

THE URBAN DOVE CHARTER SCHOOL

PROSPECTUS

AUGUST 16, 2010

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban Dove Charter School (UDCS) is an alternative high school for over-aged, under-credited (OA/UC) youth that will provide its students the social and emotional supports and rigorous academics they need to obtain a high school diploma, gain the job skills needed to enter the world of work, and the academic foundation needed to successfully pursue higher education. To attract, engage, energize and retain students who have not succeeded in traditional school settings, UDCS features a unique sports, health and fitness program, in which teams of students practice and play sports together, go to class together, and receive support services together. Urban Dove, the lead partner for this school, has developed an award-winning sports-based youth development model and college readiness program to support and empower students so that they will graduate from high school, attend college and build successful careers and futures.

UDCS will provide students who have been unsuccessful in their first high school attempts with an authentic and successful high school experience. We believe that such an experience is important for all young people, particularly those from low-income backgrounds. Considerable research has shown that young people who obtain GEDs in lieu of high school diplomas fare far worse in college.¹¹ We believe that not only are academic skills crucial to young people, but having a positive secondary school experience will provide the foundation for persistence in higher education and careers. Through its intensive sports-based youth development model, which focuses on building teamwork skills along with academic competencies, the Urban Dove Charter School will ensure that its students, whatever their background, graduate with the confidence and ability to succeed in future formal college and career settings.

The Urban Dove Charter School will be an academically rigorous three-year program that integrates sports, health and fitness into the academic curriculum. Year one will focus on building community and laying the academic and social foundation for later success. In the second year, students will move on to higher level work, begin their career and technical training, and the third year will focus on high school graduation and career readiness through internships and job training. Students will move through the school in teams both for sports and academic classes. Key to the success of the Urban Dove Charter School will be the creation of single sex environments, both in the classroom and on the playing field.

The unique sports, health and fitness program offered by Urban Dove Charter School necessitates a facility where students can engage in a variety of sports activities throughout the day. Urban Dove Charter School envisions providing training to students in a variety of sports including soccer, basketball, and baseball in addition to training in cardiovascular and weight conditioning. We have partnered with the Aviator Sports and Recreation complex, a state of the art sports facility, within Gateway National Recreation Area at Floyd Bennett Field on 3159 Flatbush Avenue in Community School District 22 in Brooklyn to utilize their facilities for our unique sports, health and fitness

¹¹ "College Readiness of New York City's GED Recipients." Report of the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, November 2008.

curriculum. This facility will provide unique possibilities for an unprecedented school experience for Urban Dove students. The Aviator Sports Facility also includes a sports performance center used by orthopedic physicians, physical therapists, and highly skilled athletic trainers, which will give students exposure to these careers and illuminates the links between their classroom work and what awaits them in college and beyond.

The Urban Dove Charter School itself will also be located at Floyd Bennett Field. Currently on the campus there exist a complex of unused buildings that will be converted into the school facility, including classrooms, cafeteria, administrative space, recreational and general meeting space. These buildings, totaling more than 22,500 s.f., will create a one-of-a-kind campus environment, unlike any public school in New York City. Students will be energized daily by the beauty and expanse of their new school environment, and the remoteness and tranquility will help them focus and achieve both in the classroom and on the field.

II. STUDENT POPULATION

A. Student Enrollment

Anticipated Enrollment Table

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Kindergarten					
1 st					
2 nd					
3 rd					
4 th					
5 th					
6 th					
7 th					
8 th					
9 th					
10 th					
11 th					
12 th					
Ungraded	95	170	240	240	240

B. Target Populations

Urban Dove Charter School will be physically located in Community School District 22 in Brooklyn, New York. While there is no data available on the number of Students With Disabilities (SWDs) in this District, the data shows relatively low populations of English Language Learners (ELL) and students who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL). Only 10% of the K-12 students are ELL and only 64% of the K-12 students

qualify for FRPL. As a transfer school, targeting overage/under-credited youth, we anticipate a much higher percentage of both ELL and FRPL students than either the District or Citywide averages.

Urban Dove Charter School will be non-graded and an enrollment preference will be limited to students between the ages of 15–16 who attended 9th grade at another school, but have earned fewer than 10 high school credits (of the 44 required for graduation). Unlike most transfer schools, Urban Dove will not have a rolling admissions process but will accept new students only at the beginning of each school year to create a more traditional high school experience. Urban Dove Charter School has a target enrollment of 240 students at capacity. Each incoming class will offer admission to 120 students, assuming that 95 will enroll. The school will be divided into a Young Men's Academy and a Young Women's Academy.

The school will use a least restrictive environment model to encourage all students, regardless of ability, to be challenged in rigorous curriculum that assumes their ability to go on to higher education or a job after graduation. Lessons will be designed to connect with the sports being studied and subject area teachers will align their curriculums to support a thematic approach to learning that helps students retain what they have studied and achieve mastery of the state standards. Working with a backwards design model using *Understanding by Design* resources, teachers will develop curriculum that reflects diverse learning modalities and aligns to youth development principals. The creation of school-wide assessments will set standards of expectation based on the New York State standards for all subject areas and the Regents exams. Several benchmark assessments will test the skills students are practicing towards mastery and the analysis of them will inform instruction and individual conferencing with students.

The overage/under-credited population in New York significantly is largely comprised of young people of color: African-Americans and Hispanics make up more than 83 percent of the population, and over 75 percent have household incomes low enough to qualify them for free school lunches. Many young people who eventually drop out or quickly fall behind enter high school with barriers such as being overage already or with academic skills that are low; however, this is not uniformly the case. The NYC Department of Education has found that 76 percent of those who fall behind or drop out were either on-age or reading at level when they entered high school. This clearly speaks to a challenge of engagement: many high schools are not equipped to engage young people in programming that allows them to reach their potential or recognize the connection between school and their life's goals.

The student population will come from diverse home environments and each young person will come with individual challenges. While some will be IEP identified special education students, all students will need the sort of individualized attention to their specific academic needs that the IEP process provides. As previously disengaged youth they will likely arrive with academic skills, especially literacy and numeracy skills that lag far behind their peers who have not taken time off from school.

At Urban Dove Charter School, we believe all students benefit from a full inclusion environment, including Special Education students. We will comply with all regulatory special education requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, all civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and any additional regulations required by the state of New York. We will not discriminate against any student and therefore are committed to working with differently-abled students to complete their high school education.

Like their special needs peers Limited English Proficient students will be fully included in the classroom and will benefit from the support of their fully English proficient teammates. Urban Dove takes the position that LEP students can add to the culture of the school and these students will be taught from the same materials as their peers with supplemental materials as their teachers see fit. Instruction and materials in their home language will be supplied when possible in all non-ELA subjects.

The application form for admission will ask for student information, and will be used to determine if the student meets admissions preference criteria. Students meeting the above mentioned criteria residing in CSD 22 where the school will be located will receive admissions preference. The process of student outreach will begin with intensive mail and telephone outreach to long-term absentees to introduce them to Urban Dove Charter School and encourage them to return to school. The school will request the long-term absentee list from appropriate DOE leadership by specific zip codes for underserved areas of Brooklyn including Bedford Stuyvesant, Bushwick, East New York, Brownsville, and Flatbush. School administrators will meet with neighborhood based high school representatives and Guidance Counselors to introduce them to the school. The Principal, Athletic Director and Coaches will conduct community engagement presentations and continue telephone outreach to reach those students and their families who are interested in attending Urban Dove Charter School. In addition, UDCS will run several open houses in community based facilities to allow students and families to meet the school faculty and staff. Information regarding the application procedures and timeline will be distributed through all of these venues. The timeline is as follows: By September 30, the application is made available to parents both online and in person at specified location and times. The application deadline will be March 31. For start-up year admissions, the timeline will be compressed to account for a January 2011 authorization. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of seats available, we will hold a lottery during a community board meeting.

III. SCHOOL DESIGN

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

Urban Dove Charter School will utilize and capitalize on what has made a handful of existing Transfer Schools and CTE schools successful, and combine this with an award

winning approach to youth development that will serve as a model for New York City and beyond. Urban Dove has learned that sports, defined here as the actual physical engagement in a sports activity, is one of the few activities that has the power to engage even the most disconnected young people. Urban Dove will use the power of sports to bring a cohort of this disconnected population back to a healthy, positive school environment where they will develop or renew their commitment to academic success, active and healthy lifestyles, and developing the job skills and career interests necessary to build successful futures.

The Urban Dove Charter School will be an academically rigorous three-year program. A student's first year focuses on learning the concept of team work and building an academic and social foundation for students to be successful at higher levels. In the second year of the program students are challenged with more rigorous levels of sports practice and competition and increasingly high expectations for academic work. By the third year students will be engaging in varsity level sports practice and competition and will be exposed to an intensive college and career readiness curriculum through college visits, admissions counseling, internships and job training. Throughout the three years students will be earning accelerated course credits and preparing for and passing Regents exams needed for graduation. Students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of concepts through portfolio assessment that are closely aligned to state standards for each course.

Teachers and coaches work together to instill community values and help all students achieve regardless of the challenges they have faced in other school settings. To attract, engage, energize and retain students, the Urban Dove Academy will feature a completely unique sports, health and fitness program for students. Students will begin each school day on the sports field for two and a half hours, with an additional 4-6 hours per week during out-of-school time playing sports. Rather than just being a student at a school, students will learn to be part of a team. In teams students will practice together, play together, attend class together, and receive support services together. Each team will have assigned coaches that teach, mentor, guide, and counsel them to develop as students, athletes and citizens. Coaches will emphasize communication, teamwork and leadership, build confidence and self-esteem, and use sports to help students learn how to focus, manage emotions, be unselfish, and become positive members of a community.

The Workshop Model, which has been the mainstay approach to Transfer School instruction, will be employed to provide a consistent yet flexible structure for teachers to create engaging lessons that have real world relevance for students, make use of their existing knowledge and draw students into ever deeper learning. Literacy and numeracy are infused throughout the curriculum along with technology to prepare students for college and careers after graduation. Project-based instruction will help students further develop teamwork, problem solving and analytic skills and Socratic Seminar, which provides a class discussion framework where higher order thinking and speaking skills are cultivated, will be two of the key pedagogical approaches employed by teachers at Urban Dove Charter School to engage students and accelerate their

learning. The school day will also be structured so that all mandatory coursework will take place at the school during the extended day, relieving students of the need to complete assignments at home.

The school will run on a trimester schedule and the instructional program will be aligned to State standards. Students are expected to take and pass all Regents exams required for graduation and the curriculum will be mapped and interim assessments will be administered with these requirements in mind.

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

Because of the specific population this school is intended to serve, we consider all students to be at-risk of academic failure. As such, we will employ the following methods and strategies for all students.

Multiple Intelligences- Urban Dove Charter School believes in a strength-based approach to instruction grounded in the work of Howard Garner's theory of multiple intelligences. Recognizing that all students are intelligent but that this intelligence can be expressed in many different ways, Urban Dove strives to engage students who are often the least understood and successful in traditional schools, those students with body-kinesthetic intelligence. By theory these young people learn best by including muscular movement and doing rather than reading or listening. In more traditional classrooms these students' movements often conflict with teacher goals for quiet and order and the students receive the message that they are not intelligent. We recognize the need for our students to express themselves kinesthetically and will therefore incorporate instructional approaches that address these needs such ELA students studying Shakespeare using the Floger's Institute methods of "on your feet" acting activities rather than relying on book work alone.

Differentiated instruction - Remembering that the student is at the center of the work teachers will design each course starting with the students own knowledge and experience and will connect every lesson to something that students already have as part of their schemata. Teachers will get to know the students and plan lessons that connect an academically rigorous content to relevant issues and topics in the student's life. Rather than assuming that students need remedial course work, critical thinking and problem solving will be central and a team spirit essential for academic achievement. Unlike other transfer schools where students are placed in classes by their individual credit needs and course content is static, at Urban Dove students will move through classes with their teams and teachers will differentiate instruction to address the varying academic needs and learning styles of each student. For example, an English teacher would create multiple pathways so that the student earning an English 1 credit would read a lower level book than a student earning an English 5 credit in the same classroom.

Targeted interventions - For students who are dramatically behind their peers, targeted research-based and practice proven interventions will be employed to accelerate student progress. For example, students struggling with literacy skills would be offered Anita Archer's REWARDS program, a relatively quick and engaging method to bring students up to a functional reading level in a short period of time. This program was used at South Brooklyn Community High School with great success for students entering at below fifth grade levels in the fall passing the ELA regents exam in the spring.

Sports based youth development – Students who enter Urban Dove Charter School will have academic deficits that the school will need to address. But given their lack of success at their previous high school, they will all likely suffer from a lack of confidence in their own ability to be successful in a formal academic environment. The school will tackle this challenge directly by using its sports-based youth development model to build students' belief in themselves. Their experiences on the sports field and as a team will provide fuel for the work that will happen in the classroom. The school will use the pillars of a sports-based youth development (SBYD) methodology to engage, energize and educate its students. SBYD programs teach sports skills along with life and leadership skills in a safe, fun, and challenging environment, delivering to students caring relationships, facilitated and experiential learning, and vigorous physical activity. The curriculum will be a combination of daily practice sessions and weekly game sessions. Practice sessions will resemble a collegiate varsity practice, including warm up and stretch, conditioning, individual skill building and team concepts. Weekly competition will include both an intra-mural league amongst teams within the school as well as an external scrimmage schedule against other schools. Students will focus on two different sports in each trimester – fall, winter and spring.

Support Services – The school will offer both group and one-on-one support services to all students. Group sessions will focus on how individuals become part of a community and what it means to be a member of a "team" both on the field and off. Being a member of a sports team can have a transformative effect on young people, and the school will use this as a basis for establishing a positive, respectful school community over which all students feel ownership. The player-coach relationship is also a uniquely powerful one in which there exists a higher level of trust. Coaches and players will use this bond as a way to stay informed, connected and supportive of each other. Referrals will be made for all issues requiring professional care. The school will provide on-site school based support team (SBST) comprised of an LCSW, Social Work students and coaches to address the psychological and emotional needs of students who are in need of support. An on-site licensed clinical social worker will provide individual, group, and family counseling to students who are need of additional support to achieve their potential. On site group work will be provided based on the needs of the student body. The Social Worker will collaborate with all school staff members and family members to ensure that student needs are addressed at school and at home. The SBST will conduct home visits as needed to address barriers of academic success, including family issues that interfere with academic success. The SBST will facilitate parent support groups that will be tailored to meet the needs of the parents and

caregivers. The SBST will provide outreach home visits to students who are excessively absent to identify barriers to attendance, including family conflict, environmental stressors, mental health needs, concrete needs, and negative peer influences. SBST and family members will work together to identify strategies and interventions to address the problem, focusing strongly on parent/caregiver involvement.

More time on task - The school will have an extended day/extended year schedule, and will not follow the traditional model of school-day/after-school timeframes, and students will complete all tasks at school, with no responsibilities to take home. Over the course of a Monday – Saturday week, students will receive intensive academic classroom instruction, career development training, one-on-one and group counseling, personalized academic support, internships, and instructional and competitive sports play. The school will also require students to participate in a mandatory summer program, which will consist of academic instruction, summer job experiences and sports. Saturdays will feature a mandatory academic advisement session where students will receive one-one-support from volunteers in subjects in which they need extra attention.

Same sex groupings - Students move through their time at Urban Dove Charter School in same sex teams both for sports and academic classes as part of either the Urban Dove Young Men’s Academy or Young Women’s Academy. Research has shown that in both sports and academics, students, especially females, benefit from same sex environments.² In the sports arena, this is especially true as so much of the success young athletes have comes from their self-esteem and confidence in themselves. Young women develop both of these traits far more strongly in single-sex environments. Leadership skills are also diminished among young women when in co-ed environments. Gender bias and social norms reduce opportunities for young women to take leadership roles in co-ed environments, reinforcing negative stereotypes from others and from within themselves. Single sex environments have also been shown to break down stereotypes that might hinder students from choosing to pursue coursework and activities (such as sports for girls, and the arts for boys).³

The development, administration and instruction of Urban Dove Charter School will lean heavily on existing research. According to a recent study, New York City’s portfolio of transfer schools has shown very strong impacts in increasing the achievement of young people who have fallen off track.

- Transfer schools increase the attendance of off track students from 40% to 78% ;
- Transfer schools improve off track students’ progress in credit accumulation, from 4.9 to 8.9 credits earned per year;

² Cornelius Riordan. *Girls and Boys in School: together or separate?* New York: Teachers College Press, 1990.

³ Abigail Norfleet James and Herbert Richards, “Escaping Stereotypes: educational attitudes of male alumni of single-sex and coed schools,” *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 4:136-148, 2003.

- Early-generation transfer schools (over 20 schools) have graduated 56% of students, compared to the citywide rate or 19% for students who are over-aged and under-credited.⁴

Urban Dove Charter School will build on the traditional transfer school model through its foundational philosophy of sports-based youth development (SBYD). SBYD is based on a strong basis of research, which has shown that young people engaged in structured sports activities exhibit:

- Increased academic performance and classroom behavior⁵
- Increased weight loss and decreased obesity⁶
- Increased life expectancy⁷
- Lower rates of cigarette smoking, teenage pregnancy, and substance use⁸
- Significantly higher odds for having a healthy self-image, and significantly lower odds for emotional distress, suicidal behavior, family substance abuse, and physical and sexual abuse victimization.⁹
- Active adolescents are more likely than their sedentary peers to have higher self-esteem.¹⁰
- A lower likelihood of feeling isolated or experiencing isolation.¹¹
- A higher sense of self-worth and better social skills than their less athletic peers.¹²

In 2001, seminal research that linked sports participation with academic success was conducted by Gary Overton, at the School of Education at East Carolina University, in collaboration with the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The study tracked the academic performance of high school student-athletes in North Carolina and revealed significant differences between athletes and non-athletes. Contrary to some popular misperceptions some of the major findings in the study include:

- Grade-Point Average: The mean GPA for athletes in the study was a 2.98, while the mean GPA for non-athletes was only 2.17.

⁴ Tamara Battaglini and JoEllen Lynch, "More Than Just Schools: Rethinking the Demand for Educational Entrepreneurship". Prepared for the American Enterprise Institute Conference, 12/7/09.

⁵ Hanson, T.L. & Austin, G.A. (2003). *Are Student Health Risks and Low Resilience Assets an Impediment to the Academic Progress of Schools?* (California Healthy Kids Survey Factsheet 3). Los Alamitos, CA: WestEd.

⁶ Economos, C.D., Hyat, R.R., Goldberg, J.P. et al. (2007). A Community Intervention Reduces BMI z-score in Children: Shape Up Somerville First Year Results. *Obesity*, 15: 1325–1336.

⁷ Wei, M., Kampert, J.B., Barlow, C.E. et al. (1999). Relationship Between Low Cardiorespiratory Fitness and Mortality in Normal-Weight, Overweight, and Obese Men. *JAMA*, 82: 1547-1553.

⁸ Pate, R.R., Trost, S.G., Levin, S., et al. (2000). Sports participation and health-related behaviors among US youth. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 154: 904-91.

⁹ Harrison, P.A., & Narayan, G. (2003). Differences in behavior, psychological factors, and environmental factors associated with participation in school sports and other activities in adolescence. *Journal of School Health*, 73(3), 113-20.

¹⁰ Barber, B.L., Stone, M.R., & Eccles, J. (2003). *Adolescent Participation in Organized Activities*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

¹¹ Barber, B.L. et al. (2003).

¹² The Case for High School Activities. (2008). The National Association of State High School Federations. Retrieved from <http://www.osaa.org/osaainfo/08CaseForHSActivities.pdf>

- Attendance: The average number of absences was significantly lower for athletes than non-athletes. The mean average number of days missed by athletes was 6.3 days per 180-day school year, as compared to 11.9 days for non-athletes.
 - Discipline referrals: The percentage of discipline referrals by the reporting schools was lower for the athlete group than the non-athlete group; referrals for athletes ran at a 33.3 percentage while the referral percentage for non-athletes was 41.8 percent.
 - Dropout rate: There was a dramatic difference in the dropout rate; the mean dropout percentage for athletes was miniscule 0.6 percent, while the corresponding percentage for non-athletes was 10.32 percent.
 - Graduation rate: The percentage of graduates was significantly higher for the athlete group than the non-athlete group; the mean graduation percentage for athletes was 99.4 percent as compared to 93.51 percent for non-athletes.
- b. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school (if applicable);

N/A

- c. Utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical application of concepts;

Assessment and instruction will be carried out in an ongoing and consistent basis. Starting with the concept that all learning begins with the child, teachers will begin their work before students arrive meeting in teams that design and evaluate starting assessments based on where the young person needs to be by the end of the school year. The creation of these school-wide assessments will be to set standards of expectation based on the New York State standards for all subject areas and the Regents exams. Formative assessment will be ongoing and inform all lessons which will be built on a backwards design model but with enough flexibility to make use of the data and discussion carried out in professional learning teams made up as closely as possible by year level. These teams will assist each other in lesson and unit plan design, will work together on designing projects whenever possible and will support each other in creation of interim assessments and using the data to inform school-wide practice. Several benchmark assessments will test the skills students are practicing towards mastery and the analysis of them will inform instruction and individual conferencing with students.

Data from assessments will be made available to the coaches who will intervene where needed to support student mastery of course content. All assessments will be teacher created or taken from the New York State Regents exams or previous tests. A project-based learning environment will foster alternative assessments whenever possible. Students that have different learning modalities will be able to demonstrate mastery of certain content without the traditional assessment tools being the only judge. With a goal of excellence, however, all Urban Dove Charter school students will achieve the standards of a full Regents diploma and most will excel with scores high enough to exempt them from remedial college courses. Each team of teachers will have a lead

that reports to the principal. This position may stay static or rotate by the choice of the team. The principal will carry out all formal observations unless a teacher asks to have a peer observe him/her and the principal agrees. The culture of the school will be one of life-long learning and teachers will be expected to watch each other teach regularly and discuss the relative merits of each lesson observed. The principal will be a part of as many of these conversations as possible to guide the process and maintain focus on the schools mission statement.

We will use data in both operations and performance monitoring of the school. In terms of operations, we will implement PowerSchool, an integrated data system that will enable our school to easily track and report out real time information on students' attendance, grades and social-emotional data. For performance monitoring, our school will set up regular bi-weekly assessments to analyze performance at both the student and school level. Every teacher designs twelve-week course plans for each trimester. Teachers will set targets in each subject area to provide students with the explicit academic expectations and milestones to reach by the close of each twelve-week cycle. Students' progress in the courses is assessed through five bi-weekly assessments. These bi-weekly assessments will be used to gauge students' progress towards acquiring the knowledge and skill targets that are outlined in the course plans. These bi-weekly assessments are a source of routine reflection on learning and an opportunity for teachers, students, and coaches to set goals and action plans.

Progress will be shared with students using a Bi-weekly Report. The report will show students' grades, progress from the previous marking period, and attendance. The report is the foundation for conversations with students regarding accountability, progress, and challenges. Teachers will use the data from Bi-weekly Reports to drive planning and instruction for the subsequent units in the cycle. In order to increase transparency of the grading process, all teachers will use the same grade break down for the Biweekly Reports

- d. Increase implementation of local instructional improvement systems to assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making, and effectiveness;

The School Leadership Team (SLT) will be representative of the adult stakeholders of Urban Dove Charter School and consist of parents including the PTA president and school staff including teachers, support staff, the Athletic Director and Principal. Student representatives of Student Government and community partnership representatives will be included as advisors in select school matters. Additionally, ad hoc committees will be formed to carry out necessary work identified by the SLT.

A primary focus of the SLT will be to make decisions which impact instructional at the school. These decisions will be grounded in the vision and mission of the school. The team will meet monthly to discuss and formulate policy related to:

- Student Achievement-Based Learning and Teaching
- Achievement and Belief-Based School-wide Culture

- Highly-Qualified Staff Aligned to Vision
- Operations and Systems to Help Drive Learning and School Culture

A data-driven approach to decision-making is supported through the use of a cycle of inquiry:

- Gather and Assess Data
- Student achievement data
- Culture surveys from all constituencies (interests, habits of learning, climate, levels of technology integration, etc.)
- Frame or Reframe Key Issues or Questions
- Investigate Literature and Field Expertise
- Develop and Tune Action Plan
- Carry out Strategies and Collect Data

The success of the actions decided by the SLT rests on the support of all members. When consensus cannot be reached and it is critical that a solution be found that all members can support for a certain period of time, the *5-finger Consensus (a.k.a. Consensus Voting)* tool will be used as outlined below:

We will assess the effectiveness of the project based learning through observations, collection of unit plans, one on one meetings with teachers, student evaluations of classes, credit accumulation, regents passing rates, and bi-weekly assessments.

Criteria for evaluation:

- Peer and principal review of course plans using a rubric.
- Peer and administrative observations of lessons using a rubric.
- Students course evaluations reflect student engagement and preparedness for the regents.
- Individual lesson plans and observations demonstrate a clear connection to the overall objectives of the course.
- Bi-weekly assessments demonstrate improvement in skills and content outlined in the unit plans
- Urban Dove Charter School staff demonstrates an awareness of the projects and discusses them in their one on one and group meetings with students.
- Regents passing rates and credit accumulation is comparable to our sister transfer schools in their first year

e. Partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best practices;

The Urban Dove Charter School believes that the unique and innovative techniques it utilizes to educate this challenging population will be a model for other schools seeking ways to engage and educate OA/UC students. UDCS is a hybrid of Transfer and CTE, taking the best of both to create a unique and successful school model. As OA/UC students get younger and younger (there are now middle school OA/UC students),

innovative methods will be needed to engage and educate them. UDCS will be particularly helpful in getting schools and educators to better understand the value and importance of sports, health and fitness in the success of the student. Sports-based youth development is an important and critical tool in the student's development but it is too often neglected or done improperly, with negative consequences. UDCS hopes to be at the forefront of a movement to get stakeholders to reinvest in this area of education and welcomes the opportunity to share best practices with other schools serving all types of students.

- f. Demonstrate the ability to overcome start-up challenges to open a successful school through management and leadership techniques;

Urban Dove Charter School has assembled a strong, diverse team of individuals who are committed to developing innovative approaches to educating young people. Our Planning Team and proposed Board of Trustees are comprised of educators, researchers, and managers whose current roles include youth program directors, youth policy experts, new school developers, as well as high school teachers and principals from traditional, charter, and transfer school models. The UDCS planning team is highly qualified to create and operate an excellent charter school. The team has extensive experience in school start-up, charter operations, transfer school instruction, administration, sports-based youth development, student support services, non-profit management and community engagement. Planning team members have founded, led, taught in and provided numerous student supports in New York City public schools. Individuals from the planning team will comprise the school leadership team providing consistency and alignment necessary to launch a successful new school. Key members include:

Jai Nanda is the Founder and Executive Director of the Urban Dove, a non-profit organization that provides after-school programs for hundreds of New York City's at-risk youth. Jai founded Urban Dove in 1998, after working at Lower East Side Prep, a transfer school, as a basketball coach and part-time teacher. Jai left teaching and started Urban Dove as a way to reach out to children in need and provide them with the life skills they need to become positive, successful citizens. He will be the chair of the Board of Trustees and manage the partnership between the school and Urban Dove.

Jason Griffiths is the founding Head Master of the Brooklyn Latin School, one of eight Specialized High Schools in New York City. Mr. Griffiths was a resident of New Leaders for New Schools and is currently on their Program Advisory Board and mentors other School Leaders. He did his residency at Village Academies Charter School Network in East Harlem, NY. Mr. Griffiths also spent five years as a high school teacher and football coach. Mr. Griffiths has a Bachelor's Degree from Princeton University and a Master's Degree in Education from Temple University. Mr. Griffiths will serve on the Board of Urban Dove Charter School.

Sydney King has been a classroom teacher for sixteen years. She is one of the founding English teachers at South Brooklyn Community High School, the model

transfer school, joining the team eight years ago when the program became an official school with the Board of Education. At South Brooklyn she has been responsible for creating the English curriculum, tailoring it to the specific needs of over-aged and under credited youth. She has been a member of numerous planning committees and curriculum teams. Ms. King has a Master's Degree in the Teaching of English from Brooklyn College.

Bob Lesser is the Director of New School and Charter School Development at Replications, Inc, a non-profit which has created more than thirty new schools over the past ten years. Prior to this he was an Associate Director in the New York City Department of Education's Office of New Schools where he provided operations and facilities support for new schools and oversaw the Department's Selective School Initiative including the development of the Brooklyn Latin School, Columbia Secondary School for Math, Science, and Engineering, the iSchool, and Bard II Early College High School. Mr. Lesser has a Master's Degree in Public Policy from Harvard University. Mr. Lesser will serve on the Board of Urban Dove Academy Charter School.

Patrick McGillicuddy led a planning team to start East Brooklyn Community High School, where he now serves as Principal. East Brooklyn is based on the Good Shepherd Services Transfer School Model for overage under-credited youth. Prior to starting East Brooklyn, he was a classroom teacher for six years at South Brooklyn Community High School, the first of the Good Shepherd Transfer Schools. Mr. McGillicuddy's holds a Bachelor's Degree from Vassar College and a Master's Degree in Public Policy & Administration from Columbia University. Mr. McGillicuddy will serve on the Board of Urban Dove Charter School.

Lazar Treschan is the Director for Youth Policy at the Community Service Society of New York where he leads the agency's efforts to address the nearly 200,000 young people who are out of school and out of work in New York City. Prior to joining CSS, he worked on the creation of small public high schools at New Visions for Public Schools, and was the Director of Planning and Evaluation at the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. He has a Masters degree in Public Policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Mr. Treschan will serve on the Board of Urban Dove Charter School.

- g. Demonstrate the support of the school district and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district;

As the planning team for the Urban Dove Charter School has met and spoken with community leaders, parents, and students this has held true and we have been greeted with a high degree of enthusiasm and excitement about the concept for the school. Members of the community have expressed support for both the proposed school model, as for the need for an innovative approach to serving local youth who have been unsuccessful in their initial high school experiences.

The following is a summary of the Urban Dove Charter School planning team's community outreach activities to date:

- Secured a partnership with Aviator Sports and Recreation Complex
- Received initial support from the National Park Service
- Met with Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz's office on May 12th, 2010 and expect a letter of support from his office
- Spoke to Dorothy Turano, District Manager of Community Board 18 and Saul Needle, Chairman of Community Board 18
- Spoke with Councilman Lewis Fidler's Chief of Staff, Reeve Eisen about the school and sent information to the Councilman and requested a meeting
- Contacted CSD 22 Community Education Council President Christopher Spinelli and requested a meeting.
- Sent information on the school to Assemblyman Alan Maisel and Regent Karen Brooks Hopkins
- Have a meeting set up with State Senator Carl Kruger's office
- Have a meeting set up with Senator Charles Schumer's office
- Have spoken to Congressman Anthony Weiner's office and are setting up a meeting
- Met with parents who have children in Crossroads Juvenile Center
- Met with parents of current and past Urban Dove youth who live in Brooklyn

h. Provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there are a lack of alternatives.

In New York City, there are nearly 140,000 young people between the ages of 16-21 who have dropped out or are significantly off-track for graduation. Most of these young people lack the education or job skills for most entry level jobs, much less ones that will put them on track for a successful career. Re-engaging these "disconnected youth" is a difficult but necessary challenge, and one that requires creative, innovative solutions. The New York City public school system has recently developed a small number of schools, known as Transfer Schools, which have become a national model for serving this population. Yet the need for these services far outweighs the number of seats available and there are still students who fall through the cracks of the transfer school model.

The Urban Dove Charter School for Sports, Health and Fitness is designed to serve a unique sub-set of "overage, under-credited" students. Urban Dove school students must be between the ages of 15 and 16, and have gained fewer than ten high school credits in the two or more years since they entered high school. Only young people

who have begun high school already but have been unsuccessful due to severe truancy, lack of credit accumulation, and/or dropping out of school entirely will be able to enroll in this school. There are approximately 50,000 young people in New York who would meet the eligibility requirements for this school.¹³

While UDCS will physically be located in CSD 22, we anticipate a large portion of our population will come from other CSDs in Brooklyn where the need for transfer school seats is high, including CSDs 15 – 19. In particular, there is a great need for the specific target population of UDCS – OA/UC 9th graders with 10 credits or less – a population often not given priority by current transfer schools.

¹³ Analysis of the 2008 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau finds over 30,000 young people ages 16-18 in New York City who are not attending high school. Data collected by the Parthenon Group in a study for the NYC Department of Education found approximately 20,000 young people ages 16-18 who were significantly under-credited for their age.