last-minute funding.

See HARTNETT, page 2



Bob Ellis/staff photographer

Truxton Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe addresses the Homer Board of Education Thursday. The board later voted, 8-1, to accept a bid from the Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters nonprofit group for the former Hartnett school building.

Friday
November 6, 2015

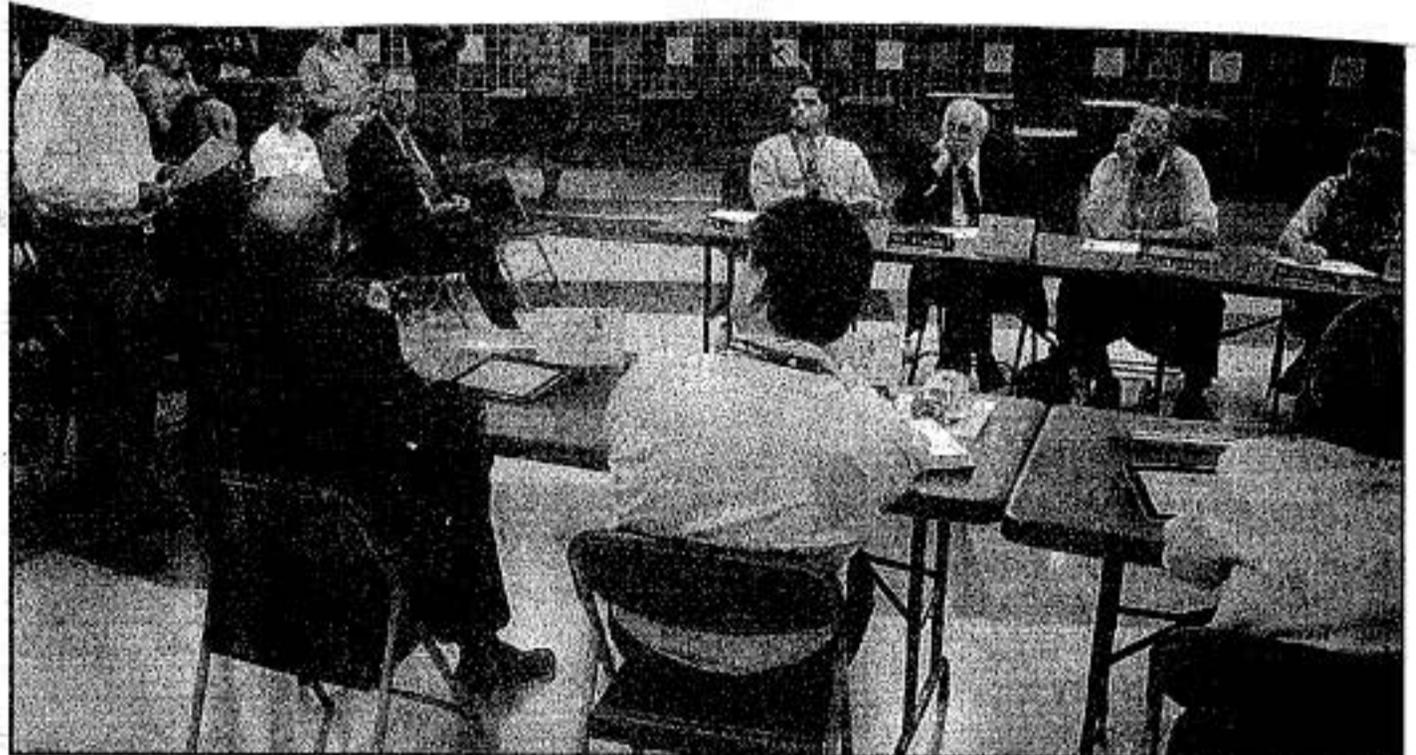
Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters board member Kathie Arnold spoke at the meeting before the board voted, encouraging board members to accept the \$51,000 bid.

"The community center that would be available to the Truxton community would be able to provide things such as: community programs, a space for town offices, adult education programs, a day care facility, a library, a recreation center for sports, a gym," Arnold said Thursday.

In voting against the bid, Kilmer said he favored holding on to the building in case the school district needs it in the future for a facility or potential field for sports, specifically baseball.

Homer Superintendent of Schools Nancy Ruscio said that the 3.8-acre lot which the Hartnett building is not large enough for a baseball field, which needs at least 5 acres.

Board of Education President Sonia Apker said that she was glad that the board decided to use an auction and give potential buyers a fair shot. She added that the board could agree that while the \$51,000 offer was not the price officials were hoping for, she was happy to have an end to the long process. The site was appraised at \$400,000.



Photos by Bob Ellis/staff photographer

Members of the Homer School Board listen to Truxton Town Supervisor Gus Wehbe Thursday. The board later voted to accept a proposal to sell the former Hartnett School.

Board Vice President Luke Morenus agreed, adding that the board had met its obligation to test the market and give taxpayers a break from long-term maintenance the district would have had to continue paying if it kept the building. Also, the district would have had to pay the 10 percent buyers premium to the auctioneer for not accepting the bid, plus an additional \$5,000 fee.

"It pleases me that Truxton has a cultural connection to the building," he said Thursday. "I feel like this is a win-win situation."



Kathie Arnold, of Truxton, addresses the Homer School Board during Thursday's special meeting.

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Thursday
November 12, 2016
Page 1

Truxton charter school push advances

Academy group visits schools in Elmira, Syracuse

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — The Truxton Academy Charter School group has visited two charter schools in preparations for filing its SUNY Charter School Institute letter of intent, which it plans to submit by Dec. 11.

The Truxton Academy Charter School board of trustees visited Finn Academy in Elmira last week, and has also visited Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School in an effort to learn and develop its application from the successes of both of these charters.

Once accepted by the SUNY Charter School Institute, the Truxton group will send the application in to the state Education Department for its decision in February, said Jeanetta Lauder milk, vice president of the board of trustees.

The group had previously sent two applications to the state Education Department, but both applications were rejected. Lauder milk said that the previous

applications were a learning process, and the group is hoping that by sending its application through the SUNY Charter Institute, it will receive the feedback it needs for its third application to the state Education Department.

The Truxton Academy Charter School is establishing the school as an alternative education for the rural Truxton community, while also incorporating agriculture and business-agriculture into its project-based learning curriculum, board of trustees President Cindy Denkenburg said in a telephone interview this morning.

The charter school group formed after Hartnett Elementary School closed

last June.

The group wants to establish a kindergarten through fourth-grade school, with the opening day scheduled in the fall of 2017.

It has already fulfilled two major components for the application — community outreach and securing a building.

The group held four community night meetings in McGraw, DeRuyter, Fabius and Tully from Oct. 14 to 27, in an effort to allow the community to ask questions or show its support for the charter school.

On Nov. 5, the group officially secured the former Hartnett Elementary

School building, as the Homer school district accepted its \$51,000 bid. After the building went up for sale on an online auction. Having a building in place might increase the chances of an application being accepted, Denkenburg said.

The group is working to finalize a letter of intent, and working toward a proposal. The proposal establishes the first five years of the school in an effort to show why the charter is being created and how the board of trustees plans to comply with state education requirements. The proposal includes the curriculum, budget and management of the school, Denkenburg said.

Local News

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Year in review: Local schools

Hartnett charter school effort ad

Community group purchases building

By LEANN HLEBICA
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Hometown pride and spirit blossomed in Truxton this year after community members formed a nonprofit group and purchased the former Hartnett Elementary School building in one of the top education stories of 2015.

Other top stories this year include: a district-wide controversy that erupted when a Marathon High School senior was suspended for bringing vitamin supplements to school and a large construction project at Homer High School that unearthed a time capsule from the 1950s.

Truxton Community wins building

Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters purchased the Hartnett Elementary School building after the Homer Board of Education decided to close the school in June due to low enrollment.

In late September, the building went up for sale in an online auction that saw Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters buying it for \$51,000. The nonprofit group has plans to turn the former school into a community center and hopefully a charter school.

On Dec. 14 the group held a meeting at the Truxton fire hall to encourage



Bob Ellis/staff photographer

The Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters group purchased the Hartnett Elementary School building after the Homer Board of Education decided to close the school in June because of projections for a low enrollment.

members of the community to suggest what they are looking for in the community center. Adult and youth recreation programs, a library, and rooms to lease for small business startups were suggested at the meeting. In the other side of the building, the group is working with Truxton Academy Charter School to establish a charter school with kindergarten through fourth-grade, focusing on agriculture.

The charter school has been turned down in two separate proposals sent to the state Department of Education over the past year. In spring 2016,

board members of the Truxton Academy Charter School plan to submit their proposal to the SUNY Charter School Institute before sending a third proposal to the state Department of Education. The application is a five-year budgeting plan that covers curriculum, budget and management of school.

Vitamin supplements bring three-day suspension

On Oct. 13, Marathon high school senior Wyatt Hatfield brought vitamin C, echinacea and olive leaf extract to school in his lunch bag. Hatfield was taking the

supplements to bolster his health so he would not pass any sickness to his father, who was having brain surgery the following week. Wyatt Hatfield was following the suggestion of his father's doctor, who directed everyone in the family to take vitamins to boost their immune systems in advance of surgery, explained Wyatt's mother, Samantha Hatfield.

Marathon High School Principal Christopher Grethel gave Wyatt a three-day suspension, saying the vitamins were "look-alike drugs," in violation of district policy.

The case was brought up at an Oct. 14 Board of Education meeting where the board voted 6-0 to uphold Grethel's decision.

To counter widespread opposition to its action, the Marathon Board of Education held an informational meeting on Nov. 17 to try to explain the policy and answer any additional questions the punishment brought up. Parents said the forms from the nurse's office should include vitamin supplements.

The Hatfields believe their son's punishment was too severe, and worry that the term "look-alike drug," will affect his career after high school. The family has appealed the board's decision to the state commissioner of education.

Homer High School renovation project

Homer High School is in the midst of a \$21 million renovation project that includes building a larger gym and ren-

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ovating the auditorium and classroom
space. The gym was demolished and
is being replaced with a facility that is
6,000 square feet larger.

Homer Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Ruscio said the work will take
two years to complete.

The project has forced athletic events
to be moved to other schools.

During the construction project,
workers uncovered a time capsule bur-
ied near the main entrance when the
school was built in 1950. Students and
staff opened the capsule on Dec. 18.

Inside the larger box was a copy of
the *Cortland Standard* and a copy of
the now defunct *Syracuse Herald-Jour-
nal* dated Nov. 10, 1950. Beneath those
were also what appeared to be records
from SUNY Cortland's Education De-
partment, dated 1948.

There was also a book emblazoned
with the state seal of New York and the
words "Cortland County Treasurer."
Between its pages was a crisp \$1 bill
with what appeared to be names written
in the margins.

In the smaller box was a reel-to-reel
audio recording. Taped to it was a piece
of paper dated Feb. 3, 1951, which
read, "Soldered by — Thomas Stanbro,
Deposited by — Arthur S. Goodwin."

Stanbro was a construction worker
and Goodwin was the school's director
of buildings and grounds. The box also
contained someone's short and simple
take on the state of affairs at that time.

...aiding for the center comes County's appointee on the col- magnetics in Itasca which are still in the planning stages, facility.

2/18/12

Former Truxton school gets makeover

Volunteer group helps transform facility into community center

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — Community volunteers have been showing up at the former Hartnett Elementary School with paintbrushes and tools since the Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters were first able to enter the building Jan. 22.

The group had purchased the former Hartnett School for \$51,000 in October and was still completing closing paperwork, but once group members finally had access into the building, they started the transition from a former school to a community center.

Board member Jeanetta Lauder milk said volunteers are working on the lower floor of the building, making necessary updates and changes.

Work for a proposed charter school will not begin until after the group's charter school appli-



ABOVE: Jim VanWagenen and Bob Gotie paint walls Tuesday in what was a classroom at the former Hartnett Elementary School that will become a party room for community members. The Truxton Alumni & Community Supporters group purchased the former Hartnett School for \$51,000 in October. BELOW: Jeanetta Lauder milk stands outside the building's gymnasium Tuesday as she discusses work being done at the former school.

Photos by Bob Ellis/staff photographer

the group's charter school application is approved. The group will submit its application to the SUNY Charter Institute toward the end of the month, Laudermilk explained.

The former school is in need of cleaning and cosmetic work, with volunteers helping to take down boards and signs off the walls, filling holes, and freshening up outdated and spotty paint.

The building was constructed in 1935 as the Truxton School and went on to become a part of the Homer school district in 1968. The district decided to auction the school after a steady drop in enrollment and a failed vote on a proposal to renovate the building to serve as a regional high school. The school

closed in June.

On Tuesday afternoon, workers were busy painting over a light yellow with a fresh blue in one of the downstairs classrooms.

"It has been a great week so far — with kids having February break off from school we have lots of help," Laudermilk said Tuesday.

Members of the Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters have been finalizing what each first floor room will be.

A fitness center, with two pieces of equipment already donated by Bob Welch, is going in a downstairs corner of the building where there is easy access to the outside, making coming and going a smooth process for peo-



ple looking to work out.

There will be a conference center, with a 50-inch television screen, office furniture, and a projector donated from Barton & Loguidice, a Liverpool-based

engineering firm.

Another room will be a toddler/parent play area with books and toys.

"This will not necessarily be a day care center just yet, but

more of an area for families to come and have a place to play or interact with other kids," Laudermilk explained.

Another classroom will be a rented room for parties and banquets, with the ability to combine access to the gym.

The group plans to hold an open house for the community after completing a chlorination project for the water system to make sure the water is safe.

Laudermilk explained that the group does not want to set a date for the open house while there is still work to be done. The group plans to keep the community informed at monthly meetings and on its website and a Facebook page.

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Truxton sends school plan to SUNY

Officials hope for fall 2017 opening

By LEANN HLEBICA
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TRUXTON — Board members for the Truxton Academy Charter School said Friday they would send their letter of intent and proposal in to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute today.

They said they hope that once approved, they can open the school for kindergarten through fourth grade in fall of 2017.

The charter school sent two previous applications to the state Board of Education, and this time is working through SUNY Charter Schools Institute before sending a third proposal to the state.

The group's mission is: "to cultivate an enthusiasm for learning through a project-based curriculum that celebrates

our rural life, environmental stewardship, and our agricultural heritage. Through real-world, student-centered learning, we will plant a foundation for future academic success."

The proposal itself lists the charter school's curriculum. Included are five years worth of budget planning, class schedules, teacher assignments and projects.

"SUNY's system provides a better feedback than the state's," Jeaneatta Lauder milk, a board member of Truxton Charter School, said Friday.

The board itself has grown in size since its previous attempts to create a charter school. Korinne L'Hommedieu who works at IMR Test Labs in Ithaca as its division accounting manager; veterinarian Lydia Aris-Brown; and John Tillotson, a professor of science education at Syracuse University, are the newest members of the board that began in the summer of 2014.

Another step the group has taken since

its last rejection in July is to increase its community presence. The group has its own website and Facebook page, had a fundraiser at Labrador Mountain in the fall and has been at school board meetings introducing themselves and their vision to local school districts.

Cindy Denkenberger, president of the board of trustees, attended the city Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, introducing herself to members of the board.

SUNY takes 10 days to respond to a request, so board members hope to have an answer by March 11. After receiving word and suggestions from SUNY Charter Institute, the board will send the application to the state for its third attempt at an approval for its rural charter school.

According to the charter school board, the Truxton Academy Charter School would be the first agriculture-based rural charter school in the state, if it is approved.



Bob Ellis/staff photo

The former Hartnett Elementary School, shown in Truxton on Thursday, would reopen as a charter school for kindergarten through fourth grade under a plan by the Truxton Academy Charter School Board, which is sending its proposal to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute.

Truxton Academy completes first hurdle

BY LEANN HLEBICA
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RUXTON — After two previous rejections from the state Education Department, board members of a group planning a charter school in the former Hartnett Elementary School received on Wednesday their first approval — from the SUNY Charter School Institute.

SUNY Charter Institute approved the first phase of creating the charter by accepting the Truxton Academy Charter School's letter of intent.

This is the first year the Truxton Academy Charter School board applied to the SUNY Charter School Institute, said charter school board member Jeanetta Laudermilk. After being advised by neighboring charter schools that SUNY offers essential feedback that would be helpful in crafting a more competitive application to the state, board members decided to try that application process before submitting to the Education Department for a third time.

On Wednesday, board members were notified that SUNY Charter School Institute accepted the letter of intent and the

group can move on to phase two of the application process.

Board members must now file a 1,000-page proposal with the Charter School Institute by March 29.

If the proposal is accepted, board members will apply for a third time to the state Education Department, which would decide if the Truxton Academy Charter School will become a school. Although SUNY Charter approval is not necessary to the state Education Department, board members wanted feedback in their initial application to make any necessary

changes before applying for state approval again.

Board members have said once they receive state approval, they can open the school for kindergarten through fourth grade in fall 2017.

During this initial stage, SUNY Charter School Institute instructed the group to continue active community outreach. Board members will continue to strive for public input through postings on its website and Facebook page, along with monthly meetings.

"In our proposal, we would like to give

a definite enrollment figure," Laudermilk said Wednesday. "Up until this point, it was estimated, but now we are trying to have every aspect completed as accurately as possible."

The Truxton Academy Charter School would take up the first floor of the former Hartnett Elementary School.

The nonprofit group Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters bought the Hartnett Elementary School building for \$51,000 at auction after the Homer Board of Education decided to close the school in June.

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Wednes
May 11, 2
Pa

Charter school forming advisory board

Links sought with colleges, other schools

By NICK GRAZIANO
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TRUXTON — While waiting for the approval of a proposal to develop a charter school in the former Hartnett Elementary School, board members for the initiative are trying to organize an advisory board of higher education institutions to help aid the endeavor.

Jeanetta Laudermilk, a member of the Truxton Academy Charter School board, said last week the school is looking to form partnerships with universities and other schools willing to help.

"The board can help by looking at what we are doing and where we need to improve,"

Laudermilk said.

The board is in the beginning phases of speaking with schools and Laudermilk did not want to mention any specific university at this time as the partnership is not yet official. Organizing a committee helps the board in developing a successful charter school model.

There are numerous charter schools located within a city, but rarely are they ever located in rural areas, Laudermilk said. The geographical and economic differences between city and rural schools are significant, she said. The Truxton Academy Charter schools needs its own specific model — addressing questions such as: "Will there be a dress code? What is the discipline policy? What are the testing perimeters?" she said.

All of that and more is specified in the proposal the board sent to the SUNY Charter



Joe McIntyre/staff photographer

Members of the Truxton Academy Charter School Board are looking to form partnerships with universities and other schools willing to help with the development of a charter school at the former Hartnett Elementary School, shown above Monday.

School Institute for approval at the end of April. Laudermilk said the board expects to hear a verdict on its proposal from the Charter Institute within a week or so.

In March, the Charter Institute

approved the board's letter of intent, the first phase of developing the charter school. The letter was an overview of what the plan is for developing the school and the proposal that was just sent is a more than 800-page

document laying out all the details of the school, Laudermilk said. She and the board had been working on the proposal for the past six months.

The Truxton Academy Charter School model is based on the Walton Rural Life Center in Kansas, Laudermilk said. The Life Center is 12 miles from the main district and there was a push to close the school. But it transitioned into a rural charter school and grew to be a national blue ribbon school, she said.

If the proposal is approved, the team associated with the Truxton Academy Charter School will go through an interview process with the Charter Institute. The purpose is to meet with the people working on the project, determine their roles, and make sure someone working on the project is not going to profit from it — such as a member who might happen to be a

builder, Laudermilk said.

Then, if they pass the review process and are approved by the Charter Institute, they have to go through the vetting process again with the state Department of Education, to make the program official, she said. But if they don't get approved, the board will have to go back and adjust aspects of its proposal, based on the Institute's feedback.

Laudermilk said the board can always reapply and board members are still learning as they are going. They continue to push forward because the school will provide numerous project-based learning opportunities for students to get more in-depth learning of subjects they're interested in, she said.

"We want to give feedback to teachers, to teach them what they want to learn," Laudermilk said.

Truxton charter school team refining proposal

By NICK GRAZIANO
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TRUXTON — After a setback last month, the committee that is working to establish a local charter school got good news last week when it got its first approval from the state Education Department.

This is the first time the New York State Education Department approved the Truxton Academy School Board's letter of intent, after two previous rejections.

"We're seeing success and making huge strides of progress," said Jeanetta Laudermilk, a member of the committee.

The idea for a charter school is an initiative by the Truxton Academy Charter School board to develop the school in the former Hartnett Elementary School in Truxton. The Homer Board of Education shut down the Truxton school in June due to low enrollment and it was later sold at auction.

Despite the recent forward progress, the initiative will remain on pause until the

committee can finalize its proposal for the charter school.

The board initially sent the proposal to the SUNY Charter School Institute earlier this year, but it was denied in March. A month ago, after making revisions and submitting it again, the committee retracted the 900-page proposal from the SUNY Charter School Institute, in order to develop it further.

"We'd much rather ... say 'Hey we see areas we can approve' than SUNY having to find them," Laudermilk said.

The main focus of the revisions is to better cite specific aspects in the document, such as the school standard for student advancement through the grades, she said.

"We're going back to the drawing board to get things ironed out," Laudermilk said.

The committee is working with a Syracuse consultant to perfect the proposal.

Once the proposal is finalized, committee members must cut 900 pages of information into 65 pages, per the state education

department's requirement for submission. Laudermilk said SUNY requires every detail of the planned school, while the state education department wants only the main details.

The state education department's approval, not SUNY's, is the only requirement to start the school. So the board is focusing on getting this approval.

"There is no set start date, yet, but we want to start very soon," Laudermilk said. "But we also want to be 110 percent ready."

The committee still plans to work with SUNY, which provides assistance and an extra set of rules and standards, while the state just observes, according to Laudermilk.

She said everyone on the board is working diligently to get the proposal ready. However there is no set timeframe on when it will be submitted. It is important to perfect the charter school model because the committee hopes it can be replicated through other rural areas, Laudermilk said.

SU grad students teach 7th-graders

By NICK GRAZIANO
Staff Reporter

ngraziano@cordlandstandard.net

TRUXTON — The gymnasium in Hartnett Elementary, which was closed in June 2015, was abuzz with joyous banter of fourth- to seventh-graders Friday, as they engineered balloon-powered rockets and car safety systems.

The event was part of the Summer Science Extravaganza, a required class for graduate students in the science teaching department at Syracuse University.

John Tillotson, chair of the department, is also a member of the Truxton Academy school board, which is working on turning Hartnett Elementary into a charter school.

Because of this connection, Tillotson has been holding classes for the extravaganza program at the former Hartnett Elementary School for the past two weeks.

Tillotson said instead of giving a final exam, he decided to have his four students in the program develop their own class modeling the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) curriculum. They then had to teach the class to area students.

As each student in the program plans to become a science teacher, Tillotson said he thought it would be a good idea to have them experience what teaching in a rural environment would be like. It was also an opportunity for the 21 fourth-through seventh-graders who took part in the program to get a hands-on experience with science and engineering.

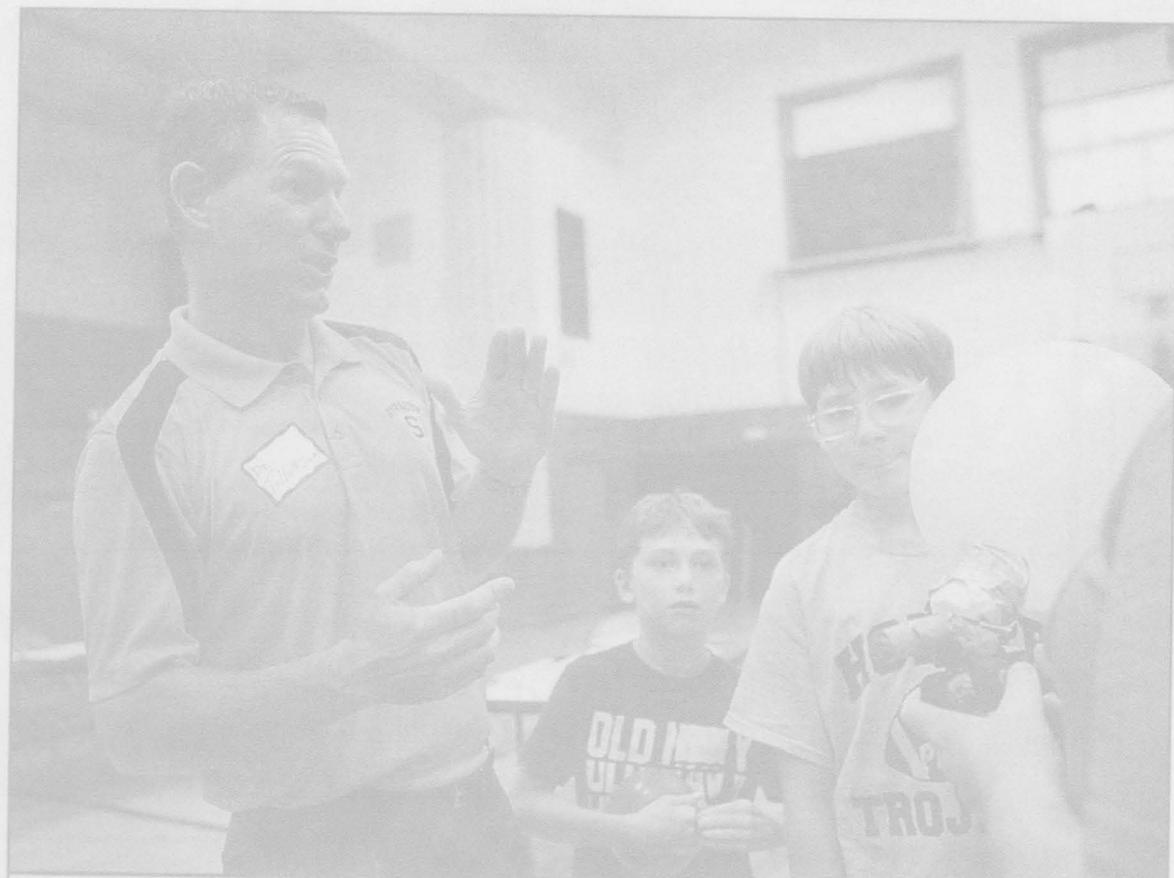
"It is the direction schools need to head in," Tillotson said of the hands-on experience. "Many schools just do reading lessons. Kids don't always respond well to that."

Many of the kids in the program reiterated his sentiment.

"This is more fun than sitting in class listening to the teacher," said Liam Austen, of Homer, who is going into sixth grade this coming school year.

Austen said what he enjoys most is getting to be creative and testing his mind.

The creativity of the projects and the results of their creations are what kept the kids excited and focused on doing their best work. Their most challenging task was developing a safety system for a toy monster truck, with an egg strapped to the



Photos by Joe McInyre

ABOVE: John Tillotson of Syracuse University's Department of Science Teaching, talks with Truxton youths Aidan Sonnacchio, 10, center, and Jack Smith, 12, during a teaching program Friday at Truxton Community Center. BELOW: Logan Austen, 9, of Homer, creates a prototype egg carrier during the program in Truxton.

back of it. The truck would be sent down a ramp, and if the designed system worked effectively, the egg would not break.

That was not always the case, but the kids never gave up.

"At first if you fail, you can still win by being able to regroup and rework on your design," Amber Le Brown, a sixth-grader from Tully, said about what she has learned from the program.

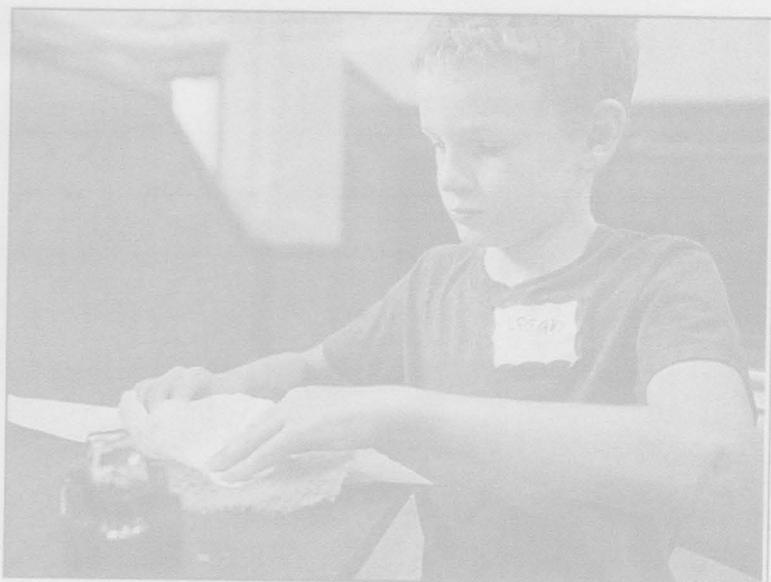
One of the graduate students in the program, Phil Kuhn, of Dewitt, said he sees the students fully immersing themselves in the activities.

"The kids like to be able to touch the materials and engineer their own designs. And then experiment with them," Kuhn said.

The curriculum the students created was developed to match the next generation of science teaching standards, which includes the hands-on activities, according to Kuhn.

Teamwork is also a significant part of the learning experience. For seventh-grader Nicholas Lines, of Truxton, he said working with other kids was one of his favorite parts of the project.

Lines added that he was having



fun learning through the hands-on activities, and would like to see more projects like that in school. But he said he would also like to go back to having school in Truxton as it is a "pain" to have to go to Homer.

Students have been sent to the Homer School District since the fall of last year after Hartnett Elementary School closed in June 2015.

Tillotson said the science teach-

ing department at Syracuse University is in full support of a charter school in Truxton, with plans already in place to help train teachers and provide more programs like the Summer Science Extravaganza at the school, if it is approved.

The charter school board received approved of its letter of intent late July by the state Education Department. But it is still working on a full proposal.

Attachment 3a: Sample Weekly Student Schedule

Lower Elementary – Kindergarten

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30	Breakfast & Meetings				
8:30-10:00	ELA & Spanish				
10:00-10:10	Fitness Break				
10:10-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:00-11:40	Applied Math & STEM	ELA – Oral Language Writing	Applied Math & STEM	ELA – Oral Language/ Writing	Applied Math & STEM
11:40-12:15	Lunch & Recess				
12:15-1:00	Social Studies				
1:00-1:45	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness
1:45-2:30	Science, Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.
2:30-3:15	Art	Music	Library/Media	Art	Music
3:15-4:15	Extended Day Tutoring & Student Clubs				

Attachment 3a: Sample Weekly Student Schedule

Upper Elementary – 3rd Grade

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30	Breakfast & Meetings				
8:30-10:00	ELA & Spanish				
10:00-10:10	Fitness Break				
10:10-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:00-11:40	STEM & Applied Math	ELA Writing Lab	STEM & Applied Math	ELA Writing Lab	STEM & Applied Math
11:40-12:25	Science, Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed
12:25-1:00	Lunch & Recess				
1:00-1:45	Social Studies				
1:45-2:30	Art	Music	Media/Tech	Art	Music
2:30-3:15	Fitness/Health	Fitness/Health	Fitness/Health	Fitness/Health	Fitness/Health
3:15-4:15	Extended Day, Tutoring & Student Clubs				

Attachment 3b: Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule

Lower Elementary – Kindergarten

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:30	Breakfast & Meetings	Breakfast & Meetings	Breakfast & Meetings	Breakfast & Meetings	Breakfast & Meetings
8:30-10:00	ELA & Spanish	ELA & Spanish	ELA & Spanish	ELA & Spanish	ELA & Spanish
10:00-10:10	Fitness Break	Fitness Break	Fitness Break	Fitness Break	Fitness Break
10:10-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:00-11:40	Applied Math & STEM	ELA – Oral Language/Writing	Applied Math & STEM	ELA – Oral Language/Writing	Applied Math & STEM
11:40-12:15	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break
12:15-1:00	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
1:00-1:45	Prep Time	Prep Time	Prep Time	Prep Time	Prep Time
1:45-2:30	Science, Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.	Science Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.			
2:30-3:15	Planning with K-2 team	Planning with K-2 team	Planning with K-2 team	Planning with K-2 team	Planning with K-2 team
3:15-4:15	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts

Attachment 3b: Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule

Upper Elementary – 3rd Grade

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:30	Breakfast & Meetings				
8:30-10:00	ELA & Spanish				
10:00-10:10	Fitness Break				
10:10-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:00-11:40	STEM & Applied Math	ELA Writing Lab	STEM & Applied Math	ELA Writing Lab	STEM & Applied Math
11:40-12:25	Science, Rural Life Lab Environ. Ed.				
12:25-1:00	Lunch Break				
1:00-1:45	Social Studies				
1:45-2:30	Planning with 3 rd -6 th Grade Team	Planning with 3 rd -6 th Grade Team	Planning with 3 rd -6 th Grade Team	Planning with 3 rd -6 th Grade Team	Planning with 3 rd -6 th Grade Team
2:30-3:15	Prep Time				
3:15-4:15	Tutoring, Parent & Staff Contacts				

**Attachment 3c
Proposed 1st Year Calendar**

**Truxton Academy
Charter School
2017-2018 Calendar**

August 2017

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

September 2017

M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

October 2017

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

November 2017

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

December 2017

M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

August-September

Aug. 7-25 Teacher Institute
 Aug. 28 First Day of School
 Aug. 28-31 Intro Learning Experience
 Sept. 1 Professional Development
 Sept. 4 Labor Day

October

October 9 Columbus Day

November

Nov. 10 Veteran's Day
 End of 1st Quarter
 Nov. 23-24 Thanksgiving Recess

December

Dec. 22-Jan 1 Holiday Recess

January

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Jan. 15 Martin L King Day
 Jan. 24 End of 2nd Quarter

February

Feb. 19-23 Winter Recess

April

April 6 End of 3rd Quarter
 April 23-27 Spring Recess

May

May 28 Memorial Day

June

June 21 Last Day for students
 End of 4th Quarter
 June 22 Professional Development

**Professional Development &
Special Program for Students:**

First Friday afternoons of each month
 (Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 1, Jan 5, Feb 2
 March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1)

Summer Session

July 9-Aug 3 Mornings

January 2018

M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

February 2018

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

March 2018

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

April 2018

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

May 2018

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

June 2018

M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

206 Staff Days
 189 Student Days
 1134 Hours of Instruction

**The TACS 2017-2018 Academic Calendar Proposed Calendar
Summarized By Quarters**

Truxton Academy Charter School Academic Calendar 2017-2018	
Teacher Institute – Professional Development	Monday, August 7– August 25
Quarter 1 (47 Instructional Days): Monday, August 28 – Friday, November 3	
First day of school	Monday, August 28
Introductory Learning Experience	Monday, August 28 – Thursday, August 31
Professional Development (No School)	Friday, September 1
Labor Day (No School)	Monday, September 4
Columbus Day (No School)	Monday, October 9
Last day of Quarter 1	Friday, November 3
Quarter 2 (47 Instructional Days): Monday, November 6 – Wednesday, January 24	
Veteran’s Day (No School)	Friday, November 10
Thanksgiving Holiday (No School)	Thursday, November 23 - Friday, November 24
Holiday Break (No School)	Friday, December 22 – Monday, January 1
School Begins in 2018	Tuesday, January 2
Martin Luther King Day (No School)	Monday, January 15
Last day of Quarter 2	Wednesday, January 24
Quarter 3 (47 Instructional Days): Thursday, January 25 – Friday, April 6	
Winter Recess (No School)	Monday, February 19 – Friday, February 23
Last Day of Quarter 3	Friday, April 6
Quarter 4 (48 Instructional Days): Monday, April 9 – Thursday, Jun 21	
Spring Recess (No School)	Monday, April 23 – Friday, April 27
Memorial Day (No School)	Monday, May 28
Last day of School & Quarter 4	Thursday, June 21
Professional Development (No School)	Friday, June 22
Tentative Summer Schedule (mornings)	Monday, July 9-Friday, August 3
Total Staff Days	206 days
Total Instructional Days	189 days
Total Number of Hours of Instruction	1,134 hours
Total Number of Half Days	0
Total Number of Full Days	189 days
Total Number of Professional Days	20 days
Total Active Days	206 days

Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy

TACS is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe, orderly, respectful **School Family Culture** that will **plant a strong foundation for future academic success** as well as promote positive character and leadership development. It is expected that all staff members, parents, and students will be respectful to each other and TACS's learning environment. A Family Handbook, containing TACS's Discipline Policy with a detailed list of school rules, regulations, and consequences, will be distributed to all families and staff members prior to the opening of school. Parents and students will review the Handbook, sign the included Student/ Parent Agreements, and return them to the School office when school starts.

School Commitment:

Safety – We will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals.

High Quality Education – We will do whatever it takes to nurture and strengthen our students' knowledge, creativity, and character as we prepare them to excel academically, socially, and physically in life. **Support and Respect** – We promise to respect, appreciate, and support every student. We will work together with parents for the benefit of all the children.

Communication – We promise to communicate regularly with parents about children's progress in person and by phone. **Civility** – We believe that we are on the same team and we will conduct ourselves respectfully and professionally in our communication with parents and children. **Fairness** – We will address all issues consistently and fairly. We will keep parents informed promptly when students are disciplined or deserve recognition for accomplishments.

Student Rights: All students have the right to: feel safe in the school environment; take full advantage of the learning opportunities; work in an environment free from disruptions, chaos, discrimination, and harassment; express their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and concerns; have a healthy environment free from smoke, alcohol, and drugs; use school resources and facilities for self-betterment under appropriate supervision; expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from all members of the school community; be informed of all expectations and responsibilities; take part in a variety of school activities; and due process.

NYS Dignity for All Students Act – At TACS, no student will be subjected to harassment or discrimination by employees or students on school property or at a school function based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

Student Responsibilities: All students have the responsibility to: be caring and honest and do their best to learn; respect school rules, regulations, and policies; be sure that personal expression does not interfere with the rights of others; follow state law and school policies concerning substance abuse; respect and protect the personal and property rights of others and of the school; treat all members of the community with full respect, fairness, and courtesy; abide by all the expectations of the school and community; follow the prescribed guidelines for participation in school activities; and adhere to due process procedures.

Code of Conduct

Truxton Academy Charter School has very high expectations for student behavior and a code of conduct to ensure that students act appropriately at all times and are always within a safe, structured environment. TACS will implement the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system setting expectations, practicing routines, and reinforcing appropriate behavior.

Consequences for inappropriate behavior are designed to help students recognize it, learn alternative choices, and protect all members of the community from disruptions or danger. Possible consequences for violating school rules depend on the severity of the infraction or the logical consequence within the given situation. Consequences may include:

Verbal Warning – Students are informed that their conduct is not conducive to learning and are warned not to continue the inappropriate behavior that may result in more consequences.

Parent Contact – Teachers will contact family members to inform them of their child's behavior and the consequence and to discuss appropriate strategies that can be used both at school and at home. These conditions will be written down and parents will be asked to sign the document and send it back to school.

Refocus – If a student repeatedly disrupts the learning environment, the student may go to the Safe Place in the classroom, the Nurse's office, or School office to refocus, depending on the individual situations. He/she will reflect on his/her actions and develop a plan to refocus and return to class ready to be productive members of the learning community.

Reconciliation – Students are responsible for their actions and the impact they have on others. Students may be asked to articulate how he/she will act differently to their classmates and teachers in the future to support the School Family and learning community.

Reparations – Students may be asked to compensate those affected by their inappropriate behavior (e.g. make amends, replace damaged property).

Parent Conference/Conversations – Parents are integral partners in helping support a child who is struggling in school. By coordinating strategies to help students in understanding appropriate behavior, we increase the likelihood of success. Teachers and staff will communicate regularly to ensure all parties are working together to solve problems.

AES (Alternative Educational Setting): AES will be utilized for students that require consequences for behavior in a restricted educational setting.

Behavioral Contract: A behavior contract may be developed for students who regularly violate the Code of Conduct and require consistent monitoring to modify their behavior. It will clearly describe expected student behaviors and require parent and teacher signatures.

Loss of School Privileges – Students who continue to exhibit inappropriate behaviors will face loss of privileges, including access to extra-curricular field trips and special events.

In-School Suspension: This consequence is used only for serious or persistent infractions of school rules. Students spend the school day supervised by a staff member in a school office, working on their schoolwork. They obtain a staff signature to be dismissed.

Out of School Suspension and Expulsion- To create and maintain a safe, supportive School Family and community, TACS will suspend students for the most serious breaches of the Code of Conduct. In all cases, parents/guardians will be informed and must attend a conference with the Head of School. In the event that a child is suspended, an alternative instructional setting will be established no later than the day after the suspension or expulsion is effective.

Bus Policy: Appropriate behavior on school buses is required at all times for safety.

Misconduct will result in: **1st incident:** a warning is issued, **2nd incident:** student will not be allowed to ride the bus for one day, **3rd incident:** student will not be allowed to ride the bus for a school week, **4th incident:** student will be prohibited from riding the school bus.

The following table specifies inappropriate behavior and resulting consequences.

<p style="text-align: center;">Level 1: Inappropriate Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Running in hallways, lunchroom, lavatories, etc. ● Making excessive noise – yelling, screaming, etc. in halls, library, lunchroom, or classroom ● Class disruption of any kind ● Failing to follow directions or engaging in unsafe behavior ● Misusing or unauthorized use of computer/electronic communications devices (including but not limited to cell phones, iPods, headphones, etc.) ● Loitering or littering in the halls, lunchroom, lavatories, staircases or on school grounds ● Leaving the classroom without permission ● Excluding classmates in activities ● Verbally dishonoring a fellow student or staff 	<p style="text-align: center;">Range of Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reminder of appropriate behavior ● Verbal warning ● Refocus Time in Nurse’s office ● Call home to parents ● Student-Parent-Teacher conference ● Student-Parent-Administrator conference ● Verbal or written apology to community ● In-school suspension ● Other consequences deemed appropriate by school
<p style="text-align: center;">Level 2: Inappropriate Behavior</p> <p>Repeating a Level 1 inappropriate behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dishonoring a fellow student or faculty or staff member using profane, vulgar or abusive language, including ethnic slurs or disobeying or defying school staff or any school personnel ● Violating the school’s Internet policy ● Forgery of any kind, lying or providing false or misleading information to school personnel ● Engaging in any academic dishonesty, cheating ● Tampering with school records or documents ● Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm or making false threats of any kind ● Stealing, misusing, or vandalizing school property or other people’s property ● Smoking, gambling, drinking alcohol, or 	<p style="text-align: center;">Range of Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sent to Head of School’s office ● Loss of classroom/school privileges ● Additional assignments which require student to reflect on behavior in writing or orally (depending on grade) ● Removal from classroom for time in another classroom or administrator’s office ● Call home to parents ● Student-Parent-Administrator conference ● In-school disciplinary action (includes but not limited to exclusion from recess, communal lunch, sports, school events) ● Verbal or written apology to community ● Staying after school ● In-school suspension

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● drug use ● Throwing any objects inappropriately ● Engaging in inappropriate physical contact ● Fighting or engaging in physically aggressive behavior ● Leaving class, school-related activity, or school premises without school authorization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Out-of-school suspension ● Other consequences deemed appropriate by school (including but not limited to extended suspension for a fixed period) ● Expulsion
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<p style="text-align: center;">Level 3: Inappropriate Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repeating Level 2 inappropriate behavior ● Exhibiting blatant and repeated disrespect for school code, policies, community, or culture ● Destroying or attempting to destroy school property ● Engaging in intimidation, bullying, harassment, coercion, or extortion or threatening violence, injury, or harm to others or stalking or seeking to coerce ● Engaging in cyberbullying which occurs via electronic communication on the Internet, on cellular phones or other electronic media on and off school grounds ● Engaging in sexual, racial, or any other type of harassment ● Engaging in behavior creating substantial risk or results in injury/assault against any member of the school community ● Possessing, transferring, or using alcohol, other drugs or controlled substances, fireworks, weapons, or any other dangerous materials ● Participating in an incident of group violence ● Charged with or convicted of a felony 	<p style="text-align: center;">Range of Consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sent to Head of School's office ● Loss of classroom/school privileges ● Additional assignments which require student to reflect on behavior in writing or orally ● Removal from classroom for time in another classroom or administrator's office ● Call home to parents ● Student-Parent-Administrator conference ● In-school disciplinary action (includes exclusion from recess, communal lunch, sports, school events, etc.) ● Verbal or written apology to community ● Staying after school ● In-school suspension ● Out-of-school suspension ● Other consequences deemed appropriate by school (including but not limited to extended suspension for a fixed period) ● Expulsion
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Gun-Free Schools: Federal and state law require expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year for a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the school, or to have possessed a firearm at school. The Head of School may modify such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. "Weapon" as used in this law includes firearms and explosives. The Head of School shall refer a student under the age of sixteen who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to a presentment agency for a juvenile delinquency proceeding. Any action taken by criminal justice or juvenile agencies will be in addition to, and independent of, discipline imposed by the school.

Students With Disabilities: TACS's disciplinary policy regarding any student with a disability, will be consistent with the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")**, its implementing regulations and applicable NYS law respecting students with disabilities. The school will cooperate with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's district of residence as necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. When a student is suspended for more than 10 days, or on multiple occasions that, in the aggregate, amount to more than 10 days in a school year, safeguards are in place to ensure that the student's behavior was not tied to or was a manifestation of his/her disability. An exclusion from school for a period greater than 10 days is considered a change in placement. A student whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to an infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the CSE for consideration of a change in the guidelines. If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of 8 days, the school will contact the CSE for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such student shall not be suspended for a total of more than 10 days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE prior to the 11th of suspension, because it may be considered to be a change in placement. TACS will work with the CSE to ensure that it meets within 7 days of notification of any of the following:

- the commission of an infraction by a student with a disability who has previously been suspended for the maximum allowable number of days,
- the commission of any infraction resulting from the student's disability, or
- the commission of any infraction by a student with a disability, regardless of whether the student has previously been suspended during the school year, if, had such an infraction been committed by a non-disabled student, the Head of School would seek to impose a suspension in excess of 10 days.

When a change of placement of greater than 10 days is proposed, a manifestation team consisting of: (a) someone from the CSE who is knowledgeable about the student and can interpret information about the student's behavior, (b) the parent/guardian, and (c) relevant members of the student's CSE IEP team (as determined by the parent and CSE) shall convene immediately, or no later than 10 days after the decision to change placement, to determine whether the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. The notice to the parent/guardian will advise that the CSE has been notified. The notice will state the purpose of the CSE meeting, the names of the expected attendees, and indicate the parent/guardian's right to have relevant CSE members attend. The manifestation team must review the student's IEP together with all relevant information within the student's file and any information

provided by the parent/guardian. If the manifestation team concludes that the child's behavior resulted from his disability, the manifestation team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) to address the behaviors giving rise to the conduct, unless an FBA or BIP was made prior to the student's violation of school rules giving rise to the suspension, in which case each should be reviewed and revised, if necessary, to address the behavior. A student whose IEP includes specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear not to be effective or if there is concern for the health and safety of the student or others if those guidelines are followed with respect to a specific infraction, the CSE may consider a change in the guidelines. Moreover, the student must also be returned to his or her original placement, unless: the parent and district agree to another placement as part of the newly created or revised BIP or in cases where the child: 1) carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a function under the jurisdiction of the State or local educational agency (LEA); 2) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or LEA; or 3) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or LEA. The Committee on Special Education shall determine an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), which shall not exceed 45 days. If a student does not currently have an IEP, but prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary action, the school has a basis of knowledge that a disability exists, the student's family may request that the student be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. If the suspension of a student with a disability is upheld, the student may be placed in alternative instruction, or be required to remain at home during the duration of the suspension, but not longer than the amount of time a non-disabled student would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.

Alternative Instruction: Alternative instruction will be provided on a case-by-case basis as required by law. A suspended elementary school student will be assigned to alternative instruction for a minimum of one hour per day. TACS will assign staff to develop alternative instruction that will enable the student to complete required coursework and make sure that he/she progresses toward the IEP goals. If the school believes it is unable to accommodate the provisions of the student's IEP, it will immediately contact the CSE to convene a meeting to remedy the situation. TACS may also seek to place the student in any alternate education program that is operated by the student's school district of residence either through agreement with the school district or by operation of law. The student may be assigned a project designed to address the behavior that gave rise to the suspension.

III. B. 5b Truxton Academy Charter School Proposed Bylaws

ARTICLE I- NAME

The name of this organization shall be Truxton Academy Charter School (hereafter, "TACS").

ARTICLE II-PURPOSE

The Truxton Academy Charter School shall be a not-for-profit educational entity, subject to the laws of the State of New York, for the general purpose of operating a public charter school as approved by the New York State Board of Regents.

ARTICLE III-BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SECTION I: Responsibilities

A. Authority

The business and affairs of Truxton Academy Charter School shall be managed and controlled under the general direction of the Board of Trustees of Truxton Academy Charter school (the "the Board of Trustees" and each member thereof, a "Trustee") in accordance with the purposes and limitations set forth herein and in the Charter Agreement between Truxton Academy Charter School and the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York.

B. Powers

The Board of Trustees of TACS shall have general and specific powers, as follows:

1. General Powers: The Board shall conduct or direct the affairs of the Corporation and exercise its powers, subject to the limitation of the Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, the Corporation's Charter and these Bylaws. The Board may delegate the management of the activities of the Corporation to others, so long as the affairs of the Corporation are managed and its powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.
2. Specific Powers: Without limiting the generality of the powers hereby granted to the Board, but subject to the same limitations, the Board shall have all the powers enumerated in these Bylaws, and the following specific powers:
 - a. To be responsible for all decision concerning the acquisition, sale, purchase, and use of TACS assets;
 - b. To establish and supervise compliance of all TACS policies, regulations, rules, the retention, supervision, evaluation, and all other employment decisions concerning the Head of School of TACS;
 - c. To approve all contracts of employment, including pay and fringe benefits provided thereunder;
 - d. To approve all personnel decisions involving the termination of employment, demotion, transfer, or promotion of TACS personnel;
 - e. To provide oversight and supervision of all facets of the operations of TACS, including approval and supervision of its curriculum, education programs, and all related matters;
 - f. To carry out all other duties that are necessary and appropriate to the governance and management of TACS are or may be prescribed by these bylaws, or which may otherwise be required by law. Such duties shall include the following:
 - g. To exist as a governing board and perform all duties appurtenant thereto, including overseeing and directing the organization and administration of the

education program, curriculum, policies, and operations of the Truxton Academy Charter School consistent with the provisions of the charter granted by the New York State Board of Regents on _____, 2016 and the charter agreement between the Truxton Charter School and the New York State Board of Regents, dated _____, 2016.

h. To ensure that the administrators and faculty of the Truxton Academy Charter School offer an exceptional, relevant and rigorous curriculum to the enrolled students.

i. To oversee the development and, to the extent necessary, implementation of a fair and unbiased lottery system, that is compliant with Education Law § 2854 (2) (b) and providing a preference to applicants residing within the Homer School District.

j. To direct and supervise its administrators and employees relative to the applications for grants and other funding for the sole benefit of the TACS educational programs, facilities and related operations.

3. Consistent Exercise of Powers: All powers exercised by the Board of Trustees shall be consistent with the objectives and purposes for which TACS is formed and provisions of Section 501 © 3 of the Internal Revenue code.

SECTION 2: Board Composition

A. Character

In general, board members should be individuals of high moral character, demonstrate an interest in the welfare of children and be committed to improving education in the community. All board members must be committed to dedicating the necessary time and energy to ensure the effective and smooth operation of the school.

B. Membership and Number of Trustees

1. The Board shall consist of not less than six or more than nine members. A trustee must be over the age of 18 and the majority of those trustees must live in the Homer School District. At least two members of the Board should have children presently attending or who have previously attended TACS in the past five years. The Board may be increased or decreased in size only within the stated limits by resolution of the Board. No position of the Board shall be dropped until the expiration of its three-year term.

3. Elected members of the Board may lose their position on the Board upon majority vote of the remaining Board, if they are absent without excuse from three consecutive Board meetings. The secretary shall provide the absent Board member in writing a warning of the Board's possible action with a response requested in a timely manner before a final vote is taken.

4. Vacancies may be filled by a majority vote of the Board at any duly called meeting of the Board, for the balance of the unexpired term.

5. No Board member may be concurrently employed by TACS or receive fees for services rendered to TACS.

C. Experience

The Board of Trustees shall have experience that demonstrates a combination of all or some of the following area of expertise: finance; law; human resources; public relations and marketing

development and fundraising; economic development; community leadership; curriculum and instruction in PK-16 education and/or administration; facilities and/or real estate; social work and/or counseling; and strategic planning.

D. Nomination & Election of Trustees

1. Nomination: To become a Trustee, a person shall be nominated by a current Trustee.
2. Election: Trustees shall be elected a majority vote of the Trustees present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees then in office, whether or not the number of Trustees in office is sufficient to constitute a quorum, or by the sole remaining Trustee. The election of any new Trustee is subject to approval by the State University Board of Trustees, which has the right to reject the election of any new Trustee.
3. Eligibility: The board may elect as a Trustee any person who in its discretion it believes will serve the interests of the Corporation faithfully and effectively. Each Trustee shall be a least eighteen years of age: however, the Board may seek the ex officio advisement of students, depending upon the issue at hand.
4. Interested Persons: No one described as an "interested person" shall sit on the Board concurrent with receiving compensation by the Corporation for services rendered to it.

SECTION 3: Meetings

A. Regular Meetings. Meetings of the Board shall be held on the first Monday of each month. Notification of any change of Board meetings must be given to all members in a manner agreed on by the Board.

B. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, or in the absence or incapacity of the President, by the Vice-President, or by written request of any members of the Board.

C. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board shall be held during the July regular monthly meeting of each calendar year.

D. Accessibility. Monthly TACS Board meetings shall be open to TACS staff and the public who may participate in discussion, but may not vote.

SECTION 4: Quorum

One-half plus one of the trustees shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the Board. All actions shall be by simple majority vote of members present and voting.

ARTICLE IV- OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Number, Election and Terms of Office

A. The Board of Trustees shall annually elect a President, Vice-President, and Treasurer from the members of the Board. At least two of these positions must be filled by a current resident of the Town of Truxton. Election of officers shall take place at the first regular Board meeting following the annual meeting.

B. Officers shall serve a term of one year, and can be re-elected. Vacancies may be filled at any duly called Board meeting, for the balance of the unexpired term.

C. The Recording Secretary shall be appointed by a majority of the Board at the annual meeting and can be re-appointed. The recording secretary shall be a resident of the Homer School District.

1. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for the records of the proceedings of the Board and of the Executive Committee.
2. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for recording minutes of Board meetings.
3. The Recording Secretary shall keep an on-going and accurate record of Board meeting attendance, and shall report to the Board when a member has failed to meet attendance requirements.
4. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining necessary organizational records and all official Board correspondence. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the presiding officer may appoint a temporary secretary.
5. The Recording Secretary shall also perform such other duties as may be designated from time to time by the Board or the President.

D. Three Board members will be elected or reelected by the Board at its annual meeting. A slate of nominees for board membership shall be offered from the floor when an opening is available. Term of office shall be three years in terms to be staggered so that as nearly as possible, one-third of the member terms expire with the conclusion of the annual meeting. Board members may be re-elected.

SECTION 2: Duties

A. President

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board and shall be responsible for its efficient operation. The President shall appoint all chairpersons of standing and special committees.

B. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall be the contact person regarding electronic communication with the Board and have such powers and responsibilities as are designated from time to time by the Board or by the President including the option to conduct on-line Board voting when needed. The Vice-President shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President, and shall carry out such other duties of the President as shall be required.

C. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall be a full member of the Board of Trustees and be one of two signatures required for any bank account opened for the sole use of TACS and function as a liaison with our partner corporation Truxton Alumni and Community Supporters, Inc.
2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for accepting, recording and depositing all financial contributions and payments to TACS and monitor the disbursement of those funds by our supporting corporation; shall make sure that all funds are properly collected, accounted for and deposited, that all bills are properly verified and paid, and that all receipts and disbursements are recorded pursuant to standard accounting procedure.
3. The Treasurer shall also render regular financial statements or reports of the income and expenses of TACS to the Board during its regular meetings and to other agencies as are or may be prescribed by law.

4. The Treasurer will be a standing member of the Finance Committee in order to assist and support their activities and responsibilities.

SECTION 3: Vacancies

Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer, such vacancy shall be filled by majority vote during any duly called meeting of the Board, and the person(s) so designated shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE V- COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: Standing Committees

Committees as described and approved by the Board, have the responsibility of notifying the Board of their meetings and providing a written summary of meeting attendance, topics discussed and action taken. The Recording Secretary will maintain these reports and share when needed.

A. Executive Committee - Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and one additional parent member of the Board or Applicant Support Group, appointed by the President. At least two of these positions must be held by Town of Truxton residents. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of three members of the Committee. Decisions shall be made by majority vote of those present and voting. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for long-range planning for TACS and shall make recommendations to the Board in this regard. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to act on behalf of the Board in such matters as are deemed appropriate by the board, subject to ratification at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

B. Curriculum Committee- Chairman will be a member of and appointed by the Board of Trustees. Members will include two teachers either active or retired, one school administrator, one parent, and one representative of local agri-business. Responsibilities include informing and assessing the effectiveness and future needs as regards implementation and integration of TACS curriculum Assessment Standards as well as fulfilling the Mission statement of TACS. These members may be solicited or volunteer and will be approved by the TACS Board.

C. Finance- Chairman will be an active member of the Applicant Support Group and appointed by the Board of Trustees. The members will include one local business owner, one parent and a certified public accountant chosen by the Board. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to, creating and publishing an Operational Budget for TACS, consulting with accountant on spending options and legal restrictions, if any, in terms of satisfying the laws of New York State and accepted spending guidelines of the NYS Dept. of Ed.

D. Audit - The board may designate an Audit Committee which committee shall consist entirely of independent members. Each member of the Board shall, upon initial appointment and annually thereafter, provide to the President of the Board a completed independence questionnaire in the form attached to the Corporation's Ethics Policy. The President shall determine the independence of each Member based on such member's responses to the questionnaire.

This committee shall undertake the following duties:

1. The Audit Committee shall annually retain, or renew the retention of the independent auditor to conduct the audit of the Corporation's financial statements, and upon the completion thereof, and review the results of the audit and any related management letter with such independent auditor. In

furtherance of the responsibilities described in this Section 3(a) of the Article, the Audit Committee shall:

- a. Review with the independent auditor the scope and planning of the audit, prior to commencement of the audit;
- b. Upon completion of the audit, review and discuss with the independent auditor
 - (i) any material risks or weaknesses in internal controls identified by the auditor,
 - (ii) any restrictions on the scope of the auditor's activities or access to requested information;
 - (iii) any significant disagreements between the auditor and management, and
 - (iv) the adequacy of the Corporation's accounting and financial reporting process.
- c. Annually consider the performance and independence of the independent auditor.

2. The Audit Committee shall maintain, monitor and administer the TACS Ethics Policy and the Whistleblower Policy (if any) of the Corporation.

In the event that the Board of Trustees does not establish an Audit Committee, or the Audit Committee is otherwise inactive, the duties of the Audit Committee shall be undertaken by the Board of Directors, excluding only those directors who are not independent.

E. Public Relations/Marketing- Chairman will be an active member of the Applicant Support Group and appointed by the Board. Members will include local residents and business leaders as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the Committee. The responsibilities shall include but are not limited to planning for and providing information about TACS to the public and encouraging interaction and support of the school's mission and program. The chairman will also supervise all Internet web sites sponsored by TACS and consult with the Board on appropriate information to be shared electronically. The chairman may also designate a specific individual to regularly monitor and respond to inquiries and comments received on these Internet web sites with approval of the Board.

F. Building and Outbuildings- Chairman will be a member of the Applicant Support Group and appointed by the Board of Trustee. Members will include local residents and business leaders familiar with building codes, construction techniques, the bidding process and maintenance of the school building and present and proposed outbuildings. This committee will support school maintenance and custodial employees bringing concerns and proposed changes to the Board for review and approval.

G. Fundraising- Chairman will be a member of the Applicant Support Group and appointed by the Board of Trustees. Members will include local residents and business leaders as needed to fulfill the responsibilities of this committee. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to, actively organizing events for the purpose of raising funds. These funds will be used to provide educational benefits and enrichment opportunities for the students of TACS. All events will be approved by the TACS Board.

SECTION 2: Special Committees

The President of the Board shall have the power to create and appoint such special committees as the business of TACS may require from time to time, and the duties and responsibilities thereof.

ARTICLE VI- FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the TACS shall be July 1 through June 30.

ARTICLE VII- DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the corporation, its assets shall be distributed according to provision described in the Truxton Academy Charter School state charter requirements.

ARTICLE VIII- PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the proceedings of this corporation except as otherwise provided by Board By-Laws.

ARTICLE IX- AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be altered, amended, added to, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the Board at any duly called meeting of the Board.

Truxton Academy Charter School
Annual Conflict of Interest Statement For Trustees and Employees

Name: _____ Date: _____
(Please Print)

Position:

Are you a voting Trustee? Yes No

Are you an Officer? Yes No If yes, which Officer position do you hold: _____

Are you an Employee? Yes No If yes, what position do you hold: _____

I affirm the following:

I have received a copy of the TACS Code of Ethics. _____ (initial)

I have read and understand the Code of Ethics. _____ (initial)

I agree to comply with the Code of Ethics. _____ (initial)

I understand that TACS is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more tax-exempt purposes. _____ (initial)

Disclosures:

Do you have a financial interest (current or potential), including a compensation arrangement, as defined in the Code of Ethics with TACS? Yes No

If yes, please describe it: _____

If yes, has the financial interest been disclosed, as provided in the Code of Ethics? Yes No

In the past, have you had a financial interest, including a compensation arrangement, as defined in the Code of Ethics with TACS? Yes No

If yes, please describe it, including when (approximately): _____

If yes, has the financial interest been disclosed, as provided in the Code of Ethics? Yes No

Are you an independent agent, as defined in the Code of Ethics? Yes No

If you are not independent, why? _____

Signature of Trustee or Employee: _____ Date _____

Date of Review by Executive Committee: _____

Proposed Truxton Academy Charter School Code of Ethics

I. Purpose

The Board of Trustees of Truxton Academy Charter School and the Founding Applicant Group hold their positions to serve and benefit the school community, and not for obtaining personal or private gain in the exercise of their official powers and duties. Truxton Academy Charter School recognizes that sound and ethical standards of conduct serve to increase the effectiveness of school board trustees and their staff as educational leaders in their community. The Board also recognizes its obligation under the NYS General Municipal Law, setting forth the standards of conduct required of all school trustees, officers, and employees.

II. Definitions

- A. The term “Board” means the Board of Trustees of the Truxton Academy Charter School.
- B. The term “Code” means this Code of Ethics.
- C. The term “School” means Truxton Academy Charter School.
- D. The term “School officer, officer, employee, or staff member” means a paid or unpaid officer or staff member of the School including, but not limited to, the members of the Board of Trustees.
- E. The term “gift” means anything of value, whether in the form of money, service, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or in any other form. The value of a gift is the gift’s fair market value, determined by the retail cost of the item or a comparable item. The fair market value of a ticket entitling the holder to food, refreshments, entertainment, or any other benefit is the face value of the ticket or the actual cost to the donor, whichever is greater.
- F. The term “interest” means a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit accruing to an officer or employee (unless the context otherwise indicates), but does not include any benefit arising from the provision or receipt of any services generally available to the residents or taxpayers of the state of New York, or a lawful class of such residents or taxpayers.
- G. The term “matter” refers to any actual or proposed contract purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement, including oral agreements with a municipality.
- H. The term “relative” means a spouse, parent, grandparent, step-parent, sibling, step-sibling, sibling’s spouse, child, step-child, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin, or household member of a School officer or employee, and individuals having any of these relationships to the spouse of the School officer or staff member.

III. Applicability

This Code applies to School officers and staff members.

IV. Standards of Conduct

General Conduct: An officer or employee shall use conduct in accordance with the core values, mission and vision of Truxton Academy Charter School. Therefore, every officer and employee of the school, whether paid or unpaid, including Board Trustees and Founders, shall adhere to the following

A. Partners

- a. The Board of Trustees shall conduct or direct the affairs of the school and exercise its powers, subject to the limitations of NYS Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, the school’s charter and its bylaws. The Board may delegate aspects of the management of the activities of the school to others, so long as the

affairs of the school are managed, and its powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.

- b. No trustee, officer, individual, or employee of a corporation, limited liability company, or partnership having a business relationship with the charter school involving the provision of education management services to the charter school shall serve as a voting member of the Board

B. Gifts

- a. An officer or employee shall not directly or indirectly violate §805a (1) (a) of the General Municipal Law by soliciting any gifts; nor shall an officer or employee accept or receive any single gift having a value of \$75 or more, or gifts from the same source having a cumulative value of \$75 or more if it could reasonably be inferred the gift was intended to influence the performance of official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action.

- b. This section does not prohibit any other gift, including:

- i. Gifts made to the School;

- ii. Gifts from a person with a family or personal relationship with the officer or employee when the circumstances make it clear that the personal relationship rather than the recipient's status as a School officer or employee, is the primary motivating factor for the gift;

- iii. Gifts given on special occasions, such as marriage, illness, or retirement, which are modest, reasonable and customary;

- iv. Unsolicited advertising or promotional material of little intrinsic value;

- v. Awards and plaques having a value of \$75 or less, which are publicly presented in recognition of service as a School officer or employee.

- c. The Board welcomes and encourages the writing of letters or notes expressing gratitude or appreciation to staff members. Inexpensive gifts from children may be accepted in the spirit in which they are given.

C. Confidential Information:

An officer or employee shall not disclose confidential information acquired in the course of official duties or use such information to further personal interest. In addition, information shall not be disclosed regarding any matters discussed in an executive session of the Board, whether such information is deemed confidential or not.

D. Investments in Conflict with Official Duties:

An officer or employee shall not invest or hold any investment directly in any financial business, commercial or other private transaction that creates a conflict with official duties. Contracts with not-for-profit entities, such as charter management organizations, partners and founding organizations must be disclosed but are not prohibited.

E. Representation before the School

- a. An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school board.

- b. Representation before the Board for a contingent fee: An officer or employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the school board, whereby the compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by the school with respect to such matter.

- c. Disclosure of interest in matters before the Board: A member of the Board of Trustees and any officer or employee of the school, whether paid or unpaid, who participates in the discussion or gives official opinion to the Board on any matter

before the Board shall publicly disclose on the official record and in writing the nature and extent of any direct or indirect financial or other private interest future interest in such matter.

F. Private employment:

a. Officers or employees shall not engage in, solicit, negotiate for or promise to accept private employment when that employment or service creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of their official duties or violates §805-a (1) or (d) of the General Municipal Law as interpreted by this Code.

b. Future employment: Officers or employees shall not, after the termination of service, or employment with the Board, appear before the Board, or any panel or committee of the Board in relation to any case, proceeding, or application in which they personally participated during the period of their service or employment or that was under his or her active consideration.

G. Prohibition on Use of School Position for Personal or Private Gain

Officers or staff members shall not use their School position or official powers and duties to secure a financial or material benefit for themselves, a relative, or any private organization in which they are deemed to have an interest.

H. Use of School Resources

School resources shall be used for lawful School purposes. School resources include, but are not limited to: School personnel, money, vehicles, equipment, materials, supplies, or other property.

I. Interest in Contracts

a. No officer or staff member may have an interest in a contract that is prohibited by §801 of the General Municipal Law.

b. Every officer and staff member shall disclose Interests in contracts with the School in the time and in the manner required by Section V of this Code and as provided in General Municipal Law §803.

V. Disclosure of Interests

A. Whenever a matter requiring the exercise of discretion comes before officers or staff members, either individually or as a member of the Board, and disposition of the matter could result in a direct or indirect financial or material benefit to themselves, a relative, or any private organization in which they are deemed to have an Interest, the officer or staff member promptly disclose in writing the nature of the Interest.

B. The disclosure shall be made when the matter requiring disclosure first comes before the officer or employee, or when the officer or employee first acquires knowledge of the Interest requiring disclosure, whichever is earlier.

VI. Recusal and Abstention

A. Officer or staff members may not participate in any decision or take any official action with respect to any matter requiring the exercise of discretion (including, but not limited to, discussion and voting) when they know or have reason to know that the action could confer a direct or indirect financial or material benefit on themselves, a relative, or any other private organization in which they are deemed to have an interest.

B. In the event that Section VI of this Code prohibits an officer or employee from exercising or performing a power or duty:

- a. If the power or duty is vested in an officer as a member of the Board, then the power of duty shall be exercised or performed by the other members of the Board.
- b. If the power or duty is vested in an individual, then the power or duty shall be exercised or performed by their deputy or, if the officer does not have a deputy, the power or duty shall be performed by another person to whom the officer may lawfully delegate the function.
- c. If the power or duty is vested in a staff member, the staff member must refer the matter to the Head of School who shall designate another person to exercise or perform the power or duty.

VII. Disclosure, Recusal, and Abstention Not Required

A. This code's prohibition on the use of a School position, disclosure requirement and requirements relating to recusal and abstention shall not apply with respect to the following:

- a. Any matter requiring the exercise of discretion that directly affects any of the following groups of people or a lawful class or such groups:
 - i. All School officers or staff members;
 - ii. All residents or taxpayers of the School or an area of the School; or
 - iii. The general public.
- b. Any matter that does not require the exercise of discretion.

B. Recusal and Abstention shall not be required with respect to:

- a. Any matter which comes before the Board when a majority of the total membership would otherwise be prohibited from acting by Section VI of this Code; or
- b. Any matter which comes before a School officer when the officer would be prohibited from acting by Section VI of the Code and the matter cannot be lawfully delegated to another person.
- c. Adoption of the School's annual budget.

VIII. Personal Representations and Claims Permitted

This Code shall not be construed as prohibiting School officers or staff members from:

- A. Representing themselves, or their spouse or minor children before the School; or
- B. Asserting a claim against the School on their own behalf or on behalf of their spouse or minor children.

IX. Posting and Distribution

The Board President shall cause a copy of this Code of Ethics to be distributed annually to every officer and employee of the school. Each officer and employee elected or appointed thereafter shall be furnished a copy before entering upon the duties of office or employment.

- A. The Head of School must post a copy of this Code and copy of any amendment to this Code conspicuously in the School building. The Code and any amendment must be posted within ten (10) days following the date on which the code or amendment as applicable, takes effect.
- B. The Head of School, at the directive to the Board President must distribute a copy of this Code, including any amendments to the Code, to each person who is or becomes a School officer or staff member.
- C. Every School officer or staff member who receives a copy of this Code or an amendment to the Code must acknowledge such receipt in writing in the form attached

hereto. Such acknowledgments must be filed with the School, which must maintain such acknowledgements as a public record.

D. The failure to post this Code or an amendment to the Code does not affect either the applicability or enforceability of the Code or any amendment. The failure of a School officer or staff member to receive a copy of this Code or any amendment to this Code, or to acknowledge receipt thereof in writing, does not affect either the applicability or enforceability of the Code or amendment to the Code.

X. Filing Requirement

Within thirty (30) days of the Board’s adoption of the Code or any amendment, the School shall file a copy of this Code or amendment, as applicable, with the Office of the NY State Comptroller.

XI. Enforcement and Penalties

In addition to any penalty contained in any other provision of law, any School officer or staff member who shall knowingly and intentionally violate any of the provision of the Board’s Code of Ethics may be censured, fined suspended or removed from office or employment, as the case may be, in the manner provided by law.

Sample Form:

Code of Ethics Acknowledgement

I, _____, an officer/staff member of the School, do hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Code of Ethics of the Truxton Academy Charter School on this ____ day of _____, in the year _____.

Signature of officer/staff member

Printed name of officer/staff member

Effective Date

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
College of Arts & Sciences
Science Teaching

February 23, 2016

Cindy Denkenberger, President
Truxton Academy Charter School
PO Box 102
Truxton, NY 13158

Dear Ms. Denkenberger:

I am very pleased to offer my enthusiastic endorsement of the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS). The school's mission to promote active, experiential learning for K-6 students in the greater Truxton community through a project-based curriculum that links STEM education, environmental stewardship, and local connections to agriculture and rural life is highly commendable. Education research has repeatedly shown the significant learning gains associated with robust, student-centered classrooms that engage children in problem-solving, group collaboration, and interdisciplinary projects that foster connections between key concepts and their real-world applications. The proposed charter school will afford K-6 students, and their parents, a rich opportunity to participate in a school-community partnership that promotes innovation in teaching and learning while honoring the heritage associated with rural life.

The Department of Science Teaching at Syracuse University is eager to play a prominent role as a collaborator in the TACS effort. Our department is responsible for teaching a wide variety of science content and pedagogy courses that prepare pre-service elementary and secondary science teachers to be STEM leaders and innovators in diverse K-12 classrooms. Our faculty members have expertise in teacher professional development, curriculum development, and assessment in both rural and urban school contexts. In addition, our program supports a number of doctoral students with significant K-12 teaching experience who assist program faculty with ongoing teaching, research, and professional development efforts who will be actively involved in our TACS collaborations.

As a collaborator with TACS, Syracuse University's Department of Science Teaching pledges to provide the following types of support:

- Ongoing consultation with the TACS Board of Directors to provide technical assistance related to STEM curriculum development and teacher support;
- Targeted academic year and summer professional development workshops for TACS K-6 teachers promoting research-based, three-dimensional STEM teaching and learning strategies designed to achieve the objectives identified in the *Next Generation Science Standards*; and
- Technical assistance with grant writing to support further TACS program development, as well as research and evaluation activities associated with measuring school performance outcomes.

We welcome this opportunity to establish a strong partnership with TACS to advance your important mission.

Sincerely,



John W. Tillotson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Science Education
Director of Graduate Programs in Science Education



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Office of Outreach

February 25, 2016

Dr. Lydia Aris, VMD and
Truxton Academy Charter School Board of Trustees
Southern Hills Veterinary Hospital
PO Box 700
Tully, NY 13159

Dear Dr. Aris:

On behalf of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), I want to express enthusiastic support for the proposed *Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS)*. Based upon my review of your proposal and mission statement, along with conversations with you and your colleagues, I wholeheartedly endorse your intent to provide Truxton students with a project-based learning program focused on environmental and agricultural studies. I believe that your proposed charter school will create enhanced opportunities and support for students that will facilitate their success in school, in their post-secondary pursuits, and throughout their careers.

As you know well, ESF is one of only nine doctoral-granting institutions in the sixty-four campus State University of New York (SUNY) system. Located in Syracuse, New York, ESF is an urban campus with eight additional regional campuses and field stations distributed across 25,000 acres in Central and Northern New York, ranging from the Appalachian highlands and Great Lakes basin to the St. Lawrence River and the Adirondack Mountains. As a result, ESF is one of the largest campuses in the U.S. dedicated to education, research, outreach and demonstration in environmental science, engineering, policy, design, and planning.

We believe ESF's mission and experience with educational outreach in elementary and secondary schools complements your expressed intent to provide an alternative model of elementary education that engages students in hands-on experiential learning opportunities focused on environmental problem solving. We applaud and encourage you in your commitment to establish the TACS.

In addition to ongoing consultation and guidance, ESF pledges to:

- Work with TACS leadership to create an academic advisory board;
- Provide meeting space at the College for selected academic advisory board and other leadership meetings;
- Facilitate the development of a tutoring program for TACS students based on appropriate *ESF Science Corps* models; and
- Consult on the development of environmental projects, mini-camps, and day camps for TACS students both during the school year and summer vacation.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues and wish you success in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles M. Spuches". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Charles M. Spuches
Assistant to the President for Outreach



RESEARCH, EVALUATION,
& DEVELOPMENT

Cindy Denkenberger, President
Truxton Academy Charter School
PO Box 102
Truxton, NY 13158

Dear Ms. Denkenberger,

On behalf of The R/E/D Group, LLC (Research/Evaluation/Development) we are pleased to support the proposed Truxton Academy Charter School initiative. Your vision to create a comprehensive educational experience that integrates STEM and environmental education with project based learning and strong community connections resonates well with our experience in rural settings and the needs of students in those settings. For the past several years The R/E/D Group has provided developmental (planning, grant writing) and evaluation services to a broad range of rural schools throughout the North Country of the State as well as Central New York and the Southern Tier. The services have ranged from advisory and consultative to more intensive assessment and evaluation studies. In addition to the services provide directly to clientele, we also are strongly affiliated with the Office of Professional Research and Development at Syracuse University. This affiliation allows us to greatly increase our capacity through access to the many resources of a private research university.

We would be happy to offer our organization to serve as member - formal or ad hoc - of the Academy's Academic Advisory Council. We believe as such we can offer access to the best in research and professional literature related to models of practice in professional development, STEM programming, project and inquiry based learning, and environmental education. In addition, we can provide you access to what we have learned over the years from research and our own studies as to some of the most promising approaches to school-community collaborations. If appropriate, the R/E/D Group, LLC is also prepared to serve in an evaluator capacity for you and the Academy Board.

We look forward to hearing from you and from moving forward in a potential role in your Academy's birth and growth.

Sincerely,

Laura Bourcy, PhD
Scott L Shablak, PhD
Founding Members, The R/E/D Group, LLC

The RED Group, L.L.C.
P.O. Box 35150
Syracuse, New York 13235

Ph: 315-727-2990
Ph: 585-388-7474
Fax: 585-388-7474

February 27, 2016

Dear Ms. Denkenberger,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Truxton Academy Charter School (TACS) proposal. At SUNY Cortland, I wear a number of “hats”, and as such have noted how potential partnerships with TACS could be mutually beneficial in each of these areas.

As the Project-Based Learning (PBL) coordinator through the Center for Innovation in Education at SUNY Cortland, I am working with a team to create a PBL certificate or micro-credential for our teacher candidates. This credential will include time in classrooms where our students will need to work with teachers implementing PBL. I look forward to the great opportunities for our students to see and participate in school-wide PBL at the elementary level. This credential could also be tailored to meet the needs of newly hired teachers working at TACS.

As a faculty member preparing childhood and early childhood education teachers in science and environmental education, part of my course curriculum includes preparing students to teach in outdoor settings, to incorporate school gardens, and apply other place-based education concepts. Having a local school providing clear examples of how to incorporate these into the school curriculum would serve as a model and strengthen the application of these concepts for my students as they go on to work in schools throughout New York State and beyond.

In addition, as the Campus Sustainability Coordinator, I am encouraged to see a focus on sustainability education at TACS. I would be happy to host tours for TACS students and staff of our sustainability aspects at the college and to facilitate partnerships with our sustainability related programs. SUNY Cortland was recently cited as being one of the greenest colleges in the U.S. by Best Colleges. SUNY Cortland was the first SUNY Campus to use 100% renewable energy for electricity, and the first to receive a gold rating on a sustainability assessment (STARS) through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

In summary, I would like to say I am excited for the potential for both TACS and the various components of SUNY Cortland that I outlined above.

Sincerely,



Beth Shiner Klein, Ed.D.
Professor of Science Education
Campus Sustainability Coordinator
Co-Director, Teacher Professional Development Network of Central NY

Truxton Academy Charter School Academic Advisory Panel

First Official Meeting

March 23rd 2016 2-3 PM

Sign In:

Print Name	Sign Name	Position at University	Date
Katharina Searing	KSearing	Asst. Director of Prof Ed.	3/23/2016
Chuck Spuchas	Chuck Spuch	Asst. to the President	3.23.16
Rick Beal	Rick Beal	Assistant Dean	"
Cindy Dentenberger		TACS Board President	"
John Tillotson	John W. Tillotson	Assoc Prof of Science Education at SU	3/23/16
Elaine Sturges	Elaine Sturges	TACS Board Member	3/23/16
Mary Welter	Mary Welter	Asst Director OPRD R/E/D Group Representative	3/23/16
Lydia Aris	Lydia Aris	Founder - Truxton Academy Charter School	3/23/16
(David Rutherford)	(David Rutherford)	(Exec. Dir. Coop. Ext., Cortland)	(3/24/16)

Note*

David could not make it to the Advisory Panel meeting on 3/23/16. TACS board representatives had a phone meeting with him on 3/24/16. Everything that transpired on 3/23/16 was discussed and David was officially welcomed to the TACS AAP.



Dear Local Business,

Truxton Academy Charter School is excited to create a new educational experience for elementary students in the area. This experience is cultivated through hands-on learning methods that are sewn through agricultural and environmental learning resources. We know that elementary student's minds are captivated in learning about what is around them. Because of this, we encourage the partnership of local businesses including technology enhancing and STEM learning resources for the students. Partnerships with local businesses, through field trips, projects, and learning resources brought into the daily school workings, will be a regular practice throughout the school year. A student being told the size of an acre will help them pass a test. But visiting a field and seeing the size, walking through a field, and measuring it as a team collaboration effort will help that student live the learning experience and remember it for a lifetime.

This process in starting a new and different public charter school is not an easy one. Currently, there are no rural charter schools in NYS. Our team is dedicated and encouraged by the support from educators, community members, and parents in the area looking for a different learning style for their children. Every day we get closer to our goal and we will continue to drive forward towards opening day.

Creating mutually beneficial and lasting partnerships with local businesses is an integral part of our effort. Our goal is to help assist the cultivation of these business partners to be effective and enriching for the students. Our goal is to have one Tier 1 business partner per class or two tier 2 or tier 3 partners per class. The first year the Truxton Academy Charter School will be opening as a K-4 school, allowing for a minimum of 5 partners. We plan to grow to K-6 with a minimum of 7 partners. Making this partnership mutually beneficial is a fundamental goal for our organization. We are looking forward to working with the partners, knowing that our community is full of supportive business owners.

Thank you from the Truxton Charter School Team.

Business Partnerships

Tier 1 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip or visit from business representative to be a guest in the classroom, within each 10 week block.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 6 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Tier 2 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip per year.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 4 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Tier 3 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip per year or visit from business representative to the classroom.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 2 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Each classroom would be assigned a single Tier 1 Partner, or a combination of 2 Tier 2 or 3 Partners.



Dear Local Business,

Truxton Academy Charter School is excited to create a new educational experience for elementary students in the area. This experience is cultivated through hands-on learning methods that are sewn through agricultural and environmental learning resources. We know that elementary student's minds are captivated in learning about what is around them. Because of this, we encourage the partnership of local businesses including technology enhancing and STEM learning resources for the students. Partnerships with local businesses, through field trips, projects, and learning resources brought into the daily school workings, will be a regular practice throughout the school year. A student being told the size of an acre will help them pass a test. But visiting a field and seeing the size, walking through a field, and measuring it as a team collaboration effort will help that student live the learning experience and remember it for a lifetime.

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Thank you from the Truxton Charter School Team.

Business Partnerships

Tier 1 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip or visit from business representative to be a guest in the classroom, within each 10 week block.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 6 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Tier 2 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip per year.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 4 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Tier 3 Partner

Availability of at least 1 field trip per year or visit from business representative to the classroom.

Business representative can be owner or employee or appointed representative by the owner of the business, as lead partner. Their assistance can range from being an onsite project and field trip destination, resource for teachers, questions and assistance with class projects, or guest speaker for in-school projects.

Dedication of 2 hours a month towards helping class partner.

Each classroom would be assigned a single Tier 1 Partner, or a combination of 2 Tier 2 or 3 Partners.

Attachment 8a: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures

TACS believes that the quality of the staff determines the quality of education offered in the school. It is the responsibility of the TACS Board and Head of School to recruit and hire the best-qualified candidates to meet our educational needs. Staff selection shall be based on: strong academic preparation; professional competence; relevant experience and knowledge; emotional maturity; enthusiastic, positive, professional attitude; and ability to contribute to TACS’s mission of **planting a strong foundation for future academic success**. All staff will be expected to fulfill individual responsibilities as well as work together in our **School Family** to help each other, students, families, and community members achieve success.

Hiring Process: TACS will conduct national searches, advertising in newspapers, online and directly through major universities to recruit qualified candidates. Teachers will be expected to be NYS-certified, although TACS may employ 30% of its staff who are in the process of obtaining certification. TACS relies on the accuracy of application information. Applicant misinformation, falsification, or material omission may result in exclusion or termination of employment.

All job applicants must provide: a cover letter stating their qualifications and educational philosophy, a completed employment application, current resume, proof of teaching certification (licenses, degrees, certificates, etc.), and 3 professional references.

Step 1: The Hiring Committee will screen applicants for a potential match of expectations and culture and select qualified candidates to participate in the interview process. It will observe a demonstration of teaching skills (in person or by video), pose questions and situations to the applicant, and measure their responses.

Step 2: Final interview questions will be asked. TACS’s Code of Ethics and Employee Handbook will be given to the candidate. All credentials, education, previous employment, and references will be verified. Fingerprinting and criminal background information will be checked.

Step 3: A final decision will be made by the Hiring Committee, and a recommendation sent to the Board for approval. The candidate is called to sign a contract plus acknowledgement of the Employee Handbook, including the **“at-will”** relationship, in which employment may be terminated at any time with or without cause or notice by TACS or the employee. A majority vote of TACS’s Board of Trustees is required to hire or terminate any TACS staff member.

Staff Responsibilities and Qualifications

Responsibilities	Qualifications
Head of School	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide positive, inspiring leadership and direction to all staff members, students, parents, and community members • Establish a positive, caring School Family culture and provide a safe learning environment for students and staff • Coordinate communications with parents and the community • Facilitate and encourage parent involvement and respond to grievances • Handle discipline issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to TACS’s mission, goals, culture and values • Demonstrated success in teaching, leadership, and raising student achievement in a rural school setting • High level of organizational skills and resourcefulness necessary for a start-up school environment • Exemplary communication skills and a positive, caring attitude toward elementary-aged students and their

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance, support and regular observation of teachers to improve instruction & raise achievement levels • Plan + implement professional development training – the 3-week Teacher Institute + ongoing staff dev. • Facilitate curriculum development, instruction and assessment • Ensure proper use of student data to drive and improve instruction • Implement all school policies and procedures as directed by the Board • Report regularly to TACS Board on financial status, curriculum & student achievement • Hire, evaluate, and terminate staff • Evaluate school programs and recommend policy changes and resource allocation • Coordinate food services, transportation, and custodial services • Prepare the annual budget and support the annual auditing process • Manage the budget and finances to ensure financial health of the school • Organize Extended Day programming, Monthly Family Events, and School Volunteers with staff assistance • Ensure school-wide compliance with state and federal education laws and workplace regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents and teachers • Advanced tech skills and data analysis • Strong recommendations from prior employers, colleagues and employees • Bachelor’s degree or higher, preferably Master’s degree • Certified in school administration • Successfully co-founding and/or serving in a leadership position in a private, public or charter school • Experience hiring, managing, and evaluating employees • Successful experience in financial management of a school, including: budgeting, auditing process, and data processing • High expectations for him/herself, staff and students • Experience with elementary grades, Core curriculum standards, and NYS curriculum and data reporting requirements • Experience working in a rural setting (preferred) • A team leader with successful experience using collaborative decision-making skills • Knowledge of state and federal laws and regulations • Open to implementing a PBIS and Conscious Discipline
Administrative Assistant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control visitor admittance to building • Maintain Main Office • Welcome all students, parents, teachers, and community volunteers and direct them to the appropriate place or person • Serve as the primary contact for all school communication via phone • Check and summarize all voice messages and respond to general inquiries • Work with Head of School and accounting firms to manage accurate financial records • Maintain records in accordance with legal requirements and audit guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate’s degree or higher • Minimum of 1 year experience working in a school setting, elementary • Distinguished record of administrative professional expertise • Excellent communication skills • Computer proficiency with Microsoft Office and instructional programs • Experience in office procedures: greeting all staff, students, parents, and visitors cordially; handling information with confidentiality; answering the phone professionally, filing and photocopying

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure confidentiality and security of office space, files, and all student, family and staff information • Type and distribute school correspondence • Manage accurate attendance records • Manage student data + info updates • Order materials, office supplies, curriculum resources • Provide administrative support, including scheduling meetings and conference calls, maintaining calendars, arranging travel, and managing correspondence • Sort and route mail • Manage inventory and office supplies • Work with Head of School to schedule and plan school calendar and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative skills and experience with accounting, and financial management • Excellent oral/written communication skills • Strong organizational skills • Ability to manage multiple priorities • Composure in stressful situations • Team player determined to help TACS + students succeed • Strong recommendations from former employers and employees • Demonstrates initiative and a willingness to learn • Proven success in detail-oriented positions • Experience working with elementary-aged students and teachers preferred • Respect for children and their parents, teachers, and a passion for education
Special Education Coordinator/Teacher	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the learning and achievement of students with disabilities and other struggling students • Use data to identify students in need of remediation or special education • Plan instruction with classroom teachers to ensure alignment • Work with the Head of School, classroom teachers, and parents to keep them informed of students' progress as well as strategies that will help students succeed • Track, analyze, identify gaps/needs, and coordinate all assessment data for special education students • Work with teachers informing them of students' needs so they can work on strategies to help students improve skills • Manage the TACS's RTI process • Coordinate all meetings and activities with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) • Determine if entering students have IEPs BIPs and ensure that all services are provided in accordance with each student's IEP and/or BIP • Coordinate all external service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent technology skills in school assessments, data collection, and analysis • Excellent communication skills in school settings • Experience with strategies to help students with special needs master skills • Successful experience in writing reports • Confidentiality regarding student records • Bachelor's degree or higher in Special Education • Demonstrated success raising the achievement levels of students with special needs and at-risk students • Experience supervising and evaluating intervention staff • Knowledgeable about best practices in special education and rural K-6 education • Knowledgeable about IEPs, BIPs, and the CSE referral process as well as ELL programs • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with experience in presentations, process, facilitation, problem-solving and relationship building • Ability to collaborate and co-teach with

<p>(e.g. a contracted Counselor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all compliance and reporting requirements are met • Maintain a history and record of services provided for students with special needs • Train instructional staff at the Teacher Institute on the Special Education program and procedures in order to collaborate and implement effective methods for educating special education students • Inform staff of all FERPA requirements as they relate to student record privacy 	<p>other teachers to ensure alignment of instruction and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated respect for all children and their families & a passion for education • Strong positive communication skills with staff, students, parents, and community members
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Classroom Teachers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare joyful, rigorous and engaging lessons for elementary-aged children that demonstrate fidelity to the New York Common Core Learning Standards • Create a positive classroom environment, contribute to creating a “School Family” for children to succeed and achieve academic, social, and emotional skills • Conduct formative and summative assessments to improve student learning and work with staff to adjust instruction to help meet individualized learning goals for all students • Use student performance data to design strategies for students to successfully acquire and improve academic skills • Mentor and provide guidance to Teacher Assistants and Aides • Contribute to the professional community and “School Family” by identifying needs and developing solutions • Demonstrate the school’s character virtues and integrate character education and conscious discipline into instruction • Participate in Project-Based Learning and Rural Life Lab activities • Make home visits to students • Communicate frequently, honestly, and respectfully with parents and be available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree and NYS teacher certification in elementary education • Ability to build rapport with elementary-age children, staff, and community • Articulate, confident, positive, warm professional demeanor • Excellent judgment and discretion • Initiative, organization and follow-through • Demonstrated success raising achievement of elementary-age rural students • Successful teaching experience at the elementary level • Knowledge + experience in teaching the Elementary Common Core standards • Experience integrating digital resources into teaching & learning • Experience and knowledge of assessment programs for elementary students as well as strategies for struggling students • Strong classroom management skills • Open to implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports System and Conscious Discipline skills and methods • Open to feedback + the desire to continuously improve • Willingness to make student home visits and regularly communicate with parents • A team player who can handle a fast-paced changing environment
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by phone during the evening to talk with parents • Collaborate with other teachers to help children be successful • Collaborate as a team member in the Summer Teacher Institute and on-going professional development meetings • Confidentiality regarding individual students and family information • Assure safety in the classroom and in all school settings • Implement student’s IEP’s and/or other special education student plans • Differentiate instruction, especially for ELL students and struggling learners • Create a culture of excellence, inquiry, and evidence seeking for learners • Utilize technology resourcefully, proficiently, and responsibly • Collaborate with community partners and school volunteers • Participate in Extended Day tutoring and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eagerness to go above and beyond the job requirements to help children learn and succeed and improve the School • Proficiency in Spanish (preferred) or willingness to learn Spanish • Demonstrated respect for children and their parents and a passion for learning • Passion for serving all students and learning • Openness and willingness to incorporate Project-Based Learning, agriculture, Spanish, and environmental education into the curriculum with assistance from other staff members and community volunteers • Willingness to assist with Extended Day tutoring and/or small groups of students in enrichment activities • Knowledge and experience with implementing IEPs, BIPs, and programs for students with special needs
English Language Learner (ELL Teacher)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare joyful, rigorous and engaging Spanish lessons for elementary-aged children in grades K-6 • Demonstrate the school’s character virtues and integrate character education into instruction • Make home visits to students before school begins who may have limited English proficiency and administer the Home Language Survey. • If the student’s language is other than English, conduct an informal interview in English and the student’s native language • If the student speaks Spanish, administer the Language Assessment Battery to determine eligibility for bilingual services. • Translate all correspondence and communication to parents into Spanish for Spanish-speaking families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree and New York State ELL teacher certification • Oral and written proficiency in Spanish • Successful teaching experience at the elementary level • Experience integrating digital resources into teaching & learning • Open to implementing “Conscious Discipline” skills and methods • Open to feedback with the desire to continuously improve • Willingness to make visits to students’ homes and regularly communicate with parents • A team player • Eagerness to go above and beyond the job requirements to help children succeed and improve the School • Demonstrated respect for children and

	their families and a passion for education
Specialty Teachers: Art, Music, Physical Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare joyful, rigorous and engaging lessons for elementary-aged children for classes of up to 20 students • Prepare a positive environment for children to learn • Contribute to the professional community and “School Family” by identifying needs and developing solutions • Demonstrate the school’s character virtues and integrate character education and conscious discipline into instruction • Collaborate with other teachers to help children be successful • Assist children, as needed, during the Monthly First Friday Professional Development sessions for teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree and New York State teacher certification in appropriate field(s) • Successful teaching experience at the elementary level • Strong classroom management skills • Open to implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports System and Conscious Discipline skills and methods • Open to feedback with the desire to continuously improve • A team player who can handle a fast-paced changing environment • Eagerness to go above and beyond the job requirements to help children learn and succeed and improve TACS • Demonstrated respect for children and families and a passion for education
Educational Technology/Media Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize, operate, and maintain the computer lab • Track, analyze, and coordinate all student assessment data • Identify gaps in academic skills • Work with teachers using technology to assist all learners • Help teachers adapt curriculum to improve reading and math skills • Teach computer technology to classroom groups as needed • Manage technology throughout the building – hardware, software, security, internet, data analysis, instructional technology, and trouble-shooting • Maintain the School’s website and social media in accordance with best practice and policy • Perform periodic safety auditing of computer technology • Participate in all staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree and NYS certification in instructional technology • Excellent internet, computer and technology skills • Knowledge and experience with student assessment computer programs • Strong leadership, organizational, analytical, and decision-making skills • Successful experience in technology instruction with students • Ability to build rapport with elementary-age children, colleagues, and community • Articulate, confident, warm professional demeanor • Excellent judgment and discretion • Initiative, organization and follow-through • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills in working with elementary-aged children, teachers, parents, and community volunteers • A team player
Teaching Assistants (1 for All Classrooms + 1 for Special Education)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the learning and achievement of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess or in the process of acquiring

<p>all students, including those with disabilities and ELL students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with teachers to lead small groups • Use technology to assess and enhance individualized learning for students • Manage class transitions and supervise lunch and recess • Actively participate in lesson planning and all staff development activities • Model the School’s values and support character development 	<p>Teacher Assistant certification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven record of achievement working with elementary children • Ability to accept and implement feedback • Ability to handle intensity in a fast-paced environment and remain organized, punctual, and reliable under pressure • A team player and coachable • Excellent interpersonal skills in working with children, staff, parents & community • SPED Teaching Assistant – previous successful experience working with students with special needs preferred
Teacher Aide (Year 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance in the classroom and school by supervising students and providing academic support • Supervise students during recess • Provide assistance to teachers and staff members throughout the building • Help students achieve and succeed with direction from teachers • Assure safety in the classroom and in all school settings • Engage learners and differentiate instruction • Reflect core values and school culture • Attend professional development sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school diploma or GED • Experience working at the elementary school level preferred • Demonstrate flexibility • “Hands-on” approach to assisting in the classroom and throughout school • A team player and coachable • Passion for serving all students and learning • Ability to build rapport with children, staff, families and community
Counselor (Contracted as Needed in Years 3-5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide individual and small group counseling, as needed • Assist students with academic, behavioral, and interpersonal success in cooperation with school leaders ,teachers, and families • Provide classroom-based learning in core values, as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor’s degree and NYS certification in Counseling • Excellent judgment and discretion • Initiative, organization and follow-through • Excellent skills in working with elementary-aged children, teachers, and parents • A team player
Nurse	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnose and treat health problems • Teach /counsel patients about health maintenance and prevention of illness • Execute medical regimes as prescribed by licensed physicians and health providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Professional Nurse in New York State or qualified under New York State law to work as a school nurse • Excellent judgment and discretion • Excellent interpersonal skills in working with children, teachers, and parents

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision and hearing screenings if needed • Administer medications within scope of school policy and state regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team player
Custodian	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee building plant operations including: maintenance, heating and electrical systems, lawn mowing and landscaping, snow removal, and security/emergency planning • Provide daily routine cleaning, sanitizing, and upkeep of building, including compliance with all safety and materials data responsibilities • Help food service staff serve meals to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful custodial experience working in an elementary school • Ability to operate lawn mowing and snow removal equipment • Ability to operate heating and electrical systems in school environments • Demonstrate flexibility and team player • “Hands-on” approach to assisting throughout the school • Ability to build rapport with children, staff, parents, families, and community
Food Service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan menus for breakfast and lunch on a monthly basis • Prepare food according to NYS regulations and laws • Cook and serve breakfast and lunch each school day • Maintain a neat and orderly kitchen • Prepare meals that reflect healthy eating choices for students • Education staff and students about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to build rapport with children, colleagues and community • Team player • Elem. School food service experience • Knowledge of healthy eating and food preparation • Curiosity and desire to learn • Passion for learning and serving all students and staff • Initiative, organization, and follow-through • Open to Farm-to-School program

Pay Scale			13	47500	49000
Years of Experience	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	14	48250	49750
			15	48750	50250
0	35000	35000	16	49250	50750
1	37000	38500	17	49750	51250
2	38000	39500	18	50250	51750
3	39000	40500	19	50750	52250
4	40000	41500	20	51250	52750
5	41000	42500	Bonuses will be given to teachers receiving student growth scores in the effective & highly effective range.		
6	42000	43500			
7	43000	44500	Salary raise: \$2,000 after the 1 st year		
8	43750	45250	Salary raise: 2-7 years \$1,000/year		
9	44500	46000	Salary raise: 8-14 years \$750/year		
10	45250	46750	Salary raise: 15+ years \$500/year		
11	46000	47500	Loyal staff stipend: 5-9 yrs. Spent at TACS, \$500 added		
12	46750	48250	Loyal staff stipend: 10+ yrs. Spent at TACS, \$750 added		

Personnel Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures set forth here are presented only as a matter of information. These policies and procedures may be changed or deleted and new policies or procedures may be added by the school at any time. These are not intended to constitute a contract between the organization and its employees or to change the nature of the employment relationship between the organization and its employees, which is “at will.”

Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE) & American Disability Act(ADA): TACS’s personnel policies are intended to comply with all applicable state and federal employment laws and regulations, including EOE and ADA. We will employ the best-qualified personnel without regard to sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, citizenship, political affiliation, sexual orientation, veteran status, age, marital status, genetic characteristic or disability in all aspects of employment. TACS will not discriminate against qualified, disabled individuals solely for reasons of their disability, enabling a qualified person with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job by making necessary reasonable accommodations.

Performance Standards: All employees shall perform jobs responsibly in a professional and conscientious manner. Employees are expected to meet the following general performance standards in addition to the specific job responsibilities and qualifications outlined above.

Employees are required to:

- Be punctual and follow regular work schedules consistently.
- Perform duties assigned by the Board, Head of School, and supervisor. Duties may extend beyond the instruction day and may include off-site functions, events, and activities.
- Be respectful to all students, co-workers, visitors, guests, and community members.
- Demonstrate the highest level of professionalism, moderation, and civility, serving as appropriate, positive role models for students in behavior and demeanor.
- Abide by laws, ordinances, Board policies and directives while performing duties for TACS.
- Provide students with effective, safe supervision, organization, and positive instruction.
- Respect, protect, and use care in handling and operating TACS equipment and property.
- Complete required reports and student progress data accurately and in a timely manner.

Professional Conduct - The successful operation and reputation of the Truxton Academy Charter School is built upon the principles of integrity, excellence, and ethical conduct of our employees. Staff members are role models for our students, parents, and the community. Our reputation requires careful observance of all applicable laws and regulations as well as regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. The success of the School is dependent on our reputation. All employees have a responsibility to the School, our students, parents, community, and the public to conduct themselves in a positive, professional manner that will earn our stakeholders’ trust and confidence. TACS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its Trustees, leaders, and employees to conduct business in accordance with all relevant laws and to refrain from illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of every employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment. All TACS employees need to demonstrate the highest standard of ethics during the performance of their assigned duties. School employees need to ensure that any external activity does not conflict with their TACS duties or

give the appearance of such conflict. Employees need to disclose any potential conflict of interest to the Head of School as soon as it becomes known to them.

Dress and Appearance Policy - Every employee contributes to Truxton Academy Charter School's image. It is important that they portray a favorable image. Employees are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for their particular assigned function.

Confidentiality Policy - School employees are required to preserve the confidentiality of any and all records containing personally identifiable information of students. Student records are confidential by virtue of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), state privacy laws and other laws and regulations. School employees may not disclose personally identifiable information about school students unless they have been given clearance by the Head of School and are certain that the disclosure is permitted by law. All student records maintained in the central school office as well as in teacher's classrooms must be secured at all times. Only employees with a legitimate need for access to a student's records may access them without written parental permission. Also, school employees who have access to social security numbers of school personnel are required to preserve the confidentiality of this information and only disclose it for legitimate or necessary business purposes.

Employment Status - Employees shall receive annual letters of employment that state the terms of their employment. Employees may be hired as regular full-time employees, and as such will be eligible for all benefits provided by the school. The school may also hire part-time staff members who are employed for less than 40 hours per work week. Part-time employees, temporary employees, and independent contractors are not eligible for benefits. TACS will verify that all of its employees are authorized for employment in the United States. Time off from work without pay for part-time employees may be granted by the Head of School.

Benefits Package - TACS reserves the right to alter the benefits package made available to employees at any time, consistent with all applicable laws. Each employee will be notified of any alteration in the benefits package.

Medical and Dental Insurance - The Board will select a medical insurance plan, which may include more than one option of provider or provider networks, which the school will provide to each full-time regular employee. Employee co-payment for health care coverage will be required, and will vary depending upon the level of coverage selected by the employee (individual; individual plus spouse; family; etc.). Employee contributions for health care and dental coverage will be automatically withheld from employee paychecks, in an amount in accordance with a schedule maintained by the Head of School or his/her designee. The Board will select a dental insurance plan that the school will provide to each employee. Employee co-payment for dental coverage will be required, and will vary depending upon the level of coverage selected by the employee (individual; individual plus spouse; family; etc.).

Workers Compensation Insurance - Injuries resulting from accidents that occur while performing official duties on behalf of TACS are covered by workers' compensation insurance. Any employee who suffers an injury as a result of such an accident must report the injury to his supervisor within the same day and file a report with the director or his or her designee as soon as possible. Such employee is responsible for filing any other necessary forms, applications, or other information as required by applicable government policies.

Disability Insurance - The school carries short-term disability insurance in accordance with New York State law. Such insurance allows payment in the event of certain injuries, illnesses or other disabilities occurring outside of the workplace, including pregnancy. Any employee wishing to claim disability pay must file appropriate reports and forms with the director or his or her designee. Such employee also is responsible for filing any other necessary forms, applications, or other information as required by applicable government policies.

Declination of Insurance Benefits - Any employee who wishes not to accept any of the insurance benefits offered by the school is required to submit such a request in writing to the Head of School.

Retirement – TACS will offer a 403b match plan for eligible employees. Details are available in the Employee Handbook. In the future, if need arises and upon determination by the Board of Trustees, the school may submit an application to join the NYS Teachers Retirement System, and if accepted, all teachers, substitute teachers, nurse teachers, administrators and teacher assistants shall be eligible for membership in the System. The school will assume all obligations of participating employers as determined by the System, including liabilities for employer payments and recordkeeping.

Unemployment Compensation - TACS contributes to the Unemployment Compensation plan administered by the State of New York.

Head of School's Benefits - The insurance coverage and benefits package offered to the Head of School may differ from that offered to other employees, subject to a determination by the Board of Trustees, and consistent with applicable state, federal, or other laws.

Reporting Responsibilities

School staff members are MANDATED to report SUSPECTED child abuse or neglect. We need not be certain that a child is being abused; we need only suspect abuse or neglect in order to report it. The following examples of "Red Flags" need to be reported to the counselor immediately:

- A child who talks about wanting to hurt or kill him or herself.
- Any injury, mark or bruise that looks concerning and for which there is no viable explanation. Only one adult should ask the child how the injury occurred – avoid excessive questioning.
- A child who complains that he/she cannot sit down because they have been spanked.
- Inappropriate sexualized behavior, either acting out or knowledge that is not age appropriate.
- A child who expresses fear or concern about going home, or about someone in his/her home or about something happening at home.

If you suspect that a child is being abused or maltreated, contact the Head of School in person as well as provide a written documentation by using the Confidential Report of an Allegation of Child Abuse. Once this is completed, it is every teacher's responsibility to report the suspicion to the Association of Children's Services (ASC) with consultation of the Head of School. Do not let a child that you suspect may be a victim of abuse leave school at the end of the day without first talking to the Head of School. In addition, all employees are REQUIRED to report any allegations of child abuse in an educational setting to the Head of School. The term educational setting means the building and grounds of any school as well as vehicles used to transport students to and from school, field trips and extracurricular activities as well as the sites where

those activities take place. The Head of School needs to be notified of any such concerns and complete a Confidential Report of an Allegation of Child Abuse in an Educational Setting.

Workplace Policies and Procedures -The goal of TACS is to provide a safe, healthy, positive, welcoming **School Family** environment for students, teachers, parents, staff members, and the community. The following workplace policies are designed to achieve that goal.

Health & Safety - The workplace will be maintained in a safe, healthy condition, and in accordance with all applicable health and safety laws. It is essential that all employees perform their duties in a safe manner and follow all established safety rules. Employees need to discuss with the Head of School or their supervisor any hazards of their job and make sure they are familiar with any equipment they operate. TACS will conduct training as needed for employees who work with hazardous materials or equipment.

Smoking Policy: All TACS facilities and events (including field trips) will be smoke-free.

Drug/Alcohol Policy: The possession, use, distribution, sale, or manufacturing of illicit drugs and alcohol on TACS grounds or at TACS events is strictly prohibited.

Harassment/Discrimination: TACS is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment free of conduct and/or communication that is objectionable or disrespectful. TACS prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, age, race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, medical condition or any other characteristic that is protected by law. TACS strictly prohibits harassment that is perpetrated by and against its employees and students. Conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment will not be tolerated. TACS prohibits sexual harassment, including repeated offensive or unwelcome sexual flirtations and advances; verbal comments, jokes, or innuendos of a sexual nature; words or gestures of a sexual nature used to describe a person or depict a situation; or the display of sexually suggestive or explicit objects or pictures by another employee or parent. If an employee believes that he/she has experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination, that employee should immediately notify the Head of School or a Trustee with whom that employee feels comfortable. All reports will be promptly investigated and kept confidential to the extent possible. A thorough investigation and appropriate action will take place.

Solicitation and Distribution: Solicitation for commercial purposes by any employee is prohibited while on working time. Employee distribution of commercial literature, including handbills, in work areas is prohibited at all times. Trespassing, soliciting or distribution of commercial literature by non-employees on TACS premises is prohibited at all times.

Workplace Anti-Violence Policy : Acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, bullying, harassment, and/or coercion, that involve or affect the School or that occur on school property or in the conduct of school business off of school property, will not be tolerated. Workplace violence includes threats of any kind - threatening, physically aggressive, or violent behavior, such as intimidation, or attempts to instill fear in others; other behavior that suggests a propensity toward violence, including belligerent speech, excessive arguing or swearing, sabotage, threats of sabotage of school property; defacing school property or causing physical damage to the facilities; and bringing weapons or firearms of any kind on school premises or while conducting school business. This prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in school operations. Violations of this policy, by any individual, will lead to removal from the School premises and disciplinary and/or legal action as appropriate.

Employees need to notify the Head of School if they observe any of the above listed actions or behavior, if a restraining order is in effect, or if a potentially violent non-work related situation exists that could result in violence in the workplace.

Personal Telephone Calls - Employees shall not charge personal long-distance telephone calls to the school, unless an exception is made by the Head of School. Employees are liable for the costs of any personal phone calls he/she may make which are billed to the school.

Internet Use - The Internet is a powerful communications tool and a valuable source of information. However, an employee's improper use of internet services can waste time and resources and potentially create legal liability and embarrassment for both the School and the employee. An Internet service includes, but is not limited to: e-mail, web browsing and newsgroups. Internet services are provided by TACS for School Use. Incidental use of Internet services for personal, non-work-related purposes is acceptable, provided such use: does not occur when an employee is scheduled to provide instruction or perform other duties, does not interfere with the employee's performance of job duties, and does not disrupt the educational process. The following uses of Internet service are prohibited: viewing, downloading, transmitting, or otherwise accessing or utilizing any pornographic material (including any material that is sexually explicit in language, content, or which depicts nudity or other indecent material); exposing computers and/or computer-related equipment to damage, virus, contamination, or breach; use for commercial purposes and/or for performing work on behalf of any third party during the employee's work hours; use that is otherwise inappropriate and/or prohibited or that constitutes any activity prohibited by TACS or State or Federal law; and use that interferes with the productivity of the employee or his/her co-workers. Employees are prohibited from placing passwords or other access-limiting devices or codes on any computer or computer-related equipment provided to the employee by the school, unless said password and/or code is provided first to the school. Computers, servers, and all computer-related equipment provided by the school is the property of the school, and the school reserves the right to search, review, or monitor any files, messages, or communications sent, received or stored on the TACS's computer systems without advance notice and may also limit the use of the Internet service in part or in whole. Employees cannot expect privacy regarding material or files created on or stored on TACS computers.

Emergencies: All staff members are urged to familiarize themselves with the building facilities and location of fire-fighting equipment. Red Cross training for first aid and child CPR will be given during the Summer Institute for teachers and staff. In emergency situations, staff shall use their best judgment in following emergency procedures. If anyone needs immediate medical attention, call the main office and request whoever answers to contact 911. The Administrative Assistant will contact the nurse, Head of School and 911, if needed. If the person has stopped breathing, a trained CPR person is needed immediately. Be prepared to provide the following information: Your location and name, child/person's name and age; and the child/person's condition and what if anything happened to cause the condition. An adult needs to stay with the sick or injured person/student at all times. The Administrative Assistant will designate a staff person to wait outside the facility for the ambulance and emergency officials to arrive at the school entrance and escort them to the classroom. The Administrative Assistant will stay in the office in case the EMS needs to contact the school and make sure a copy of the Emergency Contact Form and Before Providing Care Form are given to the

appropriate medical emergency staff and the attending faculty member. The Administrative Assistant will also notify the student's family as soon as possible. Their contact information can be found on the Emergency Contact Form.

Attendance and Leaves of Absence - Our employees are essential to the overall success of our school and students. Showing up for work on time is essential for employee performance. We recognize that there may be occasions when employees need to be absent or arrive late. On these occasions, employees are expected to contact the administrative assistant as soon as they know they will be absent or late or at least 2 hours before school starts so that proper coverage can be arranged. When contacting the administrative assistant, employees need to indicate: (1) If they will be late, indicate approximate arrival time, (2) If they will be absent, indicate the reason (i.e. sick, sick child, etc.) and the approximate duration of the absence. Employees need to call the school every day they are absent. If an employee fails to report for work and notify the administrative assistant for 3 consecutive work days, the School will consider the employee has voluntarily resigned, unless a reasonable excuse is offered and accepted by the Head of School. Disciplinary action up to and including termination may result for violating this policy or for excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness.

Personal Leave: All staff members must request personal leave from the Head of School, giving advance notice whenever possible. All instructional staff members need to make every reasonable attempt to use leave so that it does not disrupt classroom instructional time.

Military Leave: Members of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, Coast Guard, National Guard, Reserves or Public Health Service will be granted an unpaid leave of absence for military service, training or related obligations in accordance with the Unified Services Employment and Re-employment Act of 1995 (USERRA).

Employee Evaluation: The Head of School will visit classrooms weekly. These opportunities will be used to collect evidence related to each teacher's professional growth goals. The Head of School will hold monthly one-on-one meetings with teachers. Written evaluations of employees will be performed annually. The evaluation format will be determined by the Head of School with input from teachers and staff. Evidence for each employee's evaluation may take the form of survey results, work products, student assessment, and other data. The employee will be notified of any changes in salary, whether up or down, that are warranted based on evaluation. Bonuses will be given to teachers receiving student growth scores in the effective and highly effective range.

Problem-Solving Procedures - Any employee wishing to formally complain about a procedure or action of another employee needs to notify the Head of School as soon as possible after the occurrence, but not later than 2 weeks. Failure to formally complain within 2 weeks will be deemed a waiver of the complaint. The Head of School shall be the investigator and arbiter of all such grievances. If the employee believes that the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the grievance may be appealed to the Board of Trustees in writing within 10 working days from the date you receive the notice of the Head of School's decision. A committee consisting of the Board Chairperson, the teacher representative on the Board, and a third Trustee jointly selected by the other two committee members shall be the final arbiter of such grievances. In the event that the complaint involves a procedure, action, or directive of the Head of School, an employee may file a complaint with the Board. In such instances, the Board will be the investigator and final arbiter of the complaint. All employees are encouraged to discuss

problems or complaints with the Head of School. TACS will make a good faith effort to achieve a satisfactory resolution of the problem at the earliest time possible.

Discipline Policy - If an aspect of an employee's behavior or performance has become unacceptable or unsatisfactory, the Head of School may in appropriate circumstances and at the School's discretion, utilize the following process to resolve the problem. As a function of the incident involved, one or more of the following steps may be used as corrective discipline.

Step 1 - The Head of School will conduct an informal counseling session with the employee and identify the area(s) of concern/unacceptable behavior. The Head of School will seek employee input relative to the issue, record notes from the meeting and retain a copy. A time frame will be established within which the performance is expected to improve.

Step 2 - If unacceptable performance/behavior continues, the Head of School will meet with the employee to issue a written warning, identifying the unacceptable behavior and reference the meeting conducted at Step 1. The Head of School will solicit employee input relative to the unsatisfactory behavior and will instruct in the written warning that further discipline up to and including termination may follow unless the employee's performance improves. A copy of this warning will be placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee will be asked to sign the warning and will be given a copy. The employee may note his/her response to the warning.

Step 3 - If the employee's behavior/performance remains at an unacceptable level, the Head of School may either suspend the employee without pay, or implement further discipline, including termination. A notice that sets forth the disciplinary action shall be issued to the employee. The employee will be asked to sign a copy of the notice and may note his/her response in writing. A copy of the notice will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Termination - Each employee will be employed on an "at will" basis. TACS has the authority to terminate an employee with or without cause, unless such termination would violate applicable law. Offenses which can result in immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to: abusive action to a child or TACS employee, or any other person on TACS premises; physical or verbal abuse of a student; insubordination or disobedience of an order relating to the safety of children; failure to perform professional duties; possession of, sale, use, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises or during school functions; falsification of documents or records or falsification of benefit claims; theft, attempted theft, or misappropriation of TACS property or funds; failure to maintain confidentiality; fighting or provoking a fight on school premises; leaving work without supervisory approval and absence for 3 days without notice; possession of a weapon on school property or during any school-sponsored event; gambling on TACS property; destruction of TACS property, materials, or equipment; and undermining TACS's values or code of ethics.

Severance Pay & Exit Interview: Employees shall not be entitled to severance pay. All departing employees are strongly encouraged to participate in an exit interview.

Employee Handbook: Due to the suggested 15-page limit, there is insufficient space to include all of the information in TACS's Employee Handbook. After Application approval, the TACS Board will print the Employee Handbook for all employees. It will cover additional personnel policy details. Employees will be expected to read the Employee Handbook, sign the Employee Acknowledgement & Signature form, and return it to the school office before school starts.