

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Charter School Name	Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill
Applicant Name(s)	Audrey Warn
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Media Contact Telephone Number	914.494.1430
District of Location	Peekskill
Opening Date	August 2014
Proposed Charter Term	SY2014-15 to SY2018-19
Proposed Management Company or Partners	Not applicable
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	K-7 400 students
Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	K-8 450 students
Mission Statement	The mission of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill is to provide the community with an educational option that teaches a values-infused, content-rich curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in order to build character and prepare students for success in high school, college and careers.

Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill will be a new public school with a unique academic program and culture to meet the needs of young learners in our community, especially the children of our growing immigrant population. Our school will deliver a college preparatory curriculum and provide students with targeted supports to help them succeed.

The school will be built on the following pillars:

- **High Expectations:** We believe that with a rigorous curriculum and tailored supports all students can learn at high levels. We will establish high expectations for both academics and behavior and hold every staff member accountable for helping students to attain them. We will instill in our students the belief that dedicated effort and practice will enable them to follow the academic, career and personal paths of their choice. This academic climate will foster a love and joy of learning, self-discipline, analytical thinking, and creativity in our students.
- **Rigorous Content:** We believe that not only is a deep knowledge base essential for individual success, a common knowledge base is also critical to a democratic society. Our curriculum will teach students the vocabulary, literature, facts, theories, works of art, and history they need to develop their skills in reading, writing, critical analysis and

speaking. The curriculum will provide students with the knowledge they need to pursue higher education and careers as well as participate constructively in their community.

- **Focus on Literacy:** We expect many of our students to be children of immigrant families, many of whom may come to school with limited English proficiency. By starting in the elementary grades with a robust and structured English language arts program using a combination of explicit phonics and the Readers and Writers Project methods we will build a strong literacy foundation that supports student learning in all other subjects. Our co-teaching model in the elementary grades provides targeted small group instruction with an ESL specialist on every grade.
- **Character Development:** Teaching academic skills and knowledge are not enough; students must also develop the character traits necessary to succeed in and contribute to a complex and diverse world. Guardian Academy will integrate a values-based character education program into its curriculum and culture to help students reflect on their choices and actions and establish a community of mutual respect, interdependence, and perseverance. A service learning component will help build connections between personal actions and the curriculum.
- **Community:** Guardian Academy will succeed as a result of school staff, families, local community members and organizations all working together to meet our students' needs. Frequent communication, academic and social events, an inclusive board, opportunities to volunteer and community partnerships will all contribute to a school deeply rooted in and responsive to the needs of our community.
- **Extended Time for Learning:** We believe the traditional school model must adapt to meet the needs of today's youth. A longer school day and school year will provide the time necessary to adequately teach and support our students. The school doors open each day at 7:15 am with breakfast at 7:20 am and the academic program running from 8:00 am until 3:30 pm (except on Wednesdays when students are released at 2:30 pm to provide teachers with time for professional development and planning).

Leadership: Based on best practice in highly successful charter schools, Guardian Academy will be led by an experienced Principal who will focus on building a values-infused curriculum and supporting teachers, while the Director of Operations takes care of the business side of running the school. The leadership team will also include a Dean of School Culture who will work with students, families and teachers to ensure a safe, nurturing environment for learning, and a Student Support Coordinator and an ESL Coordinator to ensure students with disabilities and English language learners get the support they need.

Governance: Guardian Academy will be governed by an independent Board of Trustees comprised of distinguished members from in and around the community. Our diverse founding board currently includes a lawyer, a retired police officer, a principal, a pastor, and a teacher. The Board's meetings will be open to the public and parents are encouraged to get involved.

Location: The school will be located in the historic Guardian Building in downtown Peekskill. Children of residents of Peekskill will have preference in our random lottery to enroll students.

CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT

Proposed Charter School Name Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill
Proposed School Location (District) Peekskill School District

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

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

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

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

Signature of Applicant:	<i>Audrey C. Warn</i>
Date:	03/14/13
Print/Type Name:	Audrey C. Warn



GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL

A proposal to the New York State Board of Regents

Submitted March 15, 2013

To open August, 2014

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

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

The mission of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill is to provide the community with an educational option that teaches a values-infused, content-rich curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in order to build character and prepare students for success in high school, college and careers.

It is our objective to create a school with a unique academic program and climate to meet the needs of learners in our community, especially the children of our growing immigrant population. Our school will deliver a college-preparatory curriculum and provide students with targeted supports to help them succeed. We believe Guardian Academy will implement the objectives of the Charter Schools Act in the following ways:

- Our academic program will raise student achievement by establishing a strong foundation in literacy, exposing students to content-rich curriculum across subjects, and fostering in students the habits and character necessary for high school and post-secondary success.
- By recruiting and providing a unique program and school climate to students from families seeking educational alternatives, with a special emphasis on immigrant students, our school will expand opportunities for students at risk of academic failure.
- With a focus on collaborative planning, co-teaching and distributed leadership, we will provide unparalleled professional opportunities for teachers and staff.
- As the only alternative in Peekskill to district-run schools, Guardian Academy will provide parents with expanded choices within the public school system.
- By setting clear goals and expectations for academics and character, our school will be accountable for measurable student achievement.

The 2010 Amendment to the state’s charter school law encourages applications for schools “in a region or regions where there may be a lack of alternatives and access to charter schools would provide new alternatives within the local public education system that would offer the greatest educational benefit to students.” As we hope to demonstrate in this application, Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill fits these criteria.

B. Key Design Elements

Guardian Academy is designed to meet the needs of students in our community. The school will be built on the following pillars:

- **High Expectations:** We believe that with a rigorous curriculum and tailored supports all students can learn at high levels. We will establish high expectations for both academics and behavior and hold every staff member accountable for helping students to attain them. Given that many of the students we hope to enroll come from families that have no experience with higher education, we will instill in our students the belief that dedicated effort and practice will enable them to follow the academic, career and personal paths of their choice. This academic climate will foster a love and joy of learning, self-discipline, analytical thinking, and creativity in our students.
- **Rigorous Content:** We believe that not only is a deep knowledge base essential for individual success, a common knowledge base is also critical to a democratic society. Our curriculum will teach students the vocabulary, literature, facts, theories, works of art, and history they need to develop their skills in reading, writing, critical analysis and speaking. The curriculum will provide students with the knowledge they need to pursue higher education and careers as well as participate constructively in their community.
- **Focus on Literacy:** We expect many of our students to be children of immigrant families, many of whom may come to school with limited English proficiency. By starting in the elementary grades with a robust and structured English language arts program using a combination of explicit phonics and the Readers and Writers Project methods we will build a strong literacy foundation that supports student learning in all other subjects. Our co-teaching model in the elementary grades provides targeted small group instruction with an ESL specialist on every grade.
- **Character Development:** Teaching academic skills and knowledge are not enough; students must also develop the character traits necessary to succeed in and contribute to a complex and diverse world. Guardian Academy will integrate a values-based character education program into its curriculum and culture to help students reflect on their choices and actions and establish a community of mutual respect, interdependence, and perseverance. A service learning component will help build connections between personal actions and the curriculum.
- **Community:** Guardian Academy will succeed as a result of school staff, families, local community members and organizations all working together to meet our students' needs. Frequent communication, academic and social events, an inclusive board, opportunities to volunteer and community partnerships will all contribute to a school deeply rooted in and responsive to the needs of our community.
- **Extended Time for Learning:** We believe the traditional school model must adapt to meet the needs of today's youth. A longer school day and school year will provide the time necessary to adequately teach and support our students. The school doors open each day at 7:15 am with breakfast at 7:20 am and the academic program running from 7:50 am until 3:30 pm (except on Wednesdays when students are released at 2:30 pm to provide teachers with time for professional development and planning). Our teachers will receive ample time to plan collaboratively and engage in relevant professional development that contributes directly to their classroom practice.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Guardian Academy will open in fall 2014 with grades K-3 and add one grade per year until it is ultimately a K-8 school. Our Kindergarten class will enroll students who have reached the age of five by December 1 of the year in which they apply.

Projected Enrollment Over the Charter Term						
Grades	Ages	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2017-2018	2018-2019
K	4-5	50	50	50	50	50
1 st	5-6	50	50	50	50	50
2 nd	6-7	50	50	50	50	50
3 rd	7-8	50	50	50	50	50
4 th	8-9		50	50	50	50
5 th	9-10			50	50	50
6 th	11-12				50	50
7 th	12-13					50
Totals		200	250	300	350	400

Rationale: We have chosen to start with the elementary grades in order to start building our students' academic foundation early and have as much time as possible to prepare them for the rigors of high school and college. We know opening a new school with four grades is ambitious, but feel it is a reasonable approach to meeting the demand and need in our community and having the revenues necessary to support a full leadership and student support team from the start. We are also influenced by the small schools movement and have elected to keep grade and overall school size at a level that allows a close-knit community to form where all students feel known and supported by adults. We will have two classes per grade with an average class size of 25 students (with co-teaching in grades K-5). Given our target population, we assume there will be some student attrition, primarily due to family mobility. However, as a public school, we feel an obligation to serve as many students as possible and, like the district schools, will accept students into all open seats in all grades. With clearly defined expectations for behavior and a values-infused curriculum, we will effectively orient new students to our school culture with limited disruption to the learning environment.

Demand: Our assessment of demand is based on the changing demographics of our community and outreach to families and the organizations that serve them, such as day care providers and Head Start programs. Documenting interest from the Latino population is challenging because many are hesitant to fill out surveys due to concern about their immigration status. Nevertheless, to date we have collected over 200 signatures indicating interest. Feedback on our proposal indicates that many families want a small, safe school with regular communication between teachers and parents, which is central to the Guardian Academy design. We recognize the challenge of opening with grades K-3, but also know that without our school there will be no other options for families in Peekskill. The only alternative currently in Peekskill is the parochial Assumption School, which the Archdiocese of New York is closing at the end of this school year, leaving many families seeking another option for their children besides the district

schools. Even had the Assumption School remained open, because of the recent influx of immigrant families, Peekskill is in the midst of a baby boom; consequently we expect the opening of the Guardian Academy in 2014-15 to relieve pressure on the local district schools, especially by serving the many new students in our community who are English language learners. Therefore, we are confident we will not only fill our seats but also maintain a healthy wait list.

Recruitment Plan: As the only alternative to district-run schools, we believe filling the seats at the Guardian Academy will not be a challenge. Nevertheless, we will undertake an energetic grassroots recruitment campaign to attract a diverse student body. Our mission signals our desire to serve any family who wants a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment that emphasizes both academic and character development. We will inform parents and guardians about our school option through a variety of media, including local radio, television, print and Internet outlets, such as the Peekskill-Cortlandt Patch, The Peekskill Daily Voice, The Journal News LoHud, The Examiner News and WHUD/WLNA radio. Our marketing materials will clearly indicate that this is a free, secular public school and open to any students, including those with disabilities and English language learners. We will explain our school's program, expectations for teaching and learning and school culture, and services for at-risk students. We will disseminate information and applications in English and Spanish through local youth and social service organizations and agencies, day-care, pre-school and Head Start programs, businesses and churches. Immigrant families are well represented in and served by these organization and those listed below and in the public outreach section. For instance, the Peekskill Field Library Children's Room is a very active community hub and gathering place for kids and parents. Other examples include:

- Peekskill Youth Bureau
- Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT)
- Salvation Army Youth Program
- Peekskill Parks and Recreation Department
- Head Start Day Care Centers
- Hudson River Community Healthcare
- LaPolla Little League
- Peekskill Titans Football League.

We believe the centrally located Guardian Building will also be an asset; it will be available during our initial recruitment phase to host open houses and meet with interested families to discuss our program. Members of our founding team speak Spanish and we will make sure the recruitment staff speak Spanish or use translators to communicate with families. Guardian Academy already has an online presence with a Facebook page and will also launch a website to disseminate information and applications.

Lottery: Our application will be very simple, asking only for basic contact information and the age of student candidates. If we have more applicants than seats, we will hold a random lottery to enroll our students. There will be no restrictions to enter the lottery other than eligibility for the particular grade, and we will not ask about student characteristics or abilities or citizenship status during the application process. Applications for students who live in Peekskill will be

drawn first followed by those who live outside the district. After all seats are filled, we will put the remaining students on a waiting list in the order in which they are drawn and enroll students from it should seats become available. As a public school we believe we have a responsibility to serve as many students as possible and therefore we intend to fill all open seats, regardless of grade or time of year. New students will be oriented to our school culture and expectations and provided with targeted support to help them catch up to their classmates.

Admissions Preference: Guardian Academy Charter School will have an admissions preference for already enrolled students and siblings. Given our strategic recruitment plan, we do not anticipate requiring admissions preferences for other types of students to meet our enrollment and retention targets; should this assumption prove erroneous we will seek to amend our admissions policy to give preference to at-risk students.

Enrollment and Retention Targets: The State Education Department has not published targets for Peekskill, but we know that 68% of students in the Peekskill School District are eligible for free or reduced price lunch, 14% are Limited English Proficient, and 17% have disabilities. Our active recruitment of at-risk students, particularly English language learners, will allow us to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets established by the Board of Regents and meet the criteria of the CSP Grant incentive priorities. By targeting outreach to low-income and immigrant families through community organizations and churches and working closely with day care centers and Head Start programs, we will enroll and retain students who desire an alternative school option. And our small and supportive school design will retain high percentages of students in all three categories.

Strategies to Retain Students: We believe a strong education program and a nurturing community that results in demonstrable academic progress will inspire parents to keep their children enrolled at Guardian Academy. We will have special programs and services to meet the needs of all types of students.

- **English Language Learners:** We will use the state's procedure for identifying ELL students, including Home Language Surveys and the LAB-R exam. We intend to implement a robust early childhood literacy program that uses small group instruction to enhance reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. We will have an ESL Coordinator, an ESL specialist on every grade team in the elementary school, and additional specialists on staff who will provide supplemental targeted intervention programs to students who enter with no or limited English speaking or pre-literacy skills. We also believe parent involvement is important and will hire Spanish speaking staff who can communicate effectively with families. Through regular benchmarking of reading levels and the NYSESLAT exam we will monitor and evaluate student progress and ELL status.
- **Students with Disabilities:** We will use a Response to Intervention model to identify and monitor students at risk of not attaining grade level standards. Multiple strategies will be attempted by classroom teachers and specialists before any student is referred for evaluation for special education. Once a student is determined to have a disability by the district CSE and consensus regarding placement and services has been reached, the

school will commit to implementing each student's IEP with fidelity. IEP goals and strategies will be shared with classroom teachers and staff certified in special education will provide additional support both within and outside the classroom. We will have a Dean of School Culture and social workers to address social-emotional issues and to provide counseling. In addition, we will contract with specialists to provide services such as speech and physical therapy for those who require it. Parents will be involved every step of the way, from developing the IEP to annual reviews.

- **Students Eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program:** Many low-income students have suffered from low expectations by the very schools meant to give them the essential skills and knowledge they need to succeed. A key tenet of our school is high expectations for all students. We will instill in our students and their families the belief that college and careers of their choice are attainable with the right habits and hard work. Our co-teaching model will provide students with individualized attention and character education is integrated into the curriculum to foster the values and traits that promote achievement. Our school culture will be inclusive and encourage parent involvement.

Regardless of the mandated targets, we believe in our mission to provide a school that prepares all students for the future, and know the strategies we have described are effective, particularly for at-risk children.

D. Community to be Served

Community Description: Guardian Academy is proposing to locate in the center of Peekskill and serve the surrounding community. Peekskill is a historic American river city approximately 50 miles north of New York City. Henry Hudson landed there in 1609 and by the time of the American Revolution it was an important manufacturing center where the Continental Army established its first headquarters in 1776. The decline of manufacturing led to a slowing economy and diminishing population; nevertheless, Peekskill is currently experiencing a growing Latino and immigrant population. Census data indicate that Peekskill is now 37% Hispanic or Latino, 36% White (non-Hispanic), 24% Black and 3% Asian. Moreover, 31% of Peekskill residents are foreign born and four out of ten speak a language other than English at home. We believe this diversity is an enormous source of potential for our community, which will contribute to learning and achievement for all students in our school.

Student Population: Based on data from the NY State Report Card for 2010-11, the student population in Peekskill has a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic students compared to the overall population. In addition, more than half of the students in Peekskill are eligible for free lunch, a strong indicator of need, and another 14% qualify for reduced-price lunch.

In terms of performance, data from 2012 show that 38% of elementary and middle school students were proficient in English language arts and 52% were proficient in Math on state tests. In addition, in 2011 neither students with disabilities, nor Limited English Proficient

students nor Economically Disadvantaged students achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP). The district’s overall accountability status that year was Improvement (Year 2).

2010-11 Student Demographics

Characteristic	%
Asian	2
Black	36
Hispanic	49
White	13
Eligible for Free Lunch	54
Eligible for Reduced Lunch	14
Limited English Proficient	14
Students with Disabilities	17

Target Population: While our school is open to all students, we intend to recruit low-income students and students from immigrant families who are at greater risk of not completing high school or attending college. We believe these students would benefit from a small school with a strong focus on literacy development, individualized attention, and an inclusive community that brings students, parents and teachers together to raise achievement. Our goal is to create a diverse and multicultural community, the benefits of which are supported by research. For example, studies find that “The particular nature of a school environment—for example, whether the school is a model of inclusion and equal participation, helps determine whether or not its graduates develop the skills to navigate and find comfort in racially diverse settings later in life.” (Eaton and Chirichigno, 2011) In addition, diversity confers academic benefits on all students with research consistently showing a negative relationship between segregation and achievement. Moreover, research has also found that “white students in diverse learning environments are exposed to complex classroom discussions and they also develop better critical thinking and problem-solving skills than their counterparts in racially homogenous schools.” (Siegel-Hawley, 2013) Our focus on creating a school to serve immigrant families in our community within a diverse setting aligns with a number of New York State CSP Grant Priorities, including:

- **Design Priority 1:** “The school is specifically designed to meet the learning needs and raise the achievement of students who are English language learners.”
- **Design Priority 8:** “The school’s program will promote a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student population.”

Community Support: The Guardian Academy has taken on a grassroots approach to securing support by holding town hall style meetings, walking the neighborhoods, and reaching out to community leaders (see public outreach section below). As Guardian Academy will be the first charter school in Peekskill, the founders have assumed the task of educating the community

about charter schools in general and our specific proposal in particular, soliciting feedback and real commitment. Please see attached letters of support from:

- Valerie Swan, Director of Peekskill Youth Bureau
- John Testa, former Mayor of Peekskill and Westchester County Legislator
- Dr. Timothy J. McNiff, Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of New York
- Sibyl Canaan, Field Library Director
- Leo Dylewski, DARE and GREAT Officer, City of Peekskill Police Department

We have also had parents of school age children and other community members register their support via surveys distributed throughout the community. To date we have received 112 surveys of families specifically with school age children in support of our proposal; another 88 surveys from other community members indicated their support.

Partnering with Local Public Schools: Guardian Academy will be an open school that welcomes other educators to learn from our teachers and practices; we hope our school can work collaboratively with other schools in the region to share and learn from each other. We will publish our policies and other resources on our website and guests will be welcome to tour the school, observe classes and, whenever feasible, participate in our professional development activities.

E. Public Outreach

The founding group and proposed board members have worked diligently to inform the community of our proposal and have received significant feedback. We issued a press release and the local media has noted our efforts, as evidenced by coverage in the Peekskill-Cortland Patch, Journal News, Yorktown Examiner and Peekskill Daily Voice (see Attachment 2, Samples of Evidence of Community Outreach). In addition, the three founders participated in a weekly public access television news program that airs on Cablevision, FIOS and You Tube. Two public information sessions were advertised in advance and attended by a cross-section of community members. One meeting was held on February 26 at the Peekskill Elks Club, which was filmed for airing on the local Cablevision station; the second meeting was held on March 11 at the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in Peekskill. A number of educators as well as two school board members attended the latter meeting.

We have reached out to a range of community leaders, including the school board and superintendent as well as elected officials at the local, county and state levels, including the Peekskill Mayor, Common Council members and other local politicians and agency heads. On the following page is list of some of the key stakeholders and organizations in our community who have been contacted as part of our public outreach process. These include social service agencies, early childhood education centers, faith-based organizations, and members of service organizations, such as The Elks, The Rotary Club, the Knights of Columbus and the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The Lead Applicant has addressed the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of

Commerce membership at their breakfast meeting and is scheduled to have an information booth at the Hudson Valley Gateway Expo. She is also scheduled to address Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT), a community coalition of representatives from a variety of agencies that specifically work with youth—from scouts, sports programs and church groups to city and other government agencies that provide outreach to Peekskill children. The Lead Applicant and local members of the Board of Trustees have also taken a grassroots approach to community outreach, speaking to community members in coffee shops, bodegas, supermarkets as well as at their places of employment and worship and in their neighborhoods. The outreach materials we have used have been in English and in Spanish. Interest surveys (attached) have been distributed and continue to be returned. We have established a Facebook page, an e-mail address and a PO Box for the proposed school and have received feedback from myriad sources, including parents, educators, community residents, politicians, business owners and religious leaders in our community.

Examples of Outreach

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local School District Superintendent, James Willis and Assistant Superintendent Joseph Mosey • Peekskill Youth Bureau Director, Valerie Swan • Chamber of Commerce Director, Debbie Milone and Membership • Kiley Youth Center After School Program Staff member • Head Start Daycare Centers of Peekskill Director, Stacey Neecey and Staff • Comite Latino, Hudson River Health Care, Anabeli Gonzales, • Park and Recreation Department Supervisor Joyce Cucia and Staff • Creative Preschool, Director Dana Bennett (city program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor of Peekskill, Mary Foster • State Senator Gregory Ball • Assemblywoman Sandra Galef • County Executive Rick Astorino • County Legislator John Testa (former Peekskill mayor) • Peekskill Common Council • Peekskill Board of Education • Peekskill Chiefs of Police Eugene Tumelo (recently retired) and Eric Johansen • Hudson River Health Care, Anne Nolon, President and CEO; Jeannette Phillips, Community Development • BOSCES Peekskill Site Leader, Christine Giorgio • DARE Officer, Lew Dylewski • Peekskill Community Action Program (WESTCOP) Director Mary Rainey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Program • Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT): a coalition of representatives from over 20 groups providing services to children of Peekskill, ranging from scouting and sports clubs to churches to city and government agencies (meeting scheduled 3/20) • Various members of the Elks, Knights of Columbus, Rotary and Ancient Order of Hibernians Clubs • Assumption Church and Religious Education Program • Mt. Olivet Baptist Church • Field Library Director Sibyl Canaan • Salvation Army Caseworker, Rena Murphy
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We have received a range of feedback from individuals in our community. The predominant sentiment in support of our proposal, particularly from those who work with or provide services to youth, is the need for educational alternatives and options in Peekskill. They have indicated that the status quo is not working for all children, that the community is changing and the education system needs to change too. Parents have spoken of their concern for their child getting lost in a large school, which is why we have deliberately designed Guardian Academy to have small grade sizes with co-teachers in every elementary classroom. Concerns about our proposal have been raised as well, primarily regarding the impact on the district’s budget if parents choose to enroll their child in a public charter school as an alternative to the district’s

schools. Questions have also been raised about the placement of a public school within a building owned by a church; having researched other charter schools that have followed this path we believe that with a strong independent Board of Trustees and a clear lease agreement this will not be an issue.

The founding group and proposed board members will continue public outreach after the application deadline. Once the school is approved, we will use many of the same strategies and people described above to inform families about the opportunity to enroll in the school through a random lottery process.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Programmatic Impact: When Guardian Academy opens it will be only alternative to the Peekskill City School District. We do not believe Guardian Academy will have a significantly negative programmatic impact on other schools. In fact, it may relieve pressure on the district, which is going to have to enroll additional students when the Assumption School closes at the end of this school year at the same time as the city's student population continues to grow. The Peekskill City School District currently serves approximately 2,900 students. We estimate that more than a 100 former students of the closed Assumption School will enroll in district schools. The charter school plans to enroll 200 students in 2014, which would account for about 7% of estimated Peekskill CSD enrollment. Moreover, our initial enrollment will be spread across four grades, minimizing the impact on the two district schools that serve those same grades.

Based on the needs in our community, we are confident that approving this application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school. Guardian Academy will provide a program quite different from the traditional public schools in the Peekskill area. Specifically, it will offer a continuous Kindergarten through 8th grade college preparatory curriculum in a structured and nurturing environment with an extended day and school year and co-teaching in grades K-5. We know of no other district school in the region that offers this combination of educational opportunities and believe the school can have a positive impact on the local school district. We intend to recruit and enroll low-income students and English language learners, which will alleviate the burden on district schools to educate these at-risk students. We also hope we can contribute to the local education community by modeling innovative programs, disseminating effective practices and collaborating on professional development and extra-curricular activities.

Fiscal Impact: The Peekskill City School District 2012-13 budget was \$74,325,932. If Guardian Academy achieves full enrollment of 200 students in its first year, it will account for approximately 4% of the district's budget. This percentage may be smaller if some students enroll from other districts.

II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

A. Achievement Goals

Guardian Academy intends to adhere to the goals and measures in the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework. The Board and Principal will focus on the goals below as measures of whether the school is on track to achieve its mission.

- For students in grades K-2, 80% of each grade will read at grade level at the end of each year based on a standardized assessment of reading.
- For students in grades 3-8, the percentage proficient on state assessments in ELA and in Math will exceed the state average in the same grades each year.
- For students in grades 3-8, the percentage proficient on state assessments in ELA and in Math will exceed the district average in the same grades each year.
- Each year 75% of 8th grade students will pass the Regents Algebra exam.
- The school will exceed by a statistically significant effect size the ELA and the Math performance of other similar schools based on a regression controlling for prior academic performance and student characteristics.
- Each year 80% of students will demonstrate proficient or advanced mastery of grade level content in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies based on a portfolio of work evaluated by educators other than their classroom teachers. Evaluators will use a rubric that establishes levels of mastery based on exemplars.
- Each year 100% of English language learners will improve by at least one level on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).
- Each year 80% of students will demonstrate age appropriate character traits and school values. Grade level teams will collect evidence of these throughout the year and, using a grade level rubric, analyze the degree to which each student embodies the trait or value by the end of the year.

B. School Schedule and Calendar

Schedule: Our building will open at 7:15 am and breakfast will be served at 7:20 am. The academic school day at Guardian Academy runs from 7:50 am to 3:30 pm with an early release at 2:30 pm on Wednesdays for 90 minutes of staff development. See Attachment 3a for sample student and teacher weekly schedules.

Each day starts with a community meeting to share information and recognize students and staff who have demonstrated character and values as well as achievement and progress. In addition to extended time for literacy (interactive read-alouds, guided reading and centers, phonics, and writing workshop), reading and writing will occur across the curriculum and will not be relegated only to certain times designated in the schedule. Moreover, certain subjects

have been strategically placed together in the schedule to facilitate an integrated curriculum approach. For example, in the elementary grades Social Studies and Writers Workshop are back to back, allowing a long block for writing about social studies topics. Similarly, in the middle school grades, English and Social Studies are grouped together, as are Math and Science, allowing for integrated lessons and extended blocks when needed.

A typical day might look as follows:

7:15 am	Doors Open
7:20 am	Breakfast
7:50 am	Community Meeting
8:10	Class Meeting
8:20 am	ELA: Read Aloud, Guided Reading & Centers
9:40 am	Math
10:30 am	Art/PE
11:10 am	ELA: Phonics
11:40 pm	Recess
12:15 pm	Lunch
12:40 pm	Science
1:15 pm	ELA: Writers Workshop
1:55 pm	Social Studies
2:30 pm	Snack
2:40 pm	Enrichment
3:20 pm	Class Meeting
3:30 pm	Dismissal

Instructional Minutes of Core Subjects Per Week *

Subject	K-5	6-8
English Language Arts	750	275
Math	300	275
Science	175	275
Social Studies	175	275

* Students may actually have more minutes of instruction in these subject because of enrichment opportunities and integrated curriculum and instruction

Students will be organized into heterogeneous classes, with two classes per grade. Each class in Kindergarten through 5th grade will be co-taught by a lead teacher and assistant teacher. The four teachers on each grade level will work together as a team and an innovation at our school is that pairs of teachers are not restricted to one class. In other words, teachers may work with students in either class during the day based on the skills, experiences and interests of each teacher. For example, three teachers may work with small groups in one classroom while one teacher conducts a whole-class instruction in the other classroom. At least one member of each grade team will be an English as a Second Language (ESL) specialist. While some students

may be strategically grouped in a class to facilitate support and interventions, they may also move between classes to most effectively participate in the activities in their grade. Grade level teams will coordinate teacher schedules based on identified needs of students. In the middle school grades, classes will be departmentalized by subject with students transitioning between classes.

At the end of the day all grades will experience an enrichment block; students will no longer be grouped by class but assigned to teachers based on need and interest. All teachers will participate in enrichment, offering intervention and support to struggling students and extension activities to higher performing students in small groups. This exposes students to other adults and teaching methods and students may even work with students from other grades during this period. Every two weeks teachers will regroup students based on observation and assessment data to maintain targeted instruction and keep students engaged and motivated.

As the school provides an extended day for students, which includes an enrichment block, Guardian Academy will not run an after-school program. However, it will welcome other organizations to use the building to provide extra-curricular activities in which Guardian Academy students may choose to participate. We will also solicit volunteers from the community and local colleges to provide after-school tutoring and mentoring opportunities.

Calendar: Guardian Academy provides an extended school day, extended school year and job-embedded professional development. Teachers will begin the year with a three week Summer Institute in August to develop curriculum, plan for the year and prepare classrooms. The school year for students will run from August 25, 2014 until June 26, 2015, which provides students with 195 days of instruction. Guardian Academy will follow the major holidays and breaks of the Peekskill City School District to accommodate parents who have children in multiple schools. The school year will be broken into quarters for grading purposes. Students will be released an hour early on Wednesdays to accommodate 90 minutes of staff development and there will be three full professional development and grading days during the school year when students are not in school. At the end of the school year teachers will work for four days beyond the students' last day to review and revise curriculum and plan for the coming year. See Attachment 3b for the school's 2014-15 Calendar.

C. Curriculum and Instruction

Guardian Academy will create its own value-infused curriculum using the state's Common Core Learning Standards as well as the Common Core-aligned educational resources, instructional content, performance tasks, and assessment guidelines and materials developed by NYSED and made available for free online at engageny.org. Our curriculum will support our mission by ensuring that our students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to put them on the trajectory to college. The curriculum will be delivered using a deliberate range of pedagogical methods, including direct instruction and inquiry-based learning, to develop both a solid knowledge base and critical thinking skills.

Educational Philosophy: Our approach to curriculum development, instructional planning and pedagogy is informed by three ideas epitomized by Core Knowledge, Understanding by Design, and the Coalition of Essential Schools.

1. **Content is Key:** Founded by E.D. Hirsch, the Core Knowledge Foundation holds that schools “need to teach a coherent, cumulative, and content-specific core curriculum.” We believe depth of content knowledge is critical to developing both basic and critical thinking skills, particularly for many low-income and limited English proficient students who lack the background knowledge necessary to support and accelerate learning. Our school will be explicit about the core content students need, paying particular attention to common knowledge that facilitates communication and understanding.
2. **Standards-Based Backwards Design:** Understanding by Design employs the backwards design approach pioneered and refined over time by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Backwards design reverses the traditional approach to instructional planning by starting with learning objectives (what students should know and be able to do), then developing strategies for assessing whether students achieved the objectives, and only then creating the lesson activities and selecting materials and resources. This aligns with our focus on key content as our framework for teaching and learning.
3. **Essential Questions:** We also believe that instruction should be driven by essential questions based on the work of the Coalition of Essential Schools, which holds that “[c]urriculum and courses should be organized not around answers but around big ideas—questions and problems to which content represents answers.” Again, content is critical, but this approach forces teachers to help students acquire knowledge and skills in a deeper and more enduring manner. By challenging them to ask and answer essential questions, students must analyze and synthesize information, rather than just memorize and regurgitate it, which increases motivation and confidence and teaches them to become independent learners and critical thinkers.

Curriculum Design: During the planning year and the Summer Institute, school leaders and teachers will create curriculum maps for each subject and grade that establish the specific content and skills students will be taught in our school. They will use a standards-based approach, starting with the New York State Learning Standards and including the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), to first identify the key topics, ideas, skills, concepts, theories, and vocabulary that a student in each grade should know or be able to do by the end of the year. They will prioritize content and skills that prepare our students both to attend college and to achieve at high levels on state exams. Next, they will organize content and skills into a logical sequence, providing teachers with guidance on what to teach and when to teach it during the school year, making sure to spiral those areas that require repetition to build depth and stamina. The scope and sequences for each subject area will not be created in isolation; rather they will be built in parallel fashion to identify points for integration and coordination. As we believe in reading and writing across the curriculum, our English language arts curriculum will be our north star, guiding the development of all other subjects. This fits nicely with the shifts of the Common Core standards, which state “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range

of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts... By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas.”

The next step is the creation of unit plans that build on the standards by identifying essential questions, learning objectives, materials and resources, and assessments. In many schools, each teacher creates his or her own curriculum and it departs with them when they leave the school, often leaving new teachers to start the process from scratch. Guardian Academy will use a common unit planning template to facilitate collaboration among faculty and create an online archive of useful resources that will remain the property of the school. This will allow new faculty to quickly understand what students should have learned in previous grades and what they need to teach in their class to prepare students for future grades. Unit plans will also identify integrated themes and character traits and values that teachers will address across subjects.

Finally, grade level teams will collaboratively develop weekly lesson plans well in advance in order to provide time for instructional leaders to review them and provide feedback. In the elementary grades, each grade team will have four teachers, who will have the flexibility to divide subjects among themselves based on their own skills and experiences. In the middle school, subject area teachers will develop lesson plans for their individual classes and will be expected to work as a department to ensure lessons are age appropriate and vertically aligned from grade to grade. In addition to content-specific objectives, our lesson plans will also include language development objectives for English language learners. All lesson plans will be archived in an online system and after each lesson is taught, teachers will be expected to annotate the plan with information about what worked well and what should be improved or jettisoned the next time the lesson is used.

Teachers will use “preview” and “review” meetings to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and meets the needs of all of our students. At the beginning of each unit, grade level teams will meet to preview the content, objectives and activities of the unit. Based on existing knowledge of their students’ current level of performance and interests, lessons may be modified or additional materials secured or developed so students can effectively access the curriculum and achieve the learning objectives. At the end of each unit, teams will meet to review unit implementation and student performance, noting the strengths of the unit and areas for improvement. This will be annotated and archived for the next teachers who use the unit. At the end of the school year the entire faculty will review our Common Core-aligned scope and sequences, and revise them to improve vertical alignment across grades and eliminate content and skill gaps based on assessment of student achievement.

Curriculum Resources: Guardian Academy will not be a textbook driven school in the sense that teachers will not blindly follow a table of contents to organize and pace their instruction. That said, school leaders and teachers will have adequate funds to create and/or select materials and resources that support their learning objectives, which may include textbooks, workbooks, manipulatives, lab kits, authentic literature and informational texts. Rather than prescribe those resources now, we will empower our school leader and teachers to make those decisions based on their own experience and research. They will establish and adhere to clear selection

criteria based on our mission, education philosophy, and state Common Core standards. In addition, they will be expected to select instructional materials that are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities and English language learners, such as stories written in English on one side of the page and in Spanish on the other side.

Subject Areas: Guardian Academy will teach the core subjects of English language arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, as well as Spanish, the Arts and Physical/Health Education. Character and Technology will not be taught as stand-alone classes but be integrated into the curriculum. To deliver the curriculum, we believe educators should use the pedagogical approach that best meets the needs of their students; that said, there are certain things we will expect to see in all instruction. It is important for students to know what they are learning and why it is important, thus teachers must articulate to students each lesson's objective and any connections to past lessons or spiraled objectives. Teachers should also use formative assessment as both a learning tool to help students reflect and a way to check for understanding during lessons. Finally, we believe it helps students to close lessons with a summary of the objectives to determine if they have been met and next steps.

- **English Language Arts:** The key to our success will be our integrated program for teaching the four elements of literacy: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Our teachers will use the balanced literacy approach because of its alignment with our education philosophy, availability of resources, professional development opportunities, and research base. Balanced literacy provides opportunities to address basic phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and critical thinking. The book *A Balanced Approach to Beginning Reading Instruction: A Synthesis of Six Major U.S. Research Studies* finds that "Effective balanced instruction requires a very comprehensive, integrated approach, demanding that teachers know a great deal about literacy research related to emergent literacy, assessment-based instruction, phonological and phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, phonics and word study, selecting appropriate leveled readers, reader response, writing process, and constructivist learning. In the balanced reading classroom, all of these essentials must be addressed, and the teacher also must meet the demands of a multicultural society that requires him or her to be knowledgeable about teaching English language learners to read."

This approach has been demonstrated to work well with our student population and will allow us to achieve our mission and meet our accountability goals. Key components of our literacy program include:

- **Readers and Writers Workshop:** The workshop model supported by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project employs choice, authentic tasks, and extended time for students to read and write in in order to tap students' motivation and improve skills. The workshop model allows teachers to use a variety of strategies along the spectrum of teacher- and student-centered instruction, including whole-class, small group and independent activities. Workshops typically include: a mini-lesson where the teacher models a specific strategy, scaffolded practice activities, opportunities to apply the strategy more

broadly, and demonstrations of student learning. Workshops typically end with a summary and discussion of the day's learning. Publishing will be an important event with students work celebrated with peers and families. Our co-teaching model allows targeted support for individual students during many of these activities.

- **Interactive Read-Alouds:** Teachers engage students in variety of genres by modeling how to use mentor texts to deepen thinking, build vocabularies, strengthen comprehension strategies, and discuss literary elements. We will seek to hire enthusiastic and charismatic teachers who excite students about what they might find on the next page. Read-alouds will be used in all subjects to build literacy skills while simultaneously deepening content knowledge, which aligns with the Common Core focus on informational texts. This modeling is particularly valuable for emergent readers. Read-alouds are made interactive through questioning and discussion and opportunities for peer interaction, such as “turn and talks” and “pair shares.”
- **Guided Reading:** Teacher guide small groups of 4-6 students in small group instruction using books that they can all read at about a 90% accuracy level to cement their understanding of a strategy. Pre-reading activities include prediction making, vocabulary introduction, or discussing background knowledge required for understanding the text. As students read, the teacher coaches individuals by providing prompts, asking questions, and scaffolding use of reading strategies. At the end of the lesson, the teacher asks questions and promotes discussion to explore comprehension of the text. Co-teachers and push-in by student support teachers will make small group instruction possible for all students, who will be assessed regularly to ensure appropriate grouping. This allows students to develop at their own pace, allowing more advanced students to tackle more challenging texts.
- **Literacy Centers:** While their peers are involved in guided reading groups with teachers, other students will work independently by themselves or in small groups on tasks in literacy centers. These may address the objectives of the day's mini-lesson or reinforce knowledge and skills students have already learned. Students will be taught how to manage themselves, find answers for themselves without interrupting teachers, and resolve conflicts during center time. Literacy centers are an important aspect of providing students with choice, empowering them to become independent learners. Some center activities may also promote cooperative learning, such as buddy reading for younger students and literature circles and peer editing for older students.
- **Phonics:** Time will be allocated for explicit phonics instruction, but it will also be woven through and reinforced during workshop activities. Research findings show that a phonics program must contain two elements in order for instruction to lead to real reading results: systematic instruction and practice (National Reading Panel, 2000). During the planning year instructional leaders will select a

program and resources that are research-based, align with our overall literacy program and state standards, and provide effective guidance and support to teachers. Examples of possible programs and resources include Wilson Foundations, Words Our Way, and Orton-Gillingham.

- **Vocabulary:** Teachers will be expected to use, model and teach appropriate and subject-specific vocabulary in all classes. Key vocabulary will be identified in each unit and consistently spiraled through lessons. Teachers in turn will hold students accountable for using this vocabulary in their speaking and writing. Students will also be taught the structure of words, including Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes, in order to figure out new or related words. In addition, teachers will use word walls and labeling throughout the classroom and school building to visually reinforce vocabulary development for English language learners.
- **Intervention Programs:** We anticipate that many of our students will be English language learners and some may enroll as emergent readers without basic pre-literacy skills. We will supplement our general literacy program with intensive programs such as Wilson Reading or Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program, which are designed to quickly accelerate low-performing students so they can benefit most from grade level instruction. Selection criteria will include research base, training requirements, intensity, and cost. These programs will be administered during literacy instruction or the enrichment block by ESL specialists. See Section II.G for discussion of our tiered response to intervention (RTI) program.
- **Independent Reading:** Our students will have access to a rich assortment of engaging texts. There will never be a time during the school day when there is “nothing to do.” Students will be taught to use any down time to pull out a book and read and will be expected to read at home for increasingly longer periods of time as they grow older.

Teachers will primarily rely on authentic literature and informational text as the instructional resources for our literacy program, though they may also adopt anthologies and/or textbooks that meet our selection criteria. In keeping with our emphasis on the importance of content, resources will be selected that deepen our students’ understanding of the world, enhance their vocabulary, develop a common knowledge base, and promote character and values. As student’s progress into middle school, they will be encouraged to engage with original versions of great literature and primary sources. We believe a rich, values-infused curriculum is the best way to develop both the academic and socio/emotional skills our students need. Common Core, Core Knowledge and Junior Great Books resources will be consulted to help identify high quality materials, including stories, plays, speeches, poems, myths and biographies.

- **Mathematics:** As with literacy, our math program uses multiple strategies to develop both procedural skills and conceptual understanding in keeping with the focus on

Common Core standards. Students will explore math not only in their formal math classes, but also through morning meeting activities in elementary grades where students discuss calendars and time as well as integrated into science, social studies, art and other lessons. In the elementary grades, students will engage in inquiry-based activities that develop number sense and use practice activities to develop automaticity with basic facts that serves as the foundation for higher level mathematical thinking. Beginning in Kindergarten students will focus on the number line and move on to developing skills in estimation and using mental math.

Our approach is informed by effective practices at a number of other schools, including the Success Charter Schools and PAVE Academy Charter School in New York City. Based on the research behind Cognitively Based Instruction, story problems will play a central role, as they require students to speak and write about math and develop understanding of underlying mathematical structures. Students analyze problems and develop the habit of using a variety of techniques and working flexibly with numbers. As students develop, they will begin to model with mathematics, e.g., creating an equation to represent a situation. Math instruction will be supported with a rich array of resources and manipulatives, and students will be taught to use mathematical tools such as number lines, hundreds charts, unifix cubes, base ten blocks, or tens frames, to solve problems. This is especially useful for limited English proficient students because using tools allows them to visualize the problem and solve it strategically. As students explore multiple strategies and algorithms, they will be expected to orally discuss and write about math to deepen their understanding. Our goal is for students who enter our school in Kindergarten to be prepared to take the state Algebra Regents exam in 8th grade.

Math pedagogy will include whole class mini-lessons, small group instruction, rotating centers and independent work. Elementary grades will have a daily morning meeting that addresses real-world math, e.g., discussion of the calendar. Materials and tasks will be differentiated and targeted instruction scaffolded to individualize instruction. Our math program will not be based on any one single commercial program; school leaders and faculty will create and select instructional materials from a variety of sources that align with our scope and sequence, which may include existing text book chapters, workbooks, or problem sets. An example of the types of resources that align with our inquiry-based approach would be TERC Investigations. Skill building activities will likely be developed in-house to custom fit the needs of students.

- **Science:** Beginning in Kindergarten, we plan to provide daily science instruction in every grade in order to develop a deep understanding of the scientific method as well as the content knowledge our students will need for high school and college. The goal of our program is for students to not learn about science but to actually practice science, which is to say, hypothesize, explore, experiment, analyze and draw conclusions. This lends itself to our use of asking and answering essential questions and requires a hands-on approach that engages students in scientific work. Science topics will be aligned to the state standards for each grade and students will participate regularly in inquiry-

based, hands-on activities. Science will also not be a text-book driven subject at Guardian Academy; teachers will employ a range of resources, including exploration of the natural environment in the school and their community. Our budget will support the purchase of lab kits, such as Full Option Science System (FOSS) or Delta science modules, to serve as a resource for instruction.

- **Social Studies:** Our social studies program will go beyond memorization of facts and dates to teaching students to analyze information, weigh sources, and draw conclusions about the complex world in which they live. As a particularly content-driven subject, social studies will be closely aligned with literacy as students practice using their reading and writing skills to learn about historical events and people and explore geography and cultures. We place a heavy emphasis on non-fiction in accordance with the Common Core and expect our teachers to expose students to primary sources as much as possible. Curriculum content will be based on the state Common Core standards for each grade; we will also look to the Core Knowledge scope and sequence to identify key topics for study. As with other subjects, teachers will be able to create or select resources that meet their instructional needs. Given that many of our students may come from other countries, social studies will be an excellent place to address their and other cultures from around the world.
- **Integrated Themes:** Grade level teams will work together to create theme units that cut across multiple subjects. Integrating the entire curriculum is overly ambitious and ultimately limiting, so theme units allow teachers to decide which subjects can be integrated at any one time so as to not interrupt the flow of individual subjects. This approach is modeled off of the practices of the South Bronx Charter School for International Cultures and the Arts. As an example, that school has a theme unit built around apples. Students read fiction such as Johnny Appleseed as well as informational books about apples, learn about the science of growing and cooking with apples, visit orchards, make applesauce and draw and paint still-lives of apples. This integrates literacy, math, science, social studies, health and art.
- **Character:** Guardian Academy will focus on developing the character traits and habits necessary for effective learning and future success, such as hard work, perseverance, patience, honesty, self-discipline, kindness and integrity. We do not believe that character education should be segregated into a separate course but that it should be integrated into the substance and structures of our school. Examples of character and values will be highlighted during school-wide morning meetings. We will also use a values-infused curriculum; teachers will be expected to consider character traits in the selection of instructional materials and resources and incorporate opportunities to grapple with values into their lessons. For example, literature and biographies are an excellent way to illustrate character traits and values. History is replete with examples of events shaped by individual, community and national values. A major theme in science is understanding the value of and conserving our environment. Art often reflects the character of its creators and their subjects. Similar to the development of integrated theme units, grade teams will select specific traits and values to highlight at

different times of the year across the curriculum. Finally, students will participate in age-appropriate service learning through their advisory classes.

- **Spanish:** We expect many of our incoming students to be Spanish speakers or come from Spanish speaking homes. In the elementary grades Spanish will be offered 2-3 times per week during the enrichment block to students who are not English language learners or do not need targeted interventions to accelerate their learning. In the middle school we will offer Spanish to all students with a focus on speaking, grammar, writing, and culture.
- **Arts:** We believe study of the arts is essential to well-rounded learning because they provide access to so many other subjects and cultures as well as engage students in the act of creation. The focus of our arts program will largely be a function of the expertise and creativity of the faculty we hire; we will likely open with visual arts and/or music and may expand to dance or theater as the school grows to full size. In addition to opportunities to create art, our curriculum will also address art history, criticism, and aesthetics. Our art teachers will participate in grade team meetings and coordinate their lessons with the topics being studied in other subjects, particularly the integrated themes.
- **Technology:** We believe that technology literacy should be developed beginning in Kindergarten. We will have interactive whiteboards in each classroom and intend to purchase one laptop cart per grade. Teachers will be expected to incorporate technology into all subjects; they may use laptops with one class at a time or have centers in each class using laptops during guided reading periods. Teachers will receive training in the use of these technologies and, as the school grows, we intend to hire a Media Specialist to help teachers integrate technology into their instruction.
- **Physical and Health Education:** All students will participate in structured physical education lessons each week that develop both mind and body. The curriculum will focus on sports instruction and fitness, addressing the attitudes, habits and sportsmanship necessary to succeed in physical endeavors and maintain mental as well as bodily health. Lessons will be appropriate for students' level of physical development and maturity. Health issues will also be integrated into the curriculum and raised during advisory, which in the middle school may be on occasion organized into single-sex groups to discuss issues of adolescent development.

D. Assessment System

Assessment is central to our academic program, connecting curriculum, instruction, professional development, and accountability. Research indicates that participation in assessment actually contributes to learning in and of itself, and we believe a variety of assessment types is most useful for all stakeholders. Professor Royce Sadler wrote:

For students to be able to improve, they must develop the capacity to monitor the quality of their own work during actual production. This in turn requires that students

possess an appreciation of what high-quality work is, that they have the evaluative skills necessary for them to compare with some objectivity the quality of what they are producing in relation to the higher standard, and that they develop a store of tactics or moves which can be drawn upon to modify their own work. (1998)

Thus we believe in the concept of assessment *as* learning, and that students should be assessed frequently to help teachers plan and students learn.

Diagnostics: It is important to know our students and their needs when they enter school or begin a unit. Diagnostic assessments will be used to identify students' incoming knowledge, skills, physical and intellectual abilities and interests. Before the school year begins, we will administer a Home Language Survey and use the results to test students using the LAB-R to determine if they qualify as English language learners (ELLs). In addition, teachers will administer a standardized reading assessment, such as Fountas and Pinnell, to all students to determine basic literacy skills and levels and teachers will set ambitious internal goals for student progress within their class. Students will also take a computer adaptive assessment, such as the NWEA MAP, at the beginning of the year in language arts and math to provide teachers with additional information about their students. These will serve as baseline assessments to measure growth over the year. Finally, at the beginning of each unit teachers will assess student's prior knowledge and skill levels related to that unit's specific standards and learning objectives. This provides teachers with useful information, but also gives students a preview of what they will be learning, helping them to focus on key ideas and skills.

Formative Assessment: Meta-analysis of numerous studies across subjects and ages indicate that the practice of formative assessment produces significant and often substantial learning gains (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Nevertheless, while many teachers use formative assessment on a regular basis, few do so in a systematic, valid and reliable way. Our teachers will be expected to conduct frequent and deliberate formative assessment using a variety of techniques, including questioning, written assignments, homework, running records, conferencing, Do Nows, and Exit Tickets. In addition, Fountas and Pinnell will be administered three more times after the initial baseline test to provide information about students' growth in reading levels. Finally, the school will select a phonics program that provides ongoing assessment of skill levels and areas for growth. All formative assessment will be purposeful, i.e., used to check for understanding and measure mastery of specific learning objectives. In addition, teachers will be expected to collect and maintain the results of formative assessments to create a nuanced picture of each student's strengths and areas for improvement. Technology will assist with this practice; for example, OpenSchool ePortfolio is a Web 2.0 application that provides teachers with a simple way to record and share child observations, an electronic assignment/gradebook, and a tool to create and maintain portfolios of student work.

State Assessments: All eligible students will take the annual state ELA and Math tests in grades 3-8. Students in 4th and 8th grade will take the annual state Science exam. All ELL students will take the annual NYSESLAT each year. Students with disabilities will take the NYSAA if designated by their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Performance-Based Assessments: While we welcome the opportunity for our students to exhibit basic skills on state tests, we do not consider these assessments to be a strong gauge of

college preparatory learning. Therefore, at the culmination of each unit our teachers will develop authentic assessments that ask our students to “answer” the essential questions that guided learning during the unit. This allows them to demonstrate their mastery of content and higher level critical thinking skills. Performance-based assessments require students to complete an authentic task that demonstrates their knowledge, understanding and skills. They provide opportunities for students to choose modes of expression, which can be valuable for students with limited English proficiency who might otherwise have difficulty conveying their mastery of subjects like math and science. We expect the projects to be an important place for technology integration. Rubrics will be used to evaluate performance based assessments, which will be shared with students at the beginning of the unit so they know what they must learn and do to demonstrate mastery.

Character: An important part of our mission is teaching students the habit and traits they need to be productive members of society and achieve at the highest levels. In order to do that we need to constantly evaluate students and provide them with feedback about their demonstration of character traits and values. Grade level teams will develop rubrics at the beginning of the year and each quarter they will evaluate students against those established standards. This information will be included in report cards.

Portfolios: We believe students should be able to explain what they have learned to peers, parents and the community. Students will be taught to archive their work over time and each quarter review it and analyze it to create an account of what they have learned and how they have grown to share with their parents during report card conferences. As students enter middle school grades, these portfolios will become more sophisticated, and may involve digital archives, presentations and social media to provide opportunities for critique and feedback from a wider audience.

Validity and Reliability: One reason for choosing to use some standardized tests for diagnostic and summative assessment is because they have been thoroughly developed and results are based on large norming groups to ensure reliability. We recognize the difficulty in creating quality assessments, but believe our model will be strongest if teachers and staff have a hand in shaping much of our formative assessments to ensure alignment with curriculum, appropriateness for our students, and usefulness of results. This is especially true as the state is changing its assessments to align with the Common Core. Many commercial assessments reinforce low expectations, and we need assessments to indicate to students what is expected of college preparatory work. Teachers will receive ongoing training and support in the areas of assessment and data and academic leaders will review and provide feedback on assessments as part of their ongoing clinical supervision. We anticipate developing rubrics for performance based assessments and grade level teams will evaluate student work collaboratively to ensure they maintain consistent standards for student performance. Teachers will collect exemplars to illustrate student work at different levels, which will be shared with students and used for norming purposes when they sit down to grade assignments.

Use of Assessment Data: Assessment data have multiple purposes in the classroom, school and community:

- **Students:** Feedback is critical to learning; without it students never know if they have mastered a subject or skill. In our school culture, feedback will be valued and respected and students will be taught to appreciate critical feedback that helps them improve and achieve. They will be expected to take assessment seriously and do their best so the results are an honest reflection of their learning. Assessment results and feedback will be shared regularly with students, including timely return of assignments, quizzes and tests, and the use of rubrics to frame and then evaluate tasks. Students will never have work or tests returned without a discussion or comment addressing mistakes and deficiencies and how to fix them. The process will also include opportunities to reflect on feedback and identify improvement strategies to use at home and in school.
- **Teachers:** Teachers will use diagnostic results to plan instruction by adjust pacing, selecting materials with appropriate levels of difficulty, scaffolding activities, and creating opportunities that address student interests. Diagnostic data also serve as a baseline against which to measure student growth over time, which teachers use to evaluate the efficacy of curriculum, instruction and interventions. Teachers will use formative assessment data to identify the extent of student mastery of learning objectives in order to re-teach topics and skills to all, some or even individual students in alternative and more effective ways. Our use of the workshop model and guided reading requires flexible grouping of students and teachers will use data to assign and reconfigure groups based on students' needs. Finally, summative assessments will be used to grade students and make decisions about promotion to the next grade. Grade level teams will hold data meetings at the end of units to analyze data and place low-performing students in appropriate interventions. Throughout the year, teachers will use student performance data as the basis for conversations with parents about their child's progress. Teachers should also reflect on data to identify areas for professional development.
- **Parents:** The school will provide parents with regular information about their child's performance in the form of a progress report and a report card each quarter. Teachers will also maintain data online that parents can access at any time to help them support their child's learning at home. Student portfolios will be shared with parents during conferences so that can see evidence of students learning. In addition, Guardian Academy is a school of choice, so it will publish an annual report describing its overall performance so parents can make informed decisions about whether to keep their child enrolled. This information will be published on our school website, so not only parents but the whole community can evaluate our performance and adherence to our mission. We believe this is the best form of accountability.
- **Administration:** Academic leaders will track student, class, grade and school-wide data, including student performance, attendance, and discipline. Academic data will be used to make decisions about allocation of resources, especially with respect to staffing and programs for at-risk students. Supervision and evaluation of teachers will also be informed by student performance data, which will identify professional development needs, frequency and focus of teacher observations and feedback, and decisions about

teacher placement, retention and raises. The Student Support Coordinator in conjunction with teachers will use progress data to operate our school's Response to Intervention (RTI) program, placing students in appropriately tiered interventions and deciding whether to refer students to the district's Committee on Special Education (CSE) for evaluation. Data will be disaggregated in order to monitor the performance of subgroups, particularly at-risk students, and evaluate the efficacy of general education and intervention programs. The Principal, Assistant Principal and Student Support Coordinator will be responsible for data analysis and training faculty in the use of results to drive instruction.

- Governance:** The Board of Trustees will receive regular updates regarding academic performance, school culture, financial viability and organizational health. The board will see grade and class results on standardized tests to monitor program implementation and progress towards goals. The board will also want to see disaggregated results to ensure that the needs of subgroups, such as students with disabilities, students of color, boys and girls, low-income students, and English language learners, are being met. Student performance results will play a significant role in the board's evaluation of the Principal and inform decisions about his or her retention and compensation.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Exit Standards: Our expectations for promotion are based on Common Core Learning Standards and college readiness standards. Below are sample exit standards for our elementary and middle school in the core subjects.

Sample Exit Standards

Subject	5th Grade	8th Grade
ELA	Use specific evidence from a text to compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama.	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
ELA	Write a well-structured essay that expresses an opinion, supporting a point of view with specific reasons and information.	Write a narrative that engages and orients the reader by establishing context and point of view through a narrator and/or Characters.
Math	Add, subtract, multiply, and divide decimals to the hundredths place using concrete models or drawings and strategies based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.	Solve linear equations with rational number coefficients, including equations whose solutions require expanding expressions using the distributive property and collecting like terms.
Math	Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem. Use benchmark fractions and number sense of fractions to estimate mentally and assess the reasonableness of answers.	Use rational approximations of irrational numbers to compare the size of irrational numbers, locate them approximately on a number line diagram, and estimate the value of expressions.

Subject	5 th Grade	8 th Grade
Social Studies	Understand the basic ideals of American democracy as explained in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and other important documents.	Compare the ideals of American democracy in foundational documents to the reality of contemporary practices in government and society.
Social Studies	Identify and compare the physical, human, and cultural characteristics of different regions and people.	Understand the characteristics, functions, and applications of maps, globes, aerial and other photographs, satellite-produced images, and models.
Science	Generate "why" questions to seek greater understanding concerning objects and events they have observed and heard about and design strategies to answer their questions.	Construct explanations independently for natural phenomena, especially by proposing preliminary visual models of phenomena.
Science	Describe objects, imaginary or real, that might be modeled or made differently and suggest ways in which the objects can be changed, fixed, or improved.	Explain how different aspects of natural and designed systems change at different rates with changes in scale.

Promotion Policy and Procedures: Guardian Academy will use standards-based grading to identify levels of mastery of prescribed content and skills. At the end of the year, students will be expected to have mastered at least 80% of the content and skills in each core subject to move to the next grade. Students whose performance during the year suggests they are not on track to meeting this expectation will be identified for intervention and a promotion in doubt conference will be held at each grading period to identify areas for growth, plans for meeting the student’s needs at school, and strategies that parents/guardians and students themselves can employ at home. At the end of the year, grade level teams will consider the evidence of student mastery in all subjects as well as other information such as attendance, discipline, maturity and character to make a recommendation for promotion or retention. The Principal will make the final decision. The ultimate standard for retaining a student is that it will benefit the student rather than diminish motivation and impede progress. In some cases, students may be promoted but take individual classes in other grades.

F. School Culture and Climate

A key design element of Guardian Academy is its size. Research indicates that smaller learning communities contribute to increased attendance, elevated teacher satisfaction, improved school climate and ultimately raised student achievement (Supovitz & Christman, 2005; Howley, et al., 2000). We believe in creating an environment where students, parents, teachers and staff know each other well and respect and support each other. From day one we will communicate that Guardian Academy is a purposeful community dedicated to helping every student, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or home language, achieve at the highest levels. Similarly, teachers will be hired with the explicit understanding that they are partners in designing and maintaining the school’s curriculum and culture. Guardian Academy will be a learning community for both faculty and students that inspires effort and achievement.

Such a community does not occur by chance. We will use proven practices and procedures to set expectations for behavior, and teach students the character traits and habits necessary for success in all aspects of life, including education, careers and relationships. Our approach is grounded in positive constructive feedback, rather than punitive tactics that do not help a student understand what he or she must do to fix a problem and move forward. We will use the following strategies to establish a culture of mutual respect, interdependence, and perseverance:

- **Explicit Expectations:** Our school administration and teachers will work during the planning year to define expectations for behavior that clearly support learning. They will be articulated in our Family Handbooks and put into age appropriate language for elementary and middle school students to understand and use. These expectations will also be disseminated to parents in both English and Spanish. Orientations at the beginning of the year will be used to explicitly explain the school's expectations and gently introduce new students and their families to the systems and procedures used to maintain them.
- **Values and Character:** Beginning on the first day of school, teachers will continuously refer to specific values and character traits that form the basis for a respectful and supportive community. Teachers will use examples in literature, history and current events, as well as explicit modeling and identification of student's exhibition of these traits and habits to reinforce students understanding and desire to act with character. In addition, a system will be used to track students' development and demonstration of character traits; these data will be included in report cards and discussed during parent-teacher conferences.
- **Feedback and Alternatives:** Teachers will emphasize positive feedback to support student motivation, self-esteem and self-confidence. Feedback will also be critical in the sense that it should challenge students to consider their actions and reflect on alternatives. Standard practice at Guardian Academy whenever a student does not meet expectations will be to defuse the situation and provide opportunities for students to consider their choices. This maintains agency within the child and reduces defensive postures that limit reflection and learning. In practice, teachers in the elementary grades will use color coded thermometers to indicate at what level each child in the class is meeting expectations and demonstrating character. Moving a child down the thermometer serves as a visual cue to students to stop and reflect with the knowledge that it is in their power to change their behavior and have their name moved back up the thermometer. Students will know that movement on the thermometer can lead to positive or negative consequences.
- **Clear Consistent Consequences:** Even with an outpouring of positive feedback, we know some students will misbehave on occasion and some more frequently. Consequences will be clearly articulated and explained to both students and parents in our Family Handbook. They will be proportionate and always designed to maintain a safe learning environment. Our Dean of School Culture will train teachers and provide them with ongoing coaching and feedback to ensure a consistent and fair application of

consequence. This does not mean that similar behaviors necessarily deserve the exact same consequences: context and frequency matter as well. Yelling on the playground is far different than during a fire drill; similarly the first and fifth incident of defiance may be treated differently. We expect most consequences to be delivered by teachers within the classroom, but for more serious issues our Dean of School Culture and Principal will get involved. Ultimately the Board may participate in issues such as expulsion decisions. See Attachment 4 for our Discipline Policy that articulates behavioral expectations and consequences for violating them as well as our due process procedures.

- **Recognition and Awards:** Part of creating a joyful and inviting community that students want to join is frequent and meaningful recognition of learning, achievement, and embodiment of values and character. Every morning after breakfast and before students go to class, we will have a short school-wide meeting (eventually broken into elementary and middle schools). While an opportunity to make announcements, it is also a chance to recognize students and staff for achievement, growth and service. Teachers will be expected to identify students for recognition and explain to the community exactly how the student demonstrated mastery or a character trait. Students may also recognize their peers as well as teachers and staff in the building. Parents will be invited to attend our morning meetings, and even receive recognition themselves for service to the school community. In addition, teachers will develop awards for academic achievement and character development that will be presented during the year at special assemblies and celebrations.
- **Advisory:** In the middle school, students will participate in advisory once a week, which will provide an opportunity for students to bond with an adult in a less formal setting. Advisory groups of 10-12 students will meet to discuss values and character traits, social-emotional issues, current events, or concerns of the community. Grade teams will develop the topics and activities. In addition, advisors will conference with students about their progress and achievement, helping students to develop strategies for accomplishing their goals. The advisor will also be a liaison for parents and help them navigate the school's staff and resources.
- **Service Learning:** As part of a value-infused curriculum, students will build connections between service and learning. For younger students that may include classroom jobs or canned food drives; for older students it may involve tutoring younger students or service in the community, such as volunteering in a soup kitchen or retirement home. Advisors will be responsible for ensuring students take the time to reflect on their service through discussions, writing and presentations. Our Director of School Culture will seek out partnerships with community organizations as sites for service.

In Attachment 4 we outline our Discipline Policy and explain how the rights of students with special needs are protected. We recognize that some behaviors that runs contrary to our community expectations and rules may be a manifestation of a disability and therefore do not merit the same consequences as for a general education students. That said, any student who threatens the safety and well-being of students and adults in our community will be removed at

least temporarily until the situation can be resolved. We believe due process is a critical element of community and will provide parents and students with opportunities to explain their behaviors and appeal serious decisions.

Family Involvement: As noted, parents, guardians and other family members are critical and equal members of our school community. In our experience, low-income and immigrant parents often do not feel comfortable raising concerns with the school. Some have limited educational experience themselves or feel inhibited by language barriers or contact with people they perceive to be in authority. We will overcome this by creating a welcoming environment. Parents will be invited to attend morning meetings where they can see their children recognized for achievement. Social events such as pot lucks and holiday celebrations will be planned to foster personal relationships among families and staff. We will support a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) that empowers parents to discuss issues, provide school staff with feedback, and organize events and activities for the benefit of the whole school community. While we do not plan to have a parent representative on our Board of Trustees, we will recruit parents with skill sets relevant to good governance to join the Board. We will also publicize opportunities to volunteer at the school, especially in support of literacy efforts in the classroom.

Key to the success of family involvement is effective communication. We will recruit and hire Spanish speaking staff and train all of our staff members to be customer oriented and culturally sensitive. We will also translate documents, including our Family Handbook and correspondence, in the home languages of our students. We will issue quarterly progress reports and report cards and teachers will meet with parents to discuss student performance. We will also provide resources to help families support their child's learning in the home.

We also know that parents often look to the school for assistance in figuring out how to help their children. We will offer parent workshops on issues such as how to encourage reading, how to talk about values, how to address bullying, and how to set goals. We anticipate much of our communication with parents will be informal and will expect teachers to make themselves available in the mornings at drop-off and in the afternoons at pick-up.

G. Special Student Populations and Related Services

Our school structure and curriculum are designed to support all students, regardless of ability or native language. We use the workshop model, guided reading and co-teaching in the elementary grades to provide a low teacher-student ratio in order to target instruction and support based on assessed and observed needs. We have on staff both a Student Support Coordinator and an ESL Coordinator to ensure staff are adequately trained and supported to provide effective instruction and interventions. Our use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments allows teachers to tailor instruction and identify students for targeted support. Our approach is pro-active to head off failure and put students on the path to college.

Response to Intervention: We will employ a Response to Intervention (RTI) model based on iterative cycles of intervention and analysis using a standard three tier approach.

- **Tier 1 - High-Quality Classroom Instruction:** Teachers use differentiated instructional strategies, learning activities and curriculum materials to address the needs of all students. Our co-teaching approach provides frequent opportunities for targeted support to individuals or small groups within the classroom. Unit preview meetings allow grade level teams to adjust lessons in anticipation of students' pre-existing skills and knowledge and ongoing formative assessment inform adjustments to pacing, materials, activities and assessment.
- **Tier 2 - Targeted Interventions:** During the daily enrichment period teachers will group students according to their specific needs. This provides students with alternative instructional methods, materials and pacing. Enrichment provides opportunities for both struggling students and advanced students who would benefit from extension activities to augment what they are learning in their regular classes. In addition, Student Support Teachers with special education and/or ESL experience will provide both push-in and pull-out support in one-on-one and small group settings. They will coordinate their work with classroom teachers to ensure we maintain a single level of expectation for all students. We will also seek volunteers to tutor students during and after school.
- **Tier 3 - Intensive Interventions:** The goal of Tier 3 is remediation of severe problems that require intensive and sustained intervention. For example, we anticipate in our first years of operation most Tier 3 students may require intensive one-on-one reading programs, such as Wilson Reading or the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program.

Students may experience multiple cycles within a given tier before a decision is made to move to the next tier. Grade level teams will hold weekly RTI meetings with Student Support Teachers to identify struggling students, select an appropriate tier and intervention(s), and establish measurable goals to gauge impact. In subsequent meetings, they will review changes in student performance and decide whether to continue the intervention or try alternative strategies. Quality data collection and analysis is critical to the success of RTI; teachers will use all of the assessment tools at their disposal to create and refine accurate understanding of students' strengths and areas for growth.

Our RTI process is directly linked to our services for both students with disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs). Our approach to RTI will be informed by the practices described in *A Cultural, Linguistic and Ecological Framework for Response to Intervention with English Language Learners*, which requires

- a systematic process for examining the background variables or ecologies that impact academic achievement;
- appropriate classroom instruction and culture based on knowledge of individual student factors; and
- informal and formal assessments and nondiscriminatory interpretation of assessment data (Esparza-Brown and Doolittle, 2008).

Below we discuss our specific supports and services for SWDs and ELLs.

Enrichment: The last period of the day is a unique block of time reserved for doing things a little differently. Students will have opportunities to interact with different teachers and groupings will be fluid based on need. Teachers will review student performance data and meet to discuss specific skills or learning objectives with which groups of students are struggling. Teachers will be assigned to provide targeted Tier 2 instruction in those specific areas using methods different from general classroom instruction. For students who are not struggling, student interest combined with teachers' areas of expertise will be combined to develop classes that stretch students' imagination and skills as well as introduce them to unconventional topics. Classes might focus on chess, computer animation, harmonica, or Harry Potter novels. As the state tests approach, enrichment block can also be used to familiarize students with the testing format and procedures, i.e., test prep. We believe enrichment block will be a unique aspect of our school, and critical tool to helping students achieve grade level.

English Language Learners: Given the growing immigrant population in Peekskill, many from Latin America, we anticipate a large number of students coming from mostly Spanish speaking homes. These parents are generally very supportive of their child learning English and we intend to use multiple approaches that match different entering levels of proficiency. For example, some students may have recently arrived in this country having been schooled in their home language but have no English language knowledge or skills whereas others may have no formal education experience but speak rudimentary English without any writing skills. As noted in the prior Assessment section, we will use the diagnostic LAB-R test to determine which students are English language learners as well as their entering proficiency level: Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced.

We intend to use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model, a research-based approach demonstrated to work with ELL students (Echevarria, Short & Vogt, 1999, 2004). SIOP was developed in a national research project sponsored by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) and funded by the U.S. Department of Education; it has been refined over several years of field testing. SIOP identifies the elements of sheltered instruction under eight broad categories:

- a. **Preparation:** As described in the Curriculum and Instruction section, teachers develop specific content and language objectives for content and language that are aligned with standards and unit goals. Teachers incorporate supplemental materials to assist ELLs in the lesson.
- b. **Building Background:** Through direct questioning, conversation, and shared activities teachers learn about student background, emphasize key content vocabulary, and help students make explicit connections to personalize new word learning.
- c. **Comprehensible Input:** Linguistic input – both teacher speech and text – is adjusted to maximize student comprehension, without lessening content or expectations for achievement. Teachers first simplify their language to make content accessible and then gradually make their language more complex, building student understanding and use of subject specific vocabulary and concepts.

- d. **Strategies:** Teaching explicit learning strategies improves reading and learning and helps ELLs acquire the tools they need to approach learning tasks and solve problems with assistance, as part of a team or independently. Our use of the workshop model allows for the use of multiple strategies.
- e. **Interaction:** Sheltered lessons provide frequent opportunities for students to interact with different groups of peers and others. An aspect of character education is a focus on helping others, which supports peer learning.
- f. **Practice/Application:** Lessons provide opportunities to practice and apply both language skills and content knowledge. Teachers create activities that call upon students to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- g. **Lesson Delivery:** Teachers refer to and reinforce content and language objectives explicitly throughout the lesson and engage students by keeping the pace of the lesson challenging, but do-able, for all students.
- h. **Review and Assessment:** Teachers use multiple methods to evaluate learning, including the use of rubrics aligned with both content and language objectives.

The efficacy of this approach depends on our teachers' capacity to learn about and incorporate the prior knowledge of ELLs into instruction and use spiraling and scaffolding techniques within purposeful lessons with clear objectives. Teachers also need to learn about students' cultures and community and how these contexts affect their ways of learning. Our ESL Coordinator will be responsible for training teachers in this approach during the Summer Staff Institute and continuing support through professional development during the year. Each grade level team will have at least one ESL specialist to provide scaffolded support to ELL students and help the other teachers on the team implement SIOP strategies.

Students who arrive with little to no English language proficiency will participate in intensive supplemental intervention programs, such as Wilson Reading or Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). The ESL teachers, along with the ESL Coordinator, will work with small groups for daily doses of instruction either during the enrichment period and/or during other subjects. This will allow students to build basic skills quickly so they can benefit more fully from the SIOP methods used in their regular classroom. Students may also be identified for refresher interventions as needed.

Special Education: We are committed to meeting the needs of all of our students, including those with disabilities. Our Student Support Coordinator will be certified in special education and responsible for administering our special education program. Our RTI model is the foundation of our process for identifying students with disabilities. After multiple attempts at meeting the needs of a student through differentiated classroom instruction, targeted support and intensive interventions, our Student Support Coordinator will work with the family to refer the student to the district's Committee on Special Education (CSE) for evaluation. We acknowledge that it is the province of the CSE to determine whether a student has a disability, is eligible for special education services, and the appropriate placement for that student through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. We also respect that the ultimate authority for any decision regarding referral, evaluation and placement rests with the parents;

our Student Support Coordinator and teachers will work diligently to explain to parents their rights and role in the special education process. Finally, given the disproportionate assignment of students of color and ELLs to special education, we will be especially careful to distinguish students' cultural and linguistic differences from true disabilities.

Guardian Academy will provide a range of services for SWDs. In grades K-5, our co-teaching model provides frequent opportunities for individualized attention, and student support teachers will push in to provide additional assistance. They will support any student in need, while making sure every student receives the services mandated in their IEP. Thus in the classroom there should be no visible distinction between students with and without disabilities. In addition, direct or indirect special education teacher support services (SETSS) will be available to students in all grades. Some of these services will be provided during the enrichment block so students do not miss out on core instruction. Our social worker will provide counseling to those with it mandated in their IEP as well as to others in need. We will contract for related support services, such as Speech, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy. We will also help parents to secure Related Service Agreements (RSAs) if a child needs services that the school cannot provide.

The Student Support Coordinator will administer the special education program, managing and securing paperwork, coordinating evaluations and IEP development and review with the CSE, and training staff in special education law and best practices. All teachers will have access to their students' IEPs and go over the IEP goals each quarter. Student Support Teachers will participate in grade team planning and RTI meetings to ensure alignment of curriculum and instruction. We believe Guardian Academy will offer a robust special education program that provides students with opportunities to effectively learn in the least restrictive environment with the goal of de-certifying students whenever possible.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity

Applicant(s)/Founding Group			
Name	Current employment	Relevant experience/skills and role on founding group	Proposed role(s) if any
Edward T. Beglane, Ed.D	Yonkers Public Schools	Ed has been a principal for 12 years and has experience with school design and growth, administration and supervision. He led a building that grew from a PreK-5 to a PreK-8 school and is currently growing another PreK-8 school. Ed has a doctorate in Administration and Supervision.	Board Member
Reverend John Higgins	Assumption Church	Reverend John J. Higgins was ordained a priest in 1996, and has been the bilingual (Spanish/English) spiritual leader for over two thousand families in the ethnically and culturally diverse Church of the Assumption in the heart of Peekskill since 2006. Reverend Higgins received his Bachelor's degree from Thomas Aquinas College and two	Advisor

		Masters degrees through Saint Joseph Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y. He has experience with organizational leadership, teaching, community organizing and fundraising.	
Audrey Warn	Advancement Director, Assumption Church	A native of Peekskill, Audrey has a background in communications, media relations and fundraising. Mother of three, she has worked as a pre-school aide. Warn serves as Advancement Director for Assumption School and Church. She is active in the Peekskill community, having served on Peekskill’s Historical Preservation Advisory Committee and is a past president of Assumption School’s Parent Association.	Advisor

The founding group came together to explore ways to expand educational options for children in the city of Peekskill, particularly the growing immigrant population. The closure of a private school and the availability of the historic Guardian Building provided the impetus for members of our community to develop this application for the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill. Beginning in fall 2012 the founding group met or communicated weekly as it researched charter school law and the application process, conducted public outreach, recruited additional members to join the founding board, and worked with a consultant to develop the final application.

While two members of our founding group have ties to the Assumption School and Church, which drive their concern for underserved children, throughout the application development process we have been quite clear that the proposed charter school is not a conversion of a private school, will not provide religious instruction, will not limit enrollment to Assumption students and hiring to Assumption staff and faculty. In fact, the Archdiocese of New York is closing the Assumption School at the end of this school year, more than a year before the Guardian Academy would open its doors to students. The proposed charter school will have a unique curriculum, pedagogy, and organizational structure, and it will be governed by an independent board of trustees with the skill sets and experience to ensure the school operates as a public school under state law. We have articulated the secular nature of the proposed school in our public outreach, as evidenced by media coverage (see Section I.E and Attachment 2). Our school design is based on our assessment of the needs of students in our community and our professional experience working in schools.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

The Board of Trustees holds the charter contract with the Board of Regents and is ultimately responsible for achieving the school’s mission, meeting the accountability and compliance requirements established by the State Education Department and state federal laws, and upholding the promises to parents embodied in this application.

We have recruited a Board of Trustees that possesses a wide range of skill sets and expertise relevant to governing a charter school. It is racially diverse, has deep connections to the community, and represents a serious commitment to the mission of the school.

Proposed Founding Board of Trustees

Trustee Name	Voting Y/N	Position on the board (e.g., officer or constituent representative)	Length of initial term
Edward T. Beglane	Y	TBD	TBD
Russel C. D’Costa	Y	TBD	TBD
Jamie Sanchez	Y	TBD	TBD
Stefania Raschella	Y	TBD	TBD
Reverend Adolphus C. Lacey	Y	TBD	TBD
Natalie DiPaolo	Y	TBD	TBD
Carlos Martinez	Y	TBD	TBD

Qualifications: Our proposed board has expertise in the areas of education, law, accounting, business, fundraising, non-profit and school management and governance, labor relations, housing, law enforcement, youth development and community organizing.

- **Edward T. Beglane:** Ed has been a principal in the Yonkers Public School District for the last 12 years. He opened the district’s Thomas Cornell Academy as a Pre- K through 3rd Grade school and is in the process of growing it to 8th Grade. While growing the school, he has implemented Second Step, Weekly Character Themes, Sanctuary Model, Treasures Reading Program, Common Core Learning Standards, enVisions Math, Book Marches to the local library and created a partnership with the local Andrus Children’s Center. Ed has an Ed.D and has held a variety of leadership and teaching positions in his 28 year career as an educator in both public and parochial schools. He has taught Social Studies and Business Education and has served as an assistant basketball coach at the college level.
- **Russell D’Costa:** A graduate of Peekskill City Schools, Russell earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Binghamton University graduating with Honors in General Education. He then attended Vermont Law School earning both Juris Doctor and Master of Environmental Law and Policy degrees through a joint-degree program. Russell previously served with the White House Office of Environmental Initiatives under the Clinton Administration, and following law school he was selected for a fellowship with the New York State Unified Court System's Legal Fellows Program where he clerked at the Supreme Court, Bronx County. Russell next worked as an Associate Attorney at a prominent education and labor law firm that served school districts throughout Westchester County and Long Island. He served in a general counsel capacity and had heavy client interaction as he assisted with collective bargaining negotiations, attended school board meetings and meetings with top school management, wrote memorandums of law to clients, drafted post hearing briefs for special education impartial hearings, and interviewed witnesses in preparation for an employee disciplinary proceeding. Russell also served with the New York State Attorney General's Office under former Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, and he now works on employee and labor relations matters in the federal sector. Russell is admitted to practice law in the state and federal courts of New York, and the District of Columbia.

- **Jamie J. Sanchez:** Jamie is a product of the Peekskill Public Schools and is a model of the type of student Guardian Academy hopes to produce. The son of immigrant parents, he is currently pursuing his goal of becoming a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) through a joint BBA/MBA Program in Public Accounting at Pace University—where he holds offices in the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) and the Robert S. Pace Accounting Society. He is also an intern at Deloitte and Touche LLP through the Stamford Mentor Program—a highly selective program offered to students who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and strong academic performance.
- **Stefania Raschella:** Stefania has been an Assistant Principal of the Holy Rosary School in Bronx, NY for the past 7 years and holds Masters Degrees in Education and School Building Leadership. She also worked for seven years in the business field as a Sales Analyst and Account Executive before entering education in 1999 as a second grade teacher. She holds certification in Early Childhood Education and has served as the moderator of her church’s youth group for 12 years.
- **Reverend Adolphus C. Lacey:** The Reverend Dr. Adolphus C. Lacey is the pastor of the Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Peekskill. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in World History from Ottawa University, a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary and was conferred a doctorate of Philosophy from Northwestern University. He also has a certificate as a Community Developer from Harvard. He is the immediate past president of the Peekskill Area Pastors Association, founding member of the Cortlandt Taskforce on Diversity and board member of the Westchester County Housing Opportunity Commission and the Interfaith Housing Council.
- **Natalie DiPaolo:** Natalie has twelve years of successful teaching experience in middle school, high school, and adult settings. She is current a science teacher in the Yonkers Public School District. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the College of Mt. St. Vincent and obtained her Masters of Science in Education from the University of Bridgeport. She began her teaching career in a small satellite school in New York City and has experience teaching General Science and Biology/Living Environment to grades 7-12. Prior to her education career, she was a surgical appliance technician who taught diabetic patients in the New York City hospitals to monitor their blood glucose levels. She is currently enrolled in a PhD program and expecting to obtain her Ed.S in June with a focus on meeting the needs of students in a multicultural science classroom.
- **Carlos Martinez:** Carlos had a 21-year career in law enforcement culminating as the Commanding Officer, 42nd Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York. He is an associate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy and a member of the Sergeant Benevolent Association. A 36-year resident of Peekskill, he serves on the Peekskill Youth Bureau Board. He is a veteran of the United States Army Signal Corps serving from 1963 to 1966 and achieving the rank of Sergeant.

Responsibilities: These Guardian Academy Board members know and take extremely seriously the following duties of governance:

- **Duty of Care:** Board members act in good faith and exercise the degree of diligence, care, and skill that an ordinary prudent individual would use.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** Board members further the institution's goals and not the member's personal or business interests; self-dealing breaches fiduciary responsibility.
- **Duty of Obedience:** Board members insure that the institution's resources are dedicated to the fulfillment of its mission. The members also have a duty to ensure that the institution complies with all applicable laws and does not engage in any unauthorized activities.

The specific roles and responsibilities of our board members include:

- Attendance at board meetings to fulfill quorum requirements
- Review of board materials and preparation for board meetings
- Active involvement in board deliberations and votes
- Participation in at least one board committee
- Hiring and evaluation of the Principal
- Advising school management
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and adhering to the code of ethics
- Confidentiality related to staff and student issues
- Meaningful contributions to the school
- Advocacy for the school
- Access to personal networks

Structure: In order to limit simultaneous turnover over of board members, the terms of the founding Trustees will range from one to three years. Thereafter, all board members will serve for three year terms. Sitting board members may elect new board members; they will seek in new board members: passion for the mission, commitment to attend meetings and conduct the work of the board, respect for confidentiality and transparency where appropriate, interpersonal skills, and a willingness to roll up their sleeves and help the school succeed. The Board will have four officers—Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary—who will comprise the Executive Committee. The Board will also have the following standing committees: Finance Committee to monitor the schools budget and finances, Academic Accountability Committee to focus on implementation of the education plan and achievement of accountability goals, and Governance Committee to focus on the effectiveness of the Board and recruitment and nomination of additional Board members. The Board may create additional committees as needed, such as a Fundraising or Facility Committee if extensive renovations or expansion are required of the building.

The Governance Committee will monitor the composition of the board to ensure it is diverse and its members possess the skills and experience needed to govern the school. No outside organization or group will be allowed a majority role on the board.

Our board members are and will be selected based on the following qualifications:

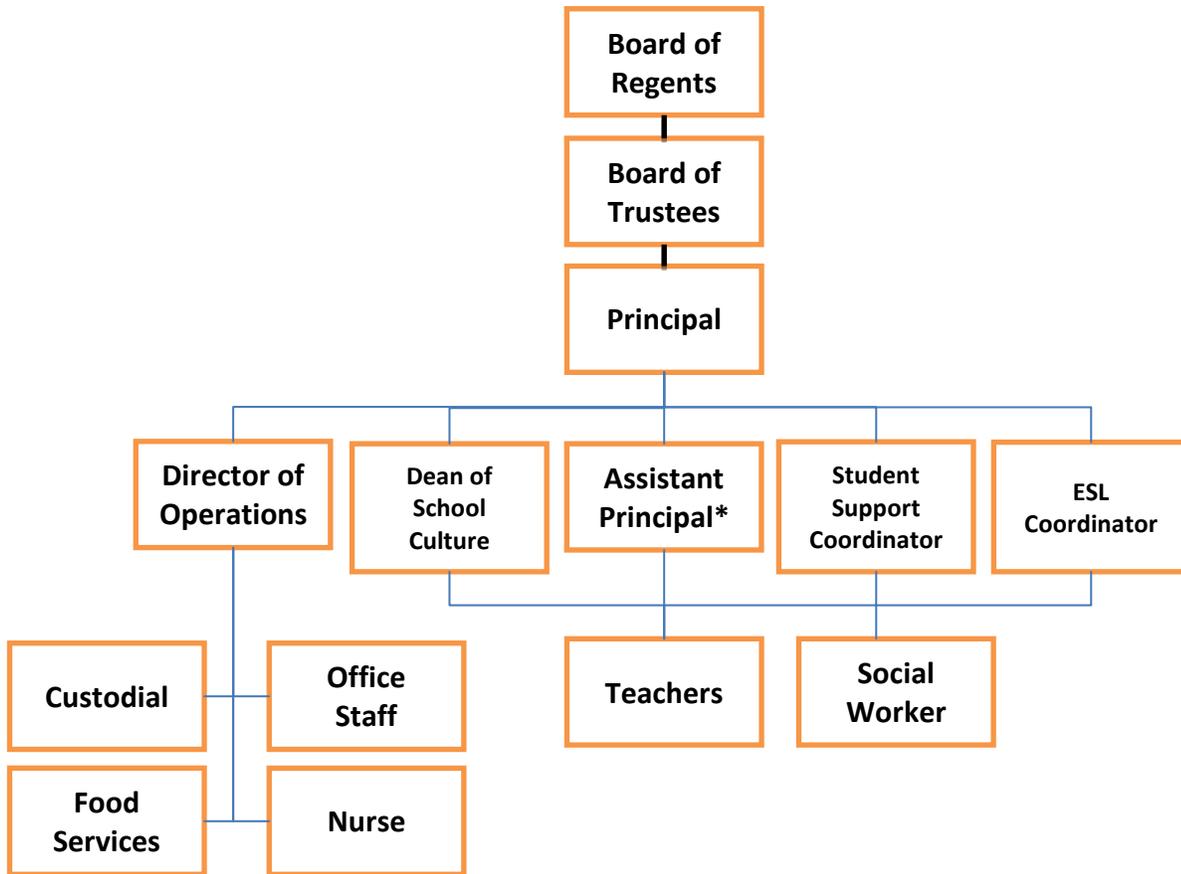
- Commitment to the mission and design of the school.
- Ability to attend board and committee meetings and volunteer for board work outside those meetings.
- Experience and expertise in a relevant field, such as: education, business, management, finance/accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing/public relations, fundraising, and/or community relations or organizing.
- Experience with data-driven decision making and accountability.
- Interpersonal skills and comfort with a consensus process.
- At least 18 years of age.

Once the school is operational the board will meet monthly at the Guardian Building. The board will adhere to the Open Meetings Law: meeting dates and agendas will be publicized in advance, board meetings will be open to the public, and board members will go into private executive session only for appropriate reasons, such as discussion of private personnel matters or contract negotiations. The Principal will present a “state of the school” report at each meeting and the board will receive regular data related to the academic, organizational and financial performance of the school. It will monitor enrollment and attendance as a gauge of parent satisfaction and to ensure sufficient revenue to support the school program. The board will also survey parents at least annually to learn their feelings about school policies and practices and the strength of the community. The board’s Finance Committee will regularly scrutinize school spending to make sure it is within the parameters of the board-approved budget and adequate funds are available to maintain cash flow.

Board Development: As the first charter school board in Peekskill we take seriously the need to develop effective governance practices and procedures. Each new Board member will be provided with information about the school, including a copy of the approved charter, by-laws, code of conduct and board policies. It will be the Board’s Executive Committee that will be responsible for orienting new members their role and the operations of the board. The officers of the Board will discuss the primary responsibilities and expectations of individual Board members with the new Board members, and new Board members will be assigned to one or more of the standing committees and made aware of their responsibilities. The board will also undertake regular training that takes into consideration the needs of individual Board members, as well as the needs of the Board as a whole. Given our proximity to New York City and the many successful charter schools there, we will explore opportunities to connect with other boards, participate in governance workshops and conferences, and access resources such as the New York City Charter Schools Center

C. Management and Staffing

Organizational Chart



*joins in Year 3

The Guardian Academy Board of Trustees holds the charter contract with the Board of Regents; the Board hires the Principal who is responsible for day-to-day management of the school and reports directly to the Board. The Principal hires all other school staff. In the first year of operation, the Principal will directly supervise the Director of Operations, Dean of School Culture, Student Support Coordinator, ESL Coordinator and classroom teachers. The Director of Operations supervises the nursing, office, custodial and food services personnel. The Student Support Coordinator supervises Student Support Teachers and the Social Worker. In Year 3 the school will add an Assistant Principal who will share responsibility for instructional leadership and faculty supervision with the Principal, taking responsibility for either the elementary or middle school grades. An additional office clerk will be added in Year 4.

The school will outsource some roles and responsibilities, including bookkeeping and accounting, payroll, auditing, and special education services such as speech or occupational therapy. Below is our staffing plan for the first five years of operation:

Staffing Plan

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
	K-3	K-4	K-5	K-6	K-7
Principal	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal			1	1	1
Dean of School Culture	1	1	1	1	1
Student Support Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
ESL Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Operations	1	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Office Clerk				1	1
Social Worker	1	1	1	1	1
Nurse	1	1	1	1	1
Cafeteria	2	2	2	3	3
Custodial	2	2	2	3	3
Lead Teachers	8	10	12	16	16
Assistant Teachers	8	10	12	12	12
Specialty Teachers	2	4	5	6	7
Student Support Teachers	2	2	3	3	4

We intend to hire a robust administrative team in Year 1 to put the school on a solid footing:

- The **Principal** hires all staff and evaluates all other management positions. Our Principal will be an instructional leader responsible for supervision of curriculum development and implementation. As the school leader, the Principal reports to the Board of Trustees and is the primary face of the school when interfacing with the public.
 - Required skills: management, supervision, evaluation, leadership, communication, organization.
- The **Dean of School Culture** is responsible for establishing the school culture, training teachers in the school’s code of conduct and discipline policies and procedures, providing teachers with support and feedback regarding classroom management, and handling most discipline cases. The DC will be a primary contact for parents beyond their child’s teacher.
 - Required skills: communication, classroom management, coaching, discipline, inter-personal.
- The **Student Support Coordinator** is certified in special education and manages the special education program, including the RTI process, special education services, and communication with the CSE and parents. In the early years the Student Support Coordinator will provide some services, but as the school grows the role will focus primarily on administration and supervision of Student Support Teachers.

- Required skills: special education administration and instruction, supervision, coaching, assessment.
- The **ESL Coordinator** will train and support teachers in the SIOP method, implement intensive intervention programs, and supervise Student Support Teachers.
 - Required skills: English as a Second Language instruction, supervision, coaching, assessment.
- The **Director of Operations** will manage all non-academic affairs of the school, including business functions, HR, transportation, and food services. He or she will supervise the front office staff, including an office manager and eventually a clerk, as well as the nurse and the custodial and cafeteria staff. The DOO will also coordinate the work of contracted services, such as bookkeeping, food services, and auditing.
 - Required skills: organizational management, finance, compliance and reporting, communication, attention to detail.
- The **Assistant Principal** will join in Year 3 to begin preparing for implementation of the middle school grades. As another instruction leader, the AP will support the academic program.
 - Required skills: supervision, coaching, curriculum development, assessment and use of data, teacher evaluation.
- The **Lead Teachers** will be experienced educators who have demonstrated success with students similar to ours.
 - Required Skills: curriculum development, instructional planning and delivery, classroom management, data analysis and action planning, adult mentoring.
- The **Assistant Teachers** will be certified teachers in the beginning of their education career. They will be co-equals with the lead teachers in terms of instructional responsibilities in the classroom, but may be less experienced with curriculum development and instructional planning.
 - Required Skills: classroom management, instructional delivery, co-teaching, coachability.
- The **Specialty Teachers** will include physical education, arts teachers and a media specialist to assist teachers with technology integration.
 - Required Skills: deep knowledge in their subject area, ability engage students, strong and effective classroom management skills with students they do not see on a daily basis.
- The **Student Support Teachers** provide intervention through push-in and pull-out services. They may be certified in special education, ESL or reading specialists, depending on the identified needs of our students.
 - Required Skills: Demonstrated success at raising achievement of at-risk students, ability to coordinate instruction with general education teachers.

The Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Support Coordinator and ESL Coordinator will comprise the instructional leadership team and together plan and implement the professional development program, supervise and support teachers, and conduct faculty evaluations.

In grades K-5 each class will have a Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher and of the four members of the grade team at least one will be an ESL specialist. These four teachers will be collectively responsible for all 50 students in their grade, rather than pairs focusing only on their class. Small group instruction may see students moved between classes to target instruction based on identified needs.

Beginning in 6th grade, the school will hire core subject teachers in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to implement our middle school program. In Year 4, the four core teachers will be responsible for only two classes, so the ELA and Social Studies teachers and Math and Science teachers will co-teach to provide additional support and further the integration of the curriculum. The next year when 7th grade is added, they will shift to a traditional four subject, four teacher rotation, i.e., teaching two 6th grade and two 7th grade classes in a single subject. When 8th grade is added, four more core teachers will be hired and the two teachers in each subject will each teach four classes and co-teach two classes.

The school will open with a PE and an Art (likely visual arts) teacher, adding another Art (likely music) teacher and a Media Specialist to support technology integration in Year 2; another Art teacher and a Spanish teacher in Year 3; another PE teacher in Year 4; and another Art teacher in Year 5.

School Leader: The founding group has not yet identified a school leader. Once the application is approved, we will begin a national search in earnest. These are the qualifications we will be seeking in our founding Principal:

- Deep commitment to the mission and vision of the school, especially a value-infused curriculum and college prep expectations.
- Experience working with a student population similar to ours
- Demonstrated experience leading a team of adults to achieve excellence
- Instructional leadership experience, including teacher support and supervision
- Demonstrated ability to connect with families and children and form a strong school community
- Excellent communication skills and ability to identify critical information
- Experience with start-up situations
- Ability to use data to support continuous improvement
- Fluent in Spanish (preferred)

The board will form a search committee that will include parents and other members from the community. The process will include resume screening, invitation to submit a written application, phone interviews; finalists will be required to participate in in-person interviews.

Contracted Services: We recognize full well the challenges of starting an organization from scratch and believe it prudent and efficient to contract for services with individuals and organizations that have experience with charter schools and non-profit organizations rather

than try to hire and develop this expertise in-house. Therefore, Guardian Academy will contract with Charter School Business Management, Inc. (CSBM) for services such as:

- Bookkeeping and Accounting
- Accounting Software Implementation
- Financial Analysis and Reporting
- Financial Audit Preparation
- Budget Creation and Analysis
- Payroll Software Implementation
- Payroll Processing
- Compliance Management
- School Database Implementation and Training
- Student Meal-Tracking Implementation and Training
- Fixed Asset Software Implementation and Training

CSBM has a strong reputation and has worked with many of the charter schools in the New York City metropolitan area. Its staff includes former authorizers and charter school administrators. Outsourcing these functions will allow our staff to focus their attentions on building the academic program and school culture in the beginning years. Once the school is established, we will consider hiring staff to manage some of those functions, such as bookkeeping and accounting, who CSBM can train to take over those functions. In addition, the school will contract for technology support to assist with setting up and maintaining our computer network. We will seek an experienced company that can provide on-site technical assistance when needed but will generally monitor and upgrade our systems remotely.

C.1. Charter Management Organization

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

C.2. Partner Organization

Not Applicable

D. Evaluation

Program Evaluation: As described in the Assessment section, we believe in the collection and use of data. The board and school leaders will have access to abundant student performance data with which to evaluate the:

- Curriculum
- Instructional programs
- Teacher performance
- Intervention programs
- Progress towards accountability goals

- Achievement of the mission

Similarly, our Director of Operations will collect data regularly to evaluate the school's operational effectiveness and fiscal soundness. These will include monthly bank reconciliations, budget to actual reports, and cash balance statements. This information will be shared with and analyzed by the board Finance Committee, which will report on the financial health of the school at each board meeting. In addition, the board will cause to be undertaken an annual audit by an independent accounting firm. A compliance calendar will also be maintained that provides timely information about the due dates for all reporting requirements and whether they have been met in a timely fashion.

The school will survey parents at least annually to find out how they feel about the school's academic program and the education their child is receiving. These survey data will be used by the board in its evaluation of the Principal and by the Principal in his or her evaluation of the teachers as well as the systems, procedures and policies of the school.

Finally, the school will also describe and disseminate its overall performance to families and the community. Guardian Academy will produce an annual report that examines overall academic performance as well as operational and fiscal viability. This report will be presented to the State Education Department and posted on our school website.

Staff Evaluation: The board will conduct an annual evaluation of the Principal based primarily on achievement of the school's mission and accountability plan goals. In the early years, the focus will be on implementation of the program described in this application; once the school is up and running the board will focus more heavily on outcome and performance data. The data the board will consider in the Principal evaluation include student growth and achievement data; parent and teacher surveys; student enrollment and attendance; and student and teacher retention (including attainment of the school's enrollment and retention targets). A board committee will meet to consider the available data and determine if he or she has lived up to the responsibilities enumerated in the Principal's job description. In those areas the Principal falls short of expectations, the board will decide whether there is a reasonable plan for address those issues, or if hiring a new Principal is required.

The Principal will ultimately be responsible for evaluating all staff, though he or she may delegate some of the evaluation work to direct supervisors. We intend to use teacher evaluation rubrics based on *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching, 2nd Edition*, by Charlotte Danielson, which is being used extensively in districts and schools in New York and around the country and is approved by NYSED. Teachers will self-evaluate themselves using selected domains of the rubric at the beginning of the year and these will be used by instructional leaders to shape observation, coaching and professional development throughout the year. In January and in June, teachers will present to their supervisor (Principal, Student Support Coordinator, a portfolio of artifacts demonstrating growth in areas mutually agreed upon. For example, a portfolio might include student performance data, video of instruction, parent survey data, or curriculum and assessments created by the teacher. The supervisor will weigh this evidence with that from observations during instruction, planning and professional development to determine a rating for each area. For non-instructional staff, supervisors will

evaluate against the responsibilities enumerated in job descriptions and provide at least annual written feedback on and rating of job performance.

Board Evaluation: The Board will conduct an annual survey of its members, asking each to reflect on their participation in the work of the board over the course of the year. The Chair will appoint a committee to review the board survey data along with board attendance data, parent survey results, the progress of the school in meeting internal and external accountability goals, and feedback from school leadership about the efficacy of board practices and policies. The review will also consider the demographics and diversity of the board as well as the skill sets represented by its members. The appointed committee will report its findings to the board and make recommendations for improving board functioning through ongoing development activities or recruitment efforts.

E. Professional Development

We believe in forming a professional community that models the practices we wish our students to embody: self-reflection, goal-setting and continuous improvement. While we will seek staff with experience in using our instructional methods and working with our student population, we also anticipate hiring teachers at various points in their career and with different levels of expertise. Our professional development program will be designed to instill in staff a common understanding of our education philosophy, instructional practices and the school culture we wish to create. At the same time, it will be tailored to meet each staff member's individual needs.

Summer Institute: In our first year, there will be a tremendous amount of work, including: curriculum and assessment to develop, instruction to plan, schedules to build, policies to adopt, etc. For this reason, we intend to schedule a three week Summer Institute in August for teachers to train and plan for school's first year. In subsequent years, the Summer Institute will only be two weeks, though additional time may be added for orientation of new staff. During the planning year, the Principal will begin collecting curriculum resources and sketching out curriculum maps and scope and sequences. In Summer Institute, the Principal will then facilitate the faculty in refining these foundational resources to establish integrated theme unit topics. They will then develop unit plans for the year with feedback and support from instructional leaders. Teachers will also participate in training to familiarize them with the school's instructional approach and selected materials and tools. Topics will include:

- Readers and Writers Workshop
- Guided Reading
- Phonics Instruction
- Character and Values Education
- ESL and SIOP Model
- RTI Process and Special Education
- Enrichment and Intervention

In addition, the Summer Institute, led by the Dean of School Culture will focus heavily on establishing a structured but warm learning environment. Staff will go over the code of conduct and discipline procedures and establish norms for classroom management.

In-Service: During the school year, professional development will take two forms: clinical supervision, primarily through classroom observation and feedback, and explicit training. Like doctors, our instructional leaders—the Principal, Dean of School Culture, Student Support Coordinator and ESL Coordinator—will make frequent rounds to observe classroom instruction and provide teachers with actionable feedback. These may be short, “pop-in” visits, like those advocated by Kim Marshall, or longer full class observations. They will target school-wide priorities as well as specific areas identified with teachers through their self-assessment using the school’s teacher evaluation rubric. Based on Critical Friends methodology, we will use a “glows and grows” approach to provide supportive and encouraging feedback as well as constructive criticism along with suggestions for ways to improve. This will all be documented as evidence that school leaders can use as part of teacher evaluation twice each year. A priority of observation will be implementation of professional development topics and our key design elements to ensure school-wide consistency. In addition, our grade level teams will consist of more and less experienced educators, and we will expect the former to mentor the latter, again with formative feedback, though this will not contribute to their evaluation. Teachers will conduct peer observations of their team members and teachers in other grades.

In addition to the Summer Institute, we have scheduled three PD days during the school year plus time after the students final quarter for training and grading. Topics will be selected by the instructional leadership team based on observed need and surveyed interest of faculty. We also expect our instructional leaders to provide training within teachers’ classrooms through modeling and team teaching. This could include instructional or classroom management techniques. Finally, instructional leaders will participate in grade team meetings to provide guidance on curriculum and assessment development, lesson planning and use of data.

Non-academic staff will also receive training and support. The school will contract with Charter Schools Business Management, Inc. (CSBM) for back office support and it will provide start-up and ongoing training to our Director of Operations and office staff. We will also provide training to staff on cardiopulmonary resuscitation and use of automated external defibrillators. In addition, food service staff will be trained in proper food handling techniques.

F. Facilities

We are very excited about the opportunity to locate the school in the historic Guardian Building in the center of downtown Peekskill. This triple-purpose building was built to house a school, a 1,100-seat theater and a separate recreation hall. Ground was broken at the intersection of South Division and First streets on July 25, 1904, the inaugural performance in the theater took place on October 1, 1906, and the school graduated its first class in 1913. For over 100 years it has served as the center of the social, cultural and recreational life of the community.



The building currently houses the Assumption School, a parochial K-8 school affiliated with the Assumption Church, the owner of the building. The Archdiocese of New York announced in January that it is closing twenty-four schools, including the Assumption School, which will cease operation at the end of this 2012-13 school year.

There are limited spaces in Peekskill to house a new K-8 school. The Peekskill City School District currently has a vacant building, but is intending to reopen it for the 2013-14 school year to accommodate current overcrowding and anticipated population growth. Though the district has been interested in renting space in this building, it currently requires renovations and improvements to its roof, windows, floors and plumbing system. The founding group considers the Guardian Building more suitable for establishing a unified school community as well as a better value compared to the cost of the district building.

The total usable space proposed for the charter school when fully operational is 49,000 square feet, with large classrooms of approximately 1,500 square feet each. At full capacity the school will use most of the building, with the exception of some space retained for church use. The Guardian Building contains 18 classrooms, smaller classes for interventions, administrative offices, a gym and a cafeteria. There is also the multi-use main hall/theater and a recreational hall (which would need renovation to be used). The building features high ceilings with large windows, making for very well-lit classrooms. There are also hallway lockers and bathrooms on all three floors. There is an elevator, though it is not accessible on all floors. In the event the school has staff or students with a physical disability that prevent access to certain floors, it will arrange for all classes and programs to be held on accessible floors. Consequently, no student will be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any of the school's services, programs, or activities. The building may need some cosmetic improvements and additional equipment to facilitate school meals; we also intend to install window-based air conditioning units in classrooms. Should more extensive renovations be required, they will be included in the rent as part of a leasehold agreement.

The lease arrangement will allow the school to only pay for the space it uses each year. In addition, the cost per square foot will be below market rate during the first three years to give the school a cushion as it gets established and grows to a sustainable enrollment size. Because

the church will use some of the space during non-school hours, 17% is deducted from the lease for multiple usage.

Year	Cost per square foot	Square footage used	Total	Minus multiple use percentage	Total yearly rent
1	\$8.50	43,000	\$365,500	17%	\$303,365
2	\$9.00	46,000	\$414,000	17%	\$343,620
3	\$9.50	49,000	\$465,000	17%	\$385,950
4	\$10.00	49,000	\$490,000	17%	\$406,700
5	\$10.00	49,000	\$490,000	17%	\$406,700

Rent will include heat, electric, existing phone and Internet (which may need to be upgraded by the school to accommodate additional technology), snow removal and use of the security system. Rent will not include custodians and custodial supplies, which are provided for in the school’s budget.

We recognize the issues that come with using a religious space for public education; the school will remove or cover all religious iconography and will expressly prohibit religious activity and proselytizing during school hours. It will be made clear to students, parents and staff that they are under no obligation to attend or participate in any church activities, but they are free to do so of their own volition. Religion may be taught as a subject of social studies, but our curriculum will never promote one religion over another or religiosity over other beliefs.

G. Insurance

Based on the insurance coverage of other charter schools in New York State, below is the approximate coverage we intend to secure by the time the school begins operation.

- General Aggregate: \$2 million aggregate and \$1 million for each occurrence
- Umbrella Liability: \$5 million limit of coverage
- Directors & Officers: \$1 million in coverage
- Student Accident: \$500,000 aggregate per accident
- Student Accident Medical: \$25,000 per accident
- Student Catastrophic Accident: \$1 million limit
- Automobile/Bus Liability: \$1 million
- Property: \$250,000 in coverage for school furnishings, equipment, and leased space betterments
- Workers' Compensation: rate determined by state of New York
- Employee Benefits Liability \$1,000,000
- Employment Practices Liability \$1,000,000
- Educators’ Legal Liability \$1,000,000
- Sexual Misconduct Liability \$1,000,000/occurrence; \$2,000,000 aggregate

We anticipate spending approximately \$35,000 annually for insurance.

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Health: Guardian Academy will employ a school nurse to handle health services. The nurse will maintain all student records in a secure manner, conduct hearing and vision screenings, and supervise the disbursement of approved medication, and manage the care of ill or injured students. At least two staff members in addition to the nurse will be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment.

As a former school, the Guardian Building has a nurse's office, where all health records will be stored in locked filing cabinets accessible only by authorized staff. These records will include proof of immunization, authorization for administration of medication, and at least three emergency contacts for each child. All visits to the nurse, including reason and treatment, will be documented in each child's file.

Our health services program will ensure that each student has a certificate of immunization that complies with the Public Health Law at the time of registration or within the acceptable time frame after enrollment (subject to exceptions permitted under the law for medical contraindications and religious exemptions). Required immunizations include:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis (DTaP, DTP, Tdap: 3 doses)
- Polio (IPV, OPV: 3 doses)
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR: 2 doses of measles containing vaccine and 1 dose each of mumps and rubella)
- Hepatitis B (3 doses); Varicella (1 dose).

The school will implement strict policies and procedures regarding the safe and secure administration of medication. The school will only administer medication that is necessary for a student to participate in school and which must be administered during school hours. All medications, including nonprescription over the counter (OTC) drugs, must be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis. Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage. Prescribed medication that requires administration through a subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or rectal route; or prescribed medications being administered through pumps, tubes or nebulizers; or oral, topical or inhalant medication needed by non-self-directed students will be given only by the nurse or licensed practical nurses under the direction of the nurse. The nurse may designate other staff to assist self-directed students taking their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication and will provide the training and supervision necessary to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner. Students may carry and self-administer prescribed medication under circumstances meeting the following conditions: demonstrated need, particularly as it relates to asthma or

allergies; written prescriber's orders and request by parents/guardians; and student receives effective instruction and demonstrates adequate level of responsibility.

Our physical education teacher will incorporate issues of health into the curriculum, and other teachers will be encouraged to raise health issues through discussion of character traits and habits leading to healthy lifestyle choices.

Food: We plan to contract with a vendor to provide nutritious meals and snacks that our students will like and eat. The criteria to select a food services provider will include: cost, menu options, nutrition, logistics and capacity; possible vendors in our area that we are considering include Aramark or Whitsons. In our early years of operation, we will likely have meals cooked off-site and then delivered to the school to be warmed in the kitchen. We will hire certified food services staff to handle and distribute meals. As we get established, we will consider whether it is worth the cost and compliance requirements to hire in-house staff to prepare hot meals, though this is not likely until at least the second charter term.

We intend to participate in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program, administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Our meals will meet all nutritional requirements under these programs. We will establish systems for identifying students' eligibility for free and reduced price meals and tracking meals served each day. Given that many of families will be limited English proficient, we will use our Spanish speaking staff to ensure parents understand this opportunity and complete their paper work properly. No child will go hungry in our school; we have budgeted to cover extra meals for parents who have not or cannot pay.

Transportation: Guardian Academy will be located in the center of Peekskill. Under state law our students will be eligible for equivalent transportation compared to other students of the same age in district schools. The Peekskill City School District provides school bus service to students up to 6th grade outside a one mile radius of the school. We will work with the district to coordinate efficient routes that meet the needs of all students in the community. The school will not provide transportation for other students, but will work with families to coordinate carpools. Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with their IEPs. We intend to have a longer school year and operate on some days the district schools are closed for students. We have dedicated funds for student transportation on those days as well as for field trips and other extracurricular programming and events.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Family Involvement: We believe the role of the family in a child's education is central, both at home and within the school, and Guardian Academy is committed to family and community involvement in the planning, implementation, and design of the school. Indeed, many Peekskill parents and community members have already been involved in the development of this application. During the planning year we will continue to seek input into such areas as curriculum, enrichment and service learning opportunities, and partnerships. Immediately after our lottery is conducted, we will organize "meet and greet" events so families can begin

getting to know each other. Orientations at the beginning of each year will provide parents with information about school values, culture, policies, and procedures, as well as ways they can help their child learn from home. We will instill a staff ethos that emphasizes frequent communication and transparency; for example, teachers will be expected to send home weekly newsletters describing what their children have been studying and their accomplishments. Guardian Academy will welcome parents into the school during morning meeting or as classroom volunteers. Our Dean of School Culture will be responsible for working with families around behavior and discipline issues and will provide parents with resources to help them support their child's academic success. Parent-teacher-student conferences will be held each quarter to discuss student learning and areas for growth. We recognize the challenge of drawing limited English proficient immigrant families into schools; we will have Spanish speaking staff and teachers to facilitate communication and translate materials sent home. The school will also coordinate social events throughout the year, including pot luck dinners, holiday festivities, and end of year "step up" and graduation celebrations. The school will also support a Parent Association that will help organize events and fundraisers and report to the board about parent issues of concern.

Partnerships: The Archdiocese of New York via the Church of the Assumption of Peekskill is a key partner in the creation of Guardian Academy Charter School. We recognize that the involvement of a religious organization in public education may raise some concerns. However, faith-based organizations have played and continue to play a critical role in educating children in this country, often providing the only safe quality schools in otherwise blighted communities. In addition, churches like Assumption often have a far greater role than just religion in communities like Peekskill, serving as a driving force for community organizing and service and as a voice for disenfranchised peoples. Assumption Church serves a majority lower-income Hispanic and immigrant congregation, providing two services a week in Spanish, and has important connections to the target population we wish to serve at the Guardian Academy Charter School. This is not an unprecedented partnership; for instance, multiple Dioceses in New York City are working with charter schools to provide space in their empty school buildings and assistance with recruiting students. In addition to serving as a landlord, the Archdiocese of New York and Assumption Church are providing Guardian Academy with the use of the furniture, equipment, and technology in the Guardian Building; a potential low-interest bridge loan should it be needed for the planning year; and assistance with outreach to potential families.

The founding group is currently in discussion with other organizations regarding potential partnerships with the school. For example, we are in the early stages of creating a partnership with Pace University, which has a nearby campus and is already involved with the Peekskill City schools. We will pursue other partnerships with mission-aligned organizations, such as the Peekskill Youth Bureau, and also seek partners for service learning opportunities, such as the Jan Peek Homeless Shelter, Fred's Food Pantry, and the Parks and Recreation Department. We have meetings scheduled with the Chamber of Commerce and Peekskill Agencies Together (PAT), a coalition of representatives from over 20 groups providing services to children of Peekskill, which we believe will help us identify more potential partners.

J. Financial Management

Guardian Academy takes seriously its responsibility for managing public funds to ensure that they are used appropriately and effectively. The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for approving a budget and use of funds, and delegates management of finances and operations to the school's Principal. The Director of Operations coordinates day-to-day administration of financial matters with the support of a contracted financial management company, Charter Schools Business Management, Inc. (CSBM), which has extensive experience working with charter schools in New York. CSBM will assist the school in setting up its chart of account, accounting software, and data tracking, filing and reporting systems. It will provide ongoing bookkeeping and accounting, financial analysis and reporting, payroll processing, audit preparation and compliance management.

The Principal and Director of Operations will prepare a draft annual budget based on assessed need to present to the Board's Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will analyze the budget, determine whether it promotes the long-term financial health of the school and is aligned with the school's mission and Board priorities. The full board must approve the budget each year as well as any subsequent amendments to the budget. This budget will serve as a road map for monitoring the financial status of the school throughout the year. With the support of CSBM, the Director of Operations will prepare monthly reports for the Finance Committee showing budget to actuals, balance sheet, cash flow statement and income statement.

The school will maintain all data with appropriate security and privacy, including personnel files and student records. The Director of Operations will ensure the accurate collection and reporting of data, including enrollment, special education, ELL and Title I counts. Should the school receive any grants with conditions, the Director of Operations will also ensure funds are tracked and used appropriately.

Guardian Academy will hire a certified public accountant to conduct an annual audit. The Finance Committee will review the audit each year and make recommendations to the board and school management regarding actions in response to any findings. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards. The school's fiscal year will be from July 1 to June 30. The first annual audit period will include the start-up period through the end of the first fiscal year. The annual audit will be provided to NYSED and posted on the school's website along with the annual report for the sake of transparency.

K. Budget and Cash Flow

We have budgeted conservatively to ensure a successful start-up and ongoing financial health. Our revenues are based on 95% of enrollment, though we fully expect to achieve our enrollment targets. Costs are based on 100% of anticipated enrollment.

Pre-Opening: Our primary costs during the pre-opening period are salary for start-up, including bringing on the Principal in January, 2014, followed soon after by the Director of Operations and Office Manager, to focus on:

- Recruiting students and hiring staff
- Preparing the building
- Purchasing equipment and supplies
- Developing and securing curriculum and assessments
- Organizing Summer Institute for staff in August

We also anticipate costs for basic office supplies and establishing our financial accounting and compliance reporting systems. We have assumed most of the pre-opening costs will be covered by the CSP grant; however, should the grant funds not arrive in a timely fashion or expenses be ineligible under the grant conditions, we will secure a short-term bridge loan, either from a financial institution or the Archdiocese of New York, which has already committed this support. We will have use of the Guardian Building during the planning period with rent set to begin in June, 2014. Building repairs and renovations will be conducted by the landlord, to be re-paid as part of the leasehold agreement that will initiate in June.

Year 1: We assume per pupil revenue of \$3,121,700 based on 95% of targeted enrollment. Title I funding is based on 70% of our students being eligible for free and reduced price lunch. Special education revenues are based on the assumption that 12% of our students with disabilities will qualify for 20-59% services and 2% will qualify for 60%+ services. Based on the experience of other charter schools, we assume IDEA funding will not begin until Year 2. We expect to use another \$200,000 of our CSP grant this year and have budgeted to raise \$20,000 from contributions and fundraisers. Given the founding group's experience with fundraising, we believe it likely that this line item will be larger. Overall, 92% of revenue is from state sources.

Though expensive, we intend to hire most of our administrative team in Year 1 to ensure a strong start and to build a collaborative professional culture. We believe our salaries are in line with the local labor market, but have tried to shrink the gap somewhat between faculty and administration. Our average salary is \$80,000 for lead teachers and \$60,000 for assistant teachers for an average of about \$70,000, compared to the median elementary school teacher salary in Peekskill of \$63,870. We believe this adequately compensates staff for the extended school day and school year. Our employees will receive standard benefits and the school will make a matched contribution to a retirement account up to 5% of base salary. In our first year 73% of expenditures are for personnel. We do not budget for substitute teachers, assuming co-teachers can manage classrooms in the elementary grades and specialty and student support teachers can cover classes in the upper grades. Unique costs include cafeteria equipment and air conditioning unit for classrooms. For technology we will purchase two laptop carts in Year 1 and secure off-site technical support for our network. We also intend to contract with CSBM Inc. for operations and finance support, including payroll, bookkeeping, accounting, and operations systems. As noted in the facility section we are fortunate to pay rent only for the space we will be using each year with a cost per square foot of \$8.5 in Year 1. We believe it

unacceptable that a student who does not qualify for free lunch may not be able to afford a meal, and have budgeted funds to cover delinquent meal payments. Similarly, we have budgeted funds to help needy families afford uniforms. In anticipation of the unexpected, we have set aside 10% of the cost of the lease for unplanned repairs and maintenance on the facility. We has also set aside 3% of our per pupil revenue as a contingency fund. Finally, \$25,000 is put into an escrow account towards building the required funds in case of dissolution.

5 Year Budget: As our school grows to serve grades K-7 in the fifth and final year of the charter term, the percentage of revenue from state sources rises to 97%. Assuming no change in the current funding rate for charter schools, in Year 5 our per pupil funding will be \$6,243,400 and total revenues will be \$7,109,354. We anticipate annual revenues from IDEA beginning in Year 2 and have assumed minimal fundraising of \$20,000 per year. Our assumptions for special education and Title I eligibility remain the same as in Year 1. CSP funds are budgeted for only the pre-opening and Years 1 and 2 of operation.

On the expenditure side, we assume a 3% annual increase in salaries, though this will be at the discretion of the Board based on the financial circumstances of the school and economic conditions. We will add an Assistant Principal in Year 3 as well as another Office Clerk; otherwise our administrative team remains the same. Our faculty will grow considerably by Year 5 with personnel costs overall accounting for 81% of the budget, and instructional staff representing over three-quarters of those personnel costs. In addition to adding classroom teachers for each additional grade, we will add specialty teachers as well as another social worker in Year 3. As student enrollment grows we will also add additional custodial and food service personnel. The non-personnel costs that increase with enrollment include instructional materials, office expenses, and back office costs (e.g., payroll). Once the school gets established we do not anticipate having to spend as much on student and staff recruitment. We will continue to invest in technology with the goal of one laptop cart per grade by Year 5. We have also budgeted 2% of our per pupil as a contingency fund, which we believe is prudent given the unknowns of operating a new schools.

We end every year with a surplus, though in Year 4 it is small due to the cost of starting the middle school program; once we add the 7th grade the personnel costs are spread over more students. While we end Year 1 with a small surplus, about \$30,000, by Year 5 we are budgeted to accumulate nearly \$400,000. Should our financial planning be generally accurate and our projections indicate stability we intend to use these funds for additional technology, learning experiences outside of the school, rehabilitation of the historic recreational hall, and perhaps an afterschool program. However, given the age of the building, we also anticipate some of these funds may be needed for basic maintenance and improvements.

CSP Grant: We believe Guardian Academy is eligible for the additional \$250,000 above the base \$500,000 grant provided to all schools because it meets both incentive priorities:

- **Underserved Student Populations Priority:** We intend to serve a growing immigrant population with a large percentage of English language learners and students eligible for free and reduced price lunch.
- **Authorizer Program Design Priority:** Guardian Academy fits the criteria for two design priorities:
 - **Design Priority 1: The school is specifically designed to meet the learning needs and raise the achievement of students who are English language learners.** Our school heavily emphasizes literacy instruction with an extended day allowing time for both Readers and Writers Workshop and phonics instruction. Every class in the elementary grades is co-taught and every grade team includes an ESL specialist. In addition to a Student Support Coordinator, our school also has an ESL Coordinator to support teachers and interventions programs for English language learners. Finally, our daily enrichment block provides additional time for supporting students outside their core courses.
 - **Design Priority 8: The school's program will promote a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student population.** As noted, Peekskill is a small community with a growing immigrant population. We believe Guardian Academy will serve a critical need in our community by bringing together a diverse group of students with a shared purpose.

L. Pre-Opening Plan

Action	Function Area	Start Date	End Date	Responsibility
Adopt bylaws and code of ethics	Governance	Jan 2014	Jan 2014	BOT
Appoint board officers	Governance	Jan 2014	Jan 2014	BOT
Conduct facility negotiations and execute lease	Facility	Jan 2014	Feb 2014	BOT
Plan and execute renovations	Facility	Jan 2014	Jun 2014	BOT, PR, DO
Recruit Principal	Governance	Oct 2013	Jan 2014	BOT
Obtain 501c3 status	Operations	Jan 2014	Jun 2014	PR, DO
Approve fiscal policies and procedures	Finance	Jan 2014	Jan 2014	BOT
Establish accounting and reporting systems	Finance	Jan 2014	Jun 2014	BOT, PR
Recruit Director of Operations	Staffing	Jan 2014	Feb 2014	PR
Recruit students	Recruitment	Jan 2014	Apr 2014	PR, DO
Hold lottery	Recruitment	Apr 2014	Apr 2014	PR, DO
Obtain student records	Operations	Apr 2014	Jul 2014	DO, SSC
Recruit school staff	Staffing	Feb 2014	Jun 2014	PR, DO
Hire school staff	Staffing	Mar 2014	Jun 2014	PR, DO
Research and secure curriculum resources	Academic	Mar 2014	Jun 2014	PR, SSC, EC
Research and secure standardized assessments	Academic	Mar 2014	Jun 2014	PR, SSC, EC
Approve budget for FY14-15	Finance	Apr 2014	Apr 2014	BOT
Secure food services	Operations	Apr 2014	May 2014	DO
Secure transportation	Operations	Apr 2014	Jul 2014	DO
Finalize staff handbook and personnel policies	HR	Apr 2014	Jun 2014	BOT, DO
Develop and distribute student handbook	Operations	May 2014	June 2014	PR, DC
Install technology systems	Technology	May 2014	July 2014	DO
Prepare school calendar and distribute to families	Academic	May 2014	May 2014	PR, DO
Conduct open houses for admitted students	Recruitment	Jun 2014	Jun 2014	PR, DO, DC
Contract with Related Service Providers	Academic	Jun 2014	Aug 2014	DO, SSC
Secure insurance policies	Operations	Jun 2014	Jul 2014	DO
Prepare Summer Institute materials	PD	Jun 2014	Aug 2014	PR, SSC, DC, EC
Complete Initial Statement of Financial Controls	Finance	Jul 2014	Jul 2014	DO
Complete staff fingerprints and background checks	HR	Jul 2014	Jul 2014	DO
Secure IEPs and student records	Operations	Jul 2014	Aug 2014	DO, SSC
Create a draft SAVE plan and submit it to SED	Operations	Jul 2014	Aug 2014	DO
Purchase AEDs and train staff	Operations	Jul 2014	Aug 2014	DO
Conduct Summer Institute	PD	Aug 2014	Aug 2014	PR, DC, SSC, EC
Prepare student orientation	Academic	Aug 2014	Aug 2014	PR, DC

BOT=Board of Trustees; PR=Principal; DO= Director of Operations; SSC=Student Support Coordinator;
EC=ESL Coordinator; DC=Dean of School Culture

M. Dissolution Plan

We have included \$75,000 in our budget by setting aside \$25,000 each year for the first three years of operation to cover costs in case of the school's dissolution. In such a case, the assets of the school will first be used to satisfy the school's debts. All property that the school has leased, borrowed, or contracted for use will be returned. Any remaining assets will be transferred to the Peekskill City School District.

Should the school close, the Board will adopt a closure plan and form an ad hoc committee of Trustees to oversee the closure. The Board would expect to delegate to the Principal responsibility for managing the dissolution process; should the Principal be unavailable the Board will designate another school staff member to implement the closure plan. After an employee termination date is established, the school will notify all employees of termination of employment and/or contracts, and notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees.

Parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the school will be notified of the closure plan within five days of the Board's adoption of said plan. An up-to-date student roster will be sent to the district and within 15 business days of the Board adopting a closure plan, the school will transfer student records to the district, notify parents and legal guardians of the transfer of such records, and send copies of each child's records to the child's parents or legal guardians. The school will maintain the privacy of records and information that may personally identify students. The school will also convene one or more meetings for all parents and legal guardians to provide information on the closure plan and the options for enrolling in other schools. School staff will also work with students and their families to identify appropriate schools with programs best suited to meet individual students' needs and to assist the students in enrolling in such schools. Every effort will be made to facilitate the students' transitions in a manner that minimizes the disruption to students and their families.

Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures

All students who reside in the state of New York are eligible to attend Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (Guardian Academy). The school shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the school shall ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools. There are no financial or academic requirements for admission to Guardian Academy; admission of students shall not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, ethnicity, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, or for any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school. Children will be admitted to Kindergarten who have reached the age of five by December 1 of the year in which they apply. The school will enroll students in all offered grades as space permits.

Guardian Academy will engage in extensive efforts to inform families in Peekskill and its neighboring communities about the new school. We will reach out to local schools, community-based organizations, businesses and faith-based organizations to raise awareness in the community. We will conduct open houses at the school; disseminate materials and host information sessions at day care centers, Head Start programs, afterschool programs, and youth centers. Parental outreach and recruitment activities will be conducted in English and Spanish. Our marketing will highlight our services for students with disabilities and English language learners and encourage the children of immigrant families to apply.

To apply to Guardian Academy, it is only necessary that the school receive a completed application for the child. Applications must be submitted by April 1st by families of students interested in attending the school. Applications must be hand delivered, mailed or e-mailed, and received no later than the admission period deadline listed on the form. The school will provide via e-mail and/or return postcard confirmation of applications received by the deadline.

The Guardian Academy application seeks only information necessary to admit new students and is not considered a pre-registration form. Our application form will be designed in accordance with the State Education Department guidelines. The school will adapt the uniform application form within the following allowable parameters: print the application form with the school's letterhead and/or logo; brand the application form by including the school's mission statement and explanatory information about the school, and request additional information. All data elements that may be required to be submitted by the applicant will be marked with asterisk and the form will include the following notation: *"* The items marked with an asterisk (*) are the only items that may be required in order to apply to this charter school. Any items not marked by an (*) are optional."*

The following statement will also be included in the application form:

Non-Discrimination Statement: *A charter school shall not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, national*

origin, gender, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry. A school may not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to that school.

The application will request information about students' eligibility for free- and reduced-price lunch, but will not require that information.

Guardian Academy will use the following preferences to enroll new students:

- Siblings of students enrolled in the school will have an absolute preference.
- Students residing within the district of location will receive an absolute preference, i.e., will be drawn before students living outside the district.
- When a student in the lottery with sibling(s) in the lottery is drawn, that student's sibling(s) will be added next to the list.

If the number of applicants exceeds the school's capacity, a random selection lottery process will be conducted on or about April 15, but no earlier than April 1. The lottery will be conducted by the Principal, a Board Member and a third adult who has no affiliation with the school. The actual process will be open to the public. After checking the birth dates to make sure that the application is the appropriate age for the entering grade, the child's name will be entered into the lottery. The following will also be noted for each child entered into the lottery:

- If there are siblings applying, each child's entry into the lottery will indicate that there is a sibling also applying.
- The place of residence will be noted so that preference can be given to students living in Peekskill.

The lottery will follow these steps for each grade:

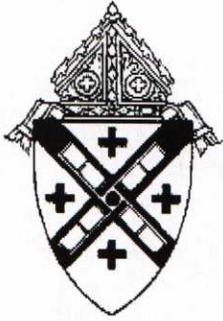
1. Siblings of students already enrolled in the school will be drawn.
2. Students who reside within Peekskill will be drawn
3. Students who reside outside of Peekskill will be drawn

Once the number of students equal to the number of available seats has been drawn, the remaining applicants will be drawn and placed on the waitlist in the order in which they are drawn. After all the names have been chosen, the parents will be notified by letter. For those students who are accepted, the letter will include a list of forms that need to be provided, specifically an original birth certificate, social security card, immunization records and proof of address, and an appointment time to meet with school administrator to turn over the forms.

For children not selected, the letter will indicate their number on the wait list, and will describe the steps that will take place if a space becomes available. That wait list will be maintained for

the entire school year. If a student withdraws, the next applicant on the wait list in that grade will be called and offered the space. Student withdrawal will be permitted upon the written request of the parent or legal guardian and proof of enrollment in another school. Following the written request of the admitting school, student records will be transferred. If a student does not return in September, the school will telephone and send the family a certified letter to determine the child's status. When a space opens, the waiting list will then be activated to admit the next child on the same grade level. For applications received after the April 1 deadline, those students will be added to the waitlist in the order they are submitted. The wait list will expire annually at the lottery drawing for the next school year.

After the first year, students returning to the school will be considered to be enrolled in each successive year through the completion of 8th grade. Each year, school personnel will meet with the families of all parents and guardians of currently enrolled students to discuss enrollment plans for the following school year. Parents or guardians must then submit to the school a letter of intent confirming their desire to enroll their child(ren) in the school for the following year.



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

1011 First Avenue, New York, New York 10022 Phone: (212) 371-1000 Fax: (212) 758-3018

February 27, 2013

Susan Megna, New Schools Coordinator
NYSED Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue,
EBA 465
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Ms. Megna,

On behalf of the Archdiocese of New York I would like to extend my support to the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill. As the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese I supervise the education of young people in ten southern counties of New York State. I am extremely familiar with the needs of children in our state and know how our difficult decision to close the Assumption School in Peekskill will affect that community. Without the creation of the Guardian Academy there will be no other options for students in Peekskill other than the traditional district schools. While they serve many students well, there will always be some who need a smaller, more nurturing community in which to thrive, particularly the children of immigrant families whose futures are often limited by language barriers and poverty.

I understand that the Guardian Academy will be a secular public charter school, but as an organization with an educational mission I am committed without reservation to its success for the sake of children in that community. To that end, we support the lease of the Guardian Building to the charter school, including the use of existing furniture and equipment, and are willing to support the school financially with a low interest bridge loan during its planning year to ensure it launches with the staff and programs it requires to meet the needs of Peekskill students. I have personally worked with Father John Higgins, one of the founders of the charter school, and can vouch for his dedication to the education of children in Peekskill.

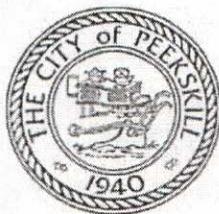
If you have any questions regarding the support of the Archdiocese for the Guardian Academy, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. McNiff, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York

City of Peekskill

Brian Havranek
Acting City Manager



Mayor
Mary Foster
Deputy Mayor
Drew A. Claxton
Common Council
Donald Bennett, Jr.
Marybeth J. McGowan
Andrew Torres
Kathleen Talbot
Darren Rigger

www.cityofpeekskill.com

March 6, 2013

NYSED Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA
Albany, NY 12234

Dear NYSED Charter School Staff:

I am pleased to be able to offer my support to the proposed *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill*.

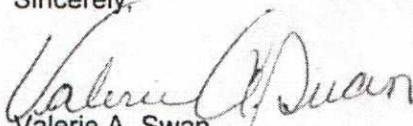
The *Guardian Academy's* emphasis on high expectations with tailored supports in order that every child may achieve his or her fullest potential, is essential to ensure the school's ultimate goal – that every child realize that higher education and a career that allows them to utilize their greatest gifts and talents is well within their grasp. I am particularly excited about their focus on college preparation starting right from kindergarten. And, I support the Founding Board's addition of a values-infused curriculum which stresses self-control, self-discipline, perseverance, and respect of others – recognizing that children are so much more than their academic achievements.

In my capacity as Executive Director of the City of Peekskill Youth Bureau, I am well aware of the fact that children grow and learn differently. Charter Schools provide parents with more educational choices to reflect that fact.

I am also pleased to see that the Founding Board has the desire to incorporate opportunities for community involvement and partnership. They no doubt recognize that it does, indeed, "take a village" to raise a child and that when one child succeeds, we all succeed and a stronger community emerges!

Thank you for your efforts and for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me regarding my support of this worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,


Valerie A. Swan
Executive Director
City of Peekskill Youth Bureau

John G. TestaLegislator, 1st District

March 3, 2013

I am pleased to be able to submit this letter of support for the creation of The Guardian Academy Charter School in Peekskill, New York.

My current position is that of Westchester County Legislator representing Northern Westchester, including Peekskill. I am also a former Mayor of the City of Peekskill and City Councilman before that. Most importantly, for the purposes of this letter, I have been a teacher at Peekskill High School for the last 33 years. I am also a graduate of Assumption School and Peekskill High School. So, as you can imagine, I have a very intimate knowledge and understanding of the Peekskill community and its needs.

The closing of the Assumption School this June will create a tremendous void in the community, both educationally and spiritually. I am encouraged by the outstanding concept to create the proposed Guardian Academy Charter School. I believe this idea is long overdue for our community and region and I applaud those individuals who have taken on the extensive task of developing the Guardian Academy initiative.

Peekskill is an ever-growing diverse community and the Guardian Academy will be well equipped to service this population. This is key as the pending closing of the Assumption school has already caused concern in the Peekskill City School District as to how to place and properly prepare for an influx of students during what has become a very difficult time for our public school system.

As an educator I can say that I am very excited about the educational plan that has been developed for the Guardian Academy. I support the holistic approach that is planned through high academic expectations coupled with building good citizens. The plan to focus on literacy and rigorous academic content is a good one and will be a successful addition to the educational choices of our local families.

Please look favorably on the Guardian Academy application and give the Peekskill area the opportunity to have such an outstanding educational institution established.

Thank you very much for your consideration and please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

John G. Testa
Westchester County Legislator

FIELD

L I B R A R Y

NYSED Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

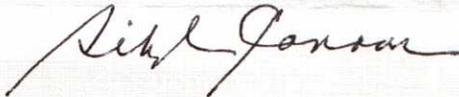
March 5, 2013

Dear Sir:

As the Director of The Field Library, the public library for the City of Peekskill, New York, I fully appreciate the educational efforts of local community citizens to establish a non-denominational charter school, The Guardian Academy Charter School.

Focusing on creating learning opportunities for children is a worthwhile and positive endeavor by an engaged citizenry. Providing choices for schooling is a critically important goal for residents who share a deep purpose to provide a new instructional setting for Peekskill children. Their concerned advocacy should be commended, as it speaks for enlightened, honorable intentions and an informed activism.

Sincerely,



Sibyl Canaan
Director

your field of knowledge

Audrey Warn

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 7:00 AM
To: pastor@assumptionpeekskill.org
Cc: guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com
Subject: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Officer Leo Dylewski of the City of Peekskill Police Department. I have been an officer with the city for thirteen years, the last nine as a DARE and GREAT Officer in the school district. I am a trained juvenile officer, a certified Police Juvenile Specialist by the State of New York Police Juvenile Officer's Association, a board member of the same association and am currently the president of the Westchester County Youth Officer's Association.

I am writing you today in regard to the Guardian Academy Charter School in Peekskill. The school would be a tremendous asset to the City of Peekskill. I have taught the DARE and GREAT programs in both the public and private schools since 2004. During this time, the Assumption School has been an instrumental alternative for parents who's children have needs that cannot be met in the traditional public school system. Unfortunately, Assumption school is closing and our community will be losing this resource.

It has been brought to my attention that a plan is in place to try to reopen the facility as a charter school known as the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill. This will not be a religious school but a totally independently run public school. Peekskill parents need this alternative. The school will be able to give students the individual attention and resources that they may not be able to acquire elsewhere. From my personal experience, parents sometimes need this alternative to help their children to avoid negative influences. The Guardian Academy will meet those needs and become a positive resource for the community. The Guardian Academy is not going to be the Assumption School renamed but a viable alternative for the parents in our area. It can only be a positive attribute for the City of Peekskill and our students.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

P.O. Leo Dylewski

Leo Dylewski
[REDACTED]

Charter school sought at Assumption

Board seeks state approval of Peekskill parish building

By Marcela Rojas
mrojas@lohud.com

PEEKSKILL — A founding board has started the process of getting state education approvals to house a charter school in the Assumption School building.

The Rev. John Higgins, pastor of Assumption Church, announced he is exploring the possibility of using the building for a K-3 charter school that, if approved, would open in September

2014. The school would add one grade each year up to eighth grade.

Earlier this year, the Archdiocese of New York said it would close the 105-year-old Assumption School and seven other local Catholic schools in June amid financial difficulties. Assumption School serves about 200 pre-K through eighth grade students.

"Our building is going to be vacant," Higgins said. "It occurred to me and some others that a



charter school would be a good idea. It's not a conversion. We would effectively be renting the building to the charter school."

He said the school would focus on meeting the needs of English language learners.

A charter school is a tuition-free public school

The Assumption School in Peekskill. RICKY FLORES/THE JOURNAL NEWS

overseen by a state educational agency and receives funding from the school district where it is.

Higgins said a letter of intent has been sent to the state Department of Education. An application is due in mid-March.

Audrey Warn, lead applicant on the charter school plan, said she and

five others make up the founding board. Warn is a fundraiser for Assumption School and has a child in the sixth grade there.

Warn said charter schools were important in inner cities, where the market can't always bear tuition-based schools. Peekskill's charter school would be nonreligious, Warn said, and would stress high academic achievement and be guided by a "values-infused curriculum" that emphasizes respect, integrity, service and perseverance.

In 2010, the Hudson River Charter School, an

environmentally themed K-6 school proposed in Ossining, was rejected.

The school received strong opposition from both Ossining residents and school officials who objected to the financial burden they said it would have on the district, as well as duplicating curricula and segregating Ossining's students.

There is only one charter school in Westchester County, the Charter School of Educational Excellence in Yonkers, and none in Rockland or Putnam counties.

Warn said the Peekskill school district is aware of their plans.

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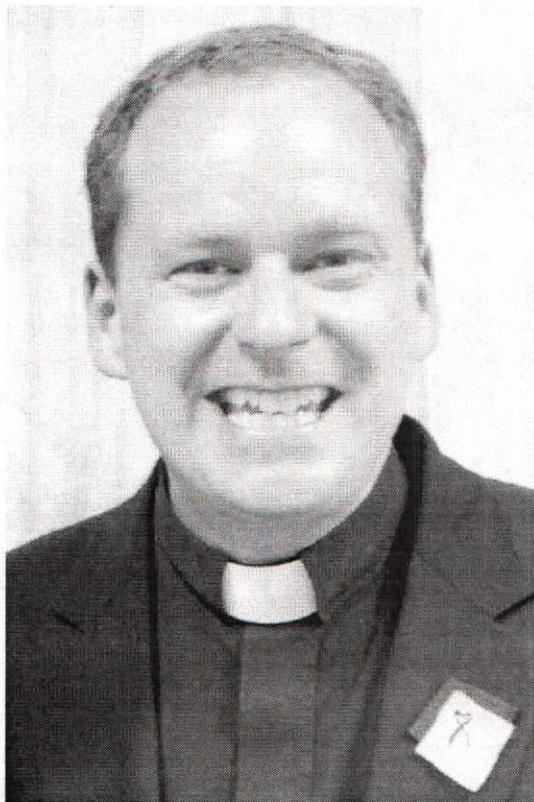
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Assumption Pastor Eyes A Charter School For Peekskill

by Art Cusano Schools 17 hours ago Comment



The Rev. John Higgins wants to create a charter school at what is now the Assumption School in Peekskill. Photo Credit: Art Cusano

PEEKSKILL, N.Y. – The pastor of Assumption Church said Friday he will explore using the parish's school building for a public charter school.

The parish school is slated to close in June as part of a retrenchment by the New York Archdiocese.

A press release sent out Friday afternoon by the Rev. John Higgins said a founding board has been organized and a letter of intent filed with the New York State Education Department – one of two charter school authorizers in New York State.

Charter schools are public schools that are free and open to all students, including those with disabilities. Charter schools are non-selective and enroll students through a non-discriminatory admissions lottery. Each charter school is governed by a volunteer board of trustees, which typically includes educators, community members and leaders from the private sector.

"Assumption School has provided Peekskill families with an educational option for over 100 years," Higgins said. "With its closing, there will be a real void. One of the ways to fill that void is to

010

establish a public charter school at no cost to families. Of course, it would be open to any Peekskill child. I would welcome the building being used as it has been used for all these years – to educate generations of Peekskill's children,"

If the authorizers accept the founding board's application, the charter school will open its doors in September of 2014 and will begin serving children from kindergarten through third grade, with a plan to add one grade a year up to eighth grade.

Higgins said the school would stress "high academic standards" and that while it would not be a Catholic school, it would be guided by a "values-infused curriculum with a goal of forming students who can reflect on their choices and actions and establish a community of mutual respect, interdependence, perseverance and integrity."

The board will hold town meetings at various locations throughout Peekskill to educate the community, Higgins added.

Charter schools have the freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their human and financial resources, according to Higgins. In exchange, they are held accountable for raising achievement and helping their students meet state learning standards.

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Proposed Charter School in Peekskill Outlines Objectives

Neal Rentz | Mar 07, 2013 | Comments 0

Many community members gathered last week at the Elks Lodge in Peekskill to hear information about the Guardian Academy, a new charter school that is looking to open on First Street where Assumption School is currently located.

The Guardian Academy will be a public charter school, funded by the state. Discussions of a possible charter school began when it was confirmed in January by the [Archdiocese of New York](#) that [Assumption School](#) would be closing in June.

According to the founding board of education, and Lead Applicant Audrey Warn, the school will start small. They will use a kindergarten to third grade model and grow by one grade each year.

The state must look at a number of factors while reviewing the application. For example, the building the school will be held in must reach certain health and safety standards. The state must also review the curriculum the school will provide.

The attendees were each given a handout promising great things for the charter school. Among the promises were "a rigorous curriculum," a "value infused curriculum," and a "robust and structured English-Arts Program".

Also, unlike the Assumption School, the curriculum will not be religion-based. Warn made it clear last Tuesday night that the Academy will be totally different from the closing Catholic school. "This is not a conversion," she emphasized.

Despite the information given by the board, many community members voiced concerns. Mike Morry, the father of a five-year old in the [Peekskill School District](#), said he was worried about accountability.

Unlike the public schools, where community members can vote on budgets and personnel, the charter school will not provide voting power.

"I am concerned about the ability of the public to have influence over the cost associated with educating these kids with public school dollars," said Morry. He also expressed concerns regarding the possible resources that might be diverted to charter school students, from the Peekskill public schools.

In contrast, there were also those in attendance who welcomed the idea of a charter school, and the ability to have options for their child's education.

"We pay so much in school taxes I think giving parents a choice is important," said Elaine Dallapia, a mother of three children who attend Peekskill schools.

Dallapia, who is herself a product of the Peekskill School District, also believes that a charter school could motivate the existing schools.

"I think if you have a separate charter school here then it becomes a bit competitive, and I don't think that is a bad thing," she said.

Warn acknowledged that there are fundamental differences between a charter school and public school that seemingly put the charter school at a disadvantage. For example, the state provides less "per-pupil" funding to a charter school than a public school. Warn gave the example of a public school that receives \$20,000 in funding per pupil. A comparable charter school would receive approximately \$15,000 or \$16,000 per pupil.

However, she also pointed out advantages that charter schools have over public schools. "They often represent a smaller class size and more manageable, flexible and creative hiring policies," said Warn. "So you can assess your student needs, you can assess student population, and respond accordingly and more quickly than the traditional public schools."

If the state approves the application, the school will open in the fall of 2014. For more information, send an email to guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com.

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Breaking: Advisory: Garbage collection is cancelled for today. However, Friday night pick up will still be done as normal. »

[Schools](#), [The Neighborhood Files](#)

Peekskill Charter Group Adds New Board Member, Schedules Second Information Session

A public information session to discuss the proposed Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill will take place Monday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m. inside the Summit at Mount Olivet Baptist Church.

By [Rasheed Oluwa](#) [Email the author](#) March 5, 2013

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Related Topics: [Assumption School](#), [Peekskill charter school](#), and [Rev. Adolphus Lacey](#)



The [Rev. Adolphus C. Lacey](#), of the Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Peekskill has joined the founding board for the proposed charter school. A native of Kansas City, Lacey has been with Mount Olivet since 2005.

Lacey earned a Bachelor of Arts in World History from Ottawa University, a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary and was conferred a doctorate of Philosophy from Northwestern University. Supplementary to his academic accolades, he received a certificate as Community Developer from the Harvard Divinity School's Institute for Church-based Community and Economic Development. In addition to his pastoral responsibilities, Lacey has served as an adjunct professor in the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY.

The proposed charter school, which officials announced earlier this month, would be held inside the Assumption school, which is closing at the end of this school year. The Guardian Academy, if it receives state approval, would be open during the 2014-2015 school year.

A second public session for the proposal is scheduled to take place Monday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m. inside the Summit Mount Olivet Baptist Church. Mount Olivet is located at 1432 Park Street.

All are welcome to attend the meeting. For further information contact: guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com.

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Senator Greg Ball
District Office
1441 Route 22, Suite 205
Brewster, NY 10509

February 22, 2013

Dear Senator Ball,

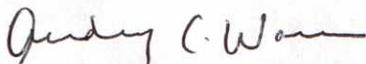
I am writing on behalf of a team of educators and community leaders to inform you that we have applied to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in the hopes of receiving authorization to open a new public charter elementary school. If approved, *The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill* would open its doors to the Peekskill community in September 2014.

As a parent enthusiastic about the children of Peekskill, I am excited to join with this team to explore launching a charter school whose hallmark would be high academic achievement coupled with a values-infused curriculum. With the pending closing of Assumption School in June 2013, educational choice for families in Peekskill has been greatly diminished. The proposed *Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill* hopes to equalize opportunities for the children of Peekskill by providing a public education option to this extremely diverse community.

Census data now indicates that Peekskill's population is 37% Hispanic/Latino and growing, 36% White (Non-Hispanic) and 24% Black. Moreover, 31% of Peekskill residents are foreign born and 40% speak a language other than English. And, more than two-thirds of Peekskill students are eligible for free-or reduced lunch. *The Guardian Academy* intends to serve this unique and diverse community and anticipates a higher percentage of its student population will be English language learners from low-income households. *The Guardian Academy* would serve grades Kindergarten through 8th grade, opening its doors first to Kindergarten through 3rd grade and adding a grade per year thereafter. The school seeks to provide this underserved population with an academically rigorous education that recognizes that all students can learn at high levels with tailored supports and high expectations. We also recognize that academic achievement is not enough and that character development, forming the "whole person," is what is necessary to be truly successful in life. We seek to engage the community, inviting families, local community members and organizations to partner with us. Furthermore, the *Guardian Academy's* curriculum will be built on the following pillars—*High Expectations, Content is Essential, Focus on Literacy, Character Development and Community Building*—which will provide the foundation for a lifelong love of learning, success in high school, college and beyond.

I look forward to sharing this exciting idea with the Peekskill's community leaders and with the families who are looking for greater educational choice. I would welcome your feedback and the opportunity to meet with you and tell you more. Feel free to contact me at guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com or at 914.494.1430 for more information or provide any guidance you might have.

Sincerely,



Audrey C. Warn
The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Academia Guardián Esc. Chárter de Peekskill

El grupo fundador desarrolla un plan para abrir una nueva, escuela pública gratis para servir a los niños del área de Peekskill. La escuela abrirá en el otoño del 2014 con kindergarden a 3er grado y agregará un grado cada año hasta tener un programa completo de K a 8. Las escuelas Chárter son escuelas públicas independientes libres de diseñar sus propios programas y contratar al personal que mejor llene las necesidades de sus estudiantes. La Academia Guardián será una pequeña escuela con solo 2 clases por grado para poder construir una comunidad muy cercana donde cada niño es conocido por sus maestros. Escuelas Chárter son abiertas a todo tipo de estudiantes, incluyendo aquellos con discapacidades y estudiantes de ingles. Los padres tendrán que aplicar a la Academia, pero para ser justos, todos los serán seleccionados por una lotería. Características claves incluyen:

- **Altas Expectativas:** Impartiremos en los estudiantes la creencia que el esfuerzo dedicado y la práctica les permitirá seguir el camino académico, profesional y personal de su elección. Este ambiente académico fomentará un amor y gusto por aprender, auto disciplina, pensamiento analítico y creatividad en nuestros estudiantes.
- **Enfoque Literario:** Al empezar en primeros grados con un programa robusto y estructurado de Artes de la Lengua Ingles usando una combinación de fonética explícita y el método Proyecto de Lectores y Escritores construiremos una base literaria fuerte que apoyará a los estudiantes a aprender en todas las materias.
- **Desarrollo del Carácter:** Enseñar habilidades académicas y conocimiento no es suficiente; los estudiantes también deben desarrollar el carácter necesario para triunfar en un mundo diverso. La Academia Guardián integrará un programa de educación basada en valores a su currículo y cultura para ayudar a los estudiantes a reflexionar en sus elecciones y acciones y establecer una comunidad de respeto mutuo, perseverancia e interdependencia.
- **Comunidad:** La Academia Guardián será un éxito debido al profesorado, las familias, miembros de la comunidad local y organizaciones trabajando juntos para llenar las necesidades de nuestros estudiantes. Comunicación frecuente, eventos académicos y sociales, un consejo inclusivo y accesible, oportunidades para voluntariado y asociaciones comunitarias contribuirán a una escuela profundamente arraigada en nuestra comunidad.
- **Extensión del Tiempo de Aprendizaje:** Creemos que el modelo tradicional escolar debe adaptarse a las necesidades de la juventud de hoy día. Un día y año escolar mas largo proveerán el tiempo necesario para adecuadamente enseñar y apoyar a nuestros estudiantes.

Marque Uno:

- Tengo niños en edad escolar que serán elegibles para inscribirse en la Academia El Guardián de Peekskill en el 2014 y quisiera tener esta opción en mi comunidad
- No soy padre de niños en edad escolar, pero apoyo la creación de la Academia el Guardián Escuela Chárter de Peekskill.

Nombre:	E-mail:
Dirección:	

guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com P.O. Box 2104, Peekskill, NY 10566



The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill shared a link.
March 9

<http://www.theexaminernews.com/proposed-charter-school-in-peekskill-outlines-objectives/>
More press for the Guardian Academy. Want to find out more about the benefits of a charter school in our community? E-mail guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com

Proposed Charter School in Peekskill Outlines Objectives | The Examiner News
www.theexaminernews.com

Proposed Charter School in Peekskill Outlines Objectives

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The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill
March 7

A rigorous academic program with tailored supports means success for every child at the Guardian Academy.

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3 people like this.



Kirsten Berger Can you please be more specific? What exactly is it that you are going to offer that will make this school stand out from the other choices of the public schools or parochial schools in the area? When the Hudson River Charter school was in the works, t... [See More](#)
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The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill Thanks again for the great questions and for your interest. Some key design elements to the Guardian Academy program include smaller school—only two classes per grade, co-teaching in all K-5 classrooms with an ESL teacher per grade, a strong focus on... [See More](#)
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Sample Facebook Page Activity

Academia El Guardian - Escuela Charter de Peekskill

¿Interesados en más opciones escolares para Peekskill?

¿Quiere saber más sobre los beneficios de tener una escuela charter en la comunidad?

Sesión Informativa
de la propuesta *Academia
El Guardian Escuela Charter de Peekskill*

Martes, febrero 26, 2013 7:30 pm
The Elks Club, 1038 Brown Street Peekskill

- Aprenda más sobre los beneficios de éste modelo educativo único
- Altos estándares académicos
- Plan de estudios de valores-infundidos
- Escuela pública sin costo de colegiatura abierta para todos

Apertura propuesta para septiembre del 2014

Para mayor información: guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com

The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

What is a Public Charter School?

- Charter schools are public schools. They are tuition-free and open to all students, including those with disabilities.
- Charter schools are non-selective. If there are more applying students than seats, students are enrolled through a non-discriminatory admissions lottery .
- Charter schools are governed by a volunteer board of trustees, which typically includes educators, community members, and leaders from the private sector.
- Charter schools were established to provide families with educational choice and educators with the flexibility to create schools that best meet the needs of their students.
- Charter schools have freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their human and financial resources.
- Charter schools are held accountable for raising achievement and helping their students meet state learning standards.
- There are currently 244 charter schools authorized in New York State.

The Guardian Academy

- **High Expectations:** A rigorous curriculum recognizing that all students can learn at high levels if given tailored supports and high expectations.
- **Character Counts:** Academic success is not enough. A values-infused, curriculum with the hallmarks of mutual respect, self-control, perseverance and integrity will be the backbone of all we do.
- **Focus on Literacy:** Robust and structured English language arts program using a combination of explicit phonics and the Readers and Writers Project methods to build a strong literacy foundation to support learning in all subjects.
- **Content is Essential:** A common knowledge base is critical to a democratic society; our curriculum will provide students with the knowledge they need to pursue higher education, careers and vital membership in their community.
- **Community:** Engaging the community as partners to create a school deeply rooted in and responsive to the needs of the community.
- Proposed Opening September 2014.
- Located in the historic *Guardian Building*.

For more information contact: guardianacademypeekskill@gmail.com
P.O. Box 2104, Peekskill, NY 10566

Sample K-5 Student Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:15 am	Doors Open				
7:20 am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
7:50 am	Community Meeting				
8:10	Class Meeting				
8:20 am	ELA: Read Aloud, Guided Reading & Workshop				
9:40 am	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:30 am	Art/PE	Art/PE	Art/PE	Art/PE	Art/PE
11:10 am	ELA: Phonics	ELA: Phonics	ELA: Phonics	ELA: Phonics	ELA: Phonics
11:40 pm	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:15 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:40 pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
1:15 pm	ELA: Writers Workshop				
1:55 pm	Social Studies				
2:30 pm	Snack	Snack	Dismissal	Snack	Snack
2:40 pm	Enrichment	Enrichment		Enrichment	Enrichment
3:20 pm	Class Meeting	Class Meeting		Class Meeting	Class Meeting
3:30 pm	Dismissal	Dismissal		Dismissal	Dismissal

Sample 6-8 Student Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:15 am	Doors Open				
7:20 am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
7:50 am	Community Meeting				
8:10 am	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA
9:15 am	Social Studies				
10:20 am	PE	Art	Advisory	Art	PE
11:00 am	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish
11:40 pm	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:00 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:20 pm	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
1:25 pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
2:30 pm	Enrichment	Enrichment	Dismissal	Enrichment	Enrichment
3:30 pm	Dismissal	Dismissal		Dismissal	Dismissal

Sample K-5 Teacher Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30 am	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
7:50 am	Community Meeting				
8:10 am	Class Meeting				
8:20 am	Read Aloud, Guided Reading & Workshop				
9:40 am	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:35 am	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
11:20 am	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics
11:55 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30 pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
1:15 pm	Writers Workshop				
1:55 pm	Social Studies				
2:30 pm	Snack	Snack	Dismissal	Snack	Snack
2:40 pm	Enrichment	Enrichment	Professional Development 2:30-4:00	Enrichment	Enrichment
3:20 pm	Class Meeting	Class Meeting		Class Meeting	Class Meeting
3:30 pm	Dismissal	Dismissal		Dismissal	Dismissal

Sample 6-8 Teacher Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30 am	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep
7:50 am	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Community Meeting
8:10 am	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6
9:15 am	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6	ELA 6
10:20 am	Prep	Prep	Advisory	Prep	Prep
11:00 am			Prep		
11:40 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00 pm					
12:20 pm	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7
1:25 pm	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7	ELA 7
2:30 pm	Enrichment	Enrichment	Dismissal	Enrichment	Enrichment
			Professional Development 2:30-4:00		
3:30 pm	Dismissal	Dismissal	Professional Development 2:30-4:00	Dismissal	Dismissal

Guardian Academy 2014-15 Calendar

M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
August					September					October				
				1	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	29	30				27	28	29	30	31
4-22: Summer Staff Institute 25: First Day of School					1: Labor Day 25-26: Rosh Hashana					13: Columbus Day				
November					December					January				
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5				1	2
10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9
17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16
24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23
					29	30	31			26	27	28	29	30
7: End 1 st Quarter 10: Professional Development Day 11: Veterans Day 27-28: Thanksgiving					24-31: Winter Break					1-2: Winter Break (continued) 19: MLK Day 30: End 2 nd Quarter				
February					March					April				
2	3	4	5	6	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3
9	10	11	12	13	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10
16	17	18	19	20	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17
23	24	25	26	27	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24
					30	31				27	28	29	30	
2: Professional Development Day 16: President's Day										6-10: Spring Break 17: End 3 rd Quarter 20: Professional Development Day				
May					June					July				
				1	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	29	30				27	28	29	30	31
25: Memorial Day					26: Last Day of School for Students					2: Last Day of School for Teachers				

Summer Institute for Teachers: Aug. 4-22
 First Day of School for Teachers: Aug. 4
 First Day of School for Students: Aug. 25
 Last Day of School for Students: June 26
 Last Day of School for Teachers: July 2

Days of Instruction: 195
 PD/Planning Days: 22 (15 pre-service, 3 in-service, 4 post-service)

Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Code of Conduct

THE MISSION OF GUARDIAN ACADEMY

The mission of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill is to provide the community with an educational option that teaches a values-infused, content-rich curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in order to build character and prepare students for success in high school, college and careers.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Behavior Thermometer: In Kindergarten through 5th grade the students use a behavior system called the thermometer. The thermometer measures behavior and ensures that students are reminded when they need to “fix” their behavior. The thermometer is color coded and posted in a visible place in the classroom:

Green = Expected Behavior

Yellow = Minor misbehaviors, Warning

Orange = Repeated misbehaviors, Warning

Red = Repeated misbehaviors, Consequence

Blue = Serious misbehavior, Consequence, Referral to Director of School Culture

Each student’s name will be attached to a clip that can be placed on any color on the thermometer and moved as needed. Students in 6th grade and above are expected to know the code of conduct and expected behaviors in the school without the visual reminder of the thermometer. The following explains reasons for moving a clip up or down the thermometer and the consequences of various infractions.

Levels	Reasons	Range of Consequence
Level 1 Misbehaviors = Clip Moves One Level	These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not following along • Yelling in response to a question • Out of seat without permission • Misuse of furniture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning/reprimand by school staff • Student is reminded of appropriate behavior • Student is reminded of past poor decisions and provided with productive alternative choices that should be made
Level 2 Misbehaviors = Clip Moves Two Levels	These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profanity • Defiance • Disrespect to peer • Disrespect to adult • Throwing an object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is reminded of appropriate behavior and task at hand • Student is given a verbal warning • Student is given a “Time Out” within the classroom and separated from other students • Removal from classroom for "Time Out" outside of the classroom

		<p>(another classroom or administrator's office)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional assignments which require student to reflect on behavior in writing or orally (depending on grade) • Call home to parents
Level 3 Misbehaviors = Automatic Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated Level 1 or 2 infractions • Bullying, taunting and laughing at a peer • High-level profanity • Slurs about gender, race, ethnicity, etc. • Threats to others • Destruction of school property • Running away from adults • Climbing furniture • Fighting • Other dangerous, violent or bullying acts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Director of School Culture • Call home • Student-Parent-Teacher conference • Student-Parent-Administrator conference • In-school disciplinary action (which includes but is not limited to exclusion from recess, communal lunch, enrichment activities, sports, school events, trips, or other activities) • Verbal or written apology to community • Mediation • Behavior Contract • Suspension • Expulsion
Level 4 Misbehaviors Automatic Referral	<p>Excessive Level 1 or 2 or repeated Level 3 infractions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arson • Extortion • Possession of a weapon • Possession of drugs or alcohol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension • Expulsion

While Guardian Academy works diligently to ensure students are following directions and demonstrating exceptional character, there are times when more drastic measures need to be put in place. Behaviors that can lead to immediate suspension are as follows:

- Physical Assault of a staff member, adult, or another student
- Destruction or Theft of Property
- Inappropriate Touching

Students who have accumulated an excessive number of suspensions are putting themselves in jeopardy of losing their opportunity to continue at Guardian Academy Charter School.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is prohibited by Guardian Academy, is against the law, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. If an employee becomes aware of an incident of corporal punishment, the employee must report the matter

immediately to his or her supervisor or the Principal. Failure to report corporal punishment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

SCHOOL BUSES

Bus drivers must focus on the road to make sure all students arrive to school and home safely. On the bus, students must remain in their seats with seatbelts fastened, sit silently, and follow all directions given by the bus driver. Students who behave poorly or do not follow directions on the bus compromise the safety of themselves and others. Riding the bus is a privilege and poor bus behavior may result in suspension or termination of transportation services. Students will be suspended from the bus for the following infractions:

- Fighting
- jumping over seats
- screaming
- throwing objects
- being out of the seat
- general behavior that puts the driver or other students at risk

If a child is suspended from the bus, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange for alternative transportation.

DRESS CODE

Guardian Academy is a community of learners and expects a school uniform to be a unifying factor within our school community. Our school uniform identifies its wearer as part of a distinctive group with a distinctive purpose. Uniforms also allow parents to save money by not having to buy an entire wardrobe of school clothing and they minimize learning distractions in the school. While the school will identify an inexpensive uniform provider, it understands that all families may not be able to afford the uniform. No student will be denied access to the school because of an inability to purchase the school uniform. The school will keep reserves on hand to assist families who cannot afford the uniform.

Uniform Expectation

Boys	Girls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School color polo shirt without logo• Blue or black slacks• Black belt• V-neck pullover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School color polo shirt without logo• Jumper or skirt• Opaque tights• V-neck cardigan

The following dress code guidelines apply to all students:

1. Students are to wear the Guardian Academy uniform every day.
2. All shirts are to be tucked in and worn appropriately.
3. All pants must fit around the waist. Boys must wear a belt every day. Belts should be of appropriate size and nature, i.e., no large-faced images or symbols which may pose as a distraction.
4. Pants may not be excessively baggy and may not cover the shoes.
5. Students may not wear jeans, jogging pants, sweat pants or shorts. Shorts are permitted if the weather is above 85 degrees and must be of appropriate length.
6. Students may not wear sleeveless or cut-off shirts, blouses, or dresses.
7. Students may not wear inappropriately tight clothing.
8. Girls may not wear skirts that are inappropriately short (above the center of their knee) or that have inappropriately long slits (above their knees). Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under their skirts as student frequently sit on the floor during class.
9. Students may not wear hats, caps, do-rags, or other head coverings in the school (except in the case of religious observance).
10. For safety reasons the following jewelry will not be permitted: necklaces outside of shirt, chains, chokers, multiple finger rings, and dangle earrings. Earrings should not hang from the earlobe (studs are permitted). Students are permitted one bracelet and one ring to be worn in school. One necklace may be worn but must remain tucked in at all times.
11. Students may not wear makeup, contacts and hair with color, sparkles or glitter. (Students may use clear lip balm, such as Vaseline, Chapstick, etc. to moisturize lips. As with any items, these may be taken away for inappropriate and excessive use).
12. Students cannot wear open shoes.
13. Students may not use nail polish or fake fingernail tips.

NEW YORK STATE DIGNITY ACT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Guardian Academy abides by the New York State dignity act and does not condone bullying, taunting, harassment, discrimination, intimidation at any point. The dignity act is described below:

New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Under no circumstances may students leave the school building without permission. A student with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult. Once students have entered the school in the morning, they may not leave the building unless they are escorted by a school staff member or other authorized adult.

STUDENT SEARCHES

In order to maintain the security of all its students, Guardian Academy reserves the right to conduct searches of students and their property. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible, and that students and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search.

School cubbies, lockers and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of the school and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time.

DUE PROCESS

Parents will be notified of all consequences that involve removing students from class, activities or the school. Students will be told of all charges against them and be provided with the opportunity to describe their side of the story. The principal or other school official shall consider this explanation prior to taking disciplinary action. For minor infractions parents may be merely notified and/or a conference requested to assist in resolving the situation. For more serious issues that involve removal of the student from participation in the school, parents will always be notified and have opportunities to discuss and appeal the disciplinary action. In cases where the student has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified.

When the school proposes suspending a student, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as practicable by telephone. If the school has the parent/guardian's email address, notification will be provided by email. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a short-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian that he/she will have the opportunity to request an informal conference with the Principal or his/her designee. At an informal conference, the student and parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to deny or explain the charges, to present his/her own evidence and question the complaining witness(es). A written decision will be issued after the informal conference. The written notice and informal conference shall be in the parent/guardian's dominant language or translation will be made.

- **Short-Term Suspension:** A short-term suspension is defined as an in-school or out-of-school suspension of 5 days or less. The Principal may impose short-term suspension for serious cause. If necessary, the student will be immediately removed from the class or the school. The school staff involved shall make reasonable efforts to verify facts and statements prior to recommending suspension. When the school proposes suspending a student, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as practicable by telephone. If the school has the parent/guardian's email address, notification will be provided by email. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a short-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the

proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian that he/she will have the opportunity to request an informal conference with the Principal or his/her designee. At an informal conference, the student and parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to deny or explain the charges and to present his/her own evidence. The Principal may then, at his or her discretion, decide to impose lesser consequences than suspension. A written decision will be issued after the informal conference. Both the informal conference and subsequent written notice shall be in the parent/guardian's dominant language or translation will be made.

- **Long-Term Suspension:** A long-term suspension is defined as an in-school or out-of-school suspension of more than 5 days. When the school proposes a long-term suspension, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately or as soon as practicable by telephone. If the school has the parent/guardian's email address, notification will be provided by email. The parent/guardian will also be notified by overnight mail service or other method to his/her last known address within 24 hours of the school's decision to propose a long-term suspension. The written notice will include the reason(s) for the proposed suspension, the proposed duration of the suspension and whether the proposed suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. The written notice will also advise the parent/guardian and the student of the student's right to a formal hearing at which he/she may be represented by counsel, cross-examine witnesses against him/her, and present witnesses and evidence of his/her own. If the student or his/her parent/guardian will be represented by counsel at the hearing, notice must be provided to the Principal no less than 2 days before the hearing is scheduled. The written notice and hearing shall be in the parent/guardian's dominant language or a translation will be made. The Principal or a delegate will preside over the hearing and all members of the staff who were involved in witnessing the alleged discipline violation are required to participate. A decision by the Principal will stand as the final decision regarding the student's long-term suspension status, though the student's family has the right to appeal to the Board of Trustees.
- **Expulsion:** An expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from the school. In the case of conduct which in the school's judgment warrants expulsion, the student may be subjected to a short or long-term suspension first. If the Principal decides that an infraction warrants expulsion, a hearing as described above will be held. Based on that hearing, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which will make the final decision. That decision may be appealed to the Board. If the school expels a student, the school will cooperate with any school to which the student seeks to enroll, including providing the receiving school with all relevant information regarding the student's academic performance and student records, upon request of the school or parent/guardian.

Students with Disabilities: The school's disciplinary policy, as regards any student with a disability, will be consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), its implementing regulations and applicable New York State 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.

Generally, a student with, or suspected of having, a disability may be disciplined in the same manner as his/her non-disabled peers as set forth above. However, 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, additional 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, as described in this paragraph, 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 Committee on Special Education (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 eight 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 ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

Guardian Academy will work with the CSE to ensure that it meets within seven 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 principal would seek to impose a suspension in excess of ten days.

Specifically, 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 generally; (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 if possible, but in no event later than 10 days after the decision to change placement, to determine whether the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability.

In the event of a proposed short-term or long-term suspension or expulsion of a student with disabilities, the school will follow the notice procedures described above for students without disabilities. The notice to the parent/guardian will advise that the CSE has been notified. The

notice will state the purpose of the CSE meeting and 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 (i.e., the placement from which he/she was removed), unless: (a) the parent and district agree to another placement as part of the newly created or revised BIP, or (b) in cases where the child:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) 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 local educational agency; or
- (iii) 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 local educational agency;

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.

Alternative Instruction: Students who are suspended will be provided with alternative instruction. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family on a case-by-case basis. In cases of suspension, alternative instruction by qualified staff will be offered within 24 hours of any suspension. Such instruction can be at a location and time of the school's choosing, so long as each is reasonable and the student has notice of it. The school can choose to provide tutoring to a suspended student at the school, the student's home or some other reasonably accessible location, either during the school day or before or after school hours. Alternative instruction means actual instruction as opposed to simply giving homework or assigning self-study. The quality of the instruction will be designed to allow the student to keep pace with school work, receive all assignments and assessments, and generally advance with the curriculum. In addition, when appropriate, the student may be assigned a project

designed to address the conduct that gave rise to the suspension. During long-term suspensions, the school may also seek to place the student during the term of the suspension in any alternate education program that is operated by the student's school district of residence. For a student who has been expelled by the school, the means and manner of alternative instruction will be the same as for a student who has been suspended. Alternative instruction will be provided until the student is enrolled at another accredited school, or otherwise participating in an accredited program, including any alternative education program operated by the student's school district of residence, to the extent the provision of such services is required by law. As above, the school may seek, where appropriate, to place the student in an alternative education program operated by the student's school district of residence either through agreement with the school district or by operation of law.

If the suspension of a student with a disability is upheld, the student, at the school's sole discretion, may be placed in alternative instruction, or be required to remain at home during the pendency of the suspension, but not for a period of time greater than the amount of time a non-disabled student would be subject to suspension for the same behavior. A suspended elementary school student will be assigned to alternative instruction for direct instruction for a minimum of one hour per day. The school will assign staff to develop alternative instruction that will enable the student to complete required coursework and make sure that the student progresses toward his/her 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. The school will coordinate with the student's general education teachers to ensure that the coursework and homework is gathered and provided to the student. During alternative instruction, the school will insure all assignments are taught, reviewed, and submitted to the general education teacher in a timely fashion. In addition, when appropriate, the student may be assigned a project designed to address the behavior that gave rise to the suspension.

Attachment 5b: By-Laws

**BYLAWS
OF
GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL**

A New York Education Corporation

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

Section 1.1 Name. The name of this corporation is Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (the "Corporation").

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

Section 2.1 Purpose. The Corporation has been organized as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The Corporation will take no action that is inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE III
OFFICE**

Section 3.1 Offices. The Corporation's principal office shall be located at 920 First Street, Peekskill, NY 10566. The Board (as defined in Section 5.1 below) may change the location of the Corporation's principal office.

**ARTICLE IV
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Section 4.1 Powers. Subject to any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation, all powers and activities of the Corporation shall be exercised and managed by the Board of Trustees of the Corporation (the "Board"). Trustees shall have no power as individual Trustees and shall act only as members of the Board.

Section 4.2 Number of Trustees. The authorized number of Trustees shall be not less than five, with the exact number of authorized Trustees to be fixed by the Board from time to time.

Section 4.3 Term of Office. Each Trustee shall be elected for a term of 3 years and shall hold office until a successor has been elected and qualified. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the first three years of its existence, at least two Board members shall serve a 1-year term, and at least two Board members shall serve a 2-year term. New Board members may be elected at any time to fill vacancies. If a Board member is elected at a time other than the annual meeting, his or her 3-year term shall be calculated starting from the date of the most recent annual meeting.

Section 4.4 Resignation. A Trustee may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair of the Board or the Secretary. Any resignation shall take effect upon receipt of notice or at any later time specified in that notice. Unless otherwise specified in the notice of resignation, affirmative acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. If the resignation specifies a later effective date, a successor may be elected prior to such effective date to take office when the resignation becomes effective.

Section 4.5 Removal. A Trustee may be removed from office at any time by a vote of a majority of the Trustees then in office, in a manner consistent with the laws of New York.

Section 4.6 Vacancies. A vacancy in the Board shall be deemed to exist in the event that the actual number of Trustees is less than the authorized number for any reason. The Board may declare vacant the office of any Trustee who has been declared of unsound mind by a final order of court or has been convicted of a felony. Vacancies on the Board may be filled by approval of the Board of Trustees or, if the number of Trustees then in office is less than a quorum, by (1) unanimous written consent of the Trustees then in office, (2) a vote of a majority of the Trustees then in office at a meeting called in accordance with Sections 6.3 and 6.4, or (3) a sole remaining Trustee. Each Trustee elected or appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the term, or until his or her death, resignation, or removal from office.

Section 4.7 Compensation of Trustees. Trustees shall not receive any compensation for their services as Trustees or for any other goods or services. Trustees shall not accept gifts in excess of \$75 dollars from any individual or entity in any way related to the school operated by the corporation. The Board may authorize the advance or reimbursement to a Trustee of actual reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out his or her duties as a Trustee.

Section 4.8 Standing Committees. The Board may create standing committees made up of at least two Board members elected by the Board to focus on particular aspects of the operation of the Corporation. The Executive Committee shall include the Board Officers and focus on setting Board agendas and coordinating the work of the Board. Other committees may include a Finance Committee to focus on accounting for revenues and expenditures, an Academic Accountability Committee to focus on implementation of the education plan and achievement of accountability goals, and a Governance Committee to focus on the effectiveness of the Board and recruitment and nomination of additional Board members.

Section 4.9 Advisory Committees. The Board may create one or more Advisory Committees, each consisting of two or more Trustees, non-Trustees or a combination of Trustees and non-Trustees. Appointments to any Advisory Committee shall be by approval of the Board of Trustees. Advisory Committees may not exercise the authority of the Board to make decisions on behalf of the Corporation. Advisory Committees shall be restricted to making recommendations to the Board or Board Committees and implementing Board or Board Committee decisions and policies under the supervision and control of the Board or Board Committee.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 5.1 Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the Board shall be held each year on a date to be specified by the Board and will coincide with one of the regular meetings.

Section 5.2 Regular Meetings. When the Corporation holds a charter for the operation of a public school and such school is operating, serving enrolled students and receiving public funds for such operation, regular meetings of the Board shall be held each month at the school.

Section 5.3 Quorum and Voting. A majority of the total number of authorized Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The vote of a majority of the Trustees present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or in the Articles of Incorporation of this Corporation, or by law, no business shall be considered by the Board at any meeting at which a quorum is not present, and the only motion which the Chair of the Board shall entertain at such meeting is a motion to adjourn. The Trustees present at a duly called and held meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to do business notwithstanding the loss of a quorum at the meeting due to a withdrawal of Trustees from the meeting, provided that any action thereafter taken must be approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such meeting or such greater percentage as may be required by law, or the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws.

Section 5.4 Video Participation in Meetings. Trustees may participate in a meeting through use of video screen communication. Participation in a meeting through use of video screen communication constitutes presence in person at that meeting so long as all members participating in the meeting are able to see and hear one another.

ARTICLE VI CERTAIN MATTERS

Section 6.1 Board-Approved Policies. The Board may adopt additional governance and management policies as it deems appropriate.

Section 6.2 Executive Compensation Review. The Board (or a Board Committee) shall review any compensation packages (including all benefits) of the Principal. The Board shall approve such compensation only after determining that the compensation is just and reasonable. This review and approval shall occur annually, as well as when such officer is hired, when the term of employment of such officer is renewed or extended, and when the compensation of such officer is modified, unless the modification applies to substantially all of the employees of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

Section 7.1 Officers. The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chair of the Board, an Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Chair of the Board must be a Trustee. The Corporation may also have such other officers as may be determined by the Board. One person may hold two or more offices, except that neither the Secretary nor the Treasurer may serve concurrently as the Chair of the Board.

Section 7.2 Election and Term. The officers of the Corporation shall be elected by the Board at an annual meeting and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Section 7.3 Chair of the Board. The Chair of the Board shall, if present, preside at all meetings of the Board, and shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by these Bylaws or the Board.

Section 7.4 Secretary. The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a full and complete record of the proceedings of the Board and its committees, shall give or cause to be given notice of all Board meetings as required by law or these Bylaws, and in general shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by these Bylaws or the Board.

Section 7.5 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the Corporation. The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct books and records of account. The Treasurer shall send or cause to be given to the Trustees such financial statements and reports as are required to be given by law, and as may be prescribed by these Bylaws or the Board. The books of account shall be open to inspection by any Trustee upon request at all reasonable times. The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all money and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as designated by the Board, shall disburse or cause to be disbursed the Corporation's funds as ordered by the Board, shall render to the Board, upon request, an account of the Treasurer's transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by these Bylaws or the Board.

Section 7.6 Resignation. An officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Corporation. Any resignation shall take effect upon receipt of notice or at any later time specified in that notice. Unless otherwise specified in the notice of resignation, affirmative acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any resignation is without prejudice to the contract or other rights, if any, of the Corporation in respect of the officer.

Section 7.7 Removal. Officers may be removed from office by the Board, consistent with the voting procedures in the bylaws.

Section 7.8 Vacancies. A vacancy in any office for any reason shall be filled by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII INDEMNIFICATION

Section 8.1 Definitions. For purposes of this Article, “Agent” means any person who is or was a Trustee, officer, employee or other agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Trustee, officer, employee or other agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise; “Proceeding” means any threatened, pending or completed action or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative; and “Expenses” includes, without limitation, attorneys’ fees and any expenses incurred in establishing a right to indemnification under Section 9.2 of this Article.

Section 8.2 Right to Indemnity. The Corporation may, to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any Proceeding by reason of the fact that such person is or was an Agent of the Corporation, against Expenses, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the Proceeding.

Section 8.3 Approval of Indemnity. On written request to the Board by any Agent seeking indemnification, to the extent that the Agent has been successful on the merits, the Board shall promptly authorize indemnification in accordance with law. Otherwise, the Board shall promptly determine, by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of Trustees who are not parties to the Proceeding, whether, in the specific case, the Agent has met the applicable standard of conduct stated, and, if so, may authorize indemnification to the extent permitted thereby.

Section 8.4 Advancing Expenses. The Board may authorize the advance of Expenses incurred by or on behalf of an Agent of the Corporation in defending any Proceeding before the final disposition of such Proceeding, if the Board finds that:

- (a) the requested advances are reasonable in amount under the circumstances; and

- (b) before any advance is made, the Agent submits a written undertaking satisfactory to the Board, in its sole discretion, to repay the advance unless it is ultimately determined that the Agent is entitled to indemnification for the Expenses under this Article.

Section 8.5 Insurance. The Board shall have the power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any Agent against any liability asserted against or incurred by the Agent in such capacity or arising out of the Agent's status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify the Agent against such liability under this Article.

ARTICLE IX FISCAL YEAR AND REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Section 9.1 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

ARTICLE X GIFTS, GRANTS, CONTRACTS, INVESTMENTS

Section 10.1 Gifts. The Board may accept on behalf of the Corporation any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the general purposes or for any specific purpose of the Corporation. The Corporation shall retain complete control and discretion over the use of all contributions it receives.

Section 10.2 Grants. The Board shall exercise itself, or delegate, subject to its supervision, control over grants, contributions, and other financial assistance provided by the Corporation, including, without limitation, fiscal sponsorship relationships.

Section 10.3 Contracts. The Board may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s), in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument. Any such authority may be general or confined to specific instances, or otherwise limited. Consistent with actions by the Board, the Chair of the Board is authorized to execute such instruments on behalf of the Corporation.

Section 10.4 Payment of Money. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, all checks, drafts or other orders for payment of money out of the funds of the Corporation and all notes or other evidences of indebtedness of the Corporation may be signed on behalf of the Corporation by the Treasurer.

Section 10.5 Deposits. The funds of the Corporation not otherwise employed, including any amounts in any reserve fund, shall be deposited from time to time to the order of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board may select.

Section 10.6 Investments. In investing, reinvesting, purchasing, acquiring, exchanging, selling and managing the Corporation's investments, other than assets which are directly related to the Corporation's public or charitable programs, the Board shall avoid speculation, looking instead to the permanent disposition of the funds, considering the probable income, as well as the probable safety of the Corporation's capital. No investment violates this Section where it conforms to provisions authorizing the investment contained in an instrument or agreement pursuant to which the assets were contributed to the Corporation.

ARTICLE XI CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Section 11.1. Purpose. The purpose of the conflicts of interest policy is to protect the Corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or Trustee of the Corporation. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable corporations.

Section 11.2. Definitions.

- (a) Interested Person. Any Trustee, principal officer, or member of a committee with Board-delegated powers who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.
- (b) Financial Interest. A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment or family:
 - (1) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or
 - (2) a compensation arrangement with the Corporation or with any entity or individual with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or
 - (3) a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are substantial in nature.

Section 11.3. Procedures.

- (a) Duty to Disclose. In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of his or her financial interest and all material facts relating thereto to the Board of Trustees.

- (b) Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts relating thereto, and after any discussion thereof, the interested person shall leave the Board of Trustees' meeting while the financial interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board of Trustees shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

- (c) Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest
 - (1) An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Trustees, but after such presentation, he or she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement that results in the conflict of interest.

 - (2) The Board shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

 - (3) After exercising due diligence, the Board of Trustees shall determine whether the Corporation can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

 - (4) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the Board of Trustees shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Trustees whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Corporation's best interest and for its own benefit and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to the Corporation and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement in conformity with such determination.

- (d) Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy
 - (1) If the Board of Trustees has reasonable cause to believe that a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief

and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

(2) If, after hearing the response of the member and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Board of Trustees determines that the member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Section 11.4. Records of Proceedings. The minutes of the Board of Trustees and all committees with Board-delegated powers shall contain:

- (a) Names of Persons with Financial Interest. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board of Trustees' decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- (b) Names of Persons Present. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

Section 11.5. Annual Statements. Each Trustee, principal officer and member of a committee with Board-delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms that such person:

- (a) Receipt. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy.
- (b) Read and Understands. Has read and understands the policy.
- (c) Agrees to Comply. Has agreed to comply with the policy.
- (d) Tax Exemption. Understands that the Corporation is a charitable organization and that, in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Section 11.6. Periodic Reviews. To ensure that the Corporation operates in a manner consistent with its charitable purposes and that it does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its status as an organization exempt from federal income tax, the Corporation may conduct periodic reviews.

**ARTICLE XII
OTHER PROVISIONS**

Section 12.1 Rights of Inspection. Every Trustee shall have the right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records and documents, and to inspect the physical properties of the Corporation.

Section 12.2 Electronic Transmissions. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, and subject to any guidelines and procedures that the Board may adopt from time to time, the terms "written" and "in writing" as used in these Bylaws include any form of recorded message in the English language capable of comprehension by ordinary visual means, and may include electronic transmissions, such as facsimile or email, provided (i) for electronic transmissions from the Corporation, the Corporation has obtained an unrevoked written consent from the recipient to the use of such means of communication; (ii) for electronic transmissions to the Corporation, the Corporation has in effect reasonable measures to verify that the sender is the individual purporting to have sent such transmission; and (iii) the transmission creates a record that can be retained, retrieved, reviewed, and rendered into clearly legible tangible form.

**ARTICLE XIII
AMENDMENTS**

Section 13.1 Amendment of Bylaws. Except as otherwise provided by law, these Bylaws may be amended or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by approval of the Board.

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, _____, hereby certify:

That I am duly elected and acting Secretary of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill, and that the foregoing Bylaws constitute Bylaws of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill, as duly adopted at the meeting of the Board held on _____.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunder subscribed my name this _____ day of _____, 2013.

_____, Secretary

**GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

Preamble

The Board of Trustees, Officers and staff members of Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill (Guardian Academy) owe a duty of loyalty and trust to Guardian Academy, which requires that in their positions, they act in the interest of Guardian Academy and not in their personal interests. Trustees, Officers and staff members may not use their positions or information they have about Guardian Academy or Guardian Academy's property or information obtained through their positions in a manner that allows them to secure an economic benefit, either directly or indirectly, for themselves or their relatives or associates.

Trustees and Officers of Guardian Academy are fiduciaries to the institution as a whole, collectively responsible for overseeing the welfare of the school and the pursuit of its mission. Although Trustees and Officers may have other relationships with Guardian Academy, Trustees and Officers must put aside these personal relationships and concern themselves solely with what is the best current and long-term interest of the institution as a whole. Fiduciary responsibilities require each of them to approach every decision from the perspective of Guardian Academy's overall best interest, putting aside consideration of how specific decisions may affect, favorably or unfavorably, themselves and family and friends.

The fiduciary duty also requires that Trustees and Officers avoid conflicts of interest and even the appearance of such conflicts, by refraining from participation in any deliberation or decision by the Board of Trustees that might affect them uniquely as an individual. To avoid a conflict of interest, trustees, officers or employees of any single organization shall hold no more than forty percent (40%) of the total seats comprising the Board of Trustees. In sum, it is the policy of Guardian Academy that no transaction between it and its Trustees, Officers or staff members be tainted with an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Disclosure

- (a) Prior to election to the Board of Trustees or appointment as a Trustee or an Officer, and annually thereafter, all Trustees and Officers shall disclose in writing, to the best of their knowledge, any Interest (as defined below) in any corporation or other organization that provides goods or professional or other services to Guardian Academy for a fee or other compensation. Under no circumstances shall any trustee, officer, individual, or employee of a for-profit corporation, limited liability company, or partnership having a business relationship with Guardian Academy involving the provision of educational management services to Guardian Academy for a fee or other compensation serve as a voting member of the Board of Trustees. A copy of each disclosure statement shall be available to any Trustee of Guardian Academy on request.

- (b) If at any time during his or her term of service, a Trustee or an Officer has any Interest which may pose a conflict of interest at any time during that Trustee's or Officer's service, he or she shall promptly disclose the material facts of that Interest in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of the Governance committee of the Board of Trustees. Trustees and Officers shall make all appropriate financial disclosures whenever a grievance of conflict of interest is lodged against them.
- (c) When any matter in which a Trustee or an Officer has an Interest comes before the Board of Trustees or any committee of the Board of Trustees for decision or approval, that Interest shall be immediately disclosed to the Board of Trustees or the committee by that Trustee or Officer, and the Trustee or Officer shall recuse himself/herself from any discussion and/or vote relating thereto.

Code of Conduct

- (a) Trustees, Officers, and employees may never ask a subordinate, a student, or a parent of a student to work on or give to any political campaign.
- (b) Trustees, Officers, and employees will exercise the highest degree of care not to disclose confidential information including, but not limited to:
- Student records
 - Financial information
 - Personnel records
 - Payroll records
- (c) Trustees, Officers, and employees will observe rules of behavior and conduct. Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
 - Falsification of documents
 - Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or while on duty
 - Use of tobacco or tobacco products on school grounds
 - Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
 - Violation of safety or health rules
 - Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
 - Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice

Definition of "Interest"

Whether a Trustee or an Officer has an Interest in a matter shall be determined by whether that Trustee or Officer or a relative (or a company with which such persons are associated) would have an economic interest, either directly or indirectly, in a decision on the matter by the Board of Trustees or committee. A "relative" is an immediate family member, which is a mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, child, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law,

brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, legal dependent or other relative(s) (including step relatives) who resides in the home. A person is associated with a company if he or she has a 5% or greater ownership interest in the company or is a director, officer, employee or partner of the company. An Interest is not intended to include fundraising and advocacy efforts.

Staff

The Principal is directed to apply to the faculty and staff of Guardian Academy rules and procedures consistent with the rules and procedures outlined above for Trustees and Officers. For purposes of this Policy, the term Officer shall include the Principal, directors, the heads of academic and administrative departments and certain other designated personnel.

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Edward T. Beglane, Ed.D.

Charter School Name: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Charter School Address: 920 First Street, Peekskill, NY 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Board of Trustees Member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. Father John Higgins mentioned to me the possibility of the Charter School. I immediately asked him if I could be part of the Board.

5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. Father Higgins and I worked together in the late 1990s at Holy Rosary School. I have tremendous admiration for him and his concern for providing a quality education for inner city children. In my role as a Principal in an inner city public school, I know how important a quality education is for the lives of the students and the community. I want to be part of a venture to build a quality school in Peekskill, a town I used to visit with my father as a child.
6. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board. This does not apply to me. Yes. (Include description here): I have been a principal for 16 years, the last 12 years in the Yonkers Public Schools. I have also been an Assistant Principal for 2/5 years and a classroom teacher for five years. My experience and skill set will provide a guiding hand in the Charter School.
7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction. This does not apply to me. Yes.
If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

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

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: I first met Father Higgins in June 1996 when he was a Parochial Vicar at Holy Rosary School in the Bronx and I was the principal of Holy Rosary School. Through Father Higgins, I met Natalie DiPaolo over the years. She and I worked together at Family School 32, in Yonkers, for two years. I also know Stefani Raschiella, who I met several times over the years through Father Higgins. Audrey Warn and I know each other through Father Higgins and we both had sons graduate from Iona Prep.

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

No. Yes.

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

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

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please

indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

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

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

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate. This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members. Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.
 None Yes
17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. I would emphatically ask them to step down.

Educational Philosophy

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or
The Mission of the Guardian Academy Charter School Of Peekskill is to provide a quality education that instills character education and higher order thinking skills. Furthermore, the Guardian Academy Charter School will provide the Peekskill community with an educational option that teaches a values-infused, content-rich curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in order to build character and prepare students for success in high school, college and careers.
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. There will be a heavy emphasis on ELL students since that is large percentage of students in the Peekskill community. The school will provide push in and pull out ELL services based upon the Lab R assessment and use a comprehensive approach to teaching reading and writing. There will be character education infused throughout the curriculum with a rigorous approach coupled with high expectations for students and staff.
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the

board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

Undertaking a school is a process. I was a principal at Family School 32 that grew from a PreK-5 school to a PreK-8 School. I am currently a Principal at a PreK-Grade 4 school that opened in September 2011 as a PreK-Grade 3 school. Our goal is to become a PreK-Grade 8 school. I know the importance of details in opening and growing a school. Each aspect-including hiring a staff, ordering supplies, developing a philosophy, recruiting families, responding to the needs of the community, navigating through educational law, district, statewide initiatives-all must be dealt with a thoroughness and comprehensive approach that incorporates the mission of the school. With my experience and background, I feel I can provide an insight that will enhance the growth of the academy.

Other

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

My understanding of the board is to have ongoing dialogue with the other members of the board to exchange of ideas and philosophies on providing the best possible education for the students of the community. Our charge is to oversee all aspects of the school and to help ensure that a principal is hired to match the needs of the school and the community.

22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. Yes, I have read through the application process and have read and a thorough understanding of the by-laws and policies of the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill.

23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review. I have spent over 30 years in education at all levels-elementary, middle school, high school and at college. I know how education can transform lives. I know the importance of reading. I have seen the light bulb turn on and the joy when a child *knows* he or she can read. I have experienced the sense of accomplishment when a student makes better choices in their lives and earns a high school degree or a college diploma. And I know that the journey of a college degree begins at the elementary level.

I also am versed in the Common Core Learning Standards. I have attended and provided workshops on the new standards and I want to oversee the infusion of the CCLS into the Academy. The Common Core is a comprehensive approach that provides a tremendous amount of resources for educators. The CCLS can be overwhelming. Just like opening a school is a process, so are the CCLS. I feel I can lend a guiding hand in these

processes.

I also have a doctorate degree from St. John's University in Administration and Supervision. This coupled with my work experience will bring insight to the Board as we move forward with our initiative.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I Edward T. Beglane, Ed.D.(name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Edward T. Beglane Ed.D.

3/5/13

Signature

Date

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

Business Telephone: _____

Business Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Home Address: _____



Administrative Experience

- 8/11-Present** **Principal**
Thomas Cornell Academy, Yonkers, NY
- Opened a new Yonkers Public School Grades PreK-Grade 3 that is growing to PreK-8
 - Manage and supervise 18 teachers and a staff of 30 and 330 students
 - Implemented *Second Step*, Weekly Character Themes, *Sanctuary Model*, Treasures Reading Program, Common Core Learning Standards, enVisions Math, Book Marches, to the local library, created a partnership with Andrus Children's Center, Coordinate weekly staff development sessions
- 8/01-8/11** **Principal**
Family School 32, Yonkers, NY
- Responsible for 500 students in a PreK-5 school with 43 teachers, and a total staff of 75 for a PreK-5 school that grew to a PreK-8 from 2005 to 2008
 - Spearheaded a RTI program, *Second Step*, Inclusion Model, Open Court Reading, Parent Center, Community Outreach, coordinate weekly staff development sessions
 - Free and Reduced Lunch Rate of 60%
 - Family School 32 was awarded a certificate for improvement in ELA and Math scores from 2001-2003 by the NY State Department of Education
- 8/99-7/01** **Assistant Principal**
Casimir Pulaski School, Yonkers, NY
- PreK-5 school with 335 students
 - Coordinated *Success for All* Reading Program
- 1/99-6/99** **Assistant Principal, Eighth Grade**
Burroughs Middle School, Yonkers, NY
- Supervised eighth grade with a student population of 495 and 27 teachers
- 1995-1/99** **Principal**
Holy Rosary School, Bronx, NY
- Responsible for 645 students, Grades Pre-K through 8th
 - Supervised a full-time faculty of 22, staff of 43 and managed a budget of \$1.6 million

Teaching Experience

- 1982-1985** ***Social Studies/Business Education Teacher, Varsity Basketball Coach
Long Island City High School, Long Island City, NY***
- Taught Global Studies I, II, Business Law, Distributive Education
 - Varsity Basketball Coach for three seasons; two league championships
- 1981-1982** ***Eighth Grade Teacher
St. Pascal's Grammar School, St. Albans, NY***
- Taught eighth grade in a self-contained classroom
- 1980-1981** ***Social Studies Teacher
Jamaica Prep High School, Jamaica, NY***
- Taught American History, Physical Education and Health

Other Experience

- 1988-1995** ***Assistant Basketball Coach***
- Manhattan College, Riverdale, N Y
 - Two NCAA appearances; two NIT appearances
- 1985-1988** ***Assistant Basketball Coach***
- Niagara University, Niagara, N Y
 - NIT appearance in 1987

Certification

- New York State Permanent Certification in Business Education, Speech and School District Administration

Publication

- Article Published in 10/01 in the *NASSP Bulletin*

Education

St. John's University, Jamaica, NY

- 2001** Doctoral Degree in Educational Administration and Supervision
- 1997** Professional Diploma in Administration and Supervision
- 1984** Master of Science Degree in Education
- 1980** Bachelor of Science Degree; Major in Communication Arts, Minor in Business

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Russell D'Costa

Charter School Name: Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Charter School Address: 920 First Street, Peekskill, N.Y. 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached.
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. See Addendum attached
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. see Addendum attached

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

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No. Yes.

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

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

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

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

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

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

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

None Yes

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

Educational Philosophy

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

Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. See Addendum Attached
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. I affirm that I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed actions.
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

School Trustee Background Information Addendum

4. I became aware of the charter school after hearing Reverend John Higgins mention the idea. I became aware of the opportunity to serve as a member of its board after Reverend John Higgins personally contacted me and presented me with the opportunity.

5. I wish to serve on the board because I support the school's proposed mission and I also believe my perspective as a life-long resident of Peekskill coupled with my legal background and experience will add value to the board and assist in ensuring its functions in a responsible manner.

6. I believe my experience serving as an associate attorney working with a school law firm is relevant to my service on the charter school board because it exposed me to the New York State Education Law and I routinely worked with legal matters related to schools.

17. I would initially confirm the basis of my belief by addressing the matter with the member(s) involved to gather specific details about the situation. I would then advise the member(s) of their duty of loyalty to the charter school. I would proceed to share my concerns about the situation with the other board members and call for an emergency meeting pursuant to the board's by-laws.

18. My understanding of the charter school's mission is to offer an alternative to the public school system that emphasizes development of each student's character and focuses on each student achieving long-term success throughout their high school careers and beyond.

19. My understanding of the educational program of the charter school includes the school initially serving grades kindergarten through 3rd grade, and then adding an additional grade annually up to the 7th grade by Year 5 of the initial charter. Irrespective of grade, there will be an academic environment which has high expectations for its students and fosters enthusiastic learners who possess self-discipline, think analytically, and are creative.

20. I believe characteristics of a successful charter school include:

- the existence of a proactive school board that holds its leaders accountable for meeting performance goals and complying with all requisite laws and regulations;
- raises public awareness of the charter school's existence and mission throughout the surrounding community;
- possesses realistic and measurable goals for student achievement;
- possesses a strategic long-term plan for sustaining student success.

I believe the charter school board achieving the above steps will ensure the school's success.

21. The appropriate role of a public charter school board member is one who: attends all board meetings, is an active participant in all actions taken by the board, maintains confidentiality and the duties of care, loyalty, and obedience owed to the school, is personally accountable for their actions and decisions made on behalf of the board, and serves as an advocate for the school throughout the community it serves.

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

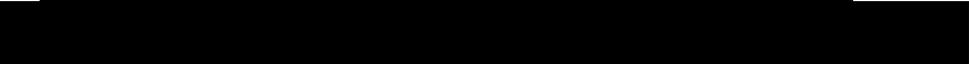
STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

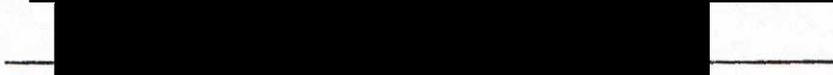
I, Russell D'Costa (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

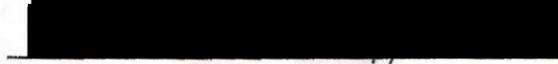
 3/6/13
Signature Date

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

Business Telephone: 

Business Address: 

E-Mail Address: 

Home Telephone: 

Home Address: 

RUSSELL C. D' COSTA

EXPERIENCE

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Montrose, NY

Employee & Labor Relations Specialist, October 2010 – present

Responsible for wide variety of employee and labor relations actions including: administering disciplinary actions, grievances, arbitrations, and negotiations for federal hospital facility with over 1,600 employees, four labor unions, and two campuses; serve as a liaison between management and union officials; research policies, laws, regulations, and court decisions; prepare MSPB Appeals and FLRA agency responses; assist in administration of investigations; counsel upper-level management on all labor relations and employee relations issues; appointed as facility's Integrated Ethics™ Program Officer, Local Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator, and Drug Free Workplace Program Coordinator; attained highest annual performance rating of "Outstanding" for each year working with agency.

New York State Office of the Attorney General, New York, NY

Volunteer Assistant Attorney General, Environmental Protection Bureau, September 2009 – September 2010

Responsible for prosecution and strategy of multiple open cases involving illegal petroleum discharges under Attorney General Andrew Cuomo; drafted motions and marked pleadings involving CERCLA cases; collaborated with other attorneys, performed pretrial discovery and research as required.

Legal Support Personnel for Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, New York, NY

Contract Attorney, May 2007 – February 2009

Used e-discovery programs to review client files for privilege and responsiveness to CFTC and FINRA subpoenas alleging commodities trading manipulation and securities fraud; performed secondary quality assurance review; created privilege log.

Ingerman Smith, LLP, Harrison, NY

Associate Attorney, September 2006 – March 2007

General Counsel to school districts throughout Westchester County, focusing on education and labor law. Provided opinion letters, and FOIL request responses to clients; drafted post-hearing briefs for Special Education impartial hearings; second-chaired collective bargaining negotiations and related arbitration proceedings; interviewed witnesses in preparation for employee disciplinary proceeding.

New York State Unified Court System 2005-2006 Legal Fellows Program, New York, NY

Court Attorney to the Hon. Dianne T. Renwick, Bronx County Supreme Court, September 2005 – September 2006

Drafted decisions and orders and jury verdict sheets for civil matters including medical malpractice, premises liability, and automobile accident cases; conferenced cases with opposing counsel to encourage settlement.

EDUCATION

Vermont Law School, South Royalton, VT Juris Doctor, May 2004; Master of Environmental Law and Policy, May 2004

Academic Excellence Awards in Corporations (2003) and Appellate Advocacy (2002)

Semester in Practice Program with Belluck & Fox LLP, New York, NY

Extern/Law Clerk, Spring 2004

Assisted with asbestos litigation: discovery, pretrial hearings, depositions, affirmations, complaints and motions.

Summer Internship, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Long Island City, NY

Region 2- Division of Environmental Enforcement & Legal Affairs Intern, Summer 2003

Responsible for enforcement of multiple open cases involving illegal distribution and sale of pesticide products: issued notices of violation, administered settlement conferences with violators, drafted and served corresponding consent orders.

Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, 2001-04; Vice President, Spring 2002-03

Teaching Assistant, First-year Legal Research course, Fall 2002

Binghamton University, State University of New York at Binghamton, NY

B.A., Environmental Studies, Concentration in Public Policy Administration and Law; Minor in Anthropology, May 2001

Harpur College Dean's List, Spring 1999, Fall 2000, Spring 2001; Honors in General Education, Spring 2001

White House Internship Program, Washington, DC, *Office of Environmental Initiatives*, Spring 2000

Worked for Deputy Assistant to the President for Environmental Initiatives during the Clinton Administration; researched hybrid automobiles for use in President's State of the Union Address; compiled Earth Day 2000 campaign databases.

Harpur College Academic Honesty Committee, Fall 1999

PUBLICATIONS

"The Bench Exam" 34 Westchester B. J. 18 (2007); "The Value of Volunteering," Westchester Bar Newsletter, March 2007; "The Makah's Right to Whale," 12 Animal L. 71 (2005) (Lewis & Clark Law School).

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: JAMIE J. SANCHEZ

Charter School Name: GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PEEKSKILL

Charter School Address: 920 FIRST STREET, PEEKSKILL, NEW YORK 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Board of Trustees

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.

I became aware of the Guardian Academy Charter School through Reverend John J. Higgins, Pastor of Assumption Church in Peekskill. I have known Reverend Higgins since his arrival to Peekskill in 2006 and have witnessed his spiritual leadership and guidance influence many lives—especially our ethnically and culturally diverse families. I am a native of Peekskill, pursuing a degree in accounting, determined to contribute to the city that has and continues to nurture me. Reverend Higgins reached out to me believing that I had the skill set required to serve on the Board.

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

As a Peekskill native, I welcome the opportunity to serve the children of this community that was so nurturing to me. I wholeheartedly support the concept of school choice reflected in the charter school movement. It allows families the opportunity to make educational choices that suit the needs of their children. I firmly believe in this proposed school and will make every effort to be a strong voice and advocate for the children we will serve.

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

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

9. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective or current board members.
 I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.
If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.
 I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.
If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:
11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.
 No. Yes.
If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:
12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
 I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
 I / we have no such interest. Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be

conducted.

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

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

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate. This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members. Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.
 None Yes
17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would immediately inform my fellow board members of this situation, request an immediate meeting and then comply with bylaws for investigation.

Educational Philosophy

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

The mission of the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill is to provide its students with an opportunity to learn in an environment that has high expectations for their achievement, provides the tools to help them meet those expectations and emphasizes a values-infused curriculum.

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

The educational program will be rigorous yet supportive. It will emphasize fundamentals, especially strong reading and language arts skills across the curriculum. Above all, character counts at the Guardian Academy Charter School as it recognizes that it takes more than academic achievement to be a success.

20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the

board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A charter school board will need to be mindful of the diverse community it will serve—making consideration for cultural differences and language barriers. The board must have a high level of commitment and dedication. It must be fiscally responsible and make responsible management choices.

Other

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

The appropriate role of a Board member is to be committed, dedicated, accountable and ever mindful of the people we serve.

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

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, JAMIE J. SANCHEZ (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Jamie J. Sanchez
Signature

03/06/2013

Date

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

Business Telephone: _____ N/A

Business Address: _____ N/A

E-Mail Address: _____ [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: _____ [REDACTED]

Home Address: _____ [REDACTED]

Jamie J. Sanchez



EDUCATION

Pace University

Bachelor of Business Administration, expected May 2014
Public Accounting - 150 Credit Course
Dean's Transfer Scholarship GPA: 3.60

Pleasantville, New York

September 2011 – Present

Monroe College

34 Credits of Coursework towards Accounting degree
President's List

New Rochelle, New York

September 2010 – April 2011

WORK EXPERIENCE

Church of the Assumption

Receptionist

- Prepare and translate documents for non-English speaking members of the parish
- Schedule appointments either manually or electronically on Microsoft Outlook
- Provide information to callers in either English or Spanish

Peekskill, New York

February 2011 – Present

LEADERSHIP, HONORS & ACTIVITIES

Deloitte & Touche LLP

Stamford Mentor Program, Stamford, CT—Summer 2012

- Participated in workshops and team activities geared towards career development

Anticipating Audit Internship, Stamford, CT—Summer 2013

- Demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and qualifications for selection

Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting—ALPFA

Treasurer

April 2012 – Present

- Prepare weekly organization workshop budgets for upcoming semesters
- Serve as a conduit between my executive board members

Robert S. Pace Accounting Society

Vice President

January 2012 – Present

- Coordinate with club President to meet goals and objectives of organization
- Organize and administrate meetings in the club President's absence

NABA- National Association of Black Accountants, Inc.

PWC Scholarship for Exceptional Scholastic Achievement, June 2011

NABA- National Association of Black Accountants, Inc.

Monroe College Student Chapter Scholarship, March 2011

SKILLS

Computer: *MS (Word, Outlook, Excel and PowerPoint); Completed a course in QuickBooks*

Language: *Fluent in Spanish*

School Trustee Background Information
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Each proposed or prospective charter school board member must provide the information requested below.

Name: Stefania Raschella

Charter School Name: The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Charter School Address: 920 First Street, Peekskill, New York

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. See Attached
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. See Attached

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

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: See Attached

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No. Yes.

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

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

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

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

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

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

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

None Yes

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

Educational Philosophy

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

Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. See Attached
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. See Attached
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

School Trustee Background Information Attachment

Name: Stefania Raschella

Charter School Name: The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Charter School Address: 920 First Street, Peekskill, New York

4. I was asked by Fr. John Higgins to be part of the founding board for the charter school.
5. I wish to serve on the board because I believe that parents need to have an educational choice. I also believe in the mission of the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill to provide a values-infused, content rich curriculum in order to build character and prepare students to successfully pursue higher education.
9. I have known Fr. John Higgins for over fifteen years. I know Dr. Edward Beglane and Mrs. Natalie DiPaolo through my friendship with Fr. Higgins.
17. If I believed that a board member was involved in working for their own benefit or the benefit of their family or friends I would discuss it with the board member in question and if I believed that it was true I would bring it to the attention of the rest of the board.
18. The charter school's mission is to provide students with a content rich and values-infused curriculum. The charter school would provide a nurturing learning environment, build character and prepare students to achieve success in higher education.
19. The educational program of the charter school is based on a rigorous curriculum with support being provided for all students to enable them to achieve at the highest academic level. The Educational program will prepare students to pursue higher education and become contributing members of the community. The charter school's extended day will provide the time necessary to provide students with academic support.
20. I believe that the specific steps that the board of a charter school needs to take to ensure its success includes a clearly define mission for the school, establishing measurable goals, and school policies. It also needs to determine a budget and make sure adequate resources are available. The board must also hire the school's leader and hold the school's leader accountable for achievement of goals and compliance with laws. The board must also advocate for the school.
21. My understanding of the role of a public charter school board member is to attend board meetings and offer my experience when deliberating and making decisions. As a board member I will be called upon to work on a committee. I will advocate for the charter school and monitor for conflict of interest. I will work to further the school's goal and the fulfillment of its mission.
22. I affirm that I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school's by-laws and all proposed policies.

**TEACHING
EXPERIENCE**

Holy Rosary School, Bronx, N.Y.

Assistant Principal

Sept. 2005 - Present

- ◆ Responsible for day to day disciplinary issues
- ◆ Work with principal during the admission process for new students
- ◆ Responsible for tracking teachers' attendance and arranging classroom coverage
- ◆ Acting principal when principal is not available or not in school
- ◆ Meet with parents concerning student's behavior or parental concerns
- ◆ Testing coordinator for state and standardize testing
- ◆ Supervise students in the school yard in the morning
- ◆ Oversee that school policies/rules are being implemented
- ◆ Responsible for the preparation of the master schedule
- ◆ Work with professional staff regarding students' behavior and academic issues

Sacred Heart Private School, Bronx, N.Y.

Teacher, Second Grade

Sept. 1999 - June 2005

- ◆ Teach whole class and small group lessons on all subjects
- ◆ Prepare weekly and monthly lesson plans based on various learning styles
- ◆ Incorporate technology into weekly lessons
- ◆ Prepare quarterly report cards and progress reports
- ◆ Assess students' progress on a weekly basis through a variety of methods
- ◆ Communicate with parents as needed
- ◆ Library Connection grade level coordinator

P.S. 158 Bayard Taylor, New York, N.Y.

Student Teacher, Second Grade

Jan. 1999 - June 1999

- ◆ Assisted with all daily activities and routines in the classroom
- ◆ Designed and implement interdisciplinary thematic unit
- ◆ Worked with cooperating teacher to prepare and teach an author study
- ◆ Prepared and taught group and whole class lessons
- ◆ Assisted individual students during independent reading, and reading workshop
- ◆ Regularly attended staff development meetings

P.S. 290 Manhattan New School, New York, N.Y.

Student Teacher, First and Fifth Grades

Sept. 1998 - Dec. 1998

- ◆ Assisted with all daily activities in the classroom
- ◆ Worked with cooperating teacher to prepare and teach grammar, math, and creative writing lessons to fifth grade students
- ◆ Provided extra help in mathematics to small group of fifth grade students
- ◆ Prepared lessons for and instructed small group of first grade students in reading

Holy Rosary Church, Bronx, N.Y

Religious Education Instructor, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades

Sept. 1993 - May 1998

- ◆ Organized and executed lessons
- ◆ Prepared fourth and fifth grade students to receive the sacraments

Dr. Joseph DeCarlo, Bronx, N.Y.

1997-1998

Medical Office Assistant

- ◆ Scheduled patient appointments and maintained patient records

EXPERIENCE**Information Resources, Inc., Towne-Oller & Associates
New York, N.Y.****1989 - 1996****Account Executive, (1993 - 1996)**

- ◆ Maintained and enhanced the relationship between current clients and Towne-Oller
- ◆ Supervised client team and communicated to Director all significant client issues
- ◆ Coordinated and conducted sales training and issue oriented presentations for clients
- ◆ Assisted in the preparation of annual budget
- ◆ As a Training Committee member organized and scheduled employee-training seminars

Account Coordinator, (1990 - 1993)

- ◆ Maintained 26 accounts on a daily basis
- ◆ Responded to client inquires and managed client requests
- ◆ Acted as liaison between client and Towne-Oller departments
- ◆ Monitored client usage and implemented programs to increase usage
- ◆ Assisted clients in effectively utilizing reports to make marketing and sales decisions
- ◆ Supervised the completion of presentations and customized analyses focusing on client issues

Sales Analyst, (1989 - 1990)

- ◆ Provided sales research and marketing information to be utilized by client's field personnel
- ◆ Worked with Towne-Oller Executive staff to develop presentations focusing on brand problems and opportunities, utilizing computer graphics
- ◆ Generated reports to assist the client in increasing market, sales, and distribution
- ◆ Client team won second place in revenue contest for new drug service

**VOLUNTEER
EXPERIENCE****Liturgy Committee Advisor (2003-Present)**

- ◆ Work with Pastor and committee member to coordinate seasonal decoration of the church

Parish Council Member (2012 -Present)

- ◆ Assist Pastor in developing and maintaining a plan for the parish and its needs and development
- ◆ Present to the council updates of committees to which I am a member

Holy Rosary Church, Bronx, N.Y.**Advisor, Young Disciples of Christ (1997- 2011)**

- ◆ Helped establish the youth group
- ◆ Worked with Moderator to plan and lead weekly meetings including prayer services and spiritual activities
- ◆ Supervised planning of summer retreats
- ◆ Lead summer retreat
- ◆ Supervise youth members during various volunteer activities and outings
- ◆ Organized various fundraisers
- ◆ Coordinated trips to World Youth Day

Sacred Heart Private School, Bronx, N.Y.**Moderator, Serving Others with Love (1999- 2005)**

- ◆ Cofounder of the service club
- ◆ Supervise students in planning various fundraisers and drives
- ◆ Supervise organization and planning of school wide activities

EDUCATION

Master of Science in School Building Leadership,
Mercy College, Bronx, N.Y. 2012

Master of Science in Teaching, Elementary Education,
Fordham University, New York, N.Y. 1999

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration,
Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. 1989

CERTIFICATION

New York State Professional Certification in School Building Leadership
New York State Permanent Certification, Pre-K-6
Master Teacher Program, Archdiocese of New York
Catechist Certification, Level I & II

INTERESTS

Crafts, Crocheting, Sewing, Jewelry Making, and Drawing

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Adolphus C Lacey

Charter School Name: Guardian Academy Charter School

Charter School Address: _____

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board. I was asked by Father Higgins.
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.
I believe in educational excellence and choice.

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

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No. Yes.

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

12. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
 I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.
13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
 I / we have no such interest. Yes.
14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.
 Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
 I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business. Yes.
15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to items 9-12, you may so indicate. This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members. Yes.
16. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.
 None Yes

17. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family. *I would confront, expose, and ask for removal of said board member or resign myself.*

Educational Philosophy

18. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. *Simply, educating and making productive citizens.*
19. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. *The program is built upon high expectations, rigorous content, focus on literacy, character development, community and extended time for learning.*
20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful. *Success is predicated upon a partnership with PCSO, the business community and other stakeholders.*

Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member. *To advise in broad strokes.*
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. *Yes*
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Adolphus C Lacey (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Adolphus C Lacey Signature 3-11-13 Date

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

Business Telephone: [REDACTED]

Business Address: [REDACTED]

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Curriculum Vitae

Education

Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Religion, June 2002

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

- Research and Teaching Interests: Ethics, Sociology of Religion, and African American Religion
- Dissertation Title: "Congregation as Community Developer: A Socio-historical Reading of the Social Ministry of the Abyssinian Baptist Church"

Areas of Qualifying Examinations

- *Philosophical Ethics*, with an emphasis on comparative methods and philosophical frameworks
- *Theological Ethics*, with an emphasis on economic and justice issues
- *Social Theory and Quantitative Methods*, with an emphasis on major methodological options and analysis of social policy
- *African American Religion*, with an emphasis on appropriate methodology and emerging issues

Master of Divinity, May 1995

Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY

Thesis Title: "Religion and Politics and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.: From 1953 to the Present"

Bachelor of Arts, May 1992

Ottawa University, Ottawa, KS

Additional Training

Harvard University Divinity School (Summer, 1999) Summer Leadership Institute for Church-based Community and Economic Development

Wesley Theological Seminary (Fall, 1994) National Capital Semester for Seminarians

Ecclesiastical Qualifications

Licensed: January 8, 1989, First Baptist Church Quindaro, Kansas City, KS

Ordained: December 22, 1994, First Baptist Church of Quindaro, Kansas City, KS

Experience

Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Baptist Church, Peekskill, NY

(July 2005 – Present)

Operates as the chief vision-caster, preacher, and leader of the congregation of more than 500 disciples. Directs assets of more than 3.5 million. Administers annual budget of 800,000.

Manages a ministerial and laity staff of 25. Responsible for the strategic planning process and overseeing its operational implementation. Teach and develop curriculum for use in all ministries of the congregation which has resulted in

- The creation of a children's educational curriculum, which ensured that children and youth would learn major Bible themes and doctrines before they graduated
- An expansion of the adult educational curriculum to include Sunday school classes focused on life application of the Scriptures
- The production of comprehensive ministry manual for the purpose of assimilating church members into effective service

Instructor, Introduction to Philosophy, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY

2005 Fall Semester

Instructed undergraduates in the five primary areas of philosophy: philosophy of religion, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, and political philosophy.

Instructor, Ethics, Marist University, College, NY

2005 Fall Semester

Instructed undergraduates in the connection between metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics.

Associate Pastor for Christian Education and Discipleship, Grace Baptist Church

Mt Vernon, NY

(January 2002 – June 2005)

Assist the Senior Pastor in the administrative and spiritual oversight of more than 4000 members and 70 ministries; birthed and oversee Grace Baptist Church at Port St. Lucie, a mission congregation in Port St. Lucie, FL; provide ministerial supervision to Windows of Grace, a national television ministry; and established and oversee a comprehensive Christian education ministry.

Executive Director, Grace Community Development Corp., Mt. Vernon, NY

(July 1998 – March 2005)

Responsible for business operations, budget development and management, program development and planning, key successes include:

- Developed Affordable Housing Program, producing over 100 units of housing for moderate- income families and seniors
- Instituted Westchester County's first Freedom School, providing summer camp for more than 100 children and employing ten college interns
- Established ten Technology and Learning Centers in Westchester County congregations to help low-income families cross the digital divide
- Supported the planning and funding of the Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network, assisting Black and Latino congregations to confront HIV/AIDS in minority communities

Consultant on Health Care Planning, National Council of Churches, New York, NY

July 1997 - July 1998

Supported the planning and organization for a Health Care Alliance; facilitated community focus groups around their experiences within the health care system; interpreted current conditions in the health care system to local religious leaders, and assisted local religious leaders in accessing resources for improved health care services for their congregations and neighborhoods

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Buddhism, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

1997 Spring Quarter

Instructed students in the origins, development, and content of Buddhist theory and practice

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Hebrew Bible, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

1997 Winter Quarter

Instructed students in modern methods of studying the Hebrew Bible

Congregational Study Project, Center for Public Ministry, Lake Street Church, Evanston, IL

1996 Fall Quarter –1997 Spring Quarter

Explored the dynamics and extent of the Lake Street's involvement in social policy and interviewed ministers and laity regarding their attitudes toward social policy

Program Consultant, National Council of Churches, New York, NY

January 1994 - September 1996

Served as liaison with religious leaders to organize participation in the Civic Conversation, which linked seven universities and seminaries in New York City in a program that facilitated civic engagement on urgent public questions

Conferences and Workshops

"Faith Based Conference on Economic Development for Pastor, Church Leaders and Community Leaders," The Greater Allen A.M.E Cathedral of New York, Jamaica, NY, September, 2006

"Using Franchising to Fuel Community Development," The KIP Business Report, Jamaica, NY, April, 2005

"Listening to Self: Exploring Passion and Purpose," Freshmen Orientation, Claflin University, Orangeburg, SC, August 2004

"Basic Strategies for Implementing After School Programs," National Alliance of Black School Educators, San Antonio, TX, November 2004

"Implications of Charitable Choice," The Public Influences of African American Churches, Alexandria, VA, April, 2003

"Effective Faith-based Models for Community Development," Children's Defense Fund, Houston, TX, March 2003

Rockefeller Foundation Conference on Race, Tarrytown, NY, February, 2002

Honors, Awards and Fellowships

NAACP Humanitarian Award, Peekskill Chapter, Peekskill, NY, 2005

Faith Leaders Award, Affinity Health Plan, Bronx, NY, 2004

White House Fellowship, Regional Finalist, Washington, DC 2002

Dissertation Fellowship, The Louisville Institute, Louisville, NY, 1998-99

Roothbert Fellow, The Roothbert Fund, Inc., New York, NY, 1998

Graduate School Teaching Assistantship, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 1996-1997

Graduate School Fellowship, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 1995-1996

Hudnut Preaching Award, Union Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL, 1994

Martin Luther King, Jr. Social Justice Award, Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee, Kansas City, MO, 1994

Professional Societies

Religious Research Association, 2001-Present

American Academy of Religion, 1998-Present

NAACP, Mount Vernon Chapter, 1992-Present

Chicago Area Group for the Study of Religious Communities, 1997- 2002

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: Natalie DiPaolo

Charter School Name: The Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill

Charter School Address: 920 First Street, Peekskill, NY 10566

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): member

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

The Department's consent is required **before** any new member may serve on the board. Accordingly, and in order to properly evaluate proposed board members, we ask that you please provide full and complete answers to each of the items below and provide the required assurance indicated. Note that providing false, misleading, and/or incomplete information may lead to a withdrawal of the Department's approval, nullifying your appointment to the board.

Background

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.
I was contacted by Father John Higgins, who gave me an overview of the charter school, its mission, and the requirements for the charter board members.
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

The school's mission is in accord with my own vision and educational philosophy. I know that all children can learn when placed in the appropriate environment. Serving on this board allows me to make a positive contribution to this community by laying a foundation for student achievement, and fulfills my civic duty to prepare citizens who will one day be entrusted with making educated decisions which affect our nation and world.

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

7. Please indicate whether or not you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here: I know Father John Higgins because he served as a priest in my parish several years ago. My husband and I volunteered our time to work with the youth in the church. I know Stefania Raschella as a parish member

of the same church. Edward Beglane was my school principal two years ago. We worked together for two years.

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

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

No. Yes.

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

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

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

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

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

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

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

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

None Yes

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

In such a situation, I would be obligated as a board member to report this to the board because self-interest has no place on the board. We represent the interest of the community. If I found that the board did not take the appropriate actions, then I would be obligated to inform the charter entity. The Board of Regents would be contacted only if the issue was not resolved. Failure on my part to do so would compromise the charter school functioning in an ethical manner and would not comply with the laws and regulations set forth in the school's Code of Ethics and with the New York General Municipal Law.

Educational Philosophy

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

The school's mission is to provide a strong curriculum in a structured and nurturing learning environment in which students develop the attitudes and ethics which will help them to be successful in this school and in their future endeavors.

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

The educational program of this school focuses on the English language arts. The students will be supported in this area because it is a prerequisite for all courses.

20. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. In particular, please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A successful charter school has several characteristics that are intertwined with management as the tie that binds. A charter school should have plans in place for the management of all aspects of the school, from security and facility maintenance to the management of finance, learning, etc. A successful charter school hires qualified school leaders and staff who share the school's philosophy, and understand their individual roles in carrying out the school's mission. The school should hold all accountable (all faculty, board members, students, and parents) and have high expectations for these people as well. Learning demands that there is not only a strong curriculum aligned with the state standards, but high expectations for performance and behavior from all parties in order for students to learn that curriculum. Therefore, the board will need to find a school leader and qualified staff to make the school successful. It will also be need to engage in reflective practices, evaluating student performance, staff, and their own effectiveness on a constant basis.

Other

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

A charter school board member attends regular board meetings and school events, and participates in board decisions. The board member has a legal responsibility to ensure that the school operates efficiently, effectively and in accordance with the school's charter, so the member needs to keep abreast of the issues so as to make well informed decisions. A board member must contribute a financial gift to the school, participate in fund raising activities for the school, and serve on a committee. The member must also attend annual board meetings.

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, Natalie DiPaolo (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

Natalie DiPaolo

Signature

3/7/13

Date

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

Business Telephone: [REDACTED]

Business Address: [REDACTED]

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Natalie DiPaolo



Objective: To serve as a member of the charter school board

PROFILE

- Twelve years of successful teaching experience in middle school, high school, and adult settings.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills necessary for building rapport with the community and participating in shared decision making.
- Ability to create a stimulating, challenging learning environment.
- Enthusiastic and a deep commitment to high quality education for children enriched by doctoral studies and teaching fellowship.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Family School 32, Yonkers, NY

General Science/Living Environment Teacher (September 2009-present)

- Teaching General Science/Living Environment courses to students in grades 7-8.
- Preparing eighth grade students for NY State Regents exam.
- Work closely with team members to monitor student progress and make home to school connections.

Gorton High School, Yonkers, NY

Living Environment/Forensic Science Teacher (September 2008-June 2009)

- Taught Living Environment lecture and laboratory courses to ninth grade students and taught Forensics to twelfth graders.
- Served as a member of the school's medical magnet and was involved in planning with team

Saunders High School, Yonkers, NY

Biology/Living Environment Teacher (September 2000-October 2003)

- Taught Biology/Living Environment lecture and laboratory courses to students in grades 9-12 in preparation for the NY State Regents exam.
- Planned and instructed each subject area using a wide variety of teaching aids and strategies to engage students in active learning.
- Served as a member of the school's curriculum design team.

Satellite West Academy (JHS 265), Brooklyn, NY

Biology/General Science Teacher (September 1997- June 2000)

- Taught Life Science course to sixth grade students, General Science to seventh grade students and Regents Biology to eighth grade students in an accelerated program.
- Designed a science laboratory, and was instrumental in creating a prerequisite course for sixth grade students to provide a foundation for science concepts encountered in grades 7 & 8.

Stahl's Surgical Supply, Riverdale, NY

Surgical Appliance Technician (December 1994- August 1996)

- Taught diabetic patients in the New York City hospitals to monitor their blood glucose levels, and measured patients for pressurized garments such as surgical stockings.
- Developed productive relationships with patients and hospital staff.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

Ph.D. in progress, Science Education, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN

M.S., Education, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT, 1997

B.S., Biology, College of Mount Saint Vincent, Riverdale, NY, 1995

NY State Permanent Certification: Biology/General Science (Grades 7-12)

Professional Affiliations

Columbia University Summer Science Research Fellow

Phi Delta Kappa

-References on request-

School Trustee Background Information

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

Name: CARLOS MARTINEZ

Charter School Name: THE GUARDIAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF PUTKESKILL

Charter School Address: 920 HERSGANSBERG WAY, PUTKESKILL, NY

To which charter school board position(s) and/or offices(s) are you asking to be appointed? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): BOARD MEMBER

As you may know, serving on a public charter school board of trustees ("board") is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school's board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school.

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1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. Resume Attached
2. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board. I affirm.
3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. I affirm.
4. Please indicate how you became aware of the charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board.
REV. JOHN HIGGINS
5. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board. SEE ATTACHED

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

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

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

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

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

This does not apply to me. Yes.

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

Conflict of Interest

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

10. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a prospective or current charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

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

11. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a

controlling interest in, contracts or does business with, or plans to contract or do business with, the charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the charter school.

No. Yes.

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

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

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

I / we do not know any such persons. Yes.

13. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

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

I / we have no such interest. Yes.

14. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

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

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

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

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

None Yes

17-23 SEE ATTACHED.

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

Educational Philosophy

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

Other

21. Please explain your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member.
22. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies.
23. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review.

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

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

I, CARLOS E. MARTINEZ (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2nd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

[Signature]
Signature

3/5/13
Date

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

Business Telephone: N/A

Business Address: MA

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Home Telephone: [Redacted]

Home Address: [Redacted]

Carlos Martinez

- Objective** Secure a position as a board member for the Guardian Academy Charter School of Peekskill.
- Experience**
- Commanding Officer, 42ND Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York
1993 - 1994 New York City Police Department, New York, New York
- Manage and evaluate unit's effectiveness.
 - Implement initiatives as needed.
 - Certify annual evaluation of personnel.
 - Implement training and integrity programs.
 - Administer disciplinary proceedings.
- Executive Officer, 40th Precinct Detective Squad, Bronx, New York
1990 - 1985 New York City Police Department, New York, New York
- Case management and review.
 - Conduct training sessions and maintain integrity programs.
 - Annual evaluation of personnel.
- Detective Investigator, Detective Borough Bronx, Bronx, New York
1982 - 1985 New York City Police Department, New York, New York
- Sex Crimes Unit.
 - Homicide Apprehension Unit.
- Detective Investigator, Organized Crime Control Bureau, New York, New York
1976 - 1982 New York City Police Department, New York, New York
- Undercover Narcotics Operative.
- Police Officer, 44th Precinct, Bronx, New York
- Sector Patrol Duties.
- Education**
- March 1992 University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.
- Certificate of Achievement: Criminal Justice
- December 1980 John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY, NY.
- Bachelor of Science: Police Science
- June 1977 John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY, NY.
- Associate in Science: Police Science
- Interests**
- Current board member of Peekskill Youth Bureau
Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy Associate
Member: Sergeant Benevolent Association
- References** References are available on request.
-

Carlos E. Martinez: Attachment

5. I wish to serve on the board because I believe that the future of our youth, city, state and nation will be based on academic success.
6. I am a board member of the Peekskill Youth Bureau. That board experience, along with inter-personal skills and community knowledge will serve advocate for the charter school.
17. If such a situation arose, I would immediately advise the board for evaluation.
18. All students have the capacity to learn at a high capacity given the required tools and support system.
19. Charter schools are an alternative for community based education. Charter schools have the freedom and flexibility to create programs that meet the student's needs.
20. The most important characteristic of a charter school, which is tailored to the needs of the students, is the students ability to acquire a high degree of academic achievement which will ensure the students to further their educational goals. The onus of student learning should be solely the responsibility of the administration and educators. Evaluation of programs and educators should be monitored constantly and changes made where required.
21. It is imperative that board members attend meetings and be active participants in deliberations and decisions. Board members should be vigilante for conflicts of interest and maintain a code of confidentiality. Board members should be able to advise management and advocate for the school.
22. I have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school boards by-laws and all the proposed policies.
23. I believe that my law-enforcement experience coupled with academic achievement and life experience will enable me to well serve the board.

Attachment 8a: Guardian Academy Personnel Policies and Procedures

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Equal Opportunity: Guardian Academy is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of the school to afford equal employment and advancement opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, citizenship status, medical condition, or any other legally protected status. This policy extends to all employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship, including the hiring of new employees and the training, transfer, promotion, compensation, and benefits of existing employees. To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, the school will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result.

Employment At-Will: Except if stated expressly otherwise by employment contract, it is the policy of the school that all employees are considered at-will employees of the school. Accordingly, either the school or the employee can terminate this relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice. Nothing contained in an employment application, school memoranda or other materials provided to employees in connection with their employment shall require the school to have cause to terminate an employee or otherwise restrict the school's right to release an employee from their at-will employment with the school. Statements of specific grounds for termination are not all-inclusive and are not intended to restrict the school's right to terminate at-will. No school representative, other than the Board of Trustees or its designee, is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to make any representations to employees or applicants concerning the terms or conditions of employment with the school that are not consistent with the school's policy regarding at will employment. This policy shall not be modified by any statements contained in employee applications, school memoranda, or any other materials provided to employees in connection with their employment. Further, none of those documents, whether singly or combined, or any employment practices shall create an expressed or implied contract of employment for a definite period, nor an expressed or implied contract concerning any terms or conditions of employment.

HIRING PROCESS

Guardian Academy will conduct national searches for the best qualified faculty and staff. Teachers will be expected to be certified, though the school may employ up to five staff members, or no more than 30% of its teaching staff, whichever is less, who are not certified. The school may hire teachers in the process of obtaining certification (e.g., Teach For America Corps members).

While the Principal has final authority to hire staff members, he or she may delegate conduct of the hiring process to other administrators or committees. All job applicants must fill out completely and sign an application for employment. In addition, all job applicants must:

- Provide an up-to-date resume;
- Supply proof of teaching certification and qualification pursuant to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (such as college matriculation, copies of school transcripts); and
- Be interviewed by the Principal or his or her delegate.

As part of the interview process, prospective teachers will be observed teaching, either at Guardian, their current school, or another school. Video of instruction may be substituted. The hiring process will include the following additional mandatory steps:

- At least two references checked, credentials verified, qualifications confirmed;
- Documentation of employment eligibility, i.e., proof of identity and legal authority to work in the United States;
- Fingerprinting and a criminal background check and clearance; and
- The candidate's signature on an offer letter confirming the offered position.

Refusal to comply with any of the above requirements or the falsification of information, or the inability to provide proof of legal authority to work in the U.S. will result in the individual not being hired or the job offer being rescinded.

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 organization also may hire part-time staff. Part-time staff members are those who are employed for less than 40 hours per work week. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits. Time off work without pay for part-time employees may be granted by the Principal or his or her designee. Guardian Academy will verify that all of our employees are authorized for employment in the United States. All employees will complete an I-9 form.

Below are the qualifications for key personnel:

Principal:

- Commitment to Guardian Academy's mission, vision and goals
- Demonstrated success in leading teachers and raising student achievement
- High expectations for themselves, staff and students
- Teaching and leadership experience, especially with at-risk students
- Commitment to the education philosophy and academic model
- Experience hiring, supervising, coaching and evaluating employees
- High level of organization and resourcefulness necessary for start-up environment
- Exemplary communication skills with staff, parents and community members
- Commitment to involving families in the life of the school
- Strong recommendations from prior employers, colleagues and employees
- Fluent in Spanish (preferred)

- Experience with charter school start-up and operation (preferred)

Director of Operations:

- At least 5 years relevant professional work experience, ideally in a charter school or other K-12 education organization
- At least 3 years direct experience successfully managing and developing staff
- Highly organized, detail-oriented with proven ability to deliver for multiple stakeholders on deliverables and deadlines
- Thrives in entrepreneurial start-up environment and working conditions; can work effectively within an ambiguous, fast-moving environment
- Systems thinker, organized planner and project manager Demonstrated success providing superior customer service
- Quantitative skills and experience with accounting, budgets, and financial management
- Strategic and critical thinker
- Values input and feedback
- Team-player capable of working both collaboratively and independently
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, ability to interact with various stakeholders, including parents, students, vendors, teachers, etc.

Student Support Coordinator

- Special Education certification
- Demonstrated success raising the achievement level of at-risk students
- Experience supervising, coaching and evaluating intervention staff
- Commitment to data-driven instruction
- Knowledgeable about best practices and programs in special education and elementary education
- Knowledgeable about CSE and IEP referral processes
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with experience in presentations, process facilitation, problem solving and relationship building
- Demonstrated respect and concern for children and their parents and a passion for education
- Fluent in Spanish (preferred)

ESL Coordinator:

- Demonstrated success raising the achievement level of English language learners
- Experience supervising, coaching and evaluating intervention staff
- Commitment to data-driven instruction
- Knowledgeable about best practices and programs in special education and elementary education
- Knowledgeable about SIOP model and ESL techniques
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with experience in presentations, process facilitation, problem solving and relationship building
- Demonstrated respect and concern for children and their parents and a passion for education

- Fluent in Spanish

Director of School Culture

- Demonstrated ability to build rapport with students and families
- Experience leading organizations and team building
- Ability to handle stressful situations calmly and productively
- Knowledgeable in effective classroom management and discipline systems, procedures and techniques
- Knowledgeable in character education and values-infused curriculum
- Experience coaching adults
- To build a culture of highly ambitious academic expectations, structure and order, intellectual rigor, and joyfulness
- Ability to administer consequences consistently and fairly
- Capacity to create a sense of identity among students at the school that drives academic achievement and excellent behavior

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Employees of Guardian Academy will be required to successfully clear a background criminal check before their first day of work. If a situation arises where an employee must begin before clearance is received, the employee must receive an emergency conditional appointment that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Under a conditional appointment, measures will be taken to ensure that the staff person is supervised on a regular basis to ensure the safety of students. Employees who have never been fingerprinted for the New York State Education Department or the New York Board of Education, will need to be fingerprinted at a facility approved by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services and at the employee's own expense

EMPLOYEE REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

Each employee will receive periodic performance reviews conducted by their supervisor as well as a summative evaluation at least annually. The frequency of performance evaluations may vary, depending on length of service, job position, past performance, changes in job duties, or recurring performance problems. Performance evaluations may review factors such as the quality and quantity of work, knowledge of the job, initiative, work attitude, and attitude toward others. The performance evaluations are intended to make staff aware of progress, areas for improvement, and objectives or goals for future work performance. Favorable performance evaluations do not guarantee increases in salary or promotions. Salary increases and promotions are solely within the discretion of the school and depend on many factors in addition to performance. After the review, staff will be required to sign the evaluation report simply to acknowledge that it has been presented to them, that they have discussed it with their supervisor, and that they are aware of its contents.

Newly-hired employees will have their performance goals reviewed by their supervisor within the first ninety (90) days of employment. Salary and your potential for advancement will be based largely on job performance. Guardian Academy's evaluation system will in no way alter the at-will employment relationship.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty members are expected to attend the Summer Institute in August, be present for the entire academic school year, and work an additional four days after the school year ends for students. Faculty should expect to be at school from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on school days. Faculty members are required to be present at all classes or other scheduled responsibilities. When not in the classroom or performing scheduled duties, faculty members are expected to be at school to attend all school meetings and assemblies, and to be available to students.

LEAVE AND ABSENCES

Guardian Academy does not distinguish between Personal Leave, Bereavement Leave or Sick Leave. All staff members must request of the Principal the use of leave, giving advance notice whenever possible, and all instructional staff should make every reasonable attempt to use leave so as to disrupt classroom instructional time as little as possible. All employees should use their best judgment in determining what constitutes "reasonable" leave-taking. As a general guideline, the school shall consider three days in the case of bereavement, five days for illness, and three personal days annually "reasonable." Additional days may be considered reasonable with sufficient explanation to the Principal.

All absences and lateness must be reported directly to the Director of Operations or his/her designee by telephone by 6:30 a.m. In addition, all teachers in co-teaching classrooms are expected to call their classroom colleagues and report their absence. Leaving messages with another co-worker is not acceptable. The Director of Operations will retain substitutes as necessary. If a co-teacher is absent a substitute will not be called; instead, the remaining teacher is expected to adapt his/her plans to reflect the absence of his/her colleague. Teachers are expected to keep up-to-date lesson plans on file, which can be referred to in case of an absence. When an absence is planned ahead of time faculty members should communicate, in writing, to the Principal and Director of Operations, the day(s) he/she will be absent. If a faculty member knows that he or she will be absent far enough in advance, it is the faculty member's responsibility to make every effort to see that classes and other obligations are covered by another faculty member. In-class and homework assignments should be carefully communicated to the class and to the substitute teacher and the Director of Operations should be informed of the arrangements that have been made. Faculty must call the Director of Operations each day they are absent unless the staff member is on an approved leave of absence. Failure to call in daily may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees who are absent for three (3) or more days and have not contacted the Director of Operations will be considered to have abandoned their employment, and school records will reflect that the individual voluntarily terminated his or her employment with

Guardian Academy. Faculty with excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness cannot perform their jobs effectively and disrupt the operation of the school. Therefore, excessive absenteeism or lateness may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to notify the Director of Operations before the start of school or failure to call his/her designee will be considered an unexcused absence and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Teachers who must be absent for reasons other than illness must communicate, in writing, and arrange for their absence in advance with the Director of Operations and Principal.

MANDATED REPORTING

All staff members of Guardian Academy will be considered mandated reporters under Section 413 of the New York State Social Services Law. Mandated reporters are legally required to initiate a report under this statute's provisions when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or maltreated. Guardian Academy will require all staff members who suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect to immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Principal before completing all other mandatory reporting requirements. It will be the responsibility of every staff member to report any suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect directly to Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Guardian Academy will also submit a report to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the law. New York law defines an abused child as a child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for his or her care inflicts or allows to be inflicted serious physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse. A maltreated child is any child under eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or person legally responsible for him or her fails to provide him or her with food, clothing, shelter, education, medical or surgical care, who abandons the child, who uses excessive corporal punishment, or who uses drugs or alcohol to the point where he or she loses control of his or her actions. Although New York law defines child abuse and maltreatment narrowly, Guardian Academy will require employees to report suspicion of any serious physical or mental injury (other than by accidental means) or sexual abuse to the Principal and ACS directly, regardless of who the suspected perpetrator. In all situations involving suspected or alleged child abuse or maltreatment, Guardian Academy will endeavor to act in the best interests of the student and to cooperate with the appropriate authorities.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

DUTY TO REPORT SUSPECTED MISCONDUCT

When any employee becomes aware of another staff member having violated school policies or rules or applicable local, state or federal laws, he or she must speak to this staff member if the violation appears minor, or report the matter to school administrators. If the observed behavior appears significant, it is the duty of every staff member to *immediately* report it to an administrator. All reports shall be confidential. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

HARASSMENT

Guardian Academy is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment. Guardian Academy's policy prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, race, religion, creed, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance, or regulation. Guardian Academy will not condone or tolerate harassment of any type by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the school does business. This policy applies to all employee actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. Guardian Academy will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and, if warranted, take appropriate corrective action.

Prohibited harassment includes:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs;
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex, race or any other protected basis;
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment; or
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected classes above.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes:

- Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.
- Sexually-oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
- Subjecting or threats of subjecting an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of the employee's sex.
- Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually

demeaning, or pornographic or bringing to work or possessing any such material to read, display, or view at work;

- Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic; and
- Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an employee by sex in an area of the workplace (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this policy.

Complainants and witnesses under these policies will be protected from further harassment and will not be retaliated against in any aspect of their employment due to their participation, filing of a complaint or reporting sexual harassment. Guardian Academy will investigate complaints promptly and provide a written report of the investigation and decision as soon as practicable. The investigation will be handled in as confidential a manner as possible consistent with a full, fair, and proper investigation.

While in most situations a personal relationship is a private matter, these relationships are not appropriate in a professional setting, particularly where one of the parties has management or supervisory responsibilities.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Guardian Academy requires its trustees, officers, employees, and volunteers to observe high standards of ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities in the school. As representatives of the school, such individuals must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling all responsibilities and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to create an ethical and open work environment, to ensure that the school has a governance and accountability structure that supports its mission, and to encourage and enable directors, officers, employees, and volunteers of the school to raise serious concerns about the occurrence of illegal or unethical actions in the school before turning to outside parties for resolution.

All trustees, officers, employees, and volunteers of the school have a responsibility to report any action or suspected action taken in the school that is illegal, unethical, or violates any adopted policy of the school. Anyone reporting a violation must act in good faith, without malice to the school or any individual at the school and have reasonable grounds for believing that the information shared in the report indicates that a violation has occurred. A person who makes a report does not have to prove that a violation has occurred. However, any report which the reporter has made maliciously or any report which the reporter has good reason to believe is false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. No one who in good faith reports a violation, or who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment action.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Guardian Academy is committed to providing a drug- and alcohol-free workplace and to promoting safety in the workplace, employee health, and well-being, customer confidence, and a work environment that is conducive to attaining high work standards. The use of drugs and alcohol by employees, whether on or off the job, jeopardizes these goals, since it adversely affects health and safety, security, productivity, and public confidence and trust. Drug or alcohol use in the workplace is extremely harmful to workers. The bringing to the workplace, possession or use of intoxicating beverages or drugs on any school premises is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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 Principal and are certain that the disclosure is permitted by law. All student records maintained in the central school office as well as in individual teacher's classrooms must be secured at all times. Only those employees with a legitimate need for access to a student's records may access such records absent written parental permission. Therefore, absent a special reason, only faculty members who provide instruction or other services to a student should have access to his/her records. In addition, school employees who have access to social security numbers of school personnel are required to preserve the confidentiality of such information and only disclose the information for legitimate or necessary business purposes.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All employees must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflict of interest. An employee involved in any relationships or situations that may constitute a conflict of interest should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to the Principal or the Board of Trustees for a determination about whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, the school may take whatever corrective action appears appropriate according to the circumstances. Failure to disclose facts shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

TERMINATION

Each employee will be employed on an "at will" basis. The Board of Trustees 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:

1. Possession, use, sale, purchase, or distribution on school property, or reporting to work under the influence, of a drug and/or alcohol.
2. Falsifying or altering records.
3. Theft of school property.
4. Sabotaging or willfully damaging school equipment or the property of other employees.
5. Insubordination involving, but not limited to, defaming, assaulting, or threatening to assault a supervisor, and refusing to carry out the order of a supervisor.
6. Fighting or provoking a fight on school premises.
7. Absence for three days without notice, in which event the employee will be deemed to have quit voluntarily.
8. Working for another employer while on leave without consent of the school.
9. Carrying concealed weapons on school property or during any school-sponsored event.
10. Treating a student in a cruel or inappropriate way.
11. Failure to perform professional duties.
12. Poor job performance.
13. Undermining the Guardian Academy code of ethics.